



MSA Newsletter

A newsletter for Member Schools of Marist Schools Australia published fortnightly during term time



From Brother Michael Green

19 March 2013

Dear Brothers, Colleagues and Friends

The gestures have been telling and, I suspect, quite deliberate. But his words even more so.

Pope Francis continues to capture and to intrigue the media's interest, as they look eagerly for some visual that will be suitable for the front page of the paper or some ten-second grab for the evening news. Less reported have been his words – or at least the substance of his serious words.

In his very first homily, the day after the election, the Holy Father reminded his scarlet-clad concelebrants of the inconvenient truth that the essence of discipleship of Jesus was to be found in the Cross. Without Jesus, and without the Cross, he told them, the Church becomes little more than a humanitarian NGO.

When we walk without the cross, when we build without the cross and when we confess Christ without the cross, we are not disciples of the Lord: we are worldly; we might be bishops, priests, cardinals, popes, but not disciples of the Lord.

It is interesting to compare this to the spirituality of our early Marists. The writings of Brothers François and Jean-Baptiste brim with the same basic spiritual intuition – something that each of them would have no doubt learned from Marcellin. François, for example, challenged his Brothers with these words in describing those who were most authentically Marian: "Where among us are the truly poor in spirit, the truly humble of heart, the true lovers of the Cross of Jesus Christ?" He came back again and again to three favourite verses of Scripture:

Lk.9:23 Then he said to all, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

Mt.10:38 Whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me

Gal.6:14 We glory in nothing save the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

The work of art that later this year we will place in the Chapel at the Marist Centre Melbourne is a powerful piece painted by Australian iconographer Michael Galovic. It is on the Stabat Mater theme. Mary stood by the Cross. The words of Pope Francis could well accompany it:

I would like that everyone ... should have the courage, truly the courage, to walk in the presence of the Lord, with the cross of the Lord; to build up the Church upon the blood of the Lord that was shed upon the cross; and to confess the only glory: Christ crucified. And in this way the Church will move forward.

As we move into Holy Week next week and the celebration of the Easter Triduum, let us dwell deeply on its mystery, and what that mean for each of us: to take up the Cross.

Nisi Dominus

Brother Michael Green FMS
NATIONAL DIRECTOR



COMING UP...

19 Mar In the Champagnat Way: Adelaide
 21 Mar Regional Principals' Meeting, Brisbane
 22 Mar In the Champagnat Way: Western Region Sydney
 24-26 Mar Australian Marist Boarding Conference, Sacred Heart College, Adelaide
 24-27 Mar Meeting of General Council with Provincial and District Councils of the Marist Oceania region: Mittagong
 26 Mar Staff Spirituality Programme (1), Holy Family Primary School, Parkes

27 – 28 Mar Spirituality & Leadership III (KLA and Year Coordinator's retreat), Marcellin College Randwick
 28 Mar Mary, Mature Disciple and iBelieve (Part 1), Trinity Catholic College, Lismore
 31 Mar – 24 April Marist Pilgrimage 2013, Holy Land, Rome, Lyon, l'Hermitage
 5 April Mary Mature Disciple (3), St Josephs, Hunters Hill

MARIST SCHOOLS CONFERENCE 2013

NOW is the time for schools to register for the biennial Australian Marist Schools Conference. We are proposing to schools that each sends three or more delegates, including at least the Principal, another in senior leadership, and a younger teacher who may be a future Marist leader. Early bird registrations close at the end of April, so it would be smart to register before the end of this term.

PROVINCE TEAMS' STRATEGIC PLANNING: GROWING COMMITTED MARISTS

The Province of Australia has three teams that work in complementary ways to lead and to support the life and mission of Marists, both Brothers and Lay, across our Marist school communities.

- The MSA *Leadership* Team for Marist Schools Australia
- The Mission and Life *Formation* Team,
- The AMC *Pastoral* Team

The sixteen people involved in these teams (eight Brothers and eight Lay Marists) met in Sydney on 15 March for a strategic planning workshop, which was facilitated by Brother Graham Neist.

The purpose of the workshop was to develop a common understanding of the major directions of the Province, and a shared appreciation of the roles of each of the teams. The major thrust of the Province in 2013 – "growing committed Marists" – was explored, and how each of the three teams could work together in pursuit of this. Consideration was given to the different foci of three team's roles – in leadership, in formation, and in pastoral accompaniment. This was placed in the context of the four principal areas of the Province's ministry – in education, youth ministry, solidarity, and youth welfare.

One of the main priorities for the Province at the present time is the development of a new structure for how Lay Marists and Brothers together can develop in communion with one another and co-responsibility for Marist life and ministry, as called for by the last General Chapter.

