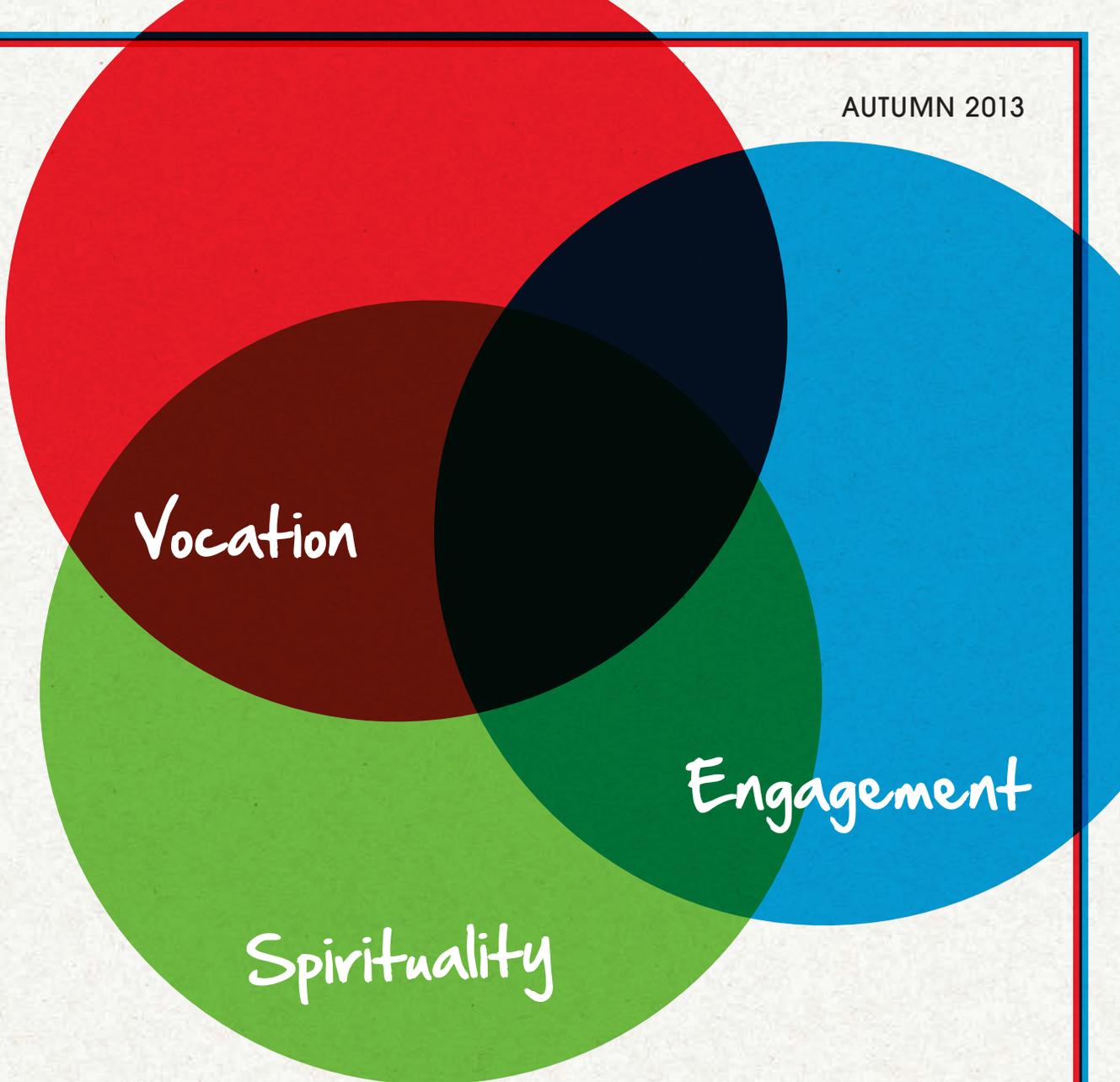


AUTUMN 2013



Vocation

Engagement

Spirituality

CHAMPAGNAT

AN INTERNATIONAL MARIST JOURNAL OF CHARISM IN EDUCATION

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Feature Articles:

The Melbourne Province 1948-2012

Inauguration of the Australian Marist Province

Champagnat: An International Marist Journal of Charism in Education

aims to assist its readers to integrate charism into education in a way that gives great life and hope. Marists provide one example of this mission.

Editor

Tony Paterson FMS
tony.paterson@marists.org.au
Mobile: 0409 538 433

Management Committee

Michael Green FMS
Paul Herrick
Lee McKenzie
Tony Paterson FMS (Chair)
Brendan Rodway
Roger Vallence FMS

Overseas Contacts

Europe

Brendan Geary FMS

North America

Dr Elizabeth Quinn
Dr Richard Rymarz

New Zealand

Alan Parker

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7 Tuscany Rise (PO Box 753)
Templestowe, Vic. 3106

Australia

Ph: + 61 3 9846 1633

Fax: + 61 3 9846 5354

Email: jmn@champagnat.org.au

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2 – 12 Paul Street, St Mary's SA 5042

T 08 8124 0000

F 08 8277 2354

sales@openbookhowden.com.au

www.openbookhowden.com.au



Champagnat

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in my view...

EDITORIAL:

Change is always interesting. The move to a single Marist Australian Province has been an important event in our history, and one that will be judged by our ongoing response to the implications of such a move. At the end of the day, one question may well be whether or not we are better *Marists* for it? Some will answer that we have 'streamlined our administration', we are more relevant and that we have a new enthusiasm for our ministries. While these responses, and I am sure there are many more, are all very important, the question at the end of the day must surely be: *Is our relationship with God any better?* This is not meant to be a judgement of some kind, but it is a question focused on the very core of our existence. It is a question that St Marcellin Champagnat frequently put to the first Marist Brothers.

Recently I was reading a book titled "Evangelical Catholicism: Deep Reform in the 21st-Century Church" by George Weigel. The author is really asking the same question when it comes to how the Church relates to God. He suggests that we cannot retreat from this question otherwise our faith is simply reduced to mere baggage, with a collection of rules and prohibitions, to fragmented devotional practices and prayers, and to selective and partial adherence to truths of faith. Rather, what is required is a confirming, a renewing and

a revitalisation of the newness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This needs to happen out of a personal and community encounter with Jesus that raises up disciples and missionaries for the task that we are all called to through our baptism. Anything else is a complete waste of time, and it is like taking a detour into a 'dead-end-street'.

The papers in this edition of the Champagnat Journal reflect the work of people that have 'not taken the detour'. Our thanks to each of them for their contributions. The articles have the potential to enhance both the spiritual and professional reading of all of our subscribers as well as the teachers and support staff in our Marist network of schools.

Br Tony Paterson
Editor

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

The Lavalla Magazine and the Champagnat Journal are published for all members of the Australian Marist Community. Current subscribers to the Champagnat Journal will notice the change in format this year. Those subscribers who took out subscriptions for the Champagnat Journal in 2012 please note that we will continue with your subscription as paid until the end of 2013. Any queries should be directed to: tony.paterson@marists.org.au

CONTRIBUTORS:

Mark Coleridge is the Archbishop of Brisbane. He was the Principal Concelebrant at the Mass to inaugurate the new Marist Province of Australia on 8th December 2012. The Mass was held at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. In his homily, Archbishop Mark really suggests that we are at a crossroads – to go into palliative care or to take the road where we renew our understanding of our *Marist Mission* and the revitalized opportunities before us.

Julian Casey was the Provincial of the Marist Melbourne Province until the end of last year. He is now the Community Leader at Lismore in New South Wales. On Saturday, 1st December a Mass and Dinner was held in Melbourne to celebrate the 64 years of service of the Melbourne Province. Julian's address provides a good historical overview of the life of the province over these years.

