

MARIST NEWSLETTER

Marist Brothers • Province of Melbourne

• Volume 43 • Number 1 • February 2012 •

**Celebrating our Faith in
Christ and the Resurrection
as lived in the life of**

**Brother Charles McKean Howard, fms
(Brother Elias)**



Born to this life ~ 29th October 1924
Born to Eternal Life ~ 14th January 2012
In his 69th year of Marist Religious Life

**Farewells to Brs Charles Howard, Stephen Bugg, Anthony O'Brien and Darryl Slater -
Province News - Adelaide Retreat - Megan Moore - National Gathering - Pondering**



Marist Brothers' Province Centre
PO Box 753 Templestowe Vic 3106
7 Tuscany Rise Templestowe 3106

Phone: 03 9846 1633

Fax: 03 9846 5354

E-mail: marist@maristmelb.org.au

Website: www.maristmelb.org.au

Marist Publications
Newsletter Office

Marist Community

38 Dolomite Court

Churchlands WA 6018

Community Phone: 08 9446 9852

Editor: Newsletter

Br Terry Orrell fms

Email: terry.orrell@maristmelb.org.au

School desk phone with voicemail: **08 9204 9416**

Mobile: **0438 884 249**

Printing and Distribution
Newsletter and Marist Publications

Br Peter Howes fms

Printing and distribution from

Province Centre Templestowe

Phone: 03 9846 1633

Fax: 03 9846 5354

Email: 03 9846 5354

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 Charles Howard**, Campbelltown N.S.W. Former Superior General. Died Saturday, 14 January, 2012.
- * **Br Stephen Bugg**, Coburg, Victoria. Died Saturday, 14 January, 2012.
- * **Br Anthony O'Brien**, Forbes, N.S.W. Died peacefully at the Jemalong Nursing Home, Forbes, 28/11/2011.
- * **Br Darryl Slater**, Sala Lavalla, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Died Sunday, 11 December, 2011.
- * **Ron Slattery**, Melbourne. Died 27/01/2012 at 94 years of age. Past student of Assumption College, Kilmore, and long time secretary of the Old Collegians Association.
- * **Mrs Jonlyn Coffey**, Adelaide. Died 21/01/2012. Wife of Vin Coffey, current staff member and former Deputy Principal of Sacred Heart College, Somerton Park, South Australia.
- * **Mr Brian Hickey**, Perth. Died 10/02/12. Cousin of **Br Noel Hickey**.

For those who are unwell ...

- * **Br Austin Stephens**, Adelaide. Residing in Flora McDonald Lodge.
- * **Br Kevin Hogan**, Adelaide. suffering from spinal arthritis.
- * **Neville McManus**, Perth. Recovering from recent surgery for a brain tumour.
- * **John McViegh**, undergoing treatment for bone cancer. Brother of **Br Leo McVeigh**, Netley.



From the Acting Provincial

Dear Brothers and Lay Marists,

Welcome to our first Marist Newsletter for 2012. Br Julian is away having a well-earned break at the moment. Consequently, he has asked me to write to you this month.

You would be aware the Bishops of Australia have declared this year, commencing at Pentecost, to be a Year of Grace. It will coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the Opening of the Second Vatican Council on 11th October, 2012. As we know well, it is a special year for us too as we prepare for the Inauguration of the New Province of Australia on the 8th December, 2012 at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney.

Last Thursday, Passionist, Fr Chris Mithen, presided at Mass for our community at Templestowe. During his homily, he recalled a Requiem Mass he had attended earlier in the week for the nineteen-year-old boy who died as a result of surfing on the top of a Melbourne train. The large numbers of young people at the Requiem Mass highlighted the many friends he had attracted over his short life. The impression Chris picked up during this Requiem Mass was of young people gathering out of friendship for the deceased. He sensed many of them were unaware of who God is and how much God loves them. I immediately recalled Marcellin Champagnat's visit to the young Montagne boy, a boy who did not know about God. I wondered how we, like Marcellin, might help these Montagne young people of today.

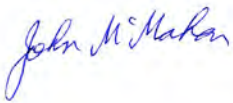
For years we have talked about the importance of the witness of our lives. Obviously, this is still true. But communicating with these young people about God is also important and relevant. It requires our real engagement with them. Chris' story challenged me to ask how do I go about communicating with today's young people who do not know about God? Do I need to develop new skills? In the first place, do I do this with my Brothers or with lay Marists?

It is easy for us to chat with each other about our lives, what we are doing and our hopes. It is more difficult, at least for me, to speak with others about how the Spirit is moving me at the moment. How do I share what is happening at a deeper level in my life? It seems the first step is to understand what is happening. Since it is hopefully God's initiative, at least part of the answer lies in making sure we have times of contemplation, either together or individually. As Marists, we are blessed to be able to gather with each other as people of like minds and hearts. We share the same mission and the same charism.

Vatican II's document on the renewal of Religious Life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, begins: 'Under the impulse of love, which the Holy Spirit poured into their hearts (cf Rom. 5:5), ... (Religious) live more and more for Christ and for his Body, the Church (cf Col. 1:24).' In other words, God takes the initiative and pours love into our hearts so that we can live and share God's love more fully. Here God takes the initiative and helps us understand what action we might take or what attitude we might have in a particular situation; how we might assist the Montagnes of today to be formed and transformed by God's love.

This Year of Grace can remind us to notice and listen to these movements of the Spirit within us and to recognise them within those with whom we mix. If we can share them, all the better. What an incredible grace this is!

With best wishes



Br John McMahon
Acting Provincial

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

We welcome Terry Orrell back to the Editorial Chair and thank Matthew Clarke for filling in so competently while Terry was enjoying his Third Age Programme.

NEW COMMUNITIES

Some Brothers are moving to new Communities in the first part of the year. We wish them a happy transition.

ADELAIDE RETREAT

In what turned out to be beautiful summer weather, thirty-four Brothers and lay Marists gathered for the annual Adelaide Retreat last Christmas. Retreat preacher, Fr Michael Fallon skilfully broke open the Scriptures for us and helped us reflect on them amidst the beautiful surroundings of Sacred Heart College, Somerton Park. We thank Tony Caddy and Doug Walsh for their organisation of this retreat once again.

MR STEVE TRABILSIE

At the close of the Retreat, and in the presence of the Trabilisie family, Jordan Redden spoke eloquently at the final dinner of Steve Trabilisie's extensive and regular contribution to Marist life in our Province. In recognition of this, Julian conferred Marist Affiliation on Steve.

BROTHERS' GATHERING IN SYDNEY

We are grateful to our Provincials for convoking the Brothers' Gathering at St Joseph's College in Sydney in January. It proved to be a special time for us, as Brothers, to be together as Brothers and family and to get to know each other a little more. We thank Tony Paterson, Graham Neist and their teams for their expert organising and facilitating work.

SACRED HEART COLLEGE BOARDING HOUSE

Mons Rob Egar blessed and opened the new extensions to the girl boarding facilities at Sacred Heart College, Somerton Park on the 30th

Province News . . .

January, 2012. Seventy boys and fifty girls can now be accommodated in the Boarding House.

PREPARATION FOR OUR FIRST PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

The First Provincial Chapter of the Province of Australia will commence on the evening of 8th December, 2012. The election of Chapter delegates will take place in both Provinces. Our Province Secretary, Peter Walsh will be sending out the voting forms. We will be electing eleven Brothers to attend the Chapter and the Sydney Province twenty-two. The elected delegates, along with the ex-officio members of the Chapter will gather at the Montagne Centre on Saturday 28th April, 2012 to begin preparations for the Chapter and to elect the Chapter Steering Committee.

APPOINTMENT OF OUR NEW PROVINCIAL OF AUSTRALIA

As you would have read in the recent letter from our Superior General, Br Emili, the process for the appointment of our new Provincial will commence shortly.

- April: During the Chapter delegates' day on 28th April, 2012, there will be an opportunity for delegates to engage in a discernment process ('murmuratio' in the Jesuit sense) for considering Brothers who might be appointed Provincial. Each Chapter delegate will then nominate confidentially five or six names for forwarding directly to Rome.
- May: The Superior General and Council will determine a final short list of up to four names of Brothers who indicate their openness to appointment as Provincial and forward this to the Brothers.
Brothers of the Provinces of Melbourne and Sydney individually complete a sondage slip of three names in order of preference and send this to the Secretary General.

- June: Br Emili announces the appointment of the new Provincial.

MARIST MINISTRIES

Commencement Masses are being held in schools around this time. New staff and students are being welcomed and Induction Programmes organised. May you have a fulfilling year in your Marist Ministry.

NORTH FITZROY

Refurbishment of our house at North Fitzroy is making good progress. Considerable demolition has taken place, photographs of which can be viewed on our website <http://www.champagnat.org.au/>

CHAMPAGNAT PILGRIMAGE

Our 2012 Champagnat Pilgrimage leaves Australia on Saturday 31st March and returns on Saturday 21st April. We will be travelling to Marist Paris, the Hermitage, our General House in Rome, our Marist International College in Nairobi and our Marist schools in Rwanda. Forty two participants will be journeying together this year including Brs Tony Boyd, Tony Caddy, Robert Hayes, Mark Needham and Adrian Story.

