

MARIST NEWSLETTER

Marist Brothers • Province of Melbourne

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Province News - The Birth of Hope - St Mary MacKillop - East Timor initial Formation Proposal - Vocations Future - Lomeri - On Being Framed



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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 partners 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...

- * **Maurice Flynn**, brother of Br Valentine Flynn (dec.). Died at 94 years of age.
- * **Mrs Cushla Woodgate**, died Melbourne October 18, 2010. Aged 90. Aunt of **Br Gerard McNamara**. Her two sons attended St John's, Hawthorn.

For those who are unwell ...

- * **Br Charles Howard**, Campelltown. Recovering from what seems to have been a slight stroke.
- * **Br Michael Green's mother**.
- * **Kevin Bodey**, recovering in hospital from blood poisoning and pneumonia. Originally a Macedon Junior from Mt Gambier. A Brother (Ian Robert) for a time.

And also for ...

- * **Patrick Connell**, as he prepares for Religious Profession
- * The students across our Australian Marist Schools Network sitting their final examinations.



From our Provincial



Dear Brothers and Friends

November 1:- "and all our Marist Saints"

Who do we think of during this time:- the official saints or the unofficial ones? I find myself thinking of the unofficial ones who have touched our lives and I am drawn to the stories of their lives. They make great reading; what a motley collection of individuals and what a vast array of human qualities! There are those who struggled against difficulties of temperament and character, and those who showed that their relationship with God meant more to them than earthly goods – a "poverty of spirit", a "meekness" and "gentleness" after the example of Jesus. There are those whose "hunger for justice" shaped what they did for the educational needs of the times, according to the values of the Kingdom.

Their stories help to remind us that we take into eternity hearts that are formed as a result of our willingness to allow God to come through the locked doors of our inner dwelling place, just as Jesus came through the locked doors of the fearful disciples' house. And they are a reminder that although the hearts of all God's family will be filled with joy, some will be limited hearts and some will be undivided and generous hearts.

In the Creed we profess our faith in the "Communion of Saints" and it helps to be aware that we have a genuine companionship with Mary, the Mother of Jesus and all those Brothers who have completed the journey. Although we have not reached the end of our journey, the story of the lives of all these Brothers is a source of encouragement in our life of as Marists.

Fraternally,

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

Br Julian Casey
Provincial



WEBSITE

Please remember to check the website for News (www.maristmelb.org.au). The latest postings include: News from Central Australia, Br Michael Herry's Launch, Baucau Visitors, Cambodian Floods and the Third Age Group. I don't want to repeat such news.

LAVALLA CATHOLIC COLLEGE - OPENING OF THE INFORMATION SERVICES CENTRE AND THE STUDENT SERVICES CENTRE

It was my honour to formally open these Centres for the Kildare Campus of Lavalla Catholic College and to unveil the plaque commemorating this event.



Bishop Prowse presided and blessed the up-to-date facilities.

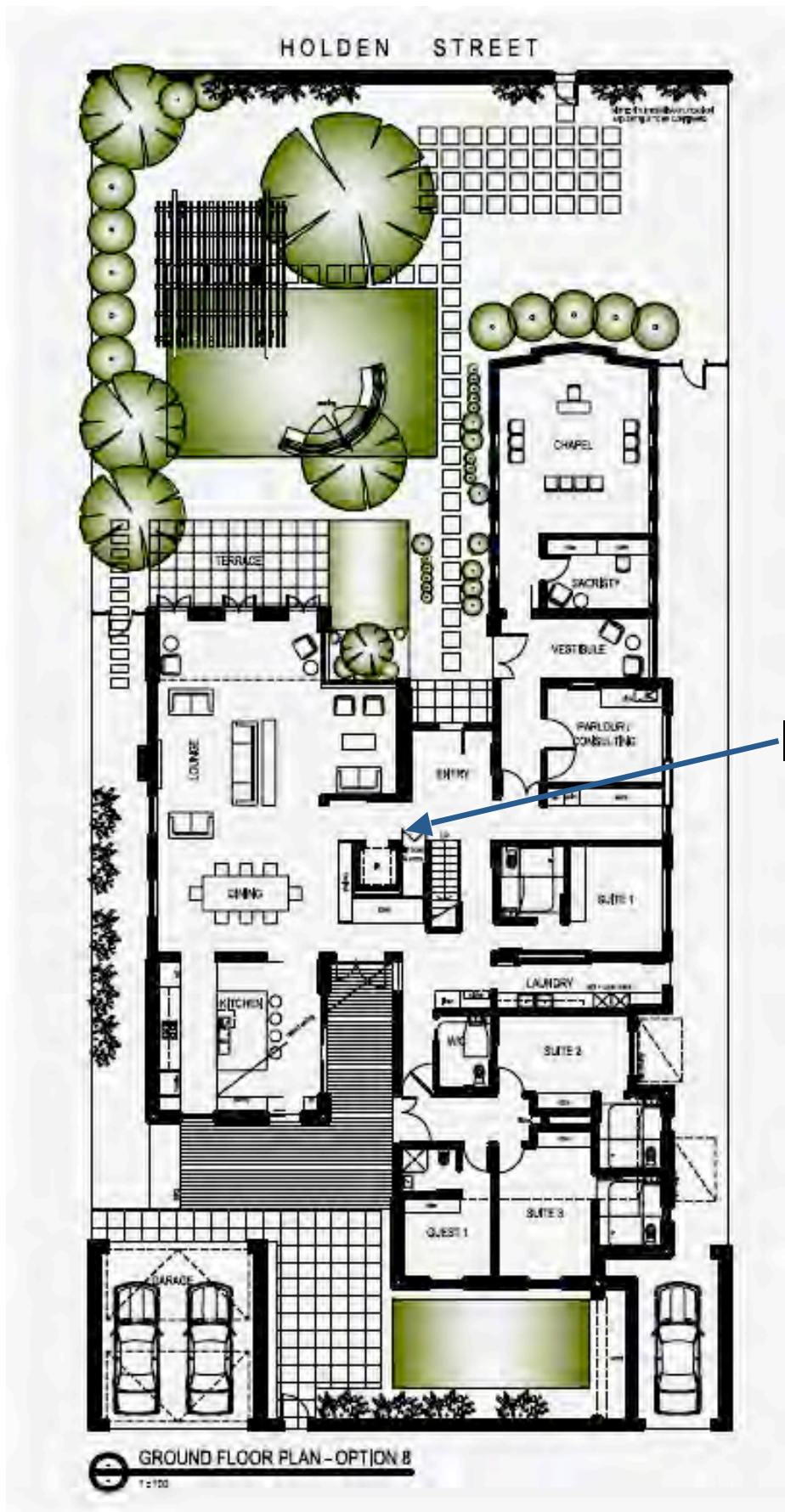
BR JOHN MCMAHON AND REX CAMBREY RETURN

We welcome back Br John McMahon from his attendance at the Marist Higher Education Conference in Brazil and his pre-pilgrimage planning in Rwanda. Jet-lag was put aside as he moved straight to a meeting of the Champagnat Education Council at Kilmore.