Debra Vermeer is a freelance journalist working in both the Catholic and secular media. In her paper she profiles Good Samaritan Sister Carmel Posa, and the paper is important for all who seek to listen and to hear the word of God as effective ministers. Our actions in ministry require this, and in effect there are times when we all need to 'listen and to hear anew'.

David Tomlins is a Cistercian monk at Tarrawarra in Victoria. Until recently he was the Abbot of the Community and has just retired after more than twenty years in the position. David reflects on the Cistercian Founders and connects their desire for God with his own experiences. The paper has value for all of us as we seek God in our lives and to help us in our ministries.

Br Mark O'Connor writes on the 'Go Between God', a God that we go to in between all of the distractions and other tasks that preoccupy our lives. It is a very good short article for teachers and those involved in the education ministry. Mark is the Director of the Office of Evangelization for the Archdiocese of Melbourne and a member of the Australian Marist Brothers Province.

THANK YOU

Our sincere thanks to all of the contributors for this edition of the *Champagnat Journal*. Contributors fall into two categories: those who write specifically for this *Journal*, and those who give permission for their papers to be produced here.

BR JULIAN CASEY

The Melbourne Province

1948 - 2012

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Tonight we share our table with so many people who have been a part of our Marist History. They also represent a number of others who could not be here tonight but who have encouraged and supported us over the years. We come together to remember, to acknowledge and to give thanks for our past. The past experience of our Province has been a significant part of our lives. We live on our past and our past, so to speak, will continue to live on in us as we journey to the new land of one Australian Province.

THE BEGINNING OF THE PROVINCE

The Province began in 1948 as the “Southern Province” and because no one, not even the authority in Rome, was sure what we were south of, we began using the term “Melbourne Province”. For example, it was useful when explaining how the Northern Territory was a part of the Southern Province. We began with 14 schools and 111 Brothers; the average age of the Brothers was 36, a very young group of Brothers. The oldest was Brother Brendan Hill at 79, Br Majella Fitzpatrick was one of the youngest at 21 years of age. Our net assets in 1949 were £8,500, there were some very sub-standard residences, two second hand cars, one attached to Kilmore and the other a “1936 Standard 7” attached to Sale. Transport was definitely public for those who couldn’t manage a bicycle.

The opening and celebratory function was restricted to those who were deemed important

in the Province. It was held at one of our better monasteries at Lisson Grove Hawthorn, where the only means of keeping foodstuffs was a small ice chest (no refrigerator) and hence no place to chill the wine and the beer. Oliver Clark sallied forth and carried the ice in a chaff bag on his shoulder up the long hill. The melting ice and hessian fibres left Oliver in a somewhat bedraggled state, but like many times hence, he saved the day. The meal was hearty if somewhat calorie laden, the catering was good and the wine warmed their hearts, despite the confusion when the labels became unstuck and they weren’t sure whether they were pouring Chablis or Sauterne. It is believed that some didn’t know the difference.

So as we gaze around this magnificent venue, the parking lot full of cars and this wonderful celebratory meal, what a difference we see 64 years on. Although we are doing this in style, we must never forget our simple beginnings; the simple life of second hand cars, ice-chests, chaff bags, melting ice and misplaced wine labels.

EXPANSION

Although youthful, there was an extraordinary apostolic impulse in establishing schools throughout the southern part of Australia. Br Placidus Redden, our first provincial was desperate to open significant Colleges in Melbourne and Perth, but the need was in the country and rural areas, places that appreciated the presence and witness of a religious community and places where Catholic

Education was desperately needed. Within a short time we had established ourselves at schools and Houses in Western Australia at Northam, Bunbury, and Subiaco; in Victoria at Macedon, Shepparton, Camberwell, Warragul, Preston, Wangaratta, Bulleen, Traralgon and North Balwyn; in NSW at Leeton, Parkes and Griffith. Right from the early days of this Province we have been working on the margins and overcoming the tyranny of distance in Australia. Formation needs of the Brothers were (to our peril) put aside as waves of Brothers fresh from the Novitiate, filled the gaps in the classrooms and dormitories in those schools dotted around the countryside.

BOARDING SCHOOLS

In 1948, seven of those fourteen schools were Boarding Schools:- New Norcia, Somerton Park, Mount Gambier, Sale, Kilmore, Forbes and Kyneton. Placidus, our first Provincial, convinced of meeting needs in rural areas, added Leeton and Wangaratta to that and was planning on Bunbury becoming one. There were farms attached to the Boarding schools at Forbes, Mt Gambier, Sale, Kilmore, and Wangaratta. Part of the schedule of some Brothers involved a milking routine twice a day. For others it was the discovery that the term “the cows are coming in” didn’t have anything to do with an open gate.

By 1989, all but 4 Brothers had spent some time working in a boarding school, teaching all day, supervising study and dining rooms, coaching teams and looking after dormitories. We cannot look at our Province without looking at the impact of such rapid expansion and the enormous work requirement associated with Boarding Schools. Free periods and “days off” were years away as Brothers expended their young energies in many different tasks. There was very little time for initial and ongoing formation and no opportunities for study and further qualifications. As well, over-work impacted on community and personal prayer. Whilst the Brothers were young and energetic, we coped. But as the years went by, we began to acknowledge the price we paid for

this surge of activity and work.

We obviously had to rationalize and, with the growth of Catholic Schools in rural and regional areas, we began the process of leaving Boarding schools. Kyneton and New Norcia went in the sixties; Mt Gambier and Sale in the seventies, Wangaratta and Leeton in the eighties. With the Sisters closing their country Boarding schools, we responded by opening our boarding to the girls of rural and regional families at our co-education Colleges in Forbes, Kilmore and Somerton Park.

LAY INVOLVEMENT

Our history is more than just places and locations and different ministries. It’s also about relationships. The Province began involving lay teachers in all our schools very early in its history and set in train from the start a wonderful tradition of partnerships and friendships with lay people. For example, in 1958 there were more lay staff members at Preston than Brothers. We also need to remember and acknowledge that many of these people graciously accepted lower salaries than their counterparts in Government schools and worked with similar commitment alongside Brothers. They enjoyed the Family Spirit in our schools, where everyone pulled together. There were no Industrial problems as the Brothers generously provided extra holidays and time in lieu.

COLLABORATION WITH THE LOCAL CHURCH

In 1968, twenty Years after our foundation as a Province, we began working in close collaboration with the local Church. School Boards were established as we shared our responsibility with the local people. In co-operation with Catholic Education Offices, we relinquished our own primary classes attached to our secondary schools, and courageously entered into co-educational arrangements. We joined with other Religious Orders and pioneered co-governed Schools with two or three charisms on hand. We began appointing lay principals, with Ken Taylor at Warragul

being the first. We were open to different configurations of school organizations, including such things as Middle Schools, Senior Schools and Multi Campus Schools. In Western Australia, for example, Newman College has had eleven different structures since its foundation from Subiaco and New Norcia in 1964.

Beyond the school, we began the Marist Retreat Team in 1977, teamed up with the Redemptorists, the Passionists and other Religious Orders to make the Stranger Camps the success they were for 20 or so years. From these initiatives grew the Young Adult Ministry centred on the community at Parkville.

A RENEWED UNDERSTANDING OF OUR MARIST CHARISM

Vatican II's encouragement to return to the charism of the Founders created the impetus for a closer look at St Marcellin. Accordingly international scholars such as Zind, Balko, and Gabriel Michel, helped us reclaim a more human and loving dimension to Marcellin and gave greater significance to his founding inspiration and religious experience of God's love.