RECENTLY DECEASED AND SICK

Four Brothers have died over recent months: Anthony O'Brien, Darryl Slater, Charles Howard and Steve Bugg. We thank them for sharing their lives with us and pray God will bless them with eternal life. The webcast of the Requiem Mass for Charles Howard will be available on demand for three months from the 24th January. It can be viewed at <http://player.streamcast.com.au/node/422/view>.

We pray too for our Brothers who are unwell: Eugene, Brendan and Austin Stephens. May they be blessed with healing and consolation.



Superiore generale dei Fratelli Maristi

LET'S BE CHAMPAGNAT TODAY

Bro. Charles Howard (1924-2012)



Dear Marist Brothers and Lay Marists:

Brother Charles Howard, who was our Superior general from 1985 to 1993, passed away on Saturday 14 January 2012 in Campbelltown (Australia). He was 87 years old.

The lamp of his earthly life had been dimming little by little in the community of elder Brothers where he spent his last days. Presently, Charles' lamp is eternally shining with the whole Marist community in heaven.

Bro Charles was born near Melbourne (Australia) on October 29, 1924. As a teenager, his family moved to Sydney. Charles studied at the Marist School, Randwick, and through his contact with the Brothers there he discovered his vocation. At 18, Charles received the religious Habit.

After some years of studies and formation, Br Charles ministered in various schools and in the juniorate at Mittagong. He excelled in his ministry through his intelligence and pedagogical know how. In 1961 he was sent to France to complete his religious formation. Returning to his country, he was appointed headmaster of St Joseph's College, Sydney, a big centre with 1000 boarding-students. Charles proved to be a good leader with serenity, consultation, humor and compassion. In 1968 he pursued studies in catechetics at Louvain, Belgium. Subsequently, he went to Dublin, Ireland, for further studies in psychology.

In 1972, at 48 years of age, Br Charles was appointed Provincial. During this challenging post-Vatican II period he gave priority to pastoral work.

In 1968 he participated at the General Chapter as delegate; in 1976 he did so as Provincial. It was during this Chapter that Br Basilio Rueda was re-elected as Superior General. Br Charles was elected General Councilor. During the next 9 years, Br Charles had the chance to visit the Marist world. He was touched particularly by issues and implications arising from the call to social justice

At the General Chapter of 1985, Br Charles was elected Superior General. Together with Br Benito Arbués, Vicar general, and the other Councilors, they determined the main priorities for their ministry leading the Institute. These priorities are beautifully reflected in the Circulars Br Charles wrote:

1. The new **Constitutions**, adapted to the Council requirements, were approved. Br. Charles encouraged the Brothers to pray them, love them, and live them. (Circular *Our new Constitutions*, 1986)

2. **Vocations**- Based on a serious theological foundation, Bro Charles encouraged Brothers and communities to commit themselves to vocation promotion, a field in which we are all responsible. (Circular *Vocations*, 1987).

3. **Discernment** was, for Bro Charles, a key attitude in the process of decision-taking, in our personal relationship with the Lord and in our personal growing. He invited all to personal and community discernment and promoted the Review of the Day. (Circular *Discernment*, 1988).

4. Meeting **Champagnat**. Since his youth Bro Charles felt attracted by the personality of the Founder and that experience consistently evolved in him. He began to see him as leader, friend, companion, and father. Based on his own experience, Br Charles challenged his Brothers to get closer to Marcellin especially during the 200th anniversary of his birth. He invited all of us to be Champagnat today. (Circular *The Founder challenges his Brothers*, 1989).

5. **Hope**. At the end of the Champagnat Year, celebrated throughout the Institute, Br Charles launched a message of hope to all the Brothers. Addressing the big changes affecting our society, Br Charles unmasked false interpretations of hope and encouraged the Institute to live a genuine hope with serenity, audacity, patience and creativity. (Circular *Sowers of hope*, 1990).

6. **Love for the poor**. The issues of social justice were very much at the heart of Br Charles. He struggled to share his passion with the whole Institute out of fidelity to Champagnat and to our charism. During his mandate he established an international commission to deal with these topics. (Circular *An urgent appeal: Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1990).

7. **Laity**. Br. Charles referred to our time as the era of Laity. Therefore he fostered the openness of the Marist charism and mission to the world of lay people. He launched and promoted the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family. (Circular *The Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family*, 1991).

8. **Marist Apostolic Spirituality**. In Br Charles there had always been an inner desire to unify and harmonize his own life and the life of his brothers. His response to this desire emerged through a deepening of Marist Apostolic Spirituality, a deepening that encompassed consecration and mission, prayer life and community life. (Circular *Marist Apostolic Spirituality*, 1992 y 1993).

Major undertakings for Br Charles during his mandate included the creation of the International Finance Commission, the new Marist presence in Eastern Europe and the establishment of international scholasticates for Africa (MIC) and for Asia (MAPAC). Charles paid a visit to our Brothers in China and also participated in the Synod *Pastores dabo vobis*.

After his Generalate was over, Br Charles, then 69, was still strong and dynamic. He spent years in two novitiates: Kutama (Africa) and Lomeri (Pacific). He was the delegate Visitor for the Sector of India. When his memory started to fail, he came back to his Province living in different communities. Finally, he went to Campbelltown, where he had been receiving medical care until his death.

I invite all the Marists of Champagnat to join me in a thanksgiving to God for the marvelous gift of Br Charles' life and vocation. He coined the expression "To be Champagnat today". And this is what he really was for all of us; a heartfelt Marist, a truly genuine son of Champagnat.

May this faithful Little Brother of Mary rest in the peace of the Lord!



Emili Turú

Br. Emili Turú

Eulogy for Br Charles Howard

October 29, 1924 - January 14, 2012

Superior General, 1985 - 1993

Br Seán Sammon, former Superior General

I must confess that during the last few days I have struggled to find just those recollections that would capture the Charles Howard that I and others knew. For we have all gathered here this morning to commemorate a life, knowing full well that a person's legacy is never the message etched into their headstone. No, the true heritage of any one of us is found in the memories that reside in the swelling of the heart. So many of us here have remembrances of Charles; we must search among them for those that speed the blood, for they will stand the test of time.

For a few moments, then, in the name of Brother Emili, our Superior General, and all of us who make up Charles's Marist family, I want to share something of the man who, while always our brother and friend, was also our leader as well as a source of inspiration and challenge, and a model of what it means to be a Marcellin Champagnat for today.

He served so well in many roles: as headmaster and community leader, student and teacher, Provincial, General Councilor, and Superior General. He was also a builder and the Director of the Juniorate as well as a writer and lecturer on topics as varied as religious life and its future, justice and peace, vocations, and the essential role of lay men and women in the Church.

Yes, Charles strode across the landscape of life with boldness, courage, daring; he had formidable talents and was gifted by God in so many ways. But in the end he was always Charles, a man of unusual faith, a person in whom you could confide, someone who listened



well, was loyal to friends, enjoyed a drink and a conversation, understood human weakness, helped you to believe in yourself, and challenged us all to take some responsibility for the human community.

Charles lived during a time in history that will be described, years from now, as an age of tremendous change, not only in terms of scientific and technological advances, but also in a deepening of faith and an understanding of the human person. He had passed sufficient years in the world prior to Vatican II to understand the need for radical change in our Church and lived long enough to be a midwife to the fundamental transformation called for by that historic gathering. For he was one of those rare men given a chance to help shape the age in which he lived. Never one to do things half-heartedly, he seized that opportunity without hesitation.

Elected Superior General at an age when many men are entertaining thoughts of retirement, he set out, with Benito and the

members of his Council, on a journey that would bring about many initiatives that today we take for granted. They were not won easily but came about through hard work, negotiation, and the building of consensus. However, like any true leader, he did not search haphazardly for consensus but rather molded it to a vision and, in so doing, he made a genuine difference in the world in which he lived and left a legacy to our Institute that remains evident today.

And, yet, throughout it all he remained always self-effacing. I remember well him telling me once that, shortly after writing his last circular letter, he received a message from one of the brothers in his Province. The text read as follows: "Dear Charles, I just read your last circular. Not bad. As a matter of fact, I might just go looking for some of the others that you have written and read them."

Charles was the first English-speaking Superior General. Coming from a language group never well-known for its strict observance of the ascetical life he, by word and deed, demonstrated what it meant to live a practical Christianity, not unlike that of Marcellin himself. In time, he convinced all who would listen that faith in action was also an essential part of the message of that fiery prophet and Messiah who walked the roads of first century Israel preaching a passion for God and for humanity.

What were the events that helped shape this remarkable man, who were the people who formed this brother of ours, how can we appreciate better the faith that nurtured him, the hope that sustained him even in the most difficult of times, the love of his God and of others that was at the heart of all he said and did?

