

MARIST NEWSLETTER

Marist Brothers • Province of Melbourne

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A New Epoch for the Marist Charism in Oceania



The delegates from the Provinces of Melbourne, New Zealand and Sydney and the District of Melanesia, who met in Sydney in mid-December, committed themselves to the establishment of a new governance and canonical structure that will result in a new Province and two Districts for the Oceania region.

Oceania has always been significant in the life of our Institute.

In 1836, Marcellin chose to send his first missionary Brothers beyond France to Oceania. That was an historic occasion. Down the years generations of Brothers have developed our mission in various countries.

On Wednesday, 22nd December, 2010, the delegates arrived at another historic moment, some one hundred and seventy four years after our first Brothers stepped ashore on our lands.

**Province News - Adelaide Retreat - St Mary of the Cross - The Liturgy of our Wounds -
Death of Bishop Joe Grech - The Corporal Works of Mercy - Ashley Higgins**



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Marist Newsletter of the Marist Brothers Province of Melbourne is a private publication for the dissemination of news, notices and articles of interest among the Brothers, the affiliated members of the Province and our lay associates who serve on Committees of the Province.

Copies are sent to each of the Brothers' Communities in the Sydney Province as well as to the General House in Rome and to some other overseas Marist Communities.

**The Editor welcomes contributions and suggestions
from our readers**



Our deceased and their families...

- * **Bishop Joe Gretch**, Diocese of Sandhurst. Died December 28, 2010, aged 62.
- * **Mr Bill Allen**, died 22 January. Prominent old scholar of Assumption College, Kilmore. Served as President of the Old Scholars Association and worked as a personal adviser to Malcolm Fraser.
- * **Sr Conleth Campbell CSB**, Former Principal of Kildare College, Traralgon, during the 1970's.
- * **Liam Houghton**, died at 19 years of age, January 30. Possibly of a heart condition. Son of Bruce (our Health Care Co-ordinator) and Catriona Houghton

For those who are unwell ...

- * **Br Charles Howard**, Campelltown. Recovering from what seems to have been a slight stroke.
- * **Br Columbanus Pratt**, now residing in Buckland nursing home, near Netley.
- * **Br Maurice Bambridge**. Well cared for in Alice Springs and making progress with his prosthesis.
- * **Br Brian McGrath**, resting well after having a metal stent replaced with a plastic one.
- * **Rex Cambrey**, recovering from surgery on his left arm.

And also for ...

- * Our **school ministries** commencing this month



From our Acting Provincial

28 January 2011

Dear Brothers and Lay Marists

Welcome to our New Year. Julian is currently in Rome attending the Provincials' Conference and has asked me to write to you at this time. I am happy to do so as we celebrate the decisions of our Concurrent Provincial Chapters held at St Joseph's College in Sydney before Christmas.

As we know, the task of making significant decisions is a complex one. It first of all involves a real desire to make such decisions. It is hard sometimes to avoid procrastinating. We think about the implications and wonder how, or whether, people will cope, let alone thrive. At other times it is difficult not to act precipitously, causing further complexities to emerge.

Getting the timing right is a difficult call. In our Marist network we have the advantage of each other, journeying to a common goal as we endeavour to fulfil Marcellin Champagnat's dream in our world of today. At this Chapter we knew the time was right. Yes, it took some courage, but it was easier, given we were in a context of discernment. We were aware that such decisions are important for the vitality of our mission, for the viability of our communities and for the opportunities they provide each of us to live our lives with commitment, energy and happiness.

The Chapter process involved significant listening, sharing and endeavouring to understand each other's point of view, irrespective of our ministry or geographical location. Happily, a profound sense of peace seemed to hover over the Assembly from the start. One could almost feel the presence of the Spirit, of Mary's guidance and Marcellin's desire that we be courageous and *'get this right'*. Not unlike Paul's conversion at Damascus, here, after months and years of prayer, conversation and in some instances, frustration, a transformation was beginning to take place. We were entering a new land, a new communal life, relying on God's grace, the guidance of our leaders and the support of each other, whether Marist Brother or Lay Marist. Once the decisions were announced and the petition to the Superior General formulated, a sense of quiet celebration began to emerge. It is timely now to pause to express our thanks to our leaders Jeff Crowe, Julian Casey, Carl Tapp, David McDonald and Ken McDonald, to our Superior General, Emili Turú and General Councillors, John Klein and Michael de Waas, and to all those who helped prepare for, and participated in, the Assemblies themselves.

Now that the decisions have been taken, it is a very different task to implement them. So much energy has been expended in making the decisions that it takes a while to regather our resources and move into a different phase. People vary in their interest too. Some like theorising and dreaming, others prefer to be practical and take a hands-on approach.

Fortunately, our Marist network is blessed to have people with many varied interests and talents. The Concurrent Provincial Chapter decisions will require us all to put our hands to the plough, gathering all our energy to help launch our new Province for our Oceania Region.

Finally, I hope you all have a very happy and fulfilling year. Some Brothers have moved to new communities, some are undertaking new ministries while others are beginning new courses, or simply continuing on. I wish you all God's special blessings for 2011.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John McMahon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Br John McMahon
Acting Provincial

DECISIONS TAKEN BY OUR CONCURRENT PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS

Two key Statements emanated from the Concurrent Provincial Chapters. They reflect the decisions taken by the Melbourne, New Zealand and Sydney Provinces at their separate Chapters and reflect the support of the District of Melanesia. The first part of the petition to the Superior General and his Council refers to the Oceania region. It says:

STATEMENT FROM THE ASSEMBLY AND CONCURRENT CHAPTERS

HUNTERS HILL, SYDNEY
DECEMBER 19 – 22, 2010

We the Major Superiors on behalf of our Brothers, in a spirit of mutual respect and concern for the wellbeing of each other and the future of Marist life and mission in Oceania, commit ourselves to the establishment of a new governance and canonical structure that will result in a new Province and two Districts for the Oceania region.



John McCall

District of Melanesia

Pro. Justin Casey

Province of Melbourne

Brian Donald

Province of New Zealand

John Cow

Province of Sydney