But Champagnat isn't the only dimension of our charism. We follow Jesus in the manner of Mary. As we became more aware of Jesus' humanity and his sharing our human condition, so too, did we become more aware of Mary:- not so much as crowned in glory, but as a woman with dust on her feet and sharing our humanity; a woman of faith who travelled a road that was often hard and whose spiritual journey had much in common with ours. This renewed Marial dimension of our lives helped to define us in a new way and in these days as the Church in Australia experiences "the perfect storm", we could well help to play our part in the call of Pope John Paul II to develop a more Marian Church.

THE CHARISM IN OUR MINISTRY

In our Province Schools, we had a vast array of principals, some were very young, some were old, some were builders, others who made do,

some were idealists, some more practical, some were great social levellers, others were socially reserved, some were inventive and planners, others were gardeners at heart; some believed in boards, others wouldn't have a bar of them, some sought a wide curriculum and others only wanted academic results; some invested great energy in meetings, seminars and conferences and others had to be dragged away from school to a conference. With all their differences, they were still Marists and that was the unifying factor among all these different principals in all sorts of governance arrangements. But how strong was the evidence of Marist Charism in our schools. In 1980 we began to reflect on what made a School "Marist" and asked the question "Should the Province be doing something more concrete in seeing that Marist and Province values increasingly influence both the school and the principal?"

This question formed the basis for our charism conference in 1981. The conference was the watershed conference for charism and we invited Fr Gerry Holohan, now Bishop, to help reflect on charism, its importance in our life and mission, its challenges and he finished up with these words "Don't worry about the 80's! Just focus on remaining faithful to the charism of which you are the current custodians on behalf of a pilgrim church."

Well the custodians did their job well and worked on accountability structures, maintained a continuous reflection and gradually articulated what the Brothers were on about in their involvement in schools. REMAR, with its particularly Marist character, became a central part in many of our schools, as a way of promoting faith among motivated students. John McMahan led the way in stimulating reflection on the charism in schools, instituting pilgrimages and ensuring that the charism went beyond principals to school community and staffs. The Champagnat Education was founded and became a dynamic force, ready for combining with Sydney Province to form Marist Schools Australia.

The charism is alive and well today and a new wave of custodians in Lay Marists have joined the Brothers in ensuring that the Marist character is evident in our schools and all our ministries and undertakings.

FORMATION

By 1958, it was time to stop the flow of Brothers from the Novitiate into the schools and to provide a more rigorous and academic formation. Responding to the insistent urgings of Br Ronald Fogarty, we established a programme of creditable teacher training and university studies in Dundas NSW, and later at Marist University College Clayton. For 20 years we were providing University qualified, energetic young religious for the schools at a time when the winds of educational change were afoot and when there was little or no Government assistance. Remember the Goulburn Strike in 1962. Thanks to Br Ronald's foresight and vision, we were ready for the new educational challenges such as the Wyndam scheme, and our schools benefitted immensely by this wave of highly competent young religious.

By 1978, however, we moved away from big groups of Brothers in formation, to a much more individualized method. We shifted our formation to Nicholson St Fitzroy. It marked the beginning of a new approach to formation which focused more on ensuring that vocational choices were made in greater freedom. Br Eugene Dwyer had returned as a clinical psychologist and began a style of formation which was new to the Province and to the Marist world at that point. Those in formation lived in a smaller community, completed their University studies, undertook spiritual direction and rigorous vocational therapy sessions once or twice a week, participated in Pastoral formation in places such as prisons, shelters and hospitals and learned to be effective Marist apostles as well as competent teachers.

CHARLES HOWARD: POVERTY AND JUSTICE, SOLIDARITY

Following the General Chapter of 1976, Br Charles Howard, armed with the General Chapter Documents and *Evangelii Nuntiandi* from Pope Paul VI, began the process of making us more aware of poverty, disadvantage and injustice. Commonly known as "P & J", Poverty and Justice became a significant focus for the Province. The ministry to our aboriginal people in central Australia began, Summer Holidays were spent in outback communities, cystic fibrosis camps and asthma camps began with Ambrose Kelly, soup kitchens and St Vincent de Paul groups developed. Brothers were challenged to have an immersion experience in any overseas travel and gradually the Province was becoming less insular and more outward looking towards disadvantage at home and abroad. Santa Teresa, Milikapiti, Alice Springs saw us sitting down with aboriginal people accompanying them in the journey and learning from them. Schools began taking on a clear focus in solidarity with other students in less advantaged areas.

Under the inspiration of Br Mark O'Connor and the leadership of Br Al Sherry, we established Marist Youth Festivals which added a new and celebratory note to the sometimes dour and sombre justice gatherings held elsewhere. We invited Cardinals and Archbishops, Bishop Helder Camara, Cardinal Arns from Brazil, Cardinal Hume from Westminster and others lined up by Mark O'Connor. It was really the young adult ministry group, which led many Brothers into further reflection on solidarity.

Solidarity was stamped all over the Province and it is something that has continued to grow over the years. With Br Harry Prout we have supported the Exodus Community at Heidelberg. We have joined with the Institute in its mission in Cambodia and Algeria and above all we have established our wonderful mission in East Timor under the leadership of Br Mark Paul and Br Fons van Rooij. Recently, in concert with the Province of Sydney, we have established Australian Marist Solidarity Ltd which is funding upwards of 60 different projects throughout our region.

RELIGIOUS LIFE THROUGH THE PERIOD

Up until Vatican II, we were formed in the “church triumphant” and, like many others, we were ill-prepared for the profound changes in the world and in the Church. Vatican II called all of us to a renewed openness to God’s Word and a new experience of God’s Spirit.

But it was not only in the Church that the call was heard, but also in our communities. The windows of change were thrown open and a wonderful breeze of freedom touched us. It was a liberating time, full of wonder as we experimented with our new found freedom and as we mingled with men and women in Religious Life and beyond. Brothers were encouraged to engage in groups designed to further their self-understanding, to develop their interests, whether in Sport, competitive running or walking, Drama and the Arts.

Through courses like the National Pastoral Institute, we began to understand our call. But as the Chapters of the 1970’s showed us, there was resistance to the changes as some more traditional Brothers tried to hold back the tide. Catechetics became a battleground as the publication “Come Alive” co-authored by Br Michael Donnelly hit the school desks and the pedagogy of using human experience as a basis for reflecting on God and Revelation was questioned and challenged. There was indeed “Blood on the Saddle” as Maurie Bambridge was wont to sing at particularly tense times. But they were stirring times as well and, through debate and dialogue, we gradually came to a greater understanding of our humanity, and our vocation as vowed Marists, committed to making Jesus known and loved.

During these times, we attended numerous community, regional and Province gatherings and engaged endless discussions on vision, directions and strategies. We all wrestled with the non-negotiable of Religious Life, with our identity as celibate men and with our mission. The life of the vows is something which each person had to work out and come to a personal acceptance that the vows identify us as people for others, incarnating in ways, seen and unseen, the Mystery of God’s presence in our world.

Recognizing the lack of early formation a wise leadership enabled Brothers to undertake ongoing formation overseas in various courses and programmes, in order to better resource them for their life and work. At the same time, we provided, at home and overseas, as much time, help and support as we could for those Brothers wrestling with decisions about their future life.

One common thread and strength throughout our history has been our communities which have shown extraordinary internal solidarity and good common sense. Our communities have been a particularly healthy source of vitality and energy. Our manly affection and love for each other, our extraordinary tolerance of eccentricity and difference, and our willingness to forgive and move on: all have played a most significant part in our history.

LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

It’s been a wonderful journey, quite literally a journey of a lifetime. It was made possible by wise and sensible leadership by provincials and councils throughout these 65 years. Rex Cambrey was appointed as Business Manager 22 years ago. He invested wisely and with the help of Tony Lennon and Peet, he has been able to develop our property at Australind in Western Australia in such a way as to provide that financial security so necessary for our Mission. This gave the leadership confidence to move into the future not only with apostolic energy, but with the finance necessary to support it. We have indeed been well served by our leaders and administrators.