Known in his early years as Brother Elias, Charles was referred to as "the boy" by his students in Adelaide as he took up his duties there in 1945. And it was no wonder for he had just turned 21. Nevertheless, within a short time, his gift for leadership became evident. While Director of Juniors, for example, he invited the

parents of his charges to become more involved in the place, established a library, built a grotto, and abolished outdated practices while also bringing new life to many of the essential activities that had characterized this stage of formation for more than a half-century. Charles was a man who respected the past, but also had a gift for anticipating what lay ahead. These traits were to serve him and the Province well during the tumultuous days that followed the close of the Vatican II.

In 1967, and then again a year later, he travelled to Rome with Othmar and others as a delegate to the extraordinary Chapter of renewal mandated by the Council. Ever after, Charles described these two sessions as passionate, complex, very rich.

The years that followed were a heady time of change in Marist life, in the Church, and, indeed, in our world at large, filled with new insights and understandings. Charles spent the first part of them as a student at Lumen Vitae in Belgium and then later at University College, Dublin. The studies he undertook in both places, combining faith and the human sciences, were to prove invaluable when he returned to the Province for, after a few short-term assignments, he was named Provincial in August of 1972.

With the support of his brothers, he set about transforming a number of areas of Province life but spent a considerable portion of his time and energy visiting the communities and meeting individually with the brothers. Pastoral work was more important to Charles than ceremonial appearances. He used his time on planes to read and became a life-long learner.

There were difficult moments also for these were years during which vocations began to decline and brothers started to leave the Institute in considerable numbers. Throughout it all he always put the person first: doing what he could to ensure that an honest discernment was carried out, and supporting each man in the final decision that he made.

At the same time, he worked hard to bring together the men and women religious of Australia, and fostered collaboration between all branches of the Marist family in this country, making many friends in the process. These relationships lasted for years and far beyond his term as Provincial.

Nineteen seventy-six saw him back in Rome for another General Chapter. This time, however, he ended up not coming home. The delegates to that gathering re-elected Basilio Rueda as Superior General and Charles as one of his Councilors. Though many in attendance would have known him from the previous Chapter, it was his passion for justice and peace that brought him to the wider group's attention. He had a major hand in writing the Chapter's document on that subject, as well as its text on Prayer, Apostolate and Community, in addition to the letter entitled Today's Marist Brother.

Charles spent the next nine years travelling throughout a world that was changing rapidly. He witnessed the struggles of many emerging nations on the African continent, as well as the crisis of faith affecting Europe, North America and parts of the Pacific region. South Africa was of particular concern to him and he was strong in his support of our brothers there as they challenged the scandal of apartheid and defied the government's regulations about the separation of races.

Charles was a networker long before the term was coined or the practice became fashionable. In word and by deed he drew people together. Be it through a conversation, or by means of an article that he shared, or as the result of a bold move that he made, he got us to consider points of view other than our own and to look beyond the differences that might divide us and to consider so much more that we shared in common.

Such was his contribution during those years that delegates to the 1985 General Chapter looked to him to take up the mission of Superior General. As he began that work, it was as though all that had come before was a preparation for the eight years that would follow. His skill as a communicator quickly became evident through the many circular letters he wrote and talks that he gave, and in the notes and letters that he sent to so many, always brought to a close with these words, "Union of prayers, Charles."

He travelled widely, had an uncanny ability to remember names, demonstrated his skill as a natural story teller, built centers of formation on the African continent and in the Asia/Pacific region that brought together all of our young brothers in those areas. He became the first Superior General to visit our brothers in the People's Republic of China, giving hope to men who had suffered imprisonment, hardship, and deprivation for so many years.

He also renewed the Institute's missionary spirit, encouraging new foundations in Eastern Europe and elsewhere, and supported the recently established Hermanitas, a group of women who came together to form a religious congregation around the charism of Marcellin Champagnat. He made us so much more aware of our obligation to the poor and reminded us time and again that Marists were meant to be where the Church was not. He was among the first, too, to recognize the importance of lay partnership and did all he could to promote it.

During these years he also came to know Marcellin Champagnat in a new and more profound way. Years later, he said that he began to see the founder as a human being with his faults and inner conflicts, griefs and failures, rather than a faultless paragon. "These insights helped greatly," he wrote, "to build a

rapport between us; I felt now that he could understand and share in my own problems.”

For Charles the founder was a “man of the heart”, a person who loved passionately and deeply, a leader who was a friend, companion and father; someone who lived the sufferings and joys, the trials and dangers, the successes of his men. But couldn’t the very same have been said about Charles himself? Absolutely, for during his mandate there was never for a moment any doubt that it was Marcellin Champagnat who was leading our Institute.

His love of Mary also deepened during this period; this fact was all the more evident when he brought the 1993 Chapter to a close by reciting a prayer that he had written to the mother of Jesus, the woman whom Marcellin so often referred to as our Good Mother and Ordinary Resource.

After his years in Rome Charles remained quite active, initially sharing his talents and experience with those in the novitiates in Kutama in Zimbabwe and Lomeri in the Pacific. He was also delegated as Vicar for India and did all he could to support the newly emerging mission there. Though no longer a citizen of the Eternal City, his world continued to remain wide and complex: he was appointed as an official observer of South Africa’s first democratic elections that saw Nelson Mandela win the Presidency of that nation.

On finally returning to Australia he initially took up residence at the Province house in Drummoyne but eventually moved to Blacktown in western Sydney. He delighted in living in a place where he could come to know his neighbors, take his turn at cooking, and simply share life with men and women of different backgrounds and faiths. And, as we all know, he spent his final days in the care of the community at Campbelltown.

With all that said, for me there will always be three traits of Charles that

immediately come to mind: his passion, his love for our young brothers, his commitment to helping restore lay men and women to their rightful place in the Church.

First, his passion. Charles was passionate about so many things in life. He had a heart for the poor, was unbending when it came to issues of justice, believed deeply that those of us in religious life were meant to be the conscience of the Church. He challenged us to live this call in life in such a way that it was evident to all that it was well worth the gift of one’s life.

He was also passionate about his God as well as his family, his friends, his brothers. He reached out to one and all. He loved us and understood our imperfection, was tolerant of our mistakes, helped us to face our fears.

Next, his love of our young brothers. Charles had a special place in his heart for our younger men. In fact, he was always at home with young people. They took to him, sensing somehow that he had he cared deeply about them and had their best interests at heart. He never hesitated to provide the means necessary to help our young brothers to grow, to widen their perspective, to come to understand just how much Jesus Christ loved them. And he wrote to them regularly. I remember, for example, visiting a Province in Latin America, during the years that I served as Superior General, and meeting a young brother who told me proudly that he had received a note from the Superior General. I smiled but thought to myself that I could not remember having written to him. No worry; later that day as I passed his room I noticed that there above his desk was a note from Charles. For this young man, Charles Howard would always be his Superior General.

Finally, his determination to give lay men and women their rightful place in our Church. Charles was one of those thoughtful Churchmen who truly believed that it was the Holy Spirit who was behind the workings of Vatican II, and he never hesitated to make the

work of that Spirit his own. Like John Paul II, he was convinced that this millennium was meant to be the age of the laity and he challenged his brothers to do all in their power to make that belief a reality.

For Charles though, an age of the laity did not mean the end of religious life. No, he saw it as ushering in a new era of collaboration and co-responsibility for mission. To his way of thinking, as lay women and men took their rightful place in the Church, those of us in religious life would also be better able to be who we were truly meant to be.

Having written about the Champagnat movement of the Marist Family and taken steps to foster its growth within the Institute, he made the bold move of inviting a number of laity to our 1993 General Chapter. This had never been done before and Charles knew that their ability to attend sessions of that meeting was actually dependent upon a positive vote on the part of elected Chapter delegates. Perhaps following the old adage that it is easier to ask forgiveness than permission, he took the step of inviting them prior to any vote being taken and depended upon the good will of those assembled to do the right thing. And he was right. Chapter delegates quickly approved the presence of this first group of laity at the Chapter and the practice has continued ever since.

But now Charles, it is time to let you fly away. We have been blessed by the years that you have been among us; we are far richer because of your presence, wiser because of your insights, more aware of our responsibilities because of the way in which you have lived your life. Continue to pray for us, as you always have, and never cease to be among us in new ways: challenging us to be the best that we can be: generous and loving men and women in love with God and on fire with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

And for those of us who are your brothers, assist us in making our own the dream of this simple country priest and Marist Father who is our founder: to do ordinary things exceptionally well and to love with an extraordinary love. Yes, continue to show us what it means to be Champagnats for today: men of faith, with hearts for the poor, ever eager to evangelize young people.

Charles, you number now among the Communion of Saints; you have earned your place with God, and though from time to time you may still have the impulse to write one of your famous notes to one or another of us, may you rest always in that same good God's everlasting peace. Amen.

