

WHAT ARE YOU GIVING UP?

This was the question being fired around the dinner table last week. Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Kids loaded up with immediate ideas and teachings from RE classes— some of them helpful. The discussion was a moment when the normally quiet and private narrative of our faith life had burst through the pack and was unashamedly front and centre. What are you giving up?

I tried to deflect the question and throw a curve ball by suggesting that we might not give up anything, but rather take something on over Lent. Bad luck Dad. Nice try. Get over it. What are you giving up? There was no point resisting. In the first place we went around the table remembering what we had given up last year. It was illuminating, particularly for discovering that I my eight year old daughter had given up Maltesers last year, and when questioned by her siblings admitted, with a smile somewhere between triumph and guilt, that she doesn't like them! Br Mark O'Connor picks up this question with a thought provoking reflection on giving up the 'Older Brother' syndrome.

Click [here to read the article](#)



MARIST ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Letter for the Year of the Consecrated Life, suggested that religious 'look to the past with gratitude, live the present with passion, and embrace the future with hope'. It is a statement that applies to many facets of life, and is well worth pondering. It captures succinctly three different doors through which people are joining the Marist Association. Many express enormous gratitude for the direction and support they have received from the Marist community, and for the life that has flowed from the practice of Marist spirituality, in the past. Looking back at the positive impact that 'Marist' has had on their life, galvanises their conviction to choose to deepen their commitment to its life and mission in coming years. Other people speak of the here and now, the present, as shaping their decision to join the Association. The energy and purpose they get from their hands-on experience of working alongside young people inspires them to explore how they can help carry forward Marist life, mission and spirituality. For others, joining the Marist Association is about growing a disposition of hope in the future. They are looking to experience further the life-giving message at the heart of the gospel, and are deliberately seeking the Association as a way of both practicing and nurturing their faith in the context of a Marist community. Click [here to read an update for the Marist Association](#)

ON THE HORIZON - REGIONAL GATHERINGS

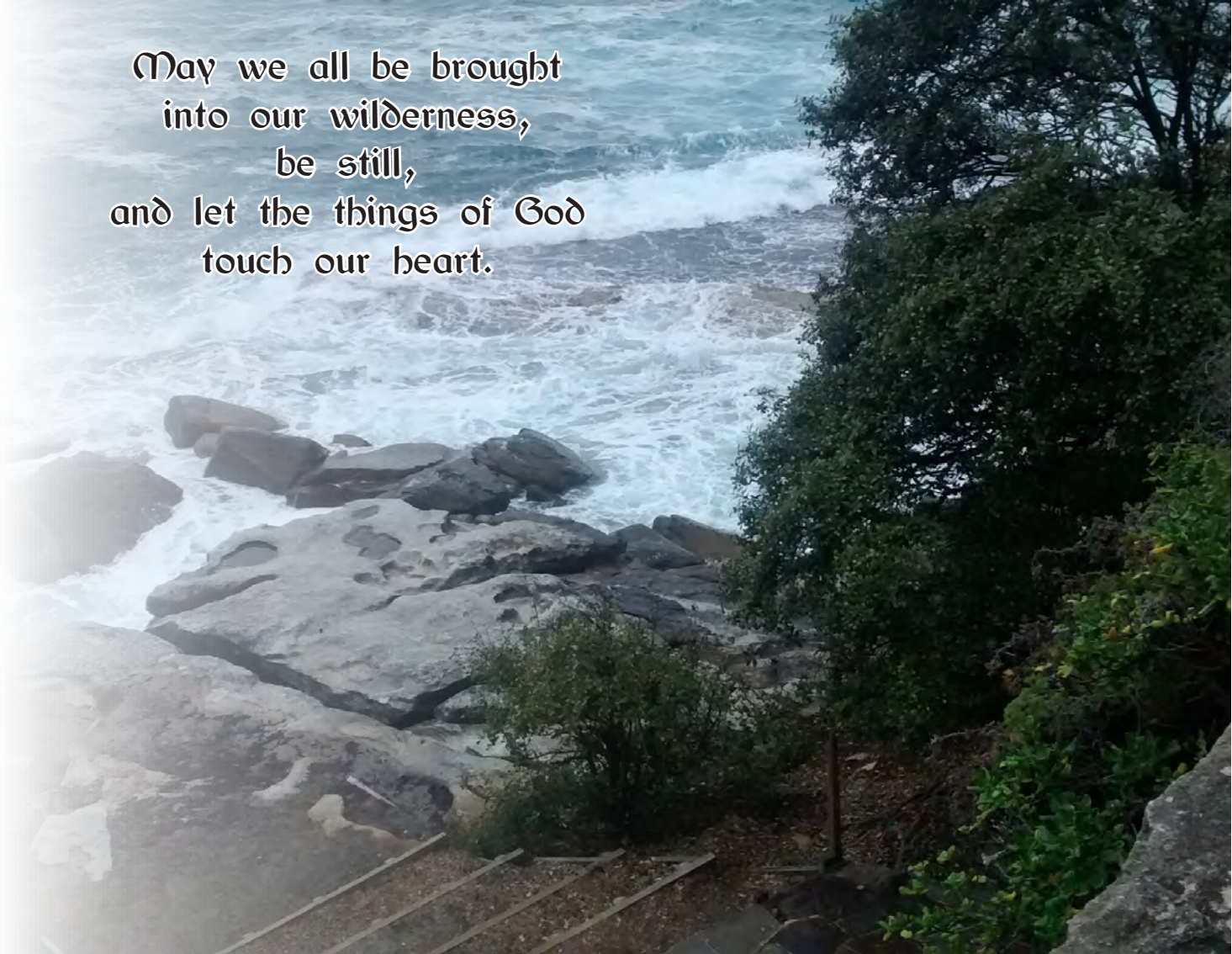
In the calendar window of May – July, people have joined the Marist Association or have expressed interest to join, will be participating in a Regional Gathering. There are 20 such regions across Australia. Local Coordinators for the Marist Association will be collaborating to propose a suitable date, time and venue. The program for these gatherings has been designed to be for a maximum of three hours, including a shared meal together.