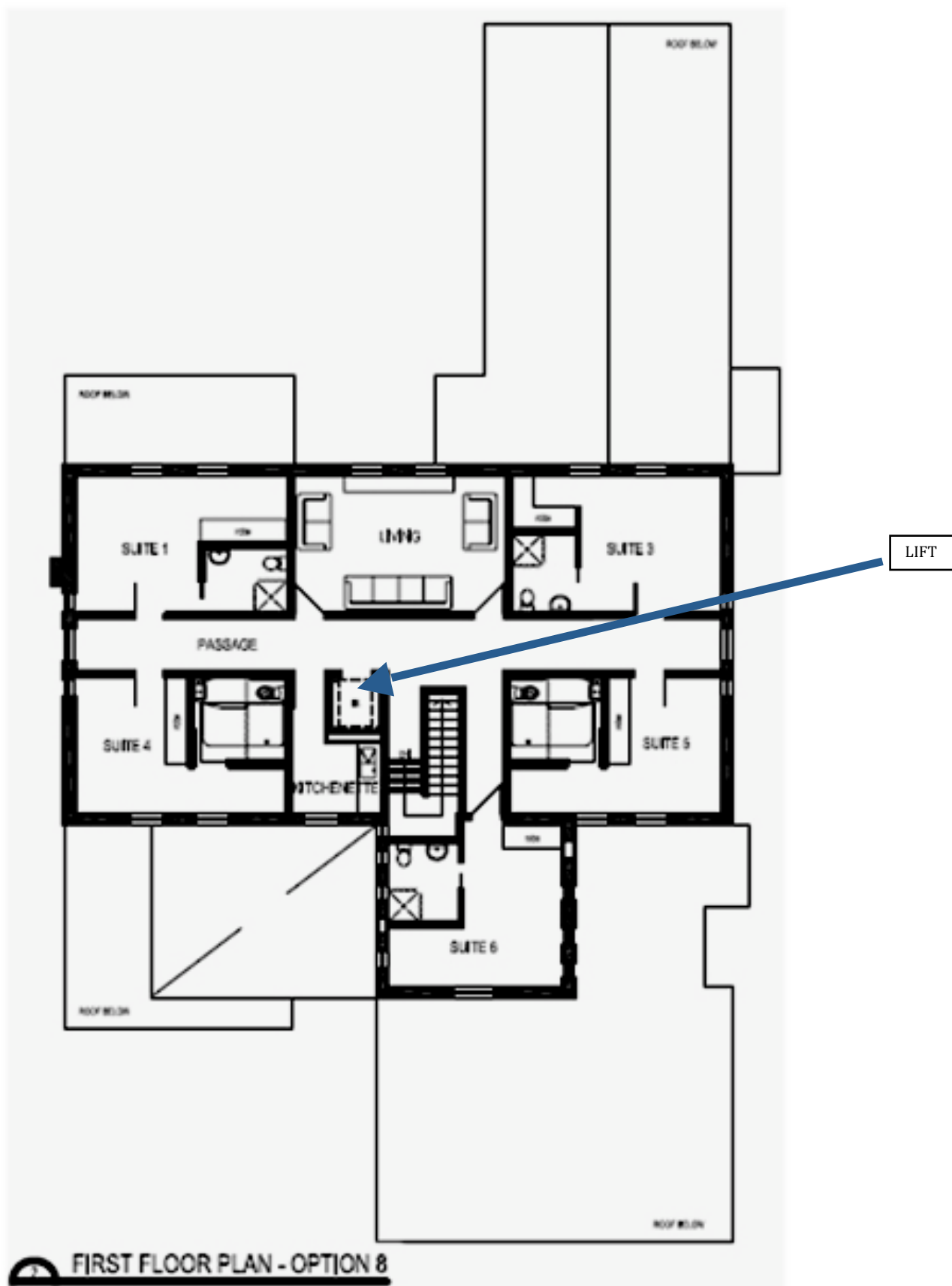
Welcome also to Rex Cambrey after his return from Long Service Leave. Rex is officially the Director of Business Affairs for the Province and is working a shorter week these days as John Greaves takes over the role of Business Manager.

BROTHERS' RESIDENCE AT NORTH FITZROY

You will see following, the eighth sketch plan, with number nine to arrive soon. Discussions are in progress about the arrangements for Marcellin College to use the land and former residence at Bulleen. The compensation will help defray the cost of the refurbishment at North Fitzroy.



Province News ...



CANONIZATION OF ST MARY MACKILLOP

Congratulations to Br Mark O'Connor for his excellent planning and arrangements for the Melbourne Celebration of the Canonization. It was well attended, over 7,000 people, and had some notable guests including the Prime Minister and the Premier of Victoria. Mark set off the next day to begin his discussions and meeting with potential overseas guests in the coming years.

MANILA VISIT TO MAPAC

During October, I travelled to Manila to attend the Board Meeting for Marist Asia Pacific Centre for Post Novitiate Formation. It comprises about thirty Brothers from the area and is led by Br Des Howard who has been Rector since 2008. It is always a pleasure to live with young Marist Life for a while and get a sense of young modern Marists preparing for their ministry. Des is well and doing well to keep on top of so many different responsibilities, both academic, organizational and formational.

BR AL SHERRY

We are in the process of bringing together the two solidarity units of the Provinces: MAPS, Sydney Province and Marist Solidarity Office, Melbourne Province. The combined operation will be a National Body for Australia and will use the title MAPS (Marist Asia-Pacific Solidarity) and will operate out of an office at Rosalie in Brisbane. Al will join Br Chris Wills in the Brisbane office and will live in a Marist community in Brisbane. Al will still retain the Solidarity Reference Group in Melbourne.

OTHER APPOINTMENTS

There are a couple of appointments still being finalized. Notification will come through in a couple of weeks.

CONCURRENT CHAPTERS AND OCEANIA ASSEMBLY (DEC 19 - DEC 22)

There has been significant preparation for this milestone event. The Provincials of Oceania and the District Leader or COMS (College of Major Superiors) have met twice since putting forward two models for the governance which formed the basis of a consultation across Australia, New Zealand and Melanesia. Given the feedback from the Brothers and from the Canon Lawyers, both models have been revised and clarified. It was impossible to portray on one image all the relationships associated with ways of coming together. Hence, delegates will or have received revised models and descriptions. Once that is done, there will be some further information for the communities.

The process involves all the delegates from each Province and the members of the District Council of Melanesia coming together to form consensus about recommendations to put to each separate Chapter of the Provinces of Melbourne, New Zealand and Sydney.

SUMMARY OF OUR REGIONAL MEETINGS

The meetings were held in Adelaide, Alice Springs, Darwin, Forbes, Melbourne, Perth and Timor Leste. They were very well attended (only 7 absentees across the Province) and included some Lay people. All appreciated the opportunity to come to an understanding of what was being proposed. The results of the soundings were:

1. There was general consensus with the amalgamation of the Sydney and Melbourne Provinces into a new Australian Province.
2. Although there was an overwhelming majority of green cards for the preferred model for Oceania, there were some reservations (yellow cards) expressed about the preferred model. Some would support this model if New Zealand were comfortable with it. A few preferred an Oceania Province and there were a couple of questions about the relationship between the models and the enhancement of our Mission.
3. Although there was a general agreement for the development of Mission and Ministry Councils, there were reservations because some Brothers needed more information about them and about how well the Ministry Council in Melbourne has worked.
4. *"Let's get on with it"* was a common refrain across the Province.