REGIONAL PRINCIPALS' MEETINGS



Two very successful meetings of Principals of Marist Schools were held in Melbourne and Sydney last week, and the third will be held in Brisbane this Thursday.

A range of topics was covered, including: major Province directions, this year's theme of 'Growing Committed Marists', the role of Australian Marist Community Pastoral Team, Marist volunteers (including treatment of Brother Emili's recent letter), the new shape of Marist Youth Ministry, the Royal Commission, and a review of Province services.



IN THE CHAMPAGNAT WAY

The In the Champagnat Way Program for staff from the Macarthur Region in Sydney was held on 27th March, 2013. Two participants shown here are Tara Lakeman from Mt Carmel High School, Varroville and James Clanfield from St Gregory's College, Campbelltown.



MARIST SPIRITUALITY AT ST LAURENCE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL FORBES

On Friday, 1 March 2013 staff from St Laurence's Primary School at Forbes gathered to explore and reflect on Marist charism, pedagogy and spirituality. Staff explored the characteristics of what makes a good Marist school and ways to nurture their personal faith life.



Mel Cannon and Prue Horan



Ben Orcher and Raymond Thorpe

FOOTSTEPS 1 - MAKING JESUS CHRIST KNOWN AND LOVED

On 3-6 March, 2013, 32 participants gathered at The Hermitage in Mittagong for the first Footsteps1 programme for 2013. With a further 4 Footsteps1 and 2 Footsteps2 programs fully subscribed for the rest of the year, we are looking at over 200 Marists lining up to immerse themselves in an experience that has as its central mission, to 'make Jesus Christ known and loved'.



EAST TIMOR

On Saturday afternoon, March 11 the skies opened with a heavy tropical downpour in Baucau, East Timor. Nothing could dampen the excitement of over 120 young people, parents and supporters as they welcomed Marist Brothers John Horgan and Tony Clark who work in Baucau and Brother Allen Sherry of Marist Solidarity, Brisbane, to their centre's inauguration. As traditional dancing started a very formal welcoming ceremony, the rain ceased only to continue with a solid downpour as Brother Allen cut the ribbon on the front door.

The local project director, Senior Flaviano Jeronimo, paid special recognition to the contributions of MSA schools to the renovated and new buildings and for the support of their ongoing programs. Special mention was made of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Alice Springs, and Sacred Heart College Middle School, Mitchell Park. Many MSA schools visit Oasis when on immersion and engage in much valued tutoring and cultural exchange.

The Oasis Youth Centre is a converted house with two learning areas attached. Each week over 100 young people attend classes run by volunteers in English language, computing, traditional music and dance and electronics. With such poor levels of education in formal schooling these study centres provide much needed learning opportunities for young people aged 8 to 25 years.

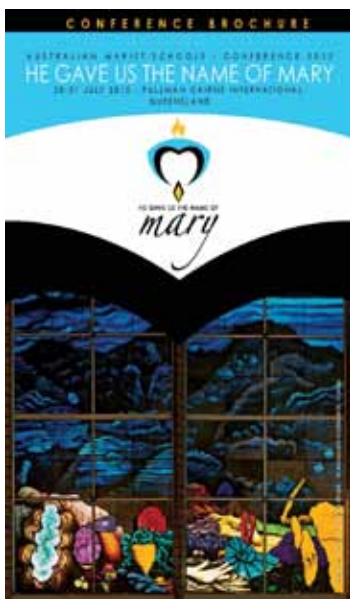


Children playing after classes outside the recently inaugurated Oasis Youth Centre in Baucau, East Timor

The support of MSA Schools for East Timor through the Marist Solidarity office, has enabled over 25 small projects for young people and five major school renovations. These partnerships are transforming the lives of our nearest neighbour.

Michael Coleman
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MARIST SCHOOLS' CONFERENCE: EARLY BIRD DISCOUNTS SOON TO CLOSE!



The inaugural Marist Schools' Conference for the Province of Australia will be held from 28-31 July this year, in Cairns.

The conference offers a vital opportunity for people across the Province to gather as members of the Australian Marist Community. Participants will be empowered to help build a strong future in which we all, through co-responsibility, will faithfully continue the educational vision of St. Marcellin.

Early Bird Registrations are only available until 30 April. These provide a discount of \$100 per registration, so book now and save!

The conference program and registration form are available via: <http://www.msa.edu.au/conferencesevents/>

A HOLY EASTER



As this is the fourth and last newsletter for the term, we take the opportunity to wish our readers a holy and peace-filled Easter.

Next Issue: 7 May 2013