LENTEN REFLECTION

Fr Michael Casey, reflecting on the fact that he had lived through many Lenten Seasons, posed this question at St Ambrose Parish on Ash Wednesday: “How do I make this Lent fresh, challenging, prayerful and spiritually nourishing?”

In Hosea 2:14 , God says of his people Israel: “I will now allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak to her heart.”

May we all be brought into our wilderness, be still, and let the things of God touch our heart.



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Honoring those awarded for outstanding contribution to Marist education or to Marist ministry

At each of the Marist Ministry Mass & Dinners held in Brisbane, Melbourne & Sydney at the end of 2014, individuals were recognized for their outstanding contribution to education or another aspect of Marist life and mission across the Province. A deep sense of gratitude and appreciation was extended to all recipients, who had all in their own way, had gone over and above in their work and life to serve those in their area of ministry. Whilst normally contextualized in ordinary circumstances, and simple surrounds, the stories of these people were rich and inspiring. We take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of those who received awards, whose names are listed:

Brisbane

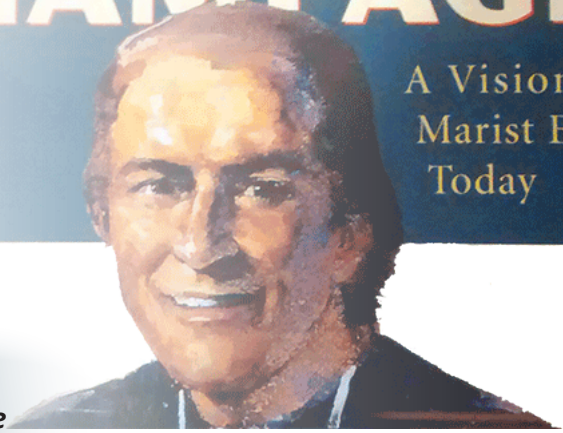
1. Cath Collier, Marist College Ashgrove
2. Michael Druce, Marist College Ashgrove
3. Tom Kruger, Burdekin Catholic High School
4. Eve McCormack, Marish College Ashgrove
5. Peter McWhirter, parent, Marish College Ashgrove
6. Diarmuid O'Riordan, St Peter Claver College Riverview
7. Megan Pettiford, Trinity College Beenleigh
8. John Pierce, St Mary's Catholic College Casino
9. Sam Puglisi, Mt Maria College Petrie
10. Mark Stower, Mt Maria College Mitchelton
11. Geraldine Swindells, St Peter Claver College Riverview
12. Derek Worden, Mt Maria College Mitchelton