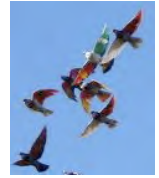
This summary was taken to the meetings of COMS and formed a part of reasons why we needed to modify and make amendments to what is being proposed.

THANKS

This is the final Newsletter for the year. Many thanks to our Newsletter Editor, Br Terry Orrell and his team, Brs Matthew Clarke, Noel Hickey and our Printer and Dispatcher, Peter Howes. It is a very big task to get the Newsletter out and it is surprising how quickly the "deadline" comes around for the next one. I am grateful to these Brothers and I speak for the Province in expressing our appreciation for their efforts. The Newsletter is awaited by many Brothers and I often see it in other places, where it is highly regarded.

What homing pigeons can teach us

Sr Marie Ralph, Chaplain, Sacred Heart Middle School



Once, on Brighton Beach (Adelaide), 512 kms from Broken Hill, a man took a crate of homing pigeons from the boot of his car. Then he opened the crate and released the pigeons. They flew straight up into the air.

However, instead of heading directly for Broken Hill, which was their home, they proceeded to fly in circles above the beach. Round and round they went. What they were doing seemed silly and a waste of time. But their owner explained that, what the pigeons were doing, was finding their bearings. Once they had found their bearings, they would set off for home.

This homing instinct which many birds possess is almost a miraculous thing. With some it seems to be an inbuilt thing. But others, such as pigeons, have to be trained. The basic requirement of training is to keep them in good health so that they are capable of sustained flight. Fog, snow, rain and adverse winds are sometimes the obstacles they have to overcome.

We too have a homing instinct. God, who has made us for heaven, has put a homing instinct in us. This is a very subtle and fragile thing, since God will never take away our freedom.

Just as the homing instinct doesn't save the birds from the necessity of having to struggle against the wind and the rain, so faith doesn't shield us from the hard knocks of life and death. But what faith does is give us bearings. It enables us to live in a topsy-turvy world without getting lost or giving in to despair. It assures us that we have a home to go to, and points us in that direction.

Through *Isaiah 43: 1-5* God tells us that we will have struggles to contend with. But God reassures us that the struggles will not overwhelm us:

*When you pass through deep water,
I will be with you;
Your troubles will not overwhelm you.
When you pass through fire,
You will not be burnt;*

*The hard trials that come will not hurt you
You are precious to me.
I love you.
Be not afraid - I am with you.*

The birds have to struggle against rain and adverse winds - but they have an inner miraculous bearing, a homing instinct.

We have to struggle against the hard knocks of life - but we have an inner miraculous bearing, our faith in God who says:

*Be not afraid, I go before you always.
Come, follow me and I will give you rest.*

At the Last Supper, when Jesus told the apostles that he was leaving them, they were deeply distressed. But he consoled them with these words:

*There are many rooms in my Father's house.
I am going to prepare a home for you.
I shall return to take you with me;
So that where I am you may be too.*

These words assure us that we have an eternal home to go to; a home where all our hopes will be fulfilled.

But there remains the question of how to get there. Have you ever been in a strange city and asked for directions? Sometimes the instructions are so complicated that you can't take them all in. But you may be fortunate enough to meet an exceptionally kind person who says: "Look, it's a bit difficult to explain. Hop in the car and follow me and I'll show you the way."

The way to God has confused and baffled many. Some have got hopelessly confused; others have got lost. When Jesus said: "So where I am you may be too," Thomas exclaimed: "Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus didn't give him a lot of complicated directions. Rather, he said "I am the Way."



The Birth of Hope

Br Mark O'Connor fms

'Because it is Christmas, because the Word was made flesh, God is near, and the faintest word in the quiet chamber of our heart, the word of love, reaches his ear and heart.'

Karl Rahner SJ

Christmas is a special time of year for most of us. There is a richness of life and colour. Hope is in the air. God is near.

We hear sacred and joyful music. Even the most health-conscious among us tend to forego self-discipline for family and work celebrations. And, of course, there are the joys of family and friends, of giving and receiving, community and friendship that are more poignant now than at any other time.

But, while many experience these delights, others are overwhelmed by a deep loneliness and sadness at this time of year. Why? Perhaps because, while being reminded of the fullness of life and family, they instead find exposed empty spaces .

And, so many families fight during the holidays, trying to meet a grotesque standard for the perfect gift, meal or gathering. None of us is perfect, and Christmas often brings us uncomfortably close to that reality.

Christmas time is hard for many because we can struggle to negotiate this nearness of the bitter with the sweet, with all that we lack standing so close to this celebration of life and relationship. Yet such feelings are also an invitation to enter more deeply into the Gracious Mystery, for the

emptiness we all feel at times can also be a gateway for celebrating its richness.

Christmas celebrates the kairós moment, when Jesus Christ, in all his glory and innocence, becomes one of us and comes as close as you can get to our 'messy' humanity. His birth was itself a cause of controversy, for Jesus was purposely conceived amidst the sexual scandal of 'illegitimacy'. "We were not born of prostitution" was the taunt of Jesus' enemies as narrated in John's gospel. Even the 'family tree' of Jesus as recounted in the genealogy of Matthew shows that there were quite a few 'black sheep' in his chosen relatives – saints and sinners abound in the family of the Son of David!

The first news of his birth was given to shepherds, among the lowest social outcasts in that culture. He was born in the most impoverished conditions—without anaesthetic, without medical assistance and amidst animal waste.

Our God - Emmanuel - didn't come into the world to commemorate a celebration that has no place for our emptiness and fragility. If anyone has cause to celebrate the season, it is precisely the person who feels that something is missing.

The Incarnation and Christmas therefore are a consoling reminder that God is now finally with us in our brokenness and longing - our secret, selfish desires, our depression, our family fights, our overeating, our obsession with giving gifts, our grief over loved-ones lost, our aching desire for healing in broken relationships, our desire to

reconcile with that family member after so many years. God is with us in all of this and can identify with our pain and loss.

Ultimately, Christ's coming was meant to satisfy our yearning to know that we can come to God as we are, especially in all our loneliness and brokenness - that this little, tiny, helpless child - Jesus of Nazareth - has come to let us hold him in our frail arms. As Francis Webb says: The tiny, not the immense, Will teach our groping eyes.

Christmas is for all of us. Yes, for those who already know this joy, but especially for those who don't. Let our prayer be that of Karl Rahner SJ

'We must be quiet and not fear the night, else we will hear nothing. For the ultimate message is uttered only in the night's stillness ever since, through the gracious arrival of the Word into the night of our life, Christmas's silent night, holy night came down among us.'

Five Days Old

Francis Webb

*Christmas is in the air.
You are given into my hands
Out of quietest, loneliest lands.
My trembling is all my prayer.
To blown straw was given
All the fullness of Heaven.*

*The tiny, not the immense,
Will teach our groping eyes.
So the absorbed skies
Bleed stars of innocence.
So cloud-voice in war and trouble
Is at last Christ in the stable.*

*Now wonderingly engrossed
In your fearless delicacies,
I am launched upon sacred seas,
Humbly and utterly lost
In the mystery of creation,
Bells, bells of ocean.*

*Too pure for my tongue to praise,
That sober, exquisite yawn
Or the gradual, generous dawn
At an eyelid, maker of days:
To shrive my thought for perfection
I must breathe old tempests of
action*

*For the snowflake and face of love.
Windfall and word of truth.
Honour close to death.
O eternal truthfulness, Dove,
Tell me what I hold—
Myrrh? Frankincense? Gold?*

*If this is man, then the danger
And fear are as lights of the inn,
Faint and remote as sin
Out here in the manger.
In the sleeping, weeping weather
We shall all kneel down together.*



Mary MacKillop - “the other Mary”

Bishop Mark Coleridge

At the end of Matthew’s Gospel, we meet two women – Mary Magdalene and another more mysterious figure known simply as “the other Mary”.

