



November 20
Universal Day of Children's Rights

10 - 9 - 8 - 7 - 6 - 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

UNIVERSAL DAY OF THE CHILD

Today, November 20, let us celebrate the UNIVERSAL DAY OF THE CHILD together with FMSI!

The *General Assembly of the United Nations* established it in 1954, and decided to celebrate it on this date every year in order to encourage all countries to establish an official day to:

- Promote mutual exchange and understanding among children;
- Launch an initiative to support and promote the well-being of children around the world;
- Celebrate the Children's Day annually.

The UN also approved the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) on November 20, 1989, 26 years ago. Since then, 196 States have ratified it.

On November 9, we started this process to prepare the celebration. Today is a big day. That is why we offered you this itinerary of "prayerful countdown towards the UNIVERSAL DAY OF THE CHILD".

We have sent these materials to all the Marist communities and centers. They brought you a number of VOICES OF THE CHILDREN from the Marist family, and invited you to reflect on the issues affecting our lives and society as a whole.

Convention on the Rights of the Child - Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
 - b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

As part of this preparation process, you received a reflection on a specific topic, country, or organization each day. Today we will read new testimonies of Marist children from around the world.

Please leave your comments at the [FMSI Facebook](#) page. What do you make of these testimonies?

GUATEMALA



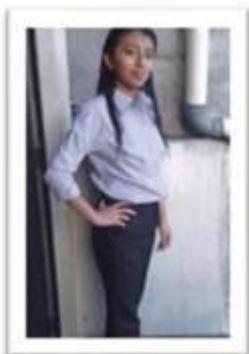
“In order to be able to detect the ill treatment that is given to children, it is necessary to dialogue with them so that they feel free to express themselves and say how they feel in the environment where they are. For a child it is very easy to make known the state in which he finds himself, the only thing necessary is to give him some attention and dedication in order to see where he feels unsatisfied, and in order to avoid the ill treatment, respect and protection for the children should be promoted, since they are the future and the new generation. For this reason it is necessary to count on qualified personnel to deal with them”.

Marisol Pixcar, ITECK, Chichicastenango.



“In order to be able to intensify the rights of the child it is very important that the parents have employment, because if the parents do not have a good income the children will not be able to study and in that case the right to study is not fulfilled. In Guatemala many families are poor and because of lack of money the parents send their children to work; the children work and because they work they do not go to school, nor do they relate with other children of their age. A child does not only need to study, he also needs the love of his parents. I think that in Guatemala employment and study are essential in order to fight against poverty and in order that children can study and know their rights”.

Mario Javier Lux Macario, ITECK, Chichicastenango.



“At present there are many children who are punished especially in the cases of those children who fail in a subject or examination in school, or because they disobey. They are hurt and punished corporally and perhaps in the future they will suffer some mental illness or keep some resentment toward other persons. In what I have seen personally I am aware that certain parents punish their children by hitting them with belts, wires used for electricity or some other instrument and this for the only reason that the child failed an examination; but many times the parents do it without being conscious, aware of their own acts, since every child needs the help, the

company of his parents, their help. But to punish the children is not the only solution, but it would be better to speak with them and ask them what has happened and if they can be helped”.

Heidy Susana Tiniguario Tzoc, Instituto Tecnológico K’iché.



“To be able to indicate or show an efficient change before this situation, it is necessary to study the problem in its very roots or origin, since our life begins at home, I consider that what I will be in the future will depend on this, since having as an almost unavoidable model, we become a reflection of what we have seen during our first years, in being impressed or affected by violent images, man then takes in himself the examples that he has seen. I consider that this is the cause of the ill treatment to children, we can also attribute to this

that in school the ill treatment to children results from the lack of vocation of the educators, but we also have to face the new problem named bullying by which children who have other problems brought from home, lack personality and they desire to despise others to consider them less”.

Kevin Nelson Tol Ventovo, Instituto Tecnológico K’iché, El Quiché, Chichicastenango.

BRAZIL



“Negroes, White, Yellow and Indians are all the same. There should be more opportunities for the Negroes, since it is difficult to see a Negro who is “head or leader”, since there is no equality or respect, but I do not remember if it was a Negro doctor or a negro lady doctor who took care of me the last time: there are laws but they are not kept”.

Guilherme Andrade, Vila Velha, ES.