Sydney

1. David Buckley, Australian Marist Solidarity
2. Sue Dein, St Gregory's College Campbelltown
3. Leonie Flynn, John Therry Catholic High School
4. James Gray, St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill
5. Ray Holmes, Trinity College Auburn
6. John Kelly, Mount Carmel Catholic College Varroville
7. Julia Lederwasch, St Francis Xavier's College Hamilton
8. Carmel Luck, Marist College Canberra
9. Chris Maley, Marist Youth Care
10. Tony McDonnell, Marist College North Shore
11. Chris Morrissey, Marist College Canberra
12. Christine Robertson, Marist College Canberra

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

A Vision for
Marist Education
Today



Melbourne

1. Margie Beck, Province
2. Phil Billington, Province
3. John Cadd, Sacred Heart College Senior
4. Peter Centra, Catholic College Sale
5. Peter Collins, Catholic College Sale
6. Matt de Jong, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Alice Springs
7. Michael Kenny, Assumption College Kilmore
8. Robert Tarraran, Lavalla Catholic College



HEARD THE LATEST BUZZ?

Frank Hough returns to Australia from PNG at the end of February. He first went to Madang in PNG in 1987 to be responsible for two scholastics studying at Divine Word Institute as it then was. This appointment followed on from his special training as a formator in Rome at the Rulla program. He went on to work as a formator in the Lomeri novitiate and at MAPAC Manila for extended periods. He was on the staff of the Formators' program at Valpré in France 1996-98 and ran a formators' program in Port Moresby for two years virtually solo. At two moments, in the late 90s and 2007, he worked at the John Berne school as a counsellor.

Frank continued to be a formation consultant for various congregations in PNG while working at Divine Word University for two years from 2011 before the Bishops asked him to be the National Director of Right Relations in Ministry (Professional Standards) for the whole Church, based in Port Moresby. He has

been in this position for the past two years and is much appreciated for his thorough work and advice. This included the production of a new policy for the Bishops of PNG and Solomon Islands on child protection. Frank himself was interviewed by media, including Radio Australia, on its launch.

Our thanks and appreciation to Frank for his years of dedicated service to the District and formation. As mentioned before, he is the last in a long line of Australian Brothers to live in Melanesia.

Frank will be in the community at Westmead. He will take a break before taking up a position in our Professional Standards Office at Drummoyne.



Fons Van Rooij has been enjoying a break with family since his return from Timor Leste in late January. In March he will be in Samoa working as a consultant with Br Siaosi, the Principal of St Joseph's Alafua. In April he will head off to Hawkestone Hall for a sabbatical.

All of the Australian Brothers at MAPAC – **Peter Rodney, Bryan Davis and Bill McCarthy** – will be taking home breaks at different times over the next couple of months. **Bryan** has been invited to Sri Lanka as he heads home to stay after six and a half years. **Ray Arthur** has been at MAPAC recently for a handover with Bryan in his work as formator there. Ray will move there from Westmead in May.

On his return to Australia in April Bryan will spend some time in Brisbane with his mother and then move down to Sydney. He will be based at Lidcombe initially before taking a sabbatical.

Dennis Cooper writes from Manziana that the mid-life renewal program is going ahead as planned. There were only three starters registered at the beginning of the year! There are now eight: six brothers from African countries, one Filipino and a Marist Father from Tonga who has been 12 years in Solomons. The program now runs for three months every two years, starting mid-March. Dennis is headed to the UK for a retreat and short program before then.

Greg McDonald travelled to Timor Leste recently for a week to prepare the ground for an immersion open to young men on the contact program.

Terry Heinrich spent a few weeks in Sydney recently for medical check-ups. He has now returned fit and well to Cambodia.

ASSOCIATION DEVELOPMENTS

Br Emili, Superior General, and **Br Michael Green** visited the Vatican last week. Their purpose was to brief the right person about our Association.

While this person gave a general welcome to the proposal and our support documentation, he indicated that it is a novel proposal to establish an 'aggregate of persons' who will collectively have canonical responsibility for ministries in the Church. That is, it will require more study on their side.

There is another group making a broadly similar proposal from Latin America – nothing to do with the Marists. The advice is that we let them go first. This means that we would not present our formal petition until mid-year.

The other question that came up was whether our proposal at the moment has enough international character to justify the Holy See becoming involved.

