

MARIST NEWSLETTER

Marist Brothers • Province of Melbourne

• Volume 42 • Number 5 • June 2011 •



The Pentecost Gospel stories:

“Luke’s account is strong, almost wild with energy and it is about dramatic empowerment.”

“John sees the coming of God’s Spirit as quiet and penetrating. Like good soaking rain, it seeps deep within, to nurture and restore.”

Fr Michael Elligate, PP of St Carthage’s, Parkville

Province News - Santa Maria la Blanca - Fraternal Correccion - Asylum Seekers - In Search of a Great Soul - Human Rights Under Review - Japan’s gods of Nature



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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...

- * **Br Alex Moss**, Randwick.
- * **Br Brian Murray**, Lismore.
- * **Fr Patrick Littlewood**, Mill Hill Fathers. Great support to the Brothers and schools at Port Hedland in his time as Parish Priest. Died April 2011 in Kataia, NZ. (Near Auckland).

For those who are unwell ...

- * **Br Charles Howard**, Campbelltown.
- * **Br Austin Stephens**, Netley, Adelaide. Now back in community with a nurse attending four days a week.
- * **Br Kevin Hogan**, Netley, Adelaide. Also back in community under medical supervision and visited by a nurse twice a week.
- * **Br Ambrose Reilly**, SHC Adelaide. Soon to have heart surgery followed by private convalescence.
- * **Br Peter Walsh**, Fitzroy. Being treated for a pulmonary embolism. Expected to return home after about a week.
- * **Br Alexander Moss**, Randwick.
- * **Br Kevin Friel**, Malloy House, St Gregory's Campbelltown.
- * **Br Ken Eaton**, Ashgrove, receiving palliative care. Ex-student of St Ildephonsus, New Norcia.
- * **Wayne Dean**, teacher at Trinity College, Lismore. Seriously injured in a traffic accident.

From the Provincial



May 30, 2011

Dear Brothers and Friends

CHAMPAGNAT DAY 2011

In Champagnat's undertaking we admire his strength of resolve and action, his intrepid pursuit of the dream and his devoted quest of it in the lives of society's marginalized and disadvantaged young people.

As Charles Gay said in his Article in the August 2009 Champagnat Journal: -

"dreaming is not something you do lying on your back; it is not something you do with your head – Dreams come out of the furnace of your belly"

Marcellin's daring yet practical approach was anchored by the dream. He dreamt a big dream because a dream has to be stretched to be credible. The dream was more than simply establishing an Institute or organization. It had to inspire and align people who were yet unborn at the time of Champagnat.

Where is the dream of Champagnat today?

Our General Chapter speaks about the dream.

We desire to carry on his dream: as men and women of God, prophets of fraternity in a dehumanised world searching for meaning and thirsty for God. In the light of this Chapter experience, we feel called to respond, as brothers and sisters, witnesses to the loving and maternal face of God.

But really it is even more than that. All that Champagnat dreamed for Institute has been realised in you, in me, and in the long line of Marists (Brothers and Lay) who have gone before us and who will follow us. We are the dream of this dreamer. We are whom he dreamed of. When we understand that we will better understand our role and identity in today's world.

Fraternally

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Br Julian Casey".

Br Julian Casey
Provincial

NEXUS

Soon you will be receiving **NEXUS** which has been commissioned by both Provinces to keep you informed of the developments associated with forming a new Province in Australia. In this introductory issue, you will find a list of the various committees and commissions which we have established to help us bring about the new Province. There is obviously much work to be done and we have tried to spread the tasks among as many as possible.

VISITATION

By the time you receive this Newsletter, I will have completed visitation in all but the Darwin and East Timor Communities. I have timetabled interviews with the Brothers at Templestowe towards the end of June and this will bring this round of visits to a conclusion. Over the last six weeks I have been away from Templestowe more often than in my office.

Visiting and speaking with the Brothers is the best part of my role. It is always a source of inspiration for me. I thank you all for your welcome, your hospitality and for making yourselves available.

In the next few months the members of the Provincial Council will arrange a visit to your community to try to keep you personally informed about developments in the New Australian Province and to hear of your reactions, responses and comments.

PROVINCE WEBSITE

I hope that you can all find some time to regularly visit the website. This contains quite a lot of news about the various province activities and I do not like to repeat from it. But at www.maristmelb.org.au/news you will find news of the website about such items as:-

- Mission Assembly for the Melanesian District
- “Marcellin the Man” Patrimony Course at the Montagne Centre
- Rex Cambrey at the International Finance Commission
- Return of the Pilgrims
- Alice Springs activities:
 - Living Champagnat’s Vision
 - Maurie Bambridge
 - Opening of the Marian Centre
 - Gathering of the Central Australian Communities

Santa María la Blanca

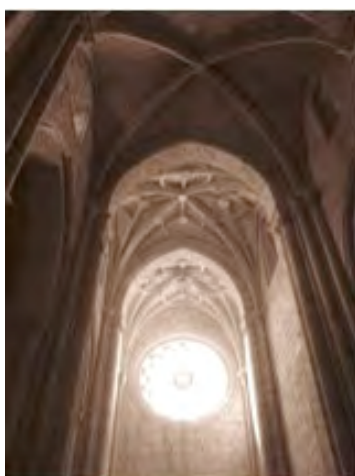
Mike Hansen, Lavalla Catholic College, Traralgon



It was always a deep joy to arrive at a little village and enter the church to pray. Some villages have two and even three churches. In some, the great golden altar panels and side altars are covered with dust and neglected. Confessional boxes are receptacles for fallen stations of the cross. There is an air of neglect and abandonment.