Seán D. Sammon, FMS



Brothers Benito and Charles

REFLECTIONS ON BR CHARLES

Paul Brock

My first Headmaster, Br Elias (known later as Br Charles Howard) was the best Principal I ever knew: a superb educator and one of the very few people I have worked with who displayed lateral-thinking brilliance. Soon after leaving St Joseph's College Br Charles Howard became Provincial of the Sydney Province of the Marist Brothers. His talent was later internationally recognised when he was elected Superior-General of the Order throughout the world.

Through sheer hard work, Br Charles Howard was able to memorise the Christian name of every boy in the College and their parents – without exception. I personally watched him as he built up that skill. He was driving the car on our way from Brewarrina to Bourke to attend yet another fund-raising dinner. I was sitting beside him with the names of the 100 or so who were also attending. We went over and over the Christian name and surnames, and then he had me test him until he made no mistakes. Few things demand so much discipline as planned spontaneity. The subsequent impact upon the attendees, as he effortlessly greeted each by name, was powerful. As the Old Testament puts it somewhere, 'Yahweh knows me because He knows my name'.

Br Charles scrutinised every comment on every report card. He had no time for meaningless

comments such as "could do better" and any unfortunate Brother who wrote such drivel would be handed back the offending cards for rewriting!

(Paul Brock, *A Passion For Life*, ABC Books, 2004, pp 71-72)

To leave the Order I required approval from the Vatican to be dispensed from my life-long vows. I made my case and the Provincial, who was now Br Charles Howard whom I have mentioned earlier, sent it off to Rome. Some weeks later he rang me to say that my Dispensation had arrived. That afternoon in Br Charles' office in Drummoyne I turned over the document. On the back, in Latin, was a handwritten note from a Vatican official which invoiced the Order for the sum of twelve hundred pounds sterling in legal costs. Shocked, I expressed my regret to Br Charles that I had cost the Marist Brothers so much to leave. "Give me a look" he said. Then he roared with laughter. "That symbol in front of the 1,200 is not British pounds sterling. It's Italian lire. You've cost us only about one Australian dollar". I now actually felt a little deflated. "Is that all I'm worth", I thought.

(Paul Brock, *A Passion For Life*, ABC Books, 2004, p 107)



Eulogy for Br Charles Howard

October 29, 1924 - January 14, 2012

Clare Howard - niece of Br Charles



This man who lies before us, Charles Howard, has long been a legend in our family and we are proud to claim him as our own. Despite our faith that he now enjoys eternal life with his God, we are very sad to be saying farewell to him.

My name is Clare Howard and Charles is my uncle.

On behalf of his brothers, Jim & John, my siblings & their families, it is a privilege to share a little of Charles' early history & some reflections on him as a family member, our Uncle Charlie, a person we love & admire.

Born in Melbourne in 1924, Charles McKean Howard was the first of three boys born to Mollie & Charlie. His middle name McKean is his mother's maiden name.

Charles often spoke of his parents, readily acknowledging the role models they were for him. Their involvement in parish, school, St Vincent de Paul, their friendships and loyalty to people embedded values in him which lasted throughout his life.

Charles was educated by the Good Samaritan Sisters in Thornbury, Melbourne. We still have an original Grade 5 school report from 1934 where he earned 100% for every subject with the comment 'excellent student' written across it from Sr Wenceslaus, perhaps a prelude to his later academic capacity and achievements.

There was only 18 months difference between Charles and Jim so they were a formidable pair in the things that kids get up to. They would share a bike, Jim sitting on the cross bar, Charles on the seat and each with a pedal. The other kids couldn't keep up with them! Jim recalls an instance where it was Charles who was in trouble and he was threatened with "You wait till your father gets home". Subsequently, Charles was nowhere to be found, though Jim remembers an unusual object appearing in the middle of the backyard.... Charles hiding in a hessian bag.

Mollie, or Nanna as we called her, was an avid Fitzroy supporter and so Charles and Jim attended many matches at the local football ground with her. When older, they sold lollies at footy matches but apparently were easily distracted by game highlights which allowed other kids to pinch some of their stock. Consequently they never made a profit!

The family moved to Sydney in 1937 when John was just a baby. Charles was due to begin high school and his father, or Poppy as we called him, was advised that CBC Waverley was the place to go. He became aware, however, that Marist College Randwick was closer, so Poppy made enquiries on a Saturday morning during a working bee. He was introduced to the principal, Br Ignatius, who was in overalls and pushing a wheelbarrow. Poppy, being a handyman, had a respect for manual labour so was impressed. Charles and Jim were enrolled at Marist Brothers Randwick and, as they say, “the rest is history....”

I’m sure you’d be surprised to know that Charles engaged in a spot of boxing for a time. Both he and Jim were in the school’s boxing squad with Charles showing enough talent to win through to the finals.

Charles was aged 14 when he went to the Marist Brothers Juniorate at Mittagong. In recent years, he reflected on how hard that must have been for his parents, particularly his mother, and questioned the wisdom of boys leaving their families at such a young age.

His early life as a Marist meant that our family knew him intermittently & only glimpsed snippets of his life. The schools he taught in and positions of responsibility are well documented. But it was the person he was that impacted us.

Charles was a master at keeping in touch and communicating a unique message to whomever he wrote. For our family, postcards or small mementos sent to the nephews & nieces, then to their children, of travel tales, birthday wishes or just 'thinking of you' were regularly received. My brother Phil recalls acquiring a significant key ring collection, and the next generation, Chris and Jo’s son Ryan, began his piggy bank saving with a million dollar note from Peru.

My sister, Maureen noted how the style of his cards to her always reflected the things she

liked, and how he was able to communicate something unique to the person in all of his correspondence. Postcards and letters were received by many people, so many of you here today, as well as people all around the world. His Christmas letters are famous, his correspondence would have measured in the thousands.

As a result of his positions of responsibility, he spent so much time away from Australia. Keeping connected was important to Charles. He valued friendship, perhaps because he lived so far from home and travelled so much. His family & friends in Australia were important to him. When home he was keen to connect whether it be sharing a meal, a walk, or a movie. Since his return to Australia, Charles appreciated that he and John were finally living in the same city, and able to spend regular time together, both of them having lived overseas for long periods.

It was wonderful to see him relax on Christmas days & family gatherings of the Geaney and Stackpool families. He laughed & enjoyed company around the table & watching the grandchildren of Maggie, Meg & Frank, and most recently, John’s friends from Sierra Leone with little N’Nadie.

He’s the only person I know who didn’t like Maggie’s caesar salad!

I know that, at the Stackpool family gatherings, he loved a big pile of dirty dishes because of the communication opportunity it provided.

He was an interesting and stimulating person to have a conversation with. Politics, the state of the Church, experiences in Africa, the missions of the Brothers in various places around the world; films he’d seen, books he’d read. He made our world broad.

His global experiences brought a great contribution to our family's awareness of social justice issues, particularly in the 1970's & 1980's when 'middle class conservative Catholics' were unaware of such issues and their relevancy to faith:

- Brothers murdered in various parts of Africa: Algeria, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo as a result of being Christian, or in solidarity with the people of the area;
- The Brothers in China who had been unable to be in contact with the Institute since the Cultural revolution, and had publicly lived without their Marist identity for many years,
- These stories made us aware of what it means to lose or risk one's life for faith.

His stories brought to life issues of apartheid, structural inequality & oppression and political tyranny. And yet he could just as easily hone in to the ordinariness of life, or the challenges faced in daily living – relationships, finances, children, work. We all noted Charles capacity to ask, listen and really get to the heart of what was important to us.

Charles friendship with Br Kieran Geaney, or Col as we know him, is one which exemplifies all he values. Charles accompanied Col home from Rome after his stroke 27 years ago. Then, when Charles returned to live in Australia, he regularly visited Col, taking him out for drives, and meals and, in the last couple of years, buying him a chocolate or ice cream, knowing he had a sweet tooth. Seeing them together, it was obvious they had a special bond borne through the suffering Col has endured.

He was well read & intelligent: An avid reader of "The Tablet," and many religious and spiritual journals, as well as local and international newspapers. So many of us received photocopies of articles of interest, with a brief note from him. Similarly, his generosity

with books & articles encouraged people to think about the God aspect of our lives.

He always had a word of affirmation, recognising unique qualities of the person, whether it be the role of mother, teacher, father, businessman, student. He saw & reminded us of our potential - The gift of being affirmed & noticed: a rare experience in today's world. My sister Denise recalls the lasting impact his notes to her as 'special one' has had on her.

His theology was strongly incarnational...and he gently extolled to many the God presence in their lives...identifying aspects of ourselves that perhaps we didn't recognise or dare to link to the grace and blessing of God. He often quoted Zephaniah in my cards, "God delights in you, as I do", he would write.

He spoke simply & honestly, even when having to say hard or difficult things. He had a unique capacity, though, to see beyond the weaknesses & failings of an individual or an institution. What he saw – and he could see through you at times to your core – or should I say my core - never overrode his loyalty and affection to the person or the institution. What an extraordinary gift that is to receive!