CONCLUSION

As we briefly reflect on our history and journey as a Province, we think of the role that we, as individuals, played in it. Each of us has memories and stories, of exhilaration, of pain, of triumph and disappointment. The historical record is scant; but each of you holds some piece of it in your hearts. We stand in need of those individual and group memories, of the stories of exploits and legends about our people.

We are caught up in a living tradition where both change and continuity have their place. It is the living tradition where we will find resources to go forward, where we will absorb the lessons of experience and where we can re-define our sense of direction. The history in our hearts and memories also tells us that to expect renewal without being willing to pay the price would be totally unrealistic. The challenges continue, externally as you would be aware from the media and government scrutiny and internally through ageing. But we are unafraid. The Spirit has been with us throughout our History and will be with us as we move into our future. We have the emotional maturity and a living faith that the vision which created our Province lives on, even after the structures which expressed it

are in need of replacement. We are once again being called to adapt, not to walk away and not to hunker down in small communities, unable to move for fear of losing the security we might have found.

We have come to the conclusion of the Melbourne Chapter of Marist History. We turn the page to the Australian Chapter. The responsibility now is for us to shape a new history, not only as individuals, but also as a group. Based on our past, we can do this with confidence. Such an attitude is not born out of naïve optimism, but from a sense of God's continuing presence in our midst. May the God who has been with us over many wonderful years continue with us on our daring Journey to the new land of the Province of Australia.

HOMILY OF ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE

Inauguration of the Australian Marist Province

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL, SYDNEY
8 DECEMBER 2012

It is tempting to think that Marcellin Champagnat would be astonished at the growth of the Institute he founded as the Little Brothers of Mary in 1817. But that is unlikely to be true, given his reply to a bishop seeking Brothers for his diocese. To the bishop, Marcellin said simply, "All the dioceses of the world figure in our plans". These are extraordinary words, given how modest the scale of the Institute was when he spoke them. Words like that signal either megalomaniac delusion or genuinely prophetic foresight.

In Champagnat's case, I would favour the latter. Marcellin's was a grand vision of possibility because it was born of a vision, indeed an experience of divine grace – the grace that lies at the heart of the great feast of the Immaculate Conception we celebrate today.

In contemplating the figure of the Immaculate Mother, Marcellin came to understand what grace is and what grace does. Grace touched Mary from the first moment of her life in the womb, keeping her free from the sin which is endemic to the human race. The one to be born of her, the Son of God, was the sinless one, and a sinless womb was needed for

the sinless one to be born into a sinful world. In preparing that sinless womb, God made it clear that sin, however endemic it may seem, is not native to the human being; we weren't created for sin. So too in the Assumption, God made it clear that death, the seeming triumph of sin, isn't native to the human being. We all die; but we weren't created for death. In the figure of Mary, "first superior" and "ordinary resource" of the Institute, we see the truth of the human being, a truth we see in its fullness only when the sinless one rises from the dead. But in Mary we see as well that God's grace can do things which, by any ordinary reckoning, are simply impossible. It was that vision of grace which brought to birth Marcellin's grand vision of possibility and enabled him to say in those early days, "All the dioceses of the world figure in our plans", even the dioceses of this distant land. Champagnat knew the truth of Gabriel's words to Mary: "Nothing is impossible to God".

Who but Marcellin would have thought, when the first Brothers arrived on these shores first in 1838 and then more permanently in 1872, that their growth here would be so remarkable? Australia was to be a base for the Pacific missions which were so much part of the great surge of Gospel energy into Oceania that came from France through the nineteenth century. But Australia became more than a base from which to depart for mission elsewhere. Here the Brothers flourished in the most unlikely way and Australia became one of the great centres of the Institute's life. This was signalled most clearly perhaps by the election of Brother Charles Howard as Superior General, born in Melbourne, died in Sydney: may that great man rest in peace and rise in glory.

Such was the growth of the Institute on these shores that Australia became a province in 1917 and two provinces in 1948 until this day in 2012. The timing of the Brothers' arrival and growth was perfect, because these were the years following the decision of the Bishops of Australia to establish their own

Catholic schools, whatever the cost. That was a brave – some said foolhardy – decision; yet what a triumph it has been. If it has yielded such fruit, it is because of Institutes like the Marist Brothers who went far and wide, establishing schools of every kind and teaching the young in every way. Were it not for their contribution, not only the Church in this land but Australian society more generally would look very different than it does today. On this historic day, we look back upon that story and we give thanks, because it has been above all a story of God's grace.

In more recent years, we have seen tumultuous change in the Church and society, and the Institute has not been exempt from this. The number of Brothers has dropped; the ministries of Religious have diversified; the character of Catholic education has changed; and the running of large institutions has become more complex. These and other factors have led to what is undoubtedly an institutional diminishment far from the glory days when we went from one institutional triumph to another in what seemed an unstoppable progress. The decision to form one province out of the two can look like an inevitable response to an irreversible decline. It can look like the kind of planning that is really palliative care. Yet if it is only that, then a celebration such as this becomes cosmetic, a kind of whistling in the dark; and if it is only that, then it is a betrayal of Champagnat and his vision of divine grace.

This is a moment of grace for the Institute or it is nothing. Real planning for the future in the Church is always a response, first, to the facts on the ground, and these have changed and are changing quite dramatically in Australia. Often we find ourselves with structures and strategies which are a response to the facts on the ground fifty or a hundred years ago. They may have worked brilliantly in those earlier times, but not now when the facts on the ground are different. Yet planning for the future in the Church must be not only a response to the facts on the ground, but also be a response to grace of the moment. The

question therefore becomes: What is the grace, even the unexpected and inconvenient grace of this time? That question can be harder to answer than it seems, but unless we move to an answer, it is unlikely that our structures and strategies will be a response to the grace of the moment. They will end up looking more like palliative care.

The brave and complex decision to unite the provinces of Australia is surely intended to stir new energies and to create new possibilities for mission. In a time of institutional decline we can be tempted to turn inwards, to close ranks in a supposedly self-protective manoeuvre. But that would be a fatal mistake at this time and ultimately a refusal of grace. Now is the time for a new missionary audacity, the kind of boldness we hear in Champagnat's words, "All the dioceses of the world figure in our plans". Without that boldness, all our talk of a new evangelisation runs the risk of being little more than a vapid mantra. We do need at this time a new surge of Gospel energy – even against the tide – such as we see in Marcellin at a time when the Church in France was reduced to almost nothing by the devastations of the Revolution. Grace always comes out of the blue. No-one saw the Marist movement or Marcellin Champagnat coming. He came as a bolt from the blue. Why should these surprises of grace cease now? What is God preparing as he leads you to this point of unification? Where and how will the new surprises of grace come? These are surely the questions.

In grappling with them, you will, as Marist Brothers have always done, turn to your "first superior" and "ordinary resource", the woman of grace, the Immaculate Mother; and you will turn to the earthy and haunting figure of your holy Founder who points now as then to the crib, the cross and the altar. Contemplating those two figures, you will understand the great mystery of grace; and understanding that mystery, you will find the right path into the future which God is now preparing. Amen.

**WORDS OF BR MICHAEL DE WAAS,
GENERAL COUNCILLOR:
8TH DECEMBER 2012**

In the name of Brother Emili, our Superior General, and the members of the General Council, it is my privilege to join with you in celebrating this grace-filled occasion. Please accept our cordial greetings at this historic moment of the inauguration of the Province of Australia. It is a very special occasion for you and also for us as an Institute. Emili regrets that he is unable to be present here today, but he wants you to know that he and the members of the Council are very much united with you in celebrating this moment.