Coming to the tomb, the two Marys meet an angel who says to them, “Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.

Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead”. The women then run from the tomb with an equal measure of awe and joy “to tell his disciples”. But then we read, “Jesus met them and said, ‘Greetings’.” They “came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him”.

This extraordinary story can be read as the story of Mary MacKillop, “the other Mary”, who is before all else a witness to Easter, a woman who saw and heard the Risen Lord, a woman who received a commission from him and who was faithful to that commission to the end.

Many are prepared to tolerate Mary MacKillop as a do-gooder who stood with the battlers and worked for the poor. That, it seems, is religion with an acceptable face in a culture like our own which tends to be uncomfortable with the more mysterious and less pragmatic depths of religious experience.



Mary was certainly a do-gooder, but she was very much more; and the “more” is the secret to understanding why she is a saint. The “more” leads us to Easter and to Mary as a witness to the hope that only Easter confers.

Believing that she had received a commission from the Risen Christ, Mary MacKillop set out to do things which many regarded as impossible.

Here there are deep echoes of the Bible where we meet a God whose speciality is doing the

impossible – light from darkness in the beginning, babies from barren wombs, slaves from Egypt and, climactically, a dead man from the tomb.

As a woman who did what looked impossible, Mary opened up a new vision of possibility in a world where the vision of human possibility always tends to be shrinking. That is why she stands for ever as a witness to hope.

The Bible rubs our nose in the seeming hopelessness of things, but only to say that if we go to the heart of all that seems hopeless and meet God there – just as the Marys met Jesus at the tomb – then we find the true hope that nothing and no-one can take away.

Mary opened schools for the poor and taught the children many things to equip them for life. But what she and her Sisters taught above all was the way of hope, the way of Easter. She led the children to meet the Risen Christ, just as she herself had seen and heard him.

That was the best and most powerful thing she could do to equip the young for a life that is genuinely human, a life that is fully lived as God wants, not the half-life of the human being locked in world without hope where Christ

never rises from the dead.

Mary MacKillop went early one morning, on the first day of the week, to the tomb, looking for the One who had been crucified. That's why she was called Mary of the Cross: she was always looking for the One who was crucified.

In searching for him, Mary found the One who is risen from the dead. Having seen him and heard him on that morning, she could see him and hear him everywhere, but most especially in those places where others could see and hear nothing, even at the heart of the Church.

Mary MacKillop stands not as an admirable do-gooder or a proto-feminist in some ideological sense, but as a holy and deeply human witness to the Resurrection, as a seed of infinite hope in this dry continent.

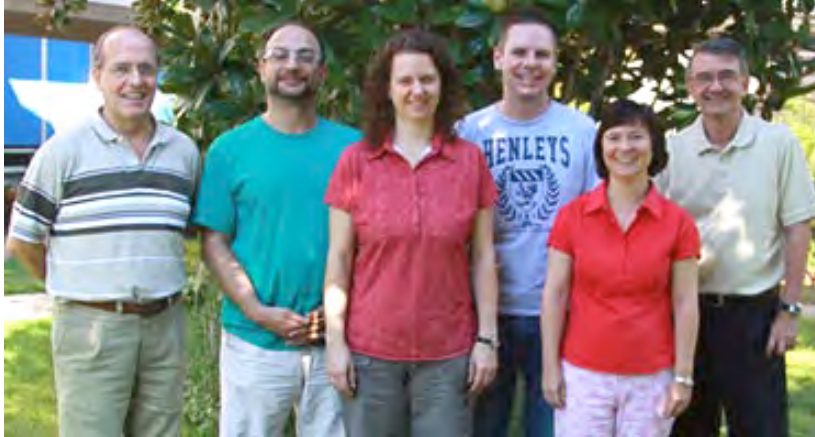
St Mary of the Cross will stand for ever with St Mary Magdalene in the morning light, coming to Jesus who had first come to them, taking hold of his feet, worshipping him, and teaching others, especially the little ones, to do the same.

That's what the Successor of Peter will proclaim on the morning of her canonisation.



Secretariat on the Laity

Animation Plan of the Secretariat for the Next Three Years



A meeting of the Secretariat on the Laity took place during the week of September 13-18, 2010 in order to plan out the animation of Marist Laity for the next three years.

Participants at the meeting were Javier Espinosa, the new Director of the Secretariat, the two new co-directors Ana Sarrate and Tony Clark, the new liaison of the General Council, Antonio Ramalho, all recently nominated for this service, and Linda Corbeil and Brother Afonso Murad, who were already acting as members of the enlarged Secretariat.

The objective of the meeting was to come up with the Animation Plan of the Secretariat for the next three years. It would be a kind of road map or pathway.

After a week of intense work, the central reference point that will steer the Secretariat has been defined, in the Plan of animation. This road map is inspired by the fundamental call of the 21st General Chapter. For the Secretariat the call includes the challenge to contribute to the birth of a new epoch for the Marist charism; to bring to life and

to solidify a new relationship between the Brothers and the laity, to visualize the Marist future as a communion of people in the charism of Champagnat.

This Plan conceived by the Secretariat is a first draft to be discussed and enriched with the echoes of laity and brothers in the following months before being presented to the General Council in its session during the month of January 2011 for its approval.

We are now able to single out some highlights of the Plan: A firm support and development of the Marist lay vocation; the priority for the formation process; to utilize and benefit from the role of the laity and the growth in communion (unity); to work in conjunction with the Plan of the General Council and of other Secretariats, especially with “The Brothers Today”; to define the functions and responsibilities of the co-directors; to better unify the laity in different regions; to broaden the Secretariat with a representative from each region of the Institute; to propose the revision of the Project for life of the Champagnat Movement.

The meeting in Rome was done in an atmosphere of intense work, and in great fraternity and communion (unity). The support and work of Brother Afonso Murad which he gave during his time in the Secretariat are greatly appreciated and acknowledged. We remember with gratitude Brother Pau for all his initiatives and work these past years.

During this time the Secretariat was in contact with Brother Charles Kitson, who is responsible to the Association of Christian and Montserrat Schools, co-secretary, as well as with the community of San Egidio, with the aim of maintaining dialogue with the lay movements of other institutions or groups.



Christians in Algeria – witnessing in difficult times

September - October 2010

In Algeria it is estimated there are only 10,000 Protestants and up to 5,000 Catholics – in a total population of 38 million, mostly Muslims. Although religious freedom is officially proclaimed in Algeria, in practice it does not exist. Since 2006 there has been a law that punishes any form of evangelisation.

Catholic Archbishop Ghaleb Bader of Algiers has not allowed himself to be intimidated, however, and has constantly renewed his demands for Christians to be granted the right to the free exercise of their religion.