Charles had a particular appreciation for the role of women especially mothers: as a Marist, he was obviously influenced by the model of Mary, but he spoke often of his love & admiration of his own mother Mollie, as well as his exposure to the experiences of women in developing countries. Our sister Trish recalls he so often used the word 'lady'. His involvement in the organisation WATAC - Women and the Australian Church - on his return from Rome attests to his appreciation of the role of women in the church.

Charles' final year of ill health was a cruel & debilitating time for a person of great intellect. We are appreciative of the loving care provided to him at St Greg's, the Brothers in the

community, the medical, nursing and personal care staff.

On the occasion of Charles' death, the world is diminished without his presence yet it is a better place because of his life.

He was a remarkable man:

- Strong yet gentle
- Gracious & sensitive
- A Man of principle

How privileged the Howard, Geaney and Stackpool families & so many others are, to have known such an extraordinary person, a global citizen, a man of enormous integrity, knowledge, wisdom. And most importantly, a man of God. We have lost a person of significant goodness but we are richer in having known Charles & experienced his friendship, affection, affirmation, intellect, and faith.

The experience of knowing and loving Charles, and being loved by him, has changed me, stimulated me to be more than I could be without him in my life, as I'm sure it has for you and so many others around the world who mourn Charles' death.

Trish reminded me of this Celtic blessing for death from John O'Donohue's book "**Anam Cara, Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World**".

"I pray that you will have the blessing of being consoled and sure about your own death.

May you know in your soul that there is no need to be afraid.

When you come to die may it be after a long life.

May your going be sheltered, and your welcome assured.

May your soul smile in the embrace of your anam cara (your soul friend)."

When I read it I could hear Charles saying it and blessing those of us who are still here. We believe Charles has already received these blessings.

Thank you Charles for the many blessings your life has brought to us and our world. You will always remain in our hearts.



Br Charles (Elias) Howard
1924 - 2012

Eulogy for Br Stephen Bugg

July 7, 1941 - January 14, 2012

Br Julian Casey, Povincial

Introduction

We gather at this Eucharist and ceremonies to bid farewell and take our leave of our Brother Stephen John Bugg. He died on Saturday morning, 14th January, following a massive cerebral hemorrhage the day before. Our condolences and our sympathy go out to his immediate and extended family, to his community, to his many friends, to all who shared in his life, and to those who shared their life with him.

When his death was announced last Saturday morning, there struck a deep and solemn note in our lives which made us all pause and take stock. We experienced an initial reaction of loss and bewilderment. At such a time, we are reminded that every human relationship is both precious and fragile. This is especially so when we come together to bid farewell to one whose death was sudden and unexpected. It caught us unprepared, like a sudden squall that seems to come from nowhere. There was no time for farewells and no further opportunity to explore and expand a relationship or bring it to a closure.

Indeed the hour had truly come, as come it will to all of us, in which Steve was summoned forth to his eternal destiny. Memories took possession of our consciousness as we confronted the reality of Steve's death. We thought of him as a family member born on the Goldfields at



Wiluna 180 kilometres east of Meekathara in WA, raised in Bullfinch, near Kalgoorlie and educated at St Ildephonsus College New Norcia. We thought of him as a Brother in our community since January 1959. We remembered him as a teacher, as a Headmaster, as a missionary, as a prison chaplain. But above all we thought of him simply as Steve, who meant a great many things to his close friends and to a great many people.

In your booklet you will notice a list of Steve's appointments to community, the various ministries in which he was engaged and the various studies and programmes he undertook. These simply provide a background, a context and a springboard for me to reflect on his life.

The Defining Moment

On August 26th, 1973, nearly 40 years ago, he opened a letter from the Provincial of the time, Br Cletus Read. It read:-

“The Provincial Council at the meeting yesterday appointed you as Headmaster of Marcellin College Bulleen for 1974”.

It was as stark as that:- no prior discussion, no invitation to consider it; just a letter appointing him and assuring him that, even at the age of 32, they believed that “you have the ability to measure up to the job, to give enlightened leadership and to get the monks and the lay staff to work well together....In these times it is important to have leaders who understand what is happening and who are resilient and adaptable”.

He could have rejected it, but the letter was framed in such a way that clearly invited immediate acceptance. Events have a part in shaping us and all of them are occasions where God can further touch our lives. This letter created one of these defining events for Steve. It was a moment which signalled his place in the educational world. It was a moment which opened the door wide to the beginning of a range of wonderful and fruitful friendships among lay people. It was also a moment which shaped his relationship with the Brothers. He was no longer a young Brother with his confrères providing a power house of energetic and creative support to an older experienced Principal. He was now the Headmaster of a Grammar school, the boss with a huge responsibility to address the enormous challenges of the time; and all at the age of 32.

It was, indeed, an “annunciation moment”, a moment which settled his life’s pathway and professional destiny for 25 years. He duly spent

the next eight years as Headmaster at Marcellin College here in Bulleen, followed by nine years as Principal at Sacred Heart College in Adelaide and then eight years as Principal at Newman College in Churchlands, Western Australia.



Br Steve’s sisters. Kath and Mary, bring up the gifts at the Offertory

The Headmaster

The times and the nature of the each of these three Colleges meant that Steve had to engage closely with members of staff and cultivate friendships and ideas as much, or perhaps even more, from the College community than from the Brothers. Education has always been accompanied by times of intense intellectual, political and social ferment, no less then than it is now. Each College had its moments of great uncertainty as to its future. At Marcellin it was about the proposal for it to become a senior co-educational College for this Region here, at Somerton Park it was the place of Sacred Heart College in the South West Region, in Perth it was the amalgamation between Newman College and Siena Dominican College.

In each of these challenges he brought a certain vision, not only for the College’s educational

program, but also for its building. In each of these places Steve has had an impact not only on the students, staffs and families, but also on the design and use of buildings. The Functions Room here at Marcellin not only epitomizes Steve's intuition and vision, it is also a testimony to his determination and tenacity in getting it done despite opposition. In Adelaide it was the establishment of the administration, the reorganization of the school plant and the refurbishment of the Chapel. In Perth it was the refurbishment of buildings to suit the amalgamation and the construction of a beautiful Chapel which marked his contribution.

Negotiating the Vision

Steve effectively represented the Province in these schools. With wonderful insight, intuition and passionate commitment, he created a vision and a dream for each place. He didn't always have the finance, and it was left to others to find a way through that. In the arcane world of Catholic Education Offices and of Province Finance, Steve got into many financial scrapes and his strong principled views on a number of matters led him, from time to time, into disagreements with his immediate superiors. He was a humble man, but he did not brook much opposition to his ideas; and when he was right, and he thought you were being narrow and bureaucratic, he had ways of letting you know it. Steve seemed, in his own way, to relish such skirmishes; he was secure as a Principal, as Brother and as a Marist, but he was an intensely determined and practical man. But it must be said that while he was not shy of stating his views, he did not approve of divisiveness itself, and frowned on attempts to promote or continue it. As Steve said in a letter to me, we were two people looking at the same problem from different vantage points, and that the more we

were able to talk, the more he realized that he had Province support.

Being a Marist Brother

It was during holiday time, and sometimes at weekends, where Steve would be relaxed in community and enjoyed the fraternal and family spirit that exists among Brothers. He was proud of being a Marist, and he spoke openly of following Jesus in the manner of Mary. He was punctilious in being present for Morning Prayer, he would share his profound insights in community meetings and he gave priority to the community Mass. He found ways of expressing his affection for the Brothers and, for their part, the Brothers were proud of the passionate way he lived out the Marist charism in the hectic and exacting educational world. His total engagement in these Colleges came from his stance of being a Marist Brother. But in truth, his relationship with many Brothers was affected by his long held position as headmaster or principal. He hadn't lost any kindness to Brothers, or any affection for them, or any ability to work with them. But the closeness to his Brothers was often displaced by the many engagements (both day and night) he had with the College community, with friends and with groups associated with the College. Although this created, from time to time, some disconnection, the Brothers could understand the power of his good work beyond their community.

Friends, Family, Acquaintances, Students, Staff and Parents

As a true teacher, Brother Steve met people where they were, with their own questions, dilemmas, foibles, ideas, and dreams. His conversation with each of his students, staff members, family and friends depended so much

upon where that other person was in his or her life and thinking. At the same time it was a mutual sharing as he sought support from them as they listened to his experience, sensed his passion and glimpsed his vision.

It was Brother Steve's particular embodiment of faith, of presence with others, of Marist simplicity and compassion and his remarkable insight into human souls that led so many people to see in him an anchor for their sanity, that kept them coming back to him for advice and solace in the midst of the strange twists and turnings that life can pull. And, obviously, they came to him because of who he was, and for the particular love that he showed them.

He was the most delightful of company; he loved his family, his faith, and his professional colleagues and they returned that love. He loved the simple luncheon chats, the scholarly exchanges and the convivial evenings with companions, friends and associates. His was as magnanimous a spirit as anyone could expect to meet, but in his humility, he recognised that to be himself more fully, he needed others standing there with him. He humbly sought support and acceptance and found it.