Many months ago, Emili booked his Airline ticket to come to Sydney. However, on November 26th he had to undergo surgery to remove a kidney stone. At the time, he asked the doctor if he could travel to Sydney, the doctor said "yes," and Emili was looking forward to being with you. However, quite simply he feels he needs more time to rest and recuperate these days and has asked me to express his sincerest regrets at not being able to be here. As a consequence, he has asked me to be his delegate before you. ...I cannot help but wonder if this is an added message that Emili would like to share with us today: that we need to be attentive to what our human nature is asking of us at any given time.

Emili wanted me to convey three things to you.

First, a word of thanks to Julian Casey for his leadership, both in his former Province and in the creation and birth of the Province of Australia! Thank you, Jules, for your leadership, your wisdom and your courage in journeying through "stormy seas" as you described the process well in your message in the most recent newsletter. We wish you calmer, more peaceful seas in the years ahead. May Mary of Pentecost be your constant guide and companion! Please accept this gift as a token of gratitude for the inspiring brother you have been for us in the Institute.

Second, a word of gratitude to Jeff! Thank you, Jeff, for the leadership you brought to the former Province of Sydney. Michael Callinan writing to the latest edition of NEXUS, in the context of creativity in shaping new Marist life, said “I think much of it emanates from the witness of our two Provincials, Brothers Julian Casey and Jeffrey Crowe, who gave us a practical model to live out our ‘getting together but not quite there yet’ experience.” Thank you, Jeff, for helping lead us to where we are today. And thanks for accepting the invitation to take on the task of leadership in this new Province of Australia. You are a gifted leader, a man of action and hard worker. May Mary of Pentecost be your inspiration in animating the life of this Province! Please accept this gift as a token of gratitude for the brother you have been for us in the Institute.

And finally, we would like to present a gift to the Province of Australia. Here is a statue of our Lady, the mother and the pregnant woman going in haste. Its sculptor is Bro. Jose Santamaria, from the Province of Compostella, a brother known to some of you. This was his image of Mary, mother of Jesus, going in haste to a new land; his imagery based on the call of our 21st General Chapter. May this gift remind you of the freedom you all have to birth something new, creative and relevant in response to the signs of our times and calls of that Chapter. Jeff, please accept this gift in the name of Emili and the members of the General Council. ...Thank you and God bless you!

**RESPONSE FROM BR JEFF CROWE,
PROVINCIAL, 8TH DECEMBER, 2012**

Thank you all for being here at this event. In former times, I might have said, “Thanks for being here with us”, meaning with the Brothers. Now we have moved into a much

more inclusive reality of all of us together within the Australian Marist Community. Some of you have come long distances to join in. You can now get a sense of how big the family is these days!

Today we, all of us, celebrate a new moment in the Marist story in Australia, a new beginning. We have just come from our special Mass where we thanked God for His enduring love and faithfulness and renewed our faith, our hope and commitment to follow Jesus in the way traced for us by our Founder, St Marcellin Champagnat and generations of Marists since. We have gathered because God’s love matters to us and we sense this more expansively when we gather as a community.

We Brothers are now members of the one Province community, present in all States and Territories of Australia, with Marist activities in Tasmania and communities in East Timor and Cambodia. There are 250 of us in all, with 21 of us working overseas. There are 36 communities in 15 dioceses.

It is a much different reality from when Bro Ludovic met Archbishop Polding here at St Mary’s on 27 Feb 1872, the day after the first group of 4 Brothers arrived in Australia. The history of the Marist Brothers says: “The Archbishop received Br Ludovic in the kindest way possible and assured him of his support and protection.” We have enjoyed that support and protection over the past 140 years and look forward to it continuing. The historian goes on to note that the Archbishop wanted the Brothers at the Cathedral rather than at St Patrick’s. But he was told that they had been sent to St Pat’s and were not free to vary this appointment! Some Bishops might say that times have not changed!

Why create the Province of Australia now? As a service organisation it makes good sense to go truly national in the 21st century. There is greater leadership potential, flexibility, efficiency, quality support, strategic capacity for the management and delivery of services across Marist ministries. But we are more than a service organisation. We Australian Marists

are committed to continuing Jesus' mission in our country today. The national context of this mission is changing rapidly: in church and society at home, in our relations with neighbouring countries in the Pacific and Asia. We Brothers, especially our younger men, have a new role to play within the wider Australian Marist Community – division into local groups, north and south, does not make sense.

Today is a special day not only for the Brothers but for the hundreds of others who identify closely with us in spirit and commitment. In a way, this day marks a birthday for the Australian Marist Community. This is more than just a network of people in Marist ministries – 54 schools across the country, our welfare arm - Marist Youth Care – based in western Sydney but now with bases or partnerships in other States, two spirituality centres and a wide range of formation, youth ministry, solidarity and support services. It is not just a network of ministries or people, it is a community sharing life and mission, Brothers and Lay, capable of growing new Marists and of conducting great ministries into the future. We call it the Australian Marist Community.

The main constant since our beginnings in Australia remains our mission of education, formation and evangelising of children and young people – now numbering around 40,000. Circumstances change but the Spirit of God moves us to continue to help them grow as “good Christians and good citizens” as St Marcellin said, open to new ways, open to new needs. It is this same Spirit who inspired Marists in past years and inspires us today to go out to new places, new projects, in Australia and beyond.

So we Marists continue to dream of a future for ourselves. At the same time, we acknowledge that we have failed in the past through abuse by some Brothers and staff in Marist institutions and through inadequate action when such abuse came to light. No wonder these former students and their families are full of rage. We apologise again for the damage done to their lives and we

commit ourselves publicly to make amends in appropriate ways. Marist institutions have had a remarkable change of culture and procedures in the past twenty years in the area of child protection and we are still learning. We want Marist schools and youth projects to be known as safe havens for kids and great places for growing up. As St Marcellin said, “There is so much good you can do.”

We leave here today, buoyed up by your support and affection, and renewed in our hope in the power of God's love and in Mary's special protection.

Thanks again to our families and friends for being here today and for your love and support.

We wish you all well on this happy day and the Christmas season to come.

WORDS OF KATE FOGARTY

Kate, Principal of St Joseph's College, Echuca, has a long association with Marists and was on the interim Ministry Council of the Melbourne Province 2008–2010.

Good afternoon. It's a such a pleasure to be here today to share this auspicious occasion. Does anybody else feel a little bit like we're at the Brady Bunch wedding?

I caught a rerun of this classic family viewing a few weeks ago and it is really is resonating with me today. Do you remember the premise? Two proud, loving and independent families brought together under one roof, brought together with all of their individual quirks and foibles, brought together with all the uncertainty of knowing that whilst a good thing in unfolding, there is a corner of the heart that is fearful of the unknown changes, the as yet hidden implications, and the prospect of having to build new relationships, brought together to facilitate love, care, security and most of all, hope in a future that is unfolding the messiness of daily life. Sound familiar?

There have been numerous times over the past few years when any number of us have wondered if we would ever get to this day! I want to thank, on all our behalf, the midwives of this process, who have persevered

and placed their trust in Champagnat, Mary and Jesus to bring us all to this moment. And I agree with Jeff, in that this is the natural progression of our Marist life together and our mission in a changing world. I am filled with hope of new relationships, new skills unfurled, new ministries built and new hearts touched by the spirit of Champagnat.