You would remember that last year we received support from the Superior General and General Council for us to proceed as a sort of 'pilot project' for the Institute. Given the comments received at the Vatican, the Superior General wants to study more closely the documentation the Institute should present now.

While all these conversations have been taking place, there have been many others at a more personal level between intending members and the Association Pastoral Team. For your information, the Mission Council has so far accepted 77 people as Association members with a further 222 having expressed interest and now in 'discernment' before formally applying. 89 Brothers have joined.

Local and Regional gatherings of the Association have started. Thanks for making the effort to build new relationships and to support one another in our faith.

The Spirit is truly at work.



Members of the Marist Association Team at Cronulla (10th and 11th February) discussing ways of strengthening connections between members of the Association and providing resources and structures to assist them. Time was also spent planning for the upcoming Regional Gatherings and the Mission Assembly in August.

from the left - Sharon Williams, Graham Neist fms, Joe McCarthy, Gail Coates, Anthony Shears fms and Paul Kane fms took the photo.

Your life is not about you. You are about life. After any true God experience, you know that you are a part of a much bigger whole. You are an instance of a universal and even eternal pattern.

Richard Rohr





We have just experienced the first national Marist Youth Festival in the Marist Brothers Province of Australia. It's been a hugely significant event in the Australian Marist and Catholic community, which has built on the tradition of exceptional Marist Justice Festivals in Melbourne and the Marist International Festival 2008. It's been a time where young people have nourished their relationship with God, in both heart and mind, and opened up new possibilities for their lives, communities and the world.

This report will summarise what happened at the Festival and the impact it has had on those who attended. This offers great hope for the future growth of the event, as we



create a home for young people and a place for them to encounter Christ in their lives.

The national Marist Youth Festival took place from 12 to 15 January, 2015 with the theme: 'JUST Living: Hearts without Borders'. All participants were accommodated for a live-in experience at Sancta Sophia College, Camperdown; and main events were held in the historic Locomotive Workshops at the Australian Technology Park, Eveleigh.

Thank you once again for your valued support and for sending students and teachers to the Marist Youth Festival. Participants' evaluations showed that the attendance of under and over 18s at MYF fostered a lively atmosphere, and a sense of community between students and post-school young Marists. I am confident this has provided participants with ongoing friendships, and a broad, supportive network in their faith journey for their time within and beyond school.

Yours sincerely,

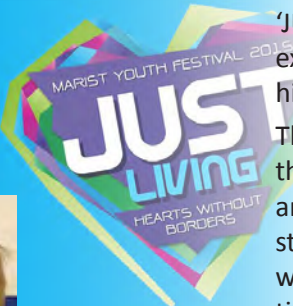
Joseph McDonald

Marist Youth Festival Logistics Coordinator

MYF15

REPORT

10 February, 2015





The Hermitage Mittagong

The Hermitage, through its Management Board is currently engaged in a process of discerning its future. It's almost ten years now since the last broad consultation took place. Out of that consultation Mittagong confirmed its identity as a centre of spirituality resulting in the reinstatement of the Chapel and a capital works program that improved and expanded the facilities. Since then, among other things, the Australian Province was erected, and the establishment of the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat is imminent. The first step of the process of imagining The Hermitage future was to replace the Charter of 2005 with a new statement that explains what The Hermitage is all about. The statement below is the foundation from which the priorities and plans for the future will be determined.

For thousands of years the traditional custodians, the Dharawal and Gundungarra people received physical and spiritual sustenance from the land around Mittagong. Since 1906 Marists have looked after this land and have shared in

the rich fruits of the inherent relationship between humans and the environment. It is the hill country (Lk. 1:39) where we, like Mary, acknowledge that the promise of the Lord has been fulfilled (Lk. 1:45).

The Hermitage is a space where nature and spirituality are intrinsically linked, where the human heart and spirit are nurtured by the serene environment. It is a place of rest and solace where peace is discovered and beauty enjoyed,

where all are invited to be still and know that God is here (Ps 46). The Hermitage is the Shabbat (Gen 2:2) on the Marist journey in making Jesus Christ known and loved, helping us to develop genuine care, respect and love for all people, and indeed all of

creation, as we strive to be true disciples of Jesus (Jn 13:35). It is an experience lovingly shared by Marists with guests from all parts of our society including school students and young people seeking spiritual enrichment in their lives.