Responses of Students and Staff

His student-centred approach to his ministry and leadership is well testified by the huge number of condolences we have received from former students and what follows are some excerpts from the condolences of some of his students:-

- *A real 'hands-on' leader who knew staff and students closely.*
- *He brought a vision, a freshness and a down-to-earth spirituality and practicality that really typified what quality Marist education is all about.*



- *He had a sharp intellect, was always well informed and didn't flinch when it came to tough decisions – whether coaching football, working with staff, or advising recalcitrant students about their future career options!*

His staff likewise had similar memories: -

- *From East Timor, Nuno Eugenio writes:- He is really A BIG BROTHER TO ME who always gave me advice in facing the challenge. I have really lost such a Guru of "negotiation" and "Leading by the heart".*
- *He was an inspirational leader, a great man of the people who could reach out to all no matter what their background, and a devoted and committed Marist. I learnt a lot from him as he mentored me in the early years of my career in Catholic Educational leadership.*
- *Our relationship developed from one where he was 'the boss' to one of friendship.*

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- *Steve had a unique balance of compassion, vision and utter determination. I cannot think of anyone else like him. The amalgamation (in Perth) typified this balance. Steve saw with absolute clarity what needed to be done, and then went about the 'doing', balancing the ambiguities of determination, compassion and sensitivity. Steve always called a spade a spade... but somehow he managed to do so 'oh so politely'!!*

Indeed the memory of Brother Stephen John Bugg is secure in Australian Education and in the hearts of those he taught, among those with whom he worked in schools and among those who observed him in his professional and public endeavours.

Post Principalsip

Retirement from being principal was for Steve only a form of clearing the decks for a further burst of activity. He was appointed Sector Superior in East Timor, and had a vision for education there. But he had no finance and no

local support. He made friends with many people, but not with those who wielded influence and, after three years, he moved, somewhat frustrated, from East Timor and became a member of the Melanesian District where he worked, first at the Divine Word University in Madang and then in Solomon Islands. In the Solomons he lived with our Marist Melanesian Brothers for two years. He was greatly appreciated for his mentoring work among those who were trying to rebuild an education system after years of warfare and bloodshed. But he had worries about being so far from his ailing mother, and he had some anxiety about his own health and age. These factors led him to return to Australia in 2009.

After an appointment to the inaugural position of Executive Director of Marist Ministries, he found he no longer had the heart for the demands of educational administration and leadership and no energy to try to implement a vision that others held but with which he was not entirely comfortable. After a brief respite from work, he became a Prison Chaplain and found a home there among hardened criminals and embittered and imprisoned youth.



Interment in the Marist Brothers' section of the Kilmore Cemetery

Those of us who have conversed with Steve these last few months will know something of his passion for this ministry. Human life without passion is intolerably dull and the passion that Steve had, added to his zest for life and uncovered for him a vast reservoir of compassion that had been sitting there for years. Confronting though it was, the circumstances of the inmates drew from his big heart an enormous outflow of kindness. He reached out to others in a humble, sensible and gentle way, gained their respect and affection, and became known as “the big fella”. His calm and steady way was having a great impact on the prisoners and those with whom he worked.

Conclusion

One of the condolences, I received from New Zealand read:

As the Maoris say here: “A mighty tree has fallen in the forest”

Indeed a mighty tree has fallen; but in faith we know that Brother Stephen John Bugg has a vision of God that is much clearer now than it ever was before, we know in faith that his simple joy is now unceasing, we know in faith that he is journeying to meet God as the final object of his love and we pray that he will rest in peace. Amen

Br Julian Casey
Provincial, January 18, 2012



**The Newman College Chapel, dedicated to St Marcellin Champagnat.
Br Stephen’s last and crowning achievement as a builder.**

Eulogy for Br Anthony O'Brien

6 June 1935 - 28 November 2011

Br Julian Casey, Provincial.



Today we bid farewell to Br Anthony O'Brien who died peacefully at the Jemalong Nursing Home in Forbes on November 28, 2011.

On your behalf, I offer my sincere condolences to his extended family and in particular to his immediate brothers and sisters - to Martin, Marie, Ted, Anthony and Dominica. They have been a wonderful family to him throughout his life. I especially thank Bruce Houghton, our Health and Aged Care Co-ordinator, for his attentive care of Br Anthony and for his close accompaniment of him during these last few years. To the Director and Staff of Jemalong Nursing facility in Forbes, I pay a special tribute of thanks for the patient care of Br Anthony throughout his time there.

Christopher Kevin Lohan O'Brien joined the Marist Brothers in 1953 and became known among the Brothers and among the communities he served by his Marist name of Brother Anthony, a name he kept despite the confusions that resulted with his having in his family a younger brother by the name of Anthony.

I speak of him from personal experience, having lived in community with him for fourteen years. Each morning as I left for school leaving him at the breakfast table, he would call out "Adios Amigos" and for ten of those fourteen years I tried to explain that it should be "Adios mi Amigo" but to no avail. When I last visited him in September, his conversational ability was reduced to single words. As I got to the door to leave, he called out "Adios Amigos" and those were his last words to me.

His personnel file is simple and records the places he has been. Following his Profession in 1954, he served the communities at Mt Gambier, Wangaratta, Macedon and Traralgon, with brief stints at Forbes and Dundas.

Until 1974, he simply worked the farms attached to the Boarding Schools. His community were generally a group of teachers and he found it hard to cope with the endless discussion of issues, discipline, students and events. But he enjoyed his work and loved the outdoors, the changing season, the care of the animals and the freedom he had to make farming decisions.

As to be expected, he had extraordinary physical strength... what he could lift and carry

was amazing and it was no wonder his back gave way from time to time. He loved the physical pleasure of work but following major problems with his back and some mental health issues, he had to retire from these enterprises and using his welding skills, he took up work making furniture and equipment for schools, and looking after the property attached to the community, whilst still being able to maintain a few cattle.

He saw himself as contributing to the Ministry of the Brothers. Our Marist Constitutions remind us that “by the tasks that they perform, Brothers employed in manual work co-operate in the apostolate of the Institute”. Through his involvement in the community and with students, he was clearly regarded as a public part of the community of Brothers serving the school and greatly appreciated by the parishioners, parents and students. He had a compassion that was genuine and he was capable of feeling the pain of others: In fact, I preferred to visit bereaved families with him, because he was much more empathetic with them and could rescue awkward gaps with some simple conversation.

Of course, he was more than just a member of a community, more than just a worker on the farm, milking cows, growing lucerne and welding furniture frames for Br Bill Venables. He could engage people, be they friends, tradesmen or passers-by. He wasn't short of a word in conversation and he had that country sense of welcome to strangers. Like many farmers, he was fearless in dealing with Government bureaucrats, and Bank Managers. He was also somewhat of a publicist, established good relationships with the local press and featured in more media outlets than the Principal of the School.

His life was not as uneventful as his record card shows. He was indeed a unique character, a

person who was both quirky and eccentric. He had a few trademarks, his exuberant greeting and his bone-crunching, shoulder-dislocating handshake; his loud laugh and bushy beard; his great ability to deflate intellectual conversation at table; his Cossack hat which he proudly wore, even crossing the road from the car to the Church; his answer “yes” to a question of whether he wanted tea or coffee. Every letter he wrote (and he wrote many) opened with: “I hope this finds you well”. He was an anti-smoker campaigner before it was fashionable, as the parish priest of Mt Gambier discovered at breakfast one morning when Br Anthony, dramatically stood up, and, using his serviette, fanned the exhaled smoke back onto the startled priest's face. Message received, loud and clear!

He had quite a creative dimension to his personality. His maxim was “turning trash into treasure” and despite being unable to organize space or throw anything out, he used his skill with steel to create some wonderful pieces of art which adorn many a shelf across the Province. As well, he produced practical farm equipment such as trailers, hay feeders for cattle and wheelbarrows, all made out of cast-offs and trash. He was proud of what he did, as the hundreds of photographs of his work would testify. A number of his works sold well in Traralgon and he was able to make really interesting pieces. On Saturday night at the Ministry Dinner in Bulleen, quite unexpectedly, a teacher held up the famous steel Madonna and spoke most eloquently and movingly about the richness of its simple form. That simple steel Madonna graces many a wall across the Marist World and recently I noticed one in New Caledonia.

You would expect him to be a Country Music fan; but no. He had a great love of classical music which pointed to a contemplative element in his personality. His contemplative aspirations were also nurtured by his great love of the bush and of solitary walks.

He pleaded with me to allow him to do small retreats in the bush around Macedon. He loved nothing better than to go on a long drive to Warren and camp along the way, even in Traralgon. He loved building a camp fire and cooking some red meat and occasionally found a good excuse to pitch his tent under the willows and sleep there. Those moments of stillness were nourishing for him.