Throughout the history of our Church, there have been many dark times, and here in the Australian Church we are certainly in middle of our own dark night. Dark, long nights bring introspection, brokenness, acceptance, and ultimately, change. Today, however, is a timely and precious opportunity for us to claim and release a spark of light into the darkness. It is an opportunity for us to put a spotlight on our commitment to bring to life the dreams of Champagnat and to renew our commitment to bring about a more Marian Church, with all that that entails: a Church founded on courageous action, dignity for all, right-relationship and joyful discipleship, a place and time where each of us, and those to whom we minister, to are brought into the fullness of life.

And it is so appropriate that we are celebrating a new beginning in the midst of Advent, the time of expectant hope and joy-filled waiting. We know that what is brought to birth this day will allow the Spirit to weave her grace into the pattern of our day in ever

new and surprising ways. So let us each journey towards the crib with a renewed spring in our step this year!

For we Lay Marists, there is another dimension to our joy today. The inclusive and respectful development of the structures of our new Province has brought even greater confidence that we can truly live our lives ‘in the footsteps of Champagnat’, in solidarity and partnership with our vowed brothers, and with the confidence that decisions about our collective future and our collective ministries will be for the greater good of us all. We are a model of success for our Church, and for our world, in how to bring formed, informed, energised and willing lay people into existing and new structures in life-giving ways.

At moments of high *joie de vivre*, good company and heart-felt peace, one of my good friends, known to many of you here, is to cry out his joy in a loud declarative timbre ‘these are my people, this is my land’. The phrase has always warmed me, because it recalls and celebrates that happiness is best found in moments of togetherness, and that when moments such as these arise, we are, like Moses before the burning bush, on holy ground. I pray that this is our experience of today, and that without trepidation, reservation or exception we can revel in the sacredness of this new beginning, and echo these words in our hearts, minds and action: these are my people, this is my land.

DOM DAVID TOMLINS, OCSO

A Desire for God

All of us, priests, religious and lay, seek God in our lives. The following homily by Dom David Tomlins, who has just retired as the Abbot of the Tarrawarra Abbey near Melbourne, provides us with food for the journey. Even though he is referring to the Cistercian Founders, the reflection has much to offer the Australian Marist Community.

Dear Brothers and Friends,

The First Book of Kings tells us of the prophet Elijah's experience of hearing Yahweh speak to him on the mountain, not in the mighty wind, and not in the earthquake or fire, but "in the sound of a gentle breeze" (1 Kings 19:12, Jerusalem Bible), or, in an alternative translation, as "**a still small voice**" (RSV). Because God is who he is, "Love" (1 John 4:8, 16), each of us can be sure that we are up there with Elijah being addressed.

One of the many graces of my days as a student at the University of Queensland in the fifties was this "still small voice" in my life. It came from a variety of sources. One was Professor Andy Thompson who taught in the English Department. Besides rooting me in a love of the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, he introduced me to Matthew Arnold's poem, *The Scholar Gipsy*. The poem's story is of a student forced by poverty to leave Oxford and join the company of a gipsy band. He comes to realise that they possess an art, **a wisdom which he is prepared to give the rest of his life to acquiring**. Matthew Arnold uses the scholar gipsy as a foil to the aimless world around him. He captures the secret of the enduring memory of the scholar gipsy in these lines:

Thou hadst **one aim, one business, one desire!**

Else wert thou long since number'd with
the dead –
Else hadst thou spent, like other men,
thy fire!
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age...

Arnold goes on to contrast the **dedication** summed up in the scholar gipsy's "**one aim, one business, one desire**" with the **half-heartedness and lack of commitment** of the generality of those who, as he puts it:

... fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for
what he strives,
And each half lives a hundred different
lives;
Who wait like thee, but not like thee,
in hope.
Thou waitest for the spark from Heaven;
and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in
deeds,

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Whose vague resolves never have been
fulfill'd;
From whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments
new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose tomorrow the ground won
today...

Matthew Arnold and Andy Thompson sought to communicate a wisdom, a wisdom

which the great monastic founders and writers have always grasped: the insight that **we have but one life** and the wise take hold of that life and shape it, or allow it to be shaped by **“one aim, one business, one desire”**. At least, “the still small voice” of God spoke this message to me in those days through our course in literature.

The Cistercian Founders, like the rest of us, experienced many desires, but at the heart of their own humanity they found **one desire** which took precedence over all others; the desire for God, **a thirst for God**. In the words of the reading from *Hebrews* (11:1-2, 8-19) today: “They looked forward to a city, designed and built by God... They were in search of their real homeland”. This became the treasure of their lives, the over-riding project which gave direction to all else. For it they became “strangers and nomads on earth”, sitting loose to anything which would impede their journey towards their **one goal**, taking to heart Jesus’ words in this morning’s gospel (Mark 10:23-30): “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God”. They received the promise in faith: “I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a hundred times over...” And they believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it.

In their search for meaning they found God coming to meet them in Christ. With a singleness of mind which was both practical and persistent they became “scholar gypsies” whose one aim, one business, one desire was to devote their undivided attention and energy to seeking union in love with the Trinity. The renunciation of a variety of involvements in the business of the Church and world of their day was a practical option in favour of their goal. They sought the means which would help them to attain their end.

Yesterday I read an article in the online Eureka Street entitled “Transformed by a

boring Brussels Mass”. It was by a young man who attended Sunday Mass here about a month ago, **Benedict Coleridge**, nephew of Brisbane’s present Archbishop. (I was somewhat relieved that it wasn’t headlined “Transformed by a boring Tarrawarra Mass”!). Benedict has gone to work in Brussels with Jesuit Refugee Services. In the article he speaks of the life of a young “expat” in Brussels as being one “full of people, parties, work and daily drama – an endless stream of events, news and new faces”. After describing a night in a noisy restaurant, he comes to the “boring Mass” which, he comments, “couldn’t stand in starker contrast ...

Compared to the excitement of everyday Brussels life, the atmosphere at Mass, the slow music, the warbling elders can seem rather underwhelming”. But it seems that “the still small voice” speaks to him through an English theologian, James Alison, whose words he quotes: “When people tell me that they find Mass boring, I want to say to them: it’s supposed to be boring, or at least seriously underwhelming. It’s a long term education in becoming un-excited”. I quote Alison and Coleridge not to defend boring liturgies, but for that final sentence: **“It’s a long term education in becoming un-excited”**.

Our Cistercian Founders have known the value, even in their day, of **“a long term education in becoming un-excited”**. Society today is committed to giving us no possibility to complain of being bored. You immediately change channels or anything else that turns out to be boring. We are encouraged to “live a hundred different lives”, as Matthew Arnold dubbed the experience, and end up missing out on living the one life that we do have. **St. Benedict, and our Cistercian Founders, Robert, Alberic and Stephen**, on the other hand, accepted for themselves, and passed on to us as a heritage, a way of life which is “a long term education in becoming un-excited”. The purpose of such a counter-cultural approach is **to give ourselves the space to hear “the still small voice” which will point the way to**

knowing where we must be sure of going, if we are to be authentically human, and how we can most effectively arrive. The monastic *conversatio*, the monastic lifestyle fashioned for us by the Founders and the living tradition to which we and they belong as monks, provides us with our one aim, and the means which will enable us to pursue that aim effectively by grace.

Whether we are monks or not we can “each year hesitate and falter life away, and lose tomorrow the ground won today”. All of us, monks or not, on the other hand, can benefit

immensely from “a long term education in becoming un-excited”. Let us pray for each other today that we may inherit a portion of our Cistercian Founders’ spirit, the spirit of the scholar gipsy. May we so listen to Christ that his promise will become **a revelation of love which will capture our hearts completely**, filling our lives with “**one aim, one business, one desire**”. May we truly “**prefer nothing whatever to Christ**”. **He is our Logos, our Word, our meaning.**

DEBRA VERMEER

A Life Devoted to Deep Listening

Sister Carmel Posa is well-known to many Marists. She worked in Adelaide at Marymount College for some years when the Good Samaritan Sisters also supplied Sisters to Sacred Heart College Senior. The paper here is of interest for all of us – even though we may not have Meniere’s Disease, there are some good points made here with regard to how we all need to continually learn to listen and to hear. The paper first appeared in The Good Oil, the Good Samaritan Sisters e-magazine, on 19th February 2013. Further details of the magazine can be found at: www.goodsams.org.au

Good Samaritan Sister, Carmel Posa, is rejoicing that a cochlear implant is restoring her hearing which was damaged by Meniere’s Disease – a development which is of no small significance to a woman who has devoted her life to deep listening.