Although they are a tiny minority, the Catholics fulfil an important function, according to Archbishop Ghaleb Bader. “They witness to Christ, and thus to the continuing existence of his Church. Our friendship, our service prompts our Muslim countrymen to ask themselves, why do the Christians do this? Why do they live among us, although they are in danger?”

[Let us keep in mind the great ministry exercised by Br Michael Sexton in Algeria - the Hermitage Province]

PROPOSED PLAN FOR THE PROMOTION AND ACCOMPANIMENT OF CHAMPAGNAT MARIST VOCATIONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INITIAL FORMATION IN TIMOR LESTE 2010-2011



*We feel driven by the Spirit of God to go into a new land,
to facilitate the birth of a new epoch of Marist charism.*

*This presumes a willingness to move on, to let go of the familiar,
to embark on a journey of both institutional and personal conversion
over the next eight years.*

*We travel this road with Mary, guide and companion.
Her faith and openness to God's will inspire us to undertake this pilgrimage.*

*This "new land" is an authentic renewal of the Institute;
It asks a genuine change of heart*

- Document of the XXI General Chapter 2009



Timor Leste

TIMOR LESTE: Some facts

Population:	1.1 million people 52% population under 15 years of age 70% population under 25 years of age Growing at 2% 26.25 births/1,000 population Urban population 27% of total population
Languages:	Portuguese and Tetun 32 local languages
Infant mortality rate:	75 deaths/1,000 live births
Life expectancy:	67.27 years (total population)
Fertility rate:	6.4 births per woman
Religion:	98% Catholic, 1% Muslim, 1% Protestant
Unemployment:	20% nationally (2006) 40% among urban youth
Poverty:	42% (2003 est) live below the poverty line 75% live on under \$4 USD per day
Literacy:	58.6% age 15 and over can read and write 77% aged 15-24 years
Education:	75% of children attend primary school 80% of children complete a full course of primary school 30% of young people attend secondary school 9% of secondary graduates go on to tertiary education

INTRODUCTION

2010 marks the tenth anniversary of the arrival of the first community of Brothers from the Melbourne Province to found the Champagnat Marist mission in Timor Leste. Moved by the widespread violence, devastation and dislocation that followed the East Timor referendum on independence in 1999, the Provincial, James Jolley, agreed to the request by the Bishop of Baucau, Bishop Basilio Nascimento, to establish a Catholic Teacher Training Centre and to assist the development of a Catholic school in Laklubar. Brothers Mark Paul, Canute Sheehan and Manuel Silva arrived in September 2000 to establish the first community and to begin laying the

foundations of this work. While the school ministry at Laklubar was not successfully established, the Catholic Teaching Training Centre (now known officially as, Instituto Católica para Formação de Professores) has, over ten years, gradually developed into a highly professional, respected and well recognised educational institution within Timor Leste.

From the vantage point of our present engagement in pre-service teacher formation, and aware of some of the hopes, joys, anxieties and questions shared by sections of the East Timorese population, the Marist Community in Baucau are acutely aware of the enormous opportunities and challenges facing this newest of independent nations, objectively

considered one of the poorest in Asia. One only needs to view statistics to recognise the pressing and overwhelming needs confronting the leaders of government, Church and local communities, let alone the people themselves.



To view this same reality through the eyes of a child in Timor Leste would, in most cases, reveal a disheartening and disturbing picture of disadvantage, inequality, squandered opportunities by local and national authorities, and seemingly innumerable barriers to appropriate development. Viewing life from this particular angle leaves few of us unmoved, nor without some resolve to act in helping to address the circumstances affecting these young people.

Understandably, the centuries of Portuguese colonial rule, the influence of Portuguese missionaries, the suffering and losses incurred during the subsequent Indonesian occupation and the significant

role the Church played during these eras, have left their mark on the religious attitudes, faith life and spirituality of the people. The fact that the majority of the population (98%) claims to be Catholic has important consequences for the country's identity and how the Church is experienced by the people. The Catholic Church leadership has a strong and influential voice among the total population. Bishops, Priests, and Religious still enjoy a revered place within the culture. Hence, young people choosing to pursue a vocation within the Church, particularly in becoming a Priest or a Religious, normally receive strong encouragement and support from family and friends.

However, accompanying these positive features are also significant challenges for the Church. For example, there is ample evidence of a strong clericalism, there is an urgent need to provide appropriate and ongoing adult faith formation to enable people to grow and mature in their faith faced by life's circumstances, the influence of traditional spirituality and the inroads being made by Protestant Churches and sects; being open to the development of distinctly East Timorese expressions of faith and worship in the life of the Church. A very relevant challenge facing the Marist Brothers in particular is the fact that the vocation of the Religious Brother is little known, understood or valued across the breadth of the Catholic Church community in Timor Leste.



RESPONDING TO THE CALLS

Conscious of these realities, the community of Marist Brothers in Timor Leste have reflected on the calls of the recent XXI General Chapter that urge Marists, *“to go out into a new land, to facilitate the birth of a new epoch of Marist charism”* (p.26) and to, *“go in haste – with Mary of the Visitation – with Marcellin Champagnat rushing to the side of young Montagne; bringing Jesus Christ to the young, especially the poorest, in all the dioceses of the world”* (p.22) by being *“bold enough to move to areas where others do not go”* (p.19). Each of us can attest to how our experiences of living and working in this new nation of Timor Leste have contributed to a certain “change of heart” in the way we view our personal and religious identity, how we live our Marist spirituality and sense of fraternal solidarity, and gaining renewed energy for the Marist mission.

Inspired by the calls of the XXI General Chapter, conscious of the urgent needs confronting the education and evangelising of young people in this nation, and aware of the stage to which the Marist mission in Baucau has evolved, we strongly believe that now is the opportune time:

- To actively promote Champagnat Marist vocations, both Brothers and Lay Marists, in Timor Leste. The vocations ministry would include the accompaniment of those discerning to make a commitment to one or another Marist vocational pathway.
- To establish formation structures and programs that will (a) accommodate local candidates who are accepted into Marist Brother initial formation; and (b) provide support and formation for local East Timorese Lay Marists.

- To expand the Marist mission in Timor Leste. This might involve establishing a Marist school that will provide quality education and evangelisation to poor children and young people where it is most needed in Timor Leste.

The specific purpose of this plan is to propose to the Provincial and Council, and through them to other Province and Regional leaders, a vision and plan to promote and accompany Champagnat Marist vocations and to establish pre-novitiate formation in Timor Leste. Logically, the relevance and poignancy of this plan is wholly dependent on the commitment of the Province, Region or Institute to the ongoing development of the Champagnat Marist mission in Timor Leste. Without such a commitment, the promotion of Marist vocations and the establishment of formation processes would be disingenuous to the people and the Catholic Church in Timor Leste. This plan anticipates a positive affirmation to the ongoing development of the Champagnat Marist mission in Timor Leste.

It is also important to note that, in formulating this plan, we have received strong affirmation and encouragement from local East Timorese associated with the Champagnat Marist mission in Timor Leste, as well as from a number of local Priests and Religious.