To understand Br Anthony, we need to understand his need to belong, to engage with others and to be enthused. His biggest struggle was within himself and for many years he suffered from episodes of great mental anguish and desperation. It was his strong sense of belonging as much as his faith that led him through the treatment and the darker moments of his life.

He Belonged Firmly to his Family

He was a part of the larger O'Brien Clan: brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews, nieces were all a part of his personal landscape. They taught him so many things and many of his wonderful qualities, such as his generosity and his hospitality to visitors, were a direct result of his family experience. Naturally, he brought the extended family to the community table and to the community prayer: their escapades, their accidents, their trials and tribulations, their triumphs and achievements. He fully engaged with them and was inspired by their experience. I cannot underestimate the love and support and encouragement they gave him. It was an example of a true sense of family maintaining contacts through many long phone calls, through letters and cards, through visits to him, through finding ways of helping him obtain equipment he needed and through the holidays they offered. Being loved by them nurtured and sustained his spirit and was an important source of comfort for him in his difficult times.

Being a Marist Brother and Belonging to the Brothers

He was proud to be a Brother. In fact, he was always Brother Anthony, didn't like "Tony" and hated "Tex". To the School and Parish community, to the students and friends, he was always "Brother Anthony". He was a constant attendee of funerals, barbecues, retreats and assemblies, catching up with people and displaying photographs of his latest adventure.

At his own jubilee, he surprised us all as he spoke most eloquently of his life as a Marist Brother and how, as a Brother, he was challenged to rise beyond his difficulties, pain and confusion and to see God present in his life, in his history and in the lives of those with whom he lived. He believed that we can be held together by faith and that, despite difficulties of seeing a way ahead, our lives do make sense. It was a rare insight into his spirit. Yet, in typical fashion, he reminded us that it was a jubilee year and not a jubilee day and that his celebrations would span the full twelve months!

Belonging to Other Groups

He belonged to many Groups associated with the Parish, particularly the prayer groups. He had connections with the Arts Community, with the support group for homeless kids in Morwell, with the ecumenical Kairos Prison group. He would love saying that he'd been "in Prison last week" or that "he was just out of Prison". He belonged, in a real sense, to these groups and regaled Brothers and friends with their various activities.

His Very Special Volunteer Fire Brigade

He became aware of the devastation to people and places through the fires at Macedon in 1983 and, from that point on, became a volunteer in the local Brigade. Being an active member gave him enormous satisfaction. He received a special medal marking his contribution as a volunteer for over 20 years. He loved meeting with other volunteers at their regular gatherings. He engaged with some wonderful community-spirited people who were very kind and respectful to him. The Volunteer Fire Brigade met his need to help people, particularly those who suffered from the fires. Above all, it gave him a great sense of exhilaration and excitement as he backed that Fire Truck out and prepared it.

Visitors were always treated to a stopover at the Fire Brigade Centre and their first ride in a Fire Engine. Nothing, not even a bad back, would stop him from answering the call to a fire. He would literally brim with energy and enthusiasm as he rushed to be the first to the gathering point. He wore the uniform with great pride. He revelled in being supplied with decent boots and fire clothing and his pride and joy was an antique fireman's helmet which symbolized an important part of his life.

Brother Anthony found in all these groups, his family, the Brothers, the various community groups and the Fire Brigade, an opportunity to be close to people, to engage with them, to share his spirituality and his sense of God's wonderful providence, to minister to those in need and to experience the stimulation and the excitement that his personality required.

The Last Chapter

In 2009 he had successful heart surgery; but the stress it caused him was enormous and he could not cope. It took months for him to find some stability and routine in his life; but gone was the energy and *joie de vivre*, and even his strength. He declined markedly throughout 2010 and 2011. Although he had wonderful care and a most attractive room at Jemalong, overlooking the bright yellow canola crops, he hardly noticed them. And so it was that he gradually withdrew and calmly awaited the final call to eternal life and happiness. Members of the Forbes Community attended him in his last hours and his family were present when he died.



And so he has said his last “Adios Amigos” to all of us. Our response is “Adios mi Amigo” and may your unquenchable spirit find the closeness, the engagement and the exhilaration which it sought after ceaselessly. May you recognize the God who has been familiar to you throughout your life and may you rest in His peace... Amen.

Br Julian Casey

Provincial. December 5, 2011

ANNUAL RETREAT

Sacred Heart College, Adelaide

About 30 Brothers gathered for the annual retreat in Adelaide. The occasion provided all those present with the opportunity to reflect on their lives as vowed religious brothers, as well as being inspired by the presentations of **Fr Michael Fallon MSC**. Michael's talks reflected his own spiritual journey, his studies of life as a Christian and as a religious priest, pastor and preacher. The themes covered were: Religious Experience, Prayer, Priest, Prophet, King, Consecrated Celibacy, Obedience and Poverty.

The experience also allowed all to share our Brotherhood together with those we have not seen for a year or more. Brothers came from Perth, Darwin, Central Australia, East Timor, Forbes and Victoria, and were well catered for by the local Adelaide communities.

A number of Lay Marists and Mercy Sisters attended the presentations and liturgies and were very grateful for the chance to spend time with the Brothers and to listen to Fr Michael.



Fr Michael Fallon MSC

At the final Meal of the retreat we were privileged to witness the Province Affiliation of long-time supporter and friend of the Marist Brothers, **Mr. Steve Trabilisic**.



Marist Retreat Adelaide - Christmas 2011

Back Row: Brs Nello Facci, David Blay, John McMahon, Matthew Clarke.
 3rd Row: Brs Austin Redden, John Horgan, Xavier Collins, Marius Woulfe, Steve Bugg, Fr Michael Fallon MSC, Brs Red Casey, Ron Campbell.
 2nd Row: Brs Patrick McInerney, Kevin Hoare, Paul Gilchrist, Dominic Stewart, Michael Herry, Ambrose Reilly, Laurie Toohey, Peter Howes, Tony Caddy, Rod Thomson.
 Front Row: Brs Majella Fitzpatrick, Ken Preston, Doug Walsh, Julian Casey, Tom Maher, Jordan Redden, Des Howard, Leo McVeigh, and the Trabilisic Family – David, Steve (Jnr), Joanne, Rae and Steve.

AUSTRALIAN MARIST AFFILIATION OF MR STEVE TRABILSIE



Br Julian Casey and Mr Steve Trbilsie

On Tuesday 2 January 2012, at the luncheon to close the Marist Retreat at Sacred Heart College, Adelaide, South Australian, and at the request of the Somerton Park Community, Br Julian Casey, Provincial of the Melbourne Province, presented a Certificate of *Australian Marist Affiliation* to Mr Steve Trbilsie.



Br Jordan Redden

Earlier, Br Jordan Redden, a long-time friend of Steve, outlined many of the activities and events whereby Steve became a friend to many Brothers who have lived in the Somerton Park Community.

Also present at the Luncheon were Steve's wife, Rae, and three members of his family.



Steve Trbilsie, wife Rae, Joanne, David and Steve (Jnr)

A Tribute to Megan Moore as Principal of the Doxa School

Br Doug Walsh, FMS

“*Dare to Dream*” – a phrase often used when we refer to Marcellin Champagnat. It was this characteristic that brought **Megan Moore** into Marist Education.

When the Gap Program (a Program that came out of Marist Education Welfare Service) introduced a six months school period prior to the twelve months follow up period, a suitable qualified person was needed. As Barbara Radford would well remember, we interviewed Megan. Her C.V. was outstanding. I said to myself, she has the qualifications that will enable her to deal with any situation. (Little did we know how right this was).

At this point, she had not met our kids. Both Barbara and I knew that Megan was our choice. My key question to Megan that day was: “Megan, to be quite honest with you, why are you giving up a secure job when I can only offer you six months employment? We might run out of funds”. (Not bad; it lasted 12 years). She replied: “I share your Dream.” Barbara whispered to me, “Don’t you dare let her go.” (In fact, she kicked me under the table)

Megan’s great challenge was to develop an education program (that I had a few ideas about). Peter White’s daughter put me straight on a few ideas. No wonder her father introduced the *McCauley-Champagnat* program to Shepparton that would allow each individual student to reach their potential. (The key word borrowed from Doxa).



This took time, a superb effort, much research, and required her to draw on all her vast education skills and knowledge. (We can only guess the time put into this. Thanks, Ron, for being so patient with both of us at times)

Megan, for all the years she was Principal of the School and the Program, was faithful to its philosophy. (An intense program that would make a difference.) She established the Program, enriched it, adapted it and made it one of the leading programs for marginalised youth for the ages 11–14. I don’t want to talk about the Program because everyone knows the incredible difference it has made to young people and their families. The Melbourne University assessment verifies this.