“It’s wonderful”, she says. “It’s amazing what technology can do these days. I’m hoping that when my brain learns to ‘re-hear’ all the sounds, it will be of great benefit to me and may even help with the Meniere’s Disease.”

Of course as a woman of the Benedictine tradition, Carmel’s listening throughout her life has been both with her ears and with the

“ear of the heart”, as St Benedict describes it in his Rule (RB, Prologue).

It has taken her on a search for an ever-deepening relationship with God and a sharing of that relationship with others, as a Good Samaritan Sister.

“The first word of the Rule is ‘Listen’, and I think that is what’s at the heart of it,” she says.

“That’s what obedience is – listening to one another in love.”

“And that’s what sustains me, the fact that haven’t heard it all and I never will and so I have to keep listening if this life is going to have any sustaining power.”

“Then that leads to your life changing because when you listen you hear things about yourself, about the world, about other people and that changes you. It makes you a new human being and that’s what I think people find attractive in Benedictine spirituality. They like who they’re becoming when they discover this pathway to God.”

Carmel’s own pathway to God has been characterised by that listening heart and a desire to share with others her deepening relationship with God.

Growing up in South Australia, Carmel attended Marymount College, a Good Samaritan school and lived on the same street as the Sisters. After leaving school, she earned a Science Degree and a Postgraduate Diploma in Nutrition and Dietetics.

“I worked as a dietician for about five years and then decided that I needed something deeper in my life, and I needed to do it with other people, so I joined the Good Samaritans and I stayed,” she says.

“The decision to enter the Good Samaritans had been growing for quite some time, I think, even unconsciously in me. I think I was looking for something to fill a hole that I had found in myself and I was filling it up with all sorts of things, including a desire to enrich my prayer life.

“I joined little groups to try and fill that hole, and eventually thought, no, I can’t do this by myself, I need to look for something that will sustain me in what I was finding was life giving, and that was a rich prayer life and a desire for God.”

Carmel headed off to Sydney to the novitiate for two-and-a-half years before embarking on her first ministry of teaching.

“I loved it,” she says. “My first placement was at Marymount College in Adelaide, back on the same street where I used to live. I loved the atmosphere of a school, I loved teaching, and I loved the people that I was teaching who had a hunger for knowledge and were great fun to be with. It was also very fulfilling.”

A desire to deepen her knowledge as a

religious education teacher led to Carmel undertaking a Theology Degree at Flinders University and towards the end of that degree her superior suggested she take up a Masters Degree in Monastic Studies at St John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota.

“That was a wonderful experience. They were incredible winters. I learned what the word ‘cold’ really means,” she laughs.

“But it was a very happy time for me as well. I met Benedictines from all over the world. I learnt more and more about our charism as Benedictines and what that means for the world, and I think I really found a huge love, an even deeper love for the search for God through that experience.”

Having earned her Masters Degree, Carmel returned home to teaching for a short period before taking up a position at Notre Dame University in Perth. She spent 13 years teaching theology, first on the Fremantle and then on the Broome Campus.

“That position gave me the opportunity to pursue that academic path and the sharing of the search for God through academia with people who had a longing in their hearts as well.”

While working in Broome, Carmel was also completing her PHD through the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD). Her topic was the theology and spirituality of the writings of the twelfth century monastic Heloise of the Paraclete.

“It was a bit unusual, I guess, that I studied a Medieval woman while living in sub-tropical Australia,” she laughs.

“Doing my PHD on a woman on a monastic from the twelfth century gave me a great love of the promotion of women in history, particularly within the church, and their search for God, and so I made friends with lots of Benedictine women from the past whose search for God I felt I could be part of too.

“If you look in Church history books, you find very few women, and so I really wanted to be a part of that recovery of women’s voices in Church history. And the woman I studied for my PhD I felt had been sorely neglected

in terms of her significance and her relevance for today, so I wanted to work on her writings and how they are key to us understanding our spiritual journey today.”

Throughout her time at Notre Dame, Carmel had developed a strong relationship with the Benedictine community at New Norcia, where she was involved with giving retreats.

In 2011, she was part of a small group who, together with the new Abbott of New Norcia John Herbert OSB, resolved to establish what is now the Institute for Benedictine Studies at New Norcia.

“The Good Samaritan charism is not to walk by the people in need,” Carmel says. “And we’ve found over the years that the people coming here and doing the retreats had a need that seemed to run very deep in them.”

“And so in responding to that need, we thought we’d thought we’d explore this setting up of an Institute that could help fill this need for people, this hunger for the deeper spiritual aspects of life and the search for God.”

“That’s what they come here for and so the Institute is trying to expand its offerings to help people discover God in their lives and

to help them open up their hearts to their own hunger.” In its first year of operation, The Institute for Benedictine Studies ran retreats and study programs and hosted an international scholar for its Annual Institute Day. This year, they have also begun to offer tertiary courses accredited through the Melbourne College of Divinity.

“When people come they don’t actually know what their hunger is but what Benedict does is to help them identify that, because Benedictine spirituality is so eminently human,” Carmel says.

“It’s not spectacular, but it’s grounded in our human experience and is so psychologically sound in terms of true human development. It is a development that isn’t purely self-focused, but other-focused and that’s what I think people respond to.

“Because it’s in this face-to-face intersection with the people you live with, the people you come across in life that you find God. Prayer is central to that of course, but there’s no escaping the fact that it’s with other people that it all becomes real.”

MARK O’CONNOR

‘The Go-Between God’ - A Model for Educators

It is helpful for us educators, to remind ourselves, as we pray the Creed, that the images of God’s transforming Holy Spirit are *wind* and *fire*.

That is the incredible personal presence we have inside each of us. This is the power through which God became one of us in Palestine and then fills the disciples hearts at

Pentecost with courage and creativity.

Since our baptism, it is the same powerful force, which like a wind blows all the cobwebs of sin and selfishness away and which burns down all barriers we erect against living our Christian life.

It is worth recalling that in modern life, wind and fire are two of the very things we

take insurance against!

No wonder then that we often conveniently forget the critical role the Spirit must have in our lives as disciples of Jesus of Nazareth. Most of us prefer to protect ourselves from such change and conversion very fiercely.

Christians in the first century were alive with this sense of the power of the Spirit. But it is often forgotten by us in the contemporary Church. Sometimes it seems we have lost our nerve and our sense of direction and have turned the divine initiative into a human enterprise.

It doesn't all depend on us! Rather it depends on our openness/receptivity to what the Holy Spirit is already doing amongst us. And this Holy Spirit is above *personal*.

That is why I like J. V. Taylor's book on the Holy Spirit – **'The Go-Between God'**. It is the best I've ever read on the Holy Spirit. For Taylor the Spirit is literally the "Go-Between God," - the bond between the Father and the Son, and the One through whom they are present to us. Taylor makes the Spirit come alive through describing how the Holy Spirit works in the 'nitty gritty' of personal relationships in daily life.

For Taylor, the Spirit's function in the mission of God is to draw people together. The Spirit does this, by helping people to see other individuals and entirely "other" than them. To help people to realize that the other persons they encounter, see the world through entirely different lenses shaped by their own experiences.