Brothers
John Horgan
Tony Clark
Fons Van Rooij



We want to affirm that:

- ❖ We believe the Holy Spirit is calling young East Timorese women and men to Christian discipleship and service within the Catholic Church of Timor Leste and beyond.
- ❖ We believe in the relevance of the gift of the Champagnat Marist charism and spirituality as well as the urgency of our mission among the People of God in Timor Leste. Our belief is confirmed by the testimonies of individual East Timorese who have shared how they have also come to value Champagnat's charism in their personal and faith lives and who affirm the importance of our mission.
- ❖ We believe in the unique contribution that the gift of our vocation as Marist Brothers can be for the Catholic Church in Timor Leste and to the nation in general. The fact that there are very few Congregations or Institutes of Brothers presently represented in Timor Leste provides a wonderful opportunity to witness to our unique consecration, our particular way of being and living, especially as we seek to be Good News for poor children and young people.
- ❖ We are moved by the plight of children and young people in Timor Leste, who comprise more than half the total population. A significant majority of young people do not receive a quality education, nor complete compulsory schooling and do not have access to adequate health facilities. A large percentage of young people do not have the opportunity to be employed in paid work.
- ❖ We are encouraged by the strong affirmation and encouragement we have received from a number of staff from ICFP, Priests and Religious who know and value the charism, spirituality and mission of the Marist Brothers in Timor Leste.
- ❖ As Brothers and Lay Marists in Timor Leste, we want to share the responsibility for seeking new Marist vocations for the development of the Champagnat Marist mission in Timor Leste and the wider Institute. We want to work together in inviting young people to become Brothers or Lay Marists and in helping establish formation processes and experiences that will help inculturate Champagnat's charism and spirituality in Timor Leste.

Champagnat Marist Vocation Ministry

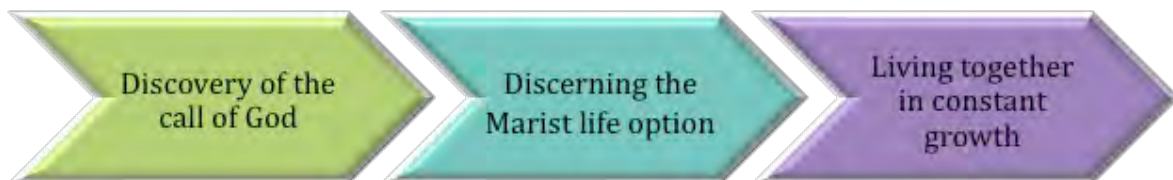
General aims:

- ❖ To assist East Timorese young people and adults to discover their baptismal identity and vocation in the Church and the world. (c.f. C.93, FG 82)
- ❖ To promote Marist vocations across Timor Leste, particularly the vocation of the Brother and Lay Marist. (XXI General Chapter)
- ❖ To accompany those who feel called by God to be a Marist Brother or a Lay Marist in the discerning of their personal vocations. (FG 83)

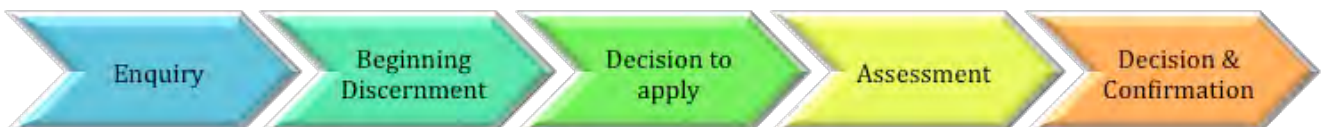


Process of transition from contact-initial discernment phase toward an acceptance into commitment to and ongoing formation as a Lay Marist

(c.f. Chapter 6: Gathered Around The Same Table)



Process of transition from the contact-initial discernment phase toward an acceptance into pre-novitiate formation for the Marist Brothers



Champagnat Marist Formation Program

Formation of Lay Marists

General Aims:

- ❖ To support the establishment and development of a local expression of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family in Timor Leste that will enable lay people to share Marist life, spirituality and mission.
- ❖ To develop formation experiences for Brothers and East Timorese Lay Marists (specific and shared) inspired by the documents *In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat, Water from the Rock, and Gathered Around the Same Table*.



Initial Formation for those becoming Marist Brothers

General Aims:

- ❖ To help form young East Timorese men capable of vowing their entire life to God in an apostolic Marist community. (c.f. C.95)
- ❖ To provide an integral formation of young East Timorese men as they respond to the call to live the Marist charism. This formation will be based on and adapted to the personalities of the young men and their East Timorese culture. (c.f. C.95)
- ❖ For the Brother Provincial and Council to approve the setting up of pre-novitiate formation communities in Timor Leste, to appoint those Brothers who will be responsible for and involved in pre-novitiate formation and to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the pre-novitiate formation program to occur successfully. (c.f. C. 96.4, 96.7, 96.8)



Specific objectives and means:

- ❖ To establish, possibly as early as April 2011, an Aspirancy house and community located in Baucau, East Timor.
- ❖ To work towards establishing, by January 2012, a Postulancy house and community located in Dili, East Timor.
- ❖ To begin, in 2011, the discernment of where in the Asia-Pacific regions future Novices from Timor Leste will undertake their novitiate and post-novitiate formation

A postscript from Br Rod Thomson



"On September 3 a group of 10 senior students from **Ltyentye Apurte** school participated in the 'Stop the violence' march in Alice Springs, to take a stand against domestic violence. Being one of those overcast days, the lads bravely bared all to be painted up in traditional colours. Br Rod carried their jumpers which they were glad to receive at journey's end! The march was organised by Ingkintja Male Health at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress."

Vocations Future

Next steps proposed to attract new generations to religious life

Catholic News Service - Nancy Frazier O'Brien

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- At what one participant called a "critical juncture in consecrated life," dozens of religious and Catholic lay leaders gathered in Chicago recently to thrash out the next steps needed to attract young people to religious life today.

AN EXTRACT:

"Citing divisions in the church on issues ranging from hierarchal leadership to women's roles to sexuality and immigration, Brother Bednarczyk noted that the study conducted by CARA showed that younger Catholics entering religious life "are clearly disheartened by this polarization they see in the church, in religious life and in their religious institutes.

"Those divisions must be acknowledged as part of the reality to which we attempt to invite women and men to a radical following of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a life of consecrated chastity, poverty and obedience," he said.

Other speakers raised similar issues, citing a need to recognize the differing worldview of today's young Catholics in order to discover what might attract them to religious life.

For them, "Vatican II is someone else's history," said **Brother Sean D. Sammon**, a former superior general of the Marist Brothers and former president of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men.

"Today a new generation, many of whose members lack a strong Catholic identity as



defined by the practices of the past, is looking at religious life and mission through eyes shaped by a world that is foreign to many of us over the age of 50," he said.

"Theirs does not include John F. Kennedy or the Cold War. Nor is it a world that has cause to remember Woodstock, the sexual revolution, Dag Hammarskjold, a war in Vietnam, Watergate, the early days of the women's movement," Brother Sammon added. "These

persons and events may have been a part of your world or mine, but for the emerging generation, they serve as content of the history books that they read."

He said the greatest differences between the younger and older generations are seen in the "desire to belong to a group whose commitment and fidelity to the church is unquestioned, the wearing of a religious habit, the form of community life and style of prayer."

Brother Sammon said a key ingredient in establishing "the necessary lines of communication between this population and our congregations" is the creation of a "culture of vocation promotion," including the appointment of at least one full-time vocation promoter in each of the congregation's provinces or districts.