I wish to acknowledge and thank Megan for her years of service to our Marist Vocation to which Saint Marcellin Champagnat continues to call us to “*love all your students particularly the*



most vulnerable". Megan showed this love every day. Her staff members were always carefully chosen and she was their "rock". They could rely on her.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat called us to be a Family. Families became an integral part of the Program. Family members were affirmed in their struggles. They were able to rejoice in

their teenager's success, many for the first time. (The Graduation Days will live in our memories for ever)

We celebrate the work of a lady who immersed herself in Marist Ministries. She took a prominent role in AMSA. Her generosity extended to other Education Institutions. She was in high demand and she gladly spread the Good News of her own learnings from the Doxa School experience.

Thank you for your wonderful book given to us at the school's closure. You will never know how many you influenced.

Megan, the Dream will continue in the Marist World and elsewhere. Bendigo and Shepparton will keep the Dream alive. The many educators you have influenced will *Dare to Dream*. I sowed the seed and you made it grow into a beautiful flower.



**Site of the former Doxa school
Montage Centre, Brunswick.**



National Gathering of Brothers



For four days in mid January, 2012, St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, hosted a historic gathering of 185 Marist Brothers from across Australia and overseas to come to a better understanding and appreciation of the new Australian Province which will be formally established on December 8, 2012.

The broad purpose of the gathering was to provide an opportunity for members of the two Provinces to get to know one another, gain an understanding of the planning which has taken place in preparation for the amalgamation and share hopes and fears about the future. This was achieved through large group presentations, small group discussions and "What's News in the Province" forums, all capably facilitated by **Br Ben Consigli**, Provincial of the USA Province of the Holy Family. Ben not only brought great personal facilitative skills, but also the experience of the two Provinces in the USA which has travelled the same journey before us.



A rich source of reflections and readings provided a springboard for morning prayer in small groups and the evening Eucharists in the College Chapel where **Fr Gary Perrett, CP**, captured the mood of the day in his homilies and the

full voices of the 185 strong "male choir" echoed impressively in the College Chapel.

A sombre note was struck in the Gathering when we learned of the collapse of **Stephen Bugg** with a cerebral haemorrhage, as well as the gentle passing of former Superior General, **Charles Howard**, that same Saturday morning on which they both joined the multitude of Champagnat Marist saints to enjoy their eternal reward.

The Gathering reached a literal crescendo at the final dinner in the Year 12 dining room. In the days before, the catering staff at St Joseph's had gone beyond the call of duty in providing sumptuous "al fresco" dinners in the grassed



area abutting the Year 12 common room. The “social club” provided an abundance of refreshment as well as the perfect background trio of musicians to welcome us on the first evening.

All in all, the Gathering was a grand prelude to the formation of the Province of Australia. Great care and solicitude had gone into preparing everything down to the finest detail - no mean feat as the College boarding facilities are designed to cater for a much younger age group.

Although there are big questions still to be addressed and answered, the Gathering has demonstrated that the Spirit is at work in those responsible for paving the way ahead as we are called to **“do something new”**.

Like Champagnat, we will commend the project to Mary, our Good Mother, and be open to the future, and the possibilities it will open up to us, as a larger and committed Australian family of Brothers and Lay Marists.

Br Terry Orrell, Editor.



What will each Brother commit to in the lead up to the establishment of the new Province of Australia?

marist

12-15 JANUARY 2012

BROTHERS' GATHERING • TOWARDS OUR NEW PROVINCE

Farewell to Br Darryl Slater

Br Peter Corr, FMS.

15/12/2011

At 2.20 pm Phnom Penh time on Thursday, December 15, 2011, approximately 500 people gathered at the Catholic Church to celebrate the life of, and say farewell to, **Br Darryl Slater FMS.**

Bishop Olivier concelebrated with 20 priests. There were 10 Marist brothers in attendance: Br Terrence Heinrich, Br Mark Fordyce, Br Peter Corr, Br Brian Kinsella. The six other *Ad Gentes* brothers were: Brothers Pedro, Francis, Gilbert, Diego, Max and Bernard. One hundred students and staff from **Sala Lavalla** also attended.

One thing that brought tears to my eyes early was the arrival of the blind masseurs who knew Darryl so well. They were helped into the church one by one and sat quietly at the side.

The Brothers processed into the Church with the casket and placed it before the altar together with a recent and beautifully framed picture of Darryl.

The proceedings were largely conducted in Khmer, with the eulogy and some intercessions in English to help the large number of foreigners present.

After the placing of the Pall and symbols, explained in Khmer by **Nimul Ouch**, the Brothers sang the *Sub Tuum* while standing around the casket. Br Terry gave his carefully prepared eulogy in English, describing Darryl in a way which not only addressed some of his characteristics and background to his 'life before Cambodia' but also included some anecdotes about Darryl's often recurring frustrations with a grass cutter which refused to start. Terry's account of Darryl resonated with

many of the congregation's experiences of him over the years and provided the assembly with a framework within which to grieve their loss of Darryl without being sadder than Darryl would desire.

The singing was wonderfully led by the Maryknoll group who loved Darryl so much and who enjoyed his company each Wednesday evening.

Bishop Olivier's gave a moving homily and was kind enough to give out some English translations. The Bishop quoted Marcellin a number of times, so he had done his homework!

One part of the homily outlined the qualities that Darryl lived that were "like Mary": "Br Darryl kept his eyes open to the world: India and Cambodia. He lived his mission with the children at La Valla School with simplicity and discretion. He was ever present as a Brother. He worked without occupying the first place....but was always faithful to all events and meetings of the Vicariate. He epitomised the spirit of service and had cordial relations with everyone."

According to local custom, and after the words of commendation, the Brothers were invited to place incense sticks before the casket and Darryl's picture, followed by the priests.

The Brothers then began to sing the *Salve Regina* as they stood around the coffin and were supported by many others in the congregation, thus making the rendition quite moving.

The selected staff from Sala Lavalla carried the coffin to the waiting van. We then processed about 500 metres on foot, out the gate and

through the narrow streets to the “Wat” for the cremation.

It is traditional for family members to light the fire and so this was done jointly by Br Terry and Br Peter.

The Brothers present are quite satisfied that Darryl’s Cambodian farewell was suitable and will not only serve to honour his life, commitment and mission but also to help the local community in their grieving the loss of one who meant so much to them.



Brothers Daryl Slater and Terry Heinrich



Ponder Tomorrow

Reflection Day and Renewal of Vows

A gathering of Brothers and Lay Marists on December 18 at the end of last year was the perfect setting for the renewal of vows of **Br Patrick Connell**.

A group of about 25 Marists, mainly Brothers, gathered at Nicholson Street for a reflection led by Fr Greg Bourke on the theme of Advent, fitting in perfectly with the theme of our year of Advent, looking forward to our new Marist situation in Australia.



**Brs Julian Casey, Patrick Connell
and Fr Greg Bourke**



**The group of Brothers who
attended the gathering**

The time of listening and pondering was then followed by a Mass which included the renewal of vows by Br Pat for three years, and for all Brothers present. Br. Patrick renewed his

commitment in the presence of Br Julian Casey and Fr Greg Bourke, who celebrated mass.

Pat had just completed a Directed Retreat in preparation for this event and spoke of his desire to renew his commitment to life as a Marist Brother, thanking those who had been part of his journey so far, his present community and all those who were present for the celebration.

Community Superior, Br Paul Kane, congratulated Pat on his renewal of his commitment and wished him well on behalf of all the Brothers and Lay Marists.

Community Superiors' Reflection Weekend

A gathering of Community Superiors will take place on the second weekend of May this year. Brothers in community leadership will have the opportunity to reflect on their lives as 'brothers to others' in a religious community and their roles as leaders in preparation for community life in the new province in 2013.

The Brothers will have the opportunity to share their experiences of leadership and brotherhood, as well as listen to presentations by **Fr Michael Casey OCSO**.

The gathering will be held at the Salesian Retreat Centre, Lysterfield, commencing on Friday evening 11th May, and concluding with the midday meal on Sunday 13th May.

Smile Awhile

How would you score the following student's answers in an exam?

- Q1. In which battle did Napoleon die? * **his last battle**
- Q2. Where was the Declaration of Independence signed? * **at the bottom of the page**
- Q3. River Ravi flows in which state? * **liquid**
- Q4. What is the main reason for divorce? * **marriage**
- Q5. What is the main reason for failure? * **exams**
- Q6. What can you never eat for breakfast? * **lunch & dinner**
- Q7. What looks like half an apple? * **The other half**
- Q8. If you throw a red stone into the blue sea what it will become? * **It will simply become wet**
- Q9. How can a man go eight days without sleeping ? * **No problem, he sleeps at night.**
- Q10. How can you lift an elephant with one hand? * **You will never find an elephant that has only one hand..**
- Q11. If you had three apples and four oranges in one hand and four apples and three oranges in other hand, what would you have ? * **Very large hands**
- Q12. If it took eight men ten hours to build a wall, how long would it take four men to build it? * **No time at all, the wall is already built.**
- Q13. How can you drop a raw egg onto a concrete floor without cracking it? * **Any way you want, concrete floors are very hard to crack.**



We'll be friends
until we are old and senile.
Then, we'll be
NEW friends.

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Cats can be so dramatic!!