“The quality of education in Brazil also represents a great challenge for the development of the country, it also represents a negative aspect for the development of the country, since besides the criticism, the rate that reflects the contempt of the government regarding the component elements of the educational process is very high”.

Rayssa Guimarães Rosa, Balsas, MA.

“The problem of discrimination, with so many others which are related with the differences among persons, begins by education. If we have a school that confirms the social prejudices and certain cultural values, we will never see the overcoming of the historical injustices and discrimination”.

Group of Marist Pupils of de Taguatinga, DF.

CHILE

"In the world in which I walk every day I see demonstrations, protests, differences with our government; struggles, conflicts. Nobody is in agreement with the others. There is unemployment, stoppage of classes in the public schools, ignorance. In the world in which I live people die every minute and everyday there is poverty, dissatisfaction, there are sicknesses, human trafficking, children trafficking, abuses, abuses in work, abuses speaking, sexual abuses."



Francisca Valencia Arias, 16 years, Institute O'Higgins Rancagua.



"I think that the most important commitment is number 4 (a juridical frame for the integral protection of the rights of migrants) because this is not fulfilled, because in many places children very frequently suffer discrimination and the State has not reacted regarding this problem, and there are several children who have died a cause of discrimination."

Siu Mei Wong Gajardo, 12 years, Institute Chacabuco, Los Andes.



"I think that childhood is a fundamental stage, an adult is the fruit of childhood, if we want a just and egalitarian world we need persons who are ready to help others, available, persons who are aware, persons who understand what the essence of the human being is, what makes us different from animals. And the only thing that can change the destiny of a person is to be well directed, influenced well from childhood, a healthy childhood, far away from drugs, far from delinquency."

Sofía Toro Molina, 14 years, Institute Chacabuco, Los Andes.



"Well, definitively things would change very much in equality, respect, everyone would have the same value in society and there would be more inclusion regarding the indigenous people, migrants and tribal groups from Chile and many others, the country would be much better."

Natalia Gallegos Bustos, 16 years, Institute Chacabuco, Los Andes.

MADAGASCAR



“Children have the right to be with their parents. In my neighborhood, some children do not live with their parents. They live with other members of the family, and I notice that some of them are not happy. There are those who ask when it will be that one will be fully joyful in the presence of the parents. I have a friend who lives with her uncle; she said that she misses her parents very much. She is not at peace at her uncle’s home, she works instead of going to school, and she follows the order of her uncles, since she lives in his house”.

RAFANOMEZANTSOA Nadirah Michelà Reinharda, 15 years.



“In daily life, we speak all the time about the rights of children but we do not apply them well. In Madagascar, as a developing country, one is aware that the rights of children are not a priority. The criminals, the robberies, the violence are things that mark that lack of respect towards the children. In certain cases, it is not the will of the people, of parents, but it is because of poverty”.

RAKOTONDAFARA Tahiry Nomena Eleonore, 15 years.



“Children have rights because they are innocent and incapable of defending themselves. These rights allow them to do some things that they like or they want to do in life. These children have the right to live peacefully so that they can live and grow to become adults. In my country Madagascar, the parents send their children to work or to beg on the street.

There are still so many things that one can still say about the lack of respect for the rights of children, but I speak only in the name of all those children who suffer very much in my country”.

ANDRIANAIVO Loïca, 13 years.



“Concerning the rights of children, some children do not profit of those rights, in a neighborhood called 67Ha Sud, in the capital of Madagascar, some children do not have any rights. I take the example of children who study in the public primary school of this neighborhood, because the parents cannot pay the expenses in private schools.

There is a certain pressure, and the education that the children receive is not very good. And the other children cannot continue to secondary school since the parents are poor. That right to education still remains a great challenge for us here in Madagascar, the State cannot do too much, and there is also the political problem that still exists”.

RAMANDIMBIARISON Imahalimanana Pâcome, 14 years.

Once again, [FMSI](#) would welcome your feedback about this way of celebrating the UNIVERSAL DAY OF THE CHILD, so please leave your comments at the Foundation's [Facebook](#) page.

People follow the social media very much nowadays. You can use them to become a defender of the rights of the child. Let us stay in touch through the [FMSI Facebook](#) page.

The children and teenagers of the world are grateful for your participation.

It was wonderful to share these moments with you!
Thanks a lot!