"If General Motors or IBM faced the personnel crisis that we have had on our hands for the last few decades, they would have long ago had their best people in the work of recruiting men and women for a career with their corporations," he said. "At the same time, each

of us must learn to take some responsibility for this work."

He also suggested taking advantage of "opportunities available to educate as wide a population as possible," such as with a parish adult education course on religious life, yesterday and today.

"In so doing, we might consider targeting parents especially," Brother Sammon said. "They were once one of the strongest allies of those encouraging vocations; they need to be brought into that same position again."

Another crucial factor is visibility, he said, noting that "a number of us from older generations of religious have, to a large extent, become invisible in the places in which we serve and the communities in which we live."

"If we are truly interested in improving the witness value of our way of life," he said, "a number of us will need to find some new and more effective ways to be more visible."



Brs **Victor Preciado**, Econome General and General Councilor, **Alberto Uribe** (Ibérica), **Nicholas Banda** (South Africa), **Delcio Alfonso Balestrin** (Brasil Centro-Sul), **Mme. Blanca Arregui** ("Acrescere" – Madrid) and **MM. Juan Martín Cebrián** (Santa Marial de los Andes) and **Rex Cambrey** (Melbourne).

Marist Financial Team meets in Rome

Rex Cambrey (pictured third from the left in the back row) recently returned from some sabbatical leave and attending a meeting of the world-wide **Marist Brothers Financial Team**. Their task was to begin preliminary discussion on how best to finance the expenses of the General Administration and to ensure the financial viability of the Administrative Units around the Marist Brothers' world.

The Team was accompanied by Mme. Blanca Arregui from Madrid who ensured that the participants followed the methodology of the work.

Future meetings will be held in May and October, 2011.

On Being Framed

Br Mark O'Connor, fms

They tell the story that one day John Paul 11, after several years as Pope, was asked if he still wrote poetry. Remember that as student, pastor and even Bishop, Karol Woytla wrote some significant poems arising from his life situation.

John Paul looked around his Vatican surroundings and replied negatively with a sigh: 'No context'!

Perhaps the Papacy is rather more than a 'golden cage' for its occupant. But the story does suggest that making 'poetry' and not 'prosaic' verse of one's life, can sometimes be a challenge, even for one as prodigiously talented an artist as John Paul 11!

For 'context' and 'framing' are indeed, if not everything, quite a lot of the 'picture'. We say of people who claim they are falsely accused in B grade Hollywood movie jargon that they have been 'framed'. That is another way of saying that they been 'set up' to look something like something that they are not.

Like it or not, the context in our lives in society and church is indeed often 'framed' by the perception others have of us. Whether it is actually the 'truth' is another matter. As the Talmud say: 'We do not see thing as they are; we see things as we are"! Nonetheless, people do write 'framing' scripts for each of us and very often demand we play the 'part' assigned for us.



What to do about this? Well, first of all we must be at least occasionally aware that we live in a culture that, at the *macro* level, is terribly reductionist and often assesses people largely by slogans and labels.

Bella Figura is not just for the Italians!

'Looking good, not being good' is *the* mark of our media-driven culture. Week and after week we see public figures being 'mowed down' by a voracious media pack. Politics is fed by this concern for image and appearances. No wonder style over substance is the hallmark of our political debates. The intensely 'visual' nature of our culture also means that it is the attractive and beautiful who have 'first place' in our psyches – even despite our better selves protesting. As the old Marist Retreat Team prayer used to say 'The packaging is not the

gift.' (disclaimer: I regret to say I never 'qualified' for the Marist Retreat Team!)

At the *micro* interpersonal level, we see this 'framing' dynamic at work in the way some 'label' others. Being honest doesn't mean being brutal. In the name of telling the truth, we've all heard -- and said -- things we're sorry were ever uttered. Sometimes a single derogatory sentence from someone can remain stuck in the brain for life, serving as a toxic seed that grows. It's much harder to remove these seeds than not to plant them in the first place.

Let us affirm each other and avoid attempting to 'frame' or 'label' people. 'The Mower' by Philip Larkin puts it eloquently.

*The mower stalled, twice; kneeling, I found
A hedgehog jammed up against the blades,
Killed. It had been in the long grass.*

*I had seen it before, and even fed it, once.
Now I had mauled its unobtrusive world
Unmendably. Burial was no help:*

*Next morning I got up and it did not.
The first day after a death, the new absence
Is always the same; we should be careful*

*Of each other, we should be kind
While there is still time.*

Larkin's poem is salutary for all for us whose lives are inevitably 'framed' by the judgments of those around us - for good and for bad. While we await judgment from the only One who really counts (see Matthew 25) – as we struggle like John Paul 11 to make the Gospel the 'poetry' of our lives - we could do worse than to practice that advice:

*we should be careful
Of each other, we should be kind
While there is still time.*



LOMERI-

Weather extremes, pumps and Novitiate Life

At Lomeri, as November approaches each year, there is a sense of anticipation as the second-year novices complete their Profession Retreat and move into the final stages of preparation for making First Vows. This year, Profession Day is Saturday 13th November and there are six young men: one from Kiribati, two from Vanuatu and three from Papua New Guinea. While there is anticipation and an urgency of preparation, there is also time to look back.

One significant marker was in late December last year when Tropical Cyclone Mick roared in with winds and belting rains. 240mm of rain fell in less than 24 hours and 12 hours of cyclonic winds left a big clean-up job but no serious damage. For a day, the Novitiate on the hill of Lomeri was a cyclone shelter and evacuation centre for a hundred or so local people.

Once the wind dropped and the rain stopped the cleaning up started. Many fallen trees and other debris were removed, and the muddied and leaf-plastered windows and walls cleaned. Things that had blown away were found and retrieved, and novices helped local people clean up around the parish church as well as our own place.

The slope below our kitchen lost many large trees and, as it was cleared, we uncovered the pump that is occasionally used to bring water up from the mains supply pipe. For more than three years it had not been used at all as the rainwater tanks have been constantly refilled from our roofs with regular downpours. The pump looked fine and what appeared to be some sort of overflow pipe was ignored – until mid-August. Then after a month of very dry

weather the pump was needed. When started it just sent a stream of water down the slope. This was a puzzle. The last time it was used the water had smoothly pumped up the hill to our underground tank. What we had not yet recognised was that the feeder pipe had been snapped off by the fall of a large branch during the cyclone.

It took the clear descriptions of former resident, Peter Morellini, to help us find the part of the broken pipe that had become well buried in the cyclone. Thanks to Peter's good memory, and after careful rejoining and repairs by Br Bernard McGrath, the pipeline is now functional, the pump is purring and again we have access to water in drier times. Thanks to the Brothers in Perth who so quickly reconnected us to Peter and thanks to him for his recall.

Of course, we prefer the fresh rainwater that flows into the underground tanks from the roof each time it rains. It is so convenient and is always *wara swit moa** (the nicest water)!

These weather extremes remind us that the work of formation continues in all weather. In the dry times, as well as in deluges, the life of the Novitiate has continued and our living of community as brothers and novices in the style of Marcellin has gone on quietly with generous sharing of skills and concern for each other and with eyes on the needs of the people in the world around us.