But in most cases there is a wonderful sense of peace in buildings that ring with the last cadences of the dismissal prayer of Sunday mass. It is like walking into a holy vacuum, resonant with the prayer life of centuries. These are sacred places. The sun creates deep pools of shadow across the paved floors, shafts of light that add grace to ancient statues of the virgin and child or rustic wooden pews.

At Villasirga I visited the church of Santa Maria la Blanca (The White Virgin). It is a national monument... a significant church of the Templar Knights. The interior is exquisite. High and cool, the interior is lit by a glorious rose window.



In an enclosure reserved for the burial of patrons of centuries gone by is a small stone statue of Mother and Child. The body of the child Jesus is long gone... only a fragment of arm and leg remains. But the sweet face of the virgin is untouched by the march of time. There is an innocent but knowing acceptance in her young face, an enigmatic smile that reaches from the corner of her mouth to her downcast eyes. Perhaps seven hundred years old, it portrays such a realistic interpretation of the Incarnation event. It remains the most beautiful religious image I saw on the Camino.

Most images of Mary are from a much later time and we see her fully clothed in rich bejewelled fabrics, perhaps carrying a kerchief or handbag. Her face is stylised and stern, gazing out from her elevated position with a solemn expression far too aware of the folly of those gathered for prayer and forgetful of her own maidenhood.

The gold carved facades, whilst telling the story of salvation and the lives of the saints, have occluded the joyous simplicity of the ancient faith ... 'a maiden is with child'. So much has been lost and forgotten under the encrustations of centuries and the layering of cultural appropriations.



Mike Hansen, Camino Journal, 2010

Fraternal Correction

Br Mark O'Connor, FMS



Cardinal Basil Hume OSB once remarked that we have lost the virtue of 'fraternal correction' in the contemporary Church. Amidst the bewildering pace of life and the pluralism all around us, it does seem a daunting challenge (and perhaps

even a bit unwise) to urge people to 'correct' each other.

And yet part of the richness of our Tradition is our duty, at times, to confront evil and call people to 'chose life not death' in their pilgrimage here on earth. St Paul told us to "be angry and sin not" and there are times when it is appropriate to tell people that they are going down the wrong path in their lives with some passion!

The Prophets did it all the time and we know what happened to them. That may help explain our reluctance!

Yet we dare not forget the example of John the Baptist at our peril. If John the Baptist were around today, that fur-wearing, locust-eating, wild-eyed, holy-rolling loudmouthed desert prophet would probably have a few things to say!

He was a little rough around the edges as far as social mannerisms were concerned but he told it how it was and didn't pull any punches. If you were looking for pampering words or a 'Cafeteria type Catholicism', the Baptist would not be the bloke to go to. The Prophet got himself in a bit of hot water for his refusal to consent to Herod's involvement with his brother's wife. The King rewarded John's courage and honesty with a complimentary decapitation.

John the Baptist's noble actions are an example of the work of mercy of admonishing the sinner. His task was rather extreme and rare. Most of us are called to something slightly less heroic. Nonetheless, this can be one of the more difficult works of mercy to put into practice and requires a different kind of personal sacrifice than the other works.

There is, of course, a right and a wrong way for the more ordinary ways of 'admonishing the sinner' to be accomplished, however. Most people are not 'Herod' and will not usually respond to a call to 'conversion' - unless they believe they are deeply loved first. Otherwise, it just produces resentment.

Heaven save us then from ideological zealots and crusaders who take it upon themselves to 'admonish' without ever having met the 'other' and establish a relationship of trust and love first. 'Right wing and left wing "ideologues"' who act in an accusatory and confrontational manner can expect the reaction will always be one of anger and resentment towards the 'preacher.'

But if time is taken for a relationship to be developed and a trust built up (with love, rather than conversion, as the underlying motivation for the development of such a relationship), words of admonition or better, fraternal correction - will be received with more thoughtfulness and will hold more meaning.

An instructing word - even when it is firm and forces the person to face painful personal 'demons' - has more weight coming from a loving fellow Christian sinner than a self-righteous 'stranger.' "He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise." (Prov. 13:31)

The old world killed the prophets. The new world simply ignores them. It can afford to do

this because the world is more conducive to self-deception today than ever before.

Some then are especially called to this ministry of 'fraternal correction' in our culture and Church. Frankly, I don't think many people have this gift at a purely human level. Since baptised believers are always on the way to becoming Christians - it takes a wise and holy person then to practise this work of mercy well. Something most us (including me) are a long way from.

On the other hand, William Blake has a salutary poem which shows us what happens, when we completely ignore the need to express our legitimate 'anger' and 'sweep everything under the carpet'. Whilst it may not be our personal charism - we all need to acknowledge that if no one practises this work of mercy - 'the poison tree' can grow in our lives and in our Church.

The Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe;
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears;
And I sunned it with my smiles
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole
When the night had veil'd the pole:
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree

William Blake