Drawing heavily on Martin Buber's *I and Thou*, Taylor's main point of the book is that the Holy Spirit primarily works as a "go-between." In other words, when individuals meet and converse, the Spirit is not merely "in" each of the individuals, but is His own personality working between them. If life were a drama, the Holy Spirit would be a separate character with his own personality.

To use another analogy, used by Taylor, if a conversation between two people were represented by the equation 1+1, the Holy Spirit would be the "+".

Taylor explains: "To live in prayer, therefore, is to live in the Spirit; and to live in the Spirit is to live in Christ... to live in Christ is to live in prayer. Prayer is not something you do; it is a style of living."

A 'style of living' that Taylor illustrates in one ordinary but very beautiful experience of the Holy Spirit. He describes a West Indian woman in London, who in her flat had just received the news that her husband had been killed in a street accident. She sat in the corner of the sofa paralysed, immovable. Nobody could get near to her – it was almost as if she were in a trance. And then the teacher of one of her children came, and saw the situation in a moment and sat down beside her, and put her arm across her shoulders and held her tightly. The white face was pressed to the brown one. And as the intolerable pain of this seeped through to the visitor, her tears began to fall, on to their hands clasped in the woman's lap. This went on until the grieving woman herself began to weep, and their tears were mingled, and their healing began.

Taylor's comments: "That is the embrace of God. That is his kiss of life. That is the embrace of his mission with our intercession. And the Holy Spirit is the force in the straining muscles of an arm, the Holy Spirit is in the thin film of perspiration between a white cheek and a brown one. The Holy Spirit is in those mingled tears falling on to those clasped hands. He is as close and as unobtrusive as that, and as irresistibly strong."

The Holy Spirit then is the invisible third party who stands between me and the other, making us mutually aware. He opens our eyes to Christ. But he also opens our eyes to our brothers and sisters in Christ - especially the poor.

More than ever - inside and outside the Church – and especially in Catholic education - we disciples urgently need be on the "look out" for the presence of this 'Go-Between God'.

Come Holy Spirit!

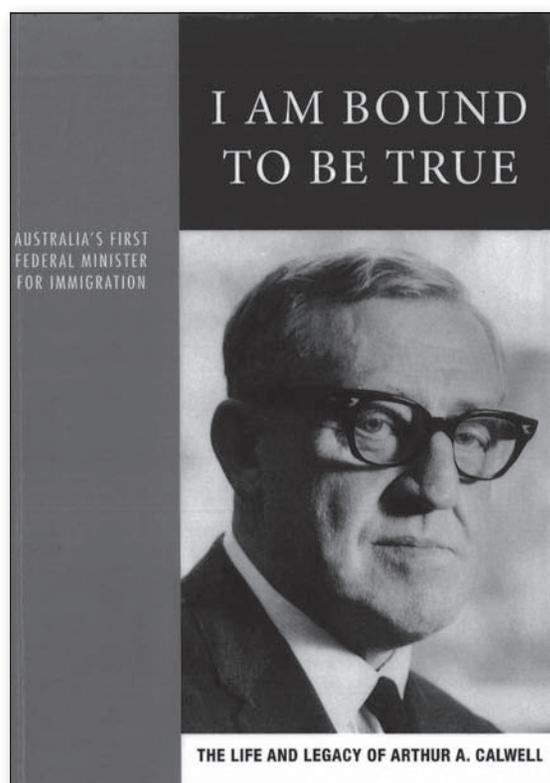
Book Reviews

I Am Bound to Be True: The Life and Legacy of Arthur A. Calwell

Mary Elizabeth Calwell

Mosaic Press, 2012

301 pages



This new book is an important resource for those that have an interest in Australian politics or history.

Marist Brother Marius Woulfe has taught both senior high school Politics and History for more than forty years in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria. I recently gave him a copy of the book to read, and his comments after reading the book were very favourable – it is informative, it contains information that is accurate and not available in the days of ‘the split’, and he indicated that he thoroughly enjoyed the read.

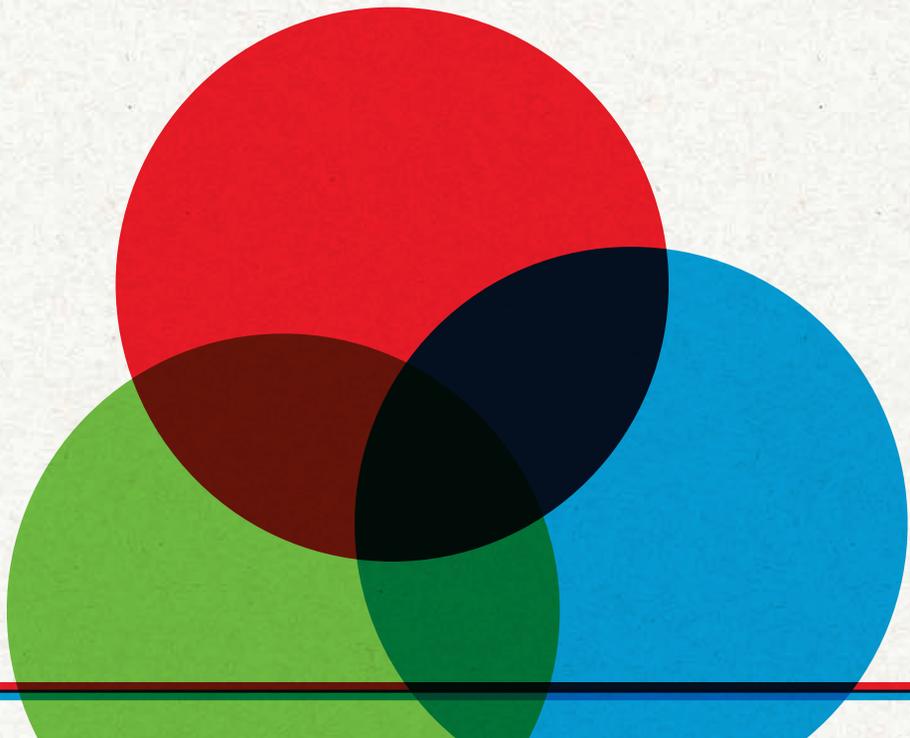
Arthur Calwell (1896-1973) was a central figure on the Australian political scene for

most of his life. He was the Federal Member for Melbourne 1940-72 and was Leader of the Federal Opposition. During his tenure as Minister for Immigration in the post – World War 11 years, he initiated policies that enabled millions of migrants to come to Australia, making multiculturalism a key feature of our society today.

The book, written by his daughter, Mary Elizabeth Calwell, provides a much needed and updated account of Calwell. She was there, she was able to hear and see history in the making, and whether or not it was interpreted as accurate at an earlier time, her work throws a new light on the story, that must be to the advantage of all of us. Arthur Calwell remained with the ALP when B.A.Santamaria and his movement tried to dominate the party. Calwell’s position cost him dearly and he experienced extraordinary malice. Despite this, and to his credit, Calwell remained a compassionate man. There was as sense of decency about him; Prime-minister Robert Menzies had great respect for him; and the Labor Party today could well learn from this great Australian.

One of the highlights of the book is the excellent range of photographs of Calwell, his family and many religious and political figures of his time. In addition, many others depict him with fellow-Australians or in his overseas trips as a Government minister, Leader of the Opposition and so on. The people around him are great and varied, but reflect the diversity of his contacts, and his ability to meet all people from all walks of life.

This is a book that every Library in the country should have a copy of. History is always about the study of the past so that we can better understand the present. There is never one interpretation of history, but every new piece of writing helps us to understand the world just a little bit better. The book is highly recommended to students who have an interest in Australian politics or history.



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