We are in a place in which the inquiring minds and searching hearts of novices are nourished in their experience of prayer and silence in beautiful tropical surroundings. One marvellous aspect of life here is seeing

and knowing their willingness to enter into the inner journey during two intensive formative years. The reading and study side of that has been enhanced greatly through careful, loving attention to the Novitiate Library over the last three years. Br Bert Webster has laboured with diligence and purpose to make it a place enticing to the reader, in which the materials are well-organised, beautifully presented, accessible, attractive and appropriate.

Bert is at the end of his three years as community leader and is returning to Port Moresby. He leaves a legacy of inspiring and dedicated work to remind us of his

vision that it is possible to tailor a library that caters well to the needs of Pacific nations novices in the 21st century. Even as we thank him, our thoughts are turning to maintaining the materials, the organisation and attractiveness so that it continues to contribute well to the life and work of the novitiate.

Even more, we all carry with us a deeper sense of the meaning of dedication and thoroughness, all done with a truly joyful way of living. Bert has communicated to us all what life as a Brother is about by his presence and willingness to share life to the full with all who have been at Lomeri during the last three years.



Novitiate Community 2010

Front from left: **Joseph Wabi** (PNG), **Oscar Irebake** (PNG), **Renaud Tsione** (Vanuatu), **Andrew Litanga** (PNG), **Charles Tavor** (PNG)

Standing: **Br Bert Webster** (Community leader), **Borerei Katarake** (Kiribati), **Br Bernard McGrath**, **Valentin Samsam** (Vanuatu), **Ezrah Kapin** (PNG), **Br Christopher Maney**, **David Molsul** (Vanuatu), **Br Dennis Cooper**

ICFP -Bacau winds up the Academic Year

Greetings from ICFP Baucau. It is the end of the academic year here, and last Saturday the Third Year graduating students organised a wonderful farewell to share with all of us. Beginning with Mass in the Cathedral at 9.00, the students continued their farewell with a great program, including morning tea and lunch. Each of the Year groups presented an item and the Third Year students responded with a farewell song that had many of the students in tears – not to mention some of the staff! Despite the torrential rain, it was a beautiful day, and in my opinion, the best farewell we have had.



Year 6 practicum - teaching basketball skills



Third Year students prepare to sing their final song

It has been a busy semester with practicum sessions for all three years during the past 13 weeks, as well as normal lectures. I always feel so happy when I go out to visit students during their practicum as I can see future teachers for Timor Leste emerging during this time. Some of the students are outstanding, just about ready to start their career, while others, despite some difficulties, continue to strive to be the best teachers possible. The schools in Baucau have been very supportive,

since the concept of having spiral development of teaching skills is still a new one for them. But they too can see the development of the students each year and how they will be able to contribute to the rebuilding of their country.

The teaching staff continues to study for their Masters degree from ACU. The Professional Development team mentors them as they complete each unit. Two of them finished their Masters at the end of July and another three are busy completing their final assessment in their last unit. Another five should finish their degree by the end of 2011. It will be wonderful to see them graduate with the Third Year students during the graduation ceremony next year. If you were thinking of visiting us in February next year, the graduation ceremony will be held on Saturday, 26th. We have already started planning for it!

Best wishes from all of us at ICFP, and my personal regards to you

Margie x



Celebrations in Perth for Br Joe Hughes' Golden Jubilee

Over a very pleasant long Sunday lunch, Br Joe Hughes was again feted in celebration of his Golden Jubilee as a Marist Brother, this time closer to his home turf.

David and Christina Rushton offered their home patio area for the gathering of over forty people, comprising family members, former students of the Brothers' St Paul's School in Northam, and a smattering of Joe's former Newman Veterans hockey playing colleagues from the 1980's.

David Rushton has nurtured a group called the "Former Students and Staff of Northam Catholic Schools" over the last 14 years. He spoke fondly of the influence that Joe had in his capacity as Deputy Principal on the education of his children in their early secondary years at Newman Siena. He also made reference to Joe's enthusiasm and exploits as a nippy left winger in the Newman Vets Hockey team, mostly made up of former students from St Ildephonsus and Marist Colleges.



Br Joe Hughes receives a presentation from David Rushton

Joe was then presented with a gift and a special T shirt with the old St Paul's badge and motto "Ut Probetis Potiora" to remind him of his school days and the influence of the Brothers who led him to his vocation as a Marist Brother.



Br Joe responds to the congratulations

Former Vets Hockey players and spouses enjoy the celebration





Marcellin
Canterbury Roaders
Reunion

An Informal Get-Together
with Old Friends

Friday 26th November 2010

6.00 pm for 6.30pm.

(School tour 6:10-6:40, brief welcome 6:45pm).

Functions Room, Marcellin College,
160 Bulleen Rd, Bulleen.

Cost: \$60

Contact:

Michael Schauble

Brendan Millane

email: canterburyroaders@gmail.com

Postal Address: PO Box 2321, HAWTHORN, Victoria 3122

Enquiries: Michael Schauble: 0407 097427

Time for a couple of riddles

Answers on the back page

1. A murderer is condemned to death. He has to choose between three rooms:
The first is full of raging fires,
the second is full of assassins with loaded guns, and the third is full of lions that haven't eaten in 3 years.
Which room is safest for him?
2. Can you name three consecutive days without using the words Wednesday, Friday or Sunday?
3. What is black when you buy it, red when you use it, and gray when you dispose of it?
4. This is an unusual paragraph. I'm just curious as to just how quickly you can find out what is so unusual about it. It looks so plain and ordinary that you would think there is nothing wrong with it! It is highly unusual, though. Study it, think about it, but you still may not find anything odd. But, if you work on it a bit, you might find out.



Recorded comments by Police Officers in the USA



"Relax, the handcuffs are tight because they're new. They'll stretch after you wear them a while."

"If you run, you'll only go to jail tired."

"The answer to this last question will determine whether you are drunk or not. Was Mickey Mouse a cat or a dog?"

"Just how big were those 'two beers' you say you had?"

"You know, stop lights don't come any redder than the one you just went through."

"Can you run faster than 1200 feet per second? Because that's the speed of the bullet that'll be chasing you."

"Yeah, we have a quota. Two more tickets and my wife gets a toaster oven."

"You don't know how fast you were going? I guess that means I can write anything I want to on the ticket, huh?"

"I'm glad to hear that the Chief (of Police) is a personal friend of yours. So you know someone who can post your bail."

"Yes, sir, you can talk to the shift supervisor, but I don't think it will help. Oh, did I mention that I'm the shift supervisor?"

"Warning! You want a warning? O.K, I'm warning you not to do that again or I'll give you another ticket."

"Fair? You want me to be fair? Listen, fair is a place where you go to ride on rides, eat cotton candy and corn dogs and step in monkey poop."

"No sir, we don't have quotas anymore. We used to, but now we're allowed to write as many tickets as we can."

"You didn't think we give pretty women tickets? You're right, we don't.. Sign here."

"If you take your hands off the car, I'll make your birth certificate a worthless document."



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Answers to the riddles

1. The third room. Lions that haven't eaten in three years should be dead.
2. Three consecutive days would be *yesterday, today and tomorrow*
3. Charcoal, as it is used in barbecuing
4. The letter *e*, which is the most common letter used in the English language, does not appear even once in the paragraph.

