



FROM THE PROVINCIAL'S DESK ...



1 July 2014

Dear Brothers and friends,

Much of our time at the last Provincial Council meeting was spent on discerning the application letters for the renewal of vows. This takes a great deal of prayer, time and *discernment*. It does not take this time only because we are fortunate to have 45 young brothers applying to renew their vows but mainly because of the importance of what we are *discerning*. Our recent experience of discernment helped me to choose a topic for this month: discernment in our lives as Marists and not only during this time of renewal but as a way of life for us all and at all times.

Someone I know recently expressed a judgement that amazed and even in some way disappointed me. I said to myself: "I thought he would have more discernment than that." The experience caused me to reflect on the importance of discernment and the dearth of it around us. True discernment means not only distinguishing the right from wrong but distinguishing the primary from secondary, and to look at what is essential. It can also mean distinguishing the good and the better, and even between the better and the best.

According to Wikipedia: **DISCERNMENT** is the activity of determining the value and quality of a certain subject or event, particularly the activity of going past the mere perception of

something and making detailed judgments about that thing. As a virtue, a discerning individual is considered to possess wisdom, and be of good judgment.

In **CHRISTIANITY**, the word discernment may have several meanings. It can be used to describe the process of determining God's desire in a situation or for one's life. In large part, it describes the interior search for an answer to the question of one's vocation, namely, determining whether or not God is calling one to the married life, single life, consecrated life, ordained ministry or any other calling.



We should try to make discernment a way of life. Our growth in the ability to discern wisely depends on our love of God and our trust in God's providence. The question we need to ask ourselves continually is: "What is God inviting me to be or do in this situation at this moment." Whenever we come to an important choice in life – what work we should do, who to be in relationship with, how to spend our time and efforts – we should do our best to discern what God wants of us. Discernment should become a way of life, we should discern these questions each

day and end the day examining how we lived the day's discernment in reality. Our goal should be in a love relationship with God that our choices lead us to a deeper relationship. If we wish to do discernment well we must come to the realization that God is good and desires good for us and all of His creation.

We need to believe that God has a right choice for us in each decision we make. Christian wisdom as demonstrated in the lives of the saints reveals two elements that are relevant to the question of discernment.

Firstly, God loves us and he cares about us in every detail of our lives when we seek to walk in his will in all things.

Secondly God has given us free will and reason because he wants us to use our will to make decisions.

St Augustine wrote a well-known expression: "Love God and then do what you will." In other words, if you truly love God and intend to do his will then, in fact, you will be doing what God wills.

1. ***Always begin with data***, with what we know for sure. Judge the unknown by the known, the uncertain by the certain. Adam and Eve neglected that principle in Eden and ignored God's clear command and warning for the devil's promised pig in a poke.
2. ***Let your heart educate your mind***. Let your love of God educate your reason in discerning his will. Jesus teaches this principle in John 7:17 to the Pharisees. (Would that certain Scripture scholars today would heed it!) They were asking how they could interpret his words, and he gave them the first principle of hermeneutics (the science of interpretation): "If you were to do the will of my Father, you would understand my teaching." The saints understand the Bible better than the theologians, because they understand its primary author, God, by loving him with their whole heart and their whole mind.
3. ***Have a soft heart but a hard head***. We should be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," sharp as a fox in thought but loyal as a dog in will and deed. Soft-heartedness does not excuse soft-headedness, and hard-headedness does not excuse hard-heartedness. In our hearts we should be "bleeding-heart liberals" and in our heads "stuck-in-the-mud conservatives."
4. ***All God's signs should line up***, by a kind of trigonometry. There are at least seven such signs: (1) scripture, (2) church teaching, (3) human reason (which God created), (4) the appropriate situation, or circumstances (which he controls by his providence), (5) conscience, our innate sense of right and wrong, (6) our individual personal bent or desire or instincts, and (7) prayer. Test your choice by holding it up before God's face. If one of these seven voices says no, don't do it. If none say no, do it.
5. ***Look for the fruits of the spirit***, especially the first three: love, joy, and peace. If we are angry and anxious and worried, loveless and joyless and peaceless, we have no right to say we are sure of being securely in God's will. Discernment itself should not be a stiff, brittle, anxious thing, but—since it too is part of God's will for our lives—loving and joyful and peace-filled, more like a game than a war, more like writing love letters than taking final exams.

There is much more that could be said about discernment. I believe that there is enough for us to think about in this short reflection.

I would like to end my message with a short incident that I think sums up what I have tried to write about in this letter.

When I was teaching religion I introduced a sentence to my students and asked them what they thought of this sentence. The sentence was "Wait for the light." Some thought it was beautiful. Others thought it was a good spiritual maxim to live by. Finally I told them where I had read it: I read it at the corner of an intersection that was flashing a warning: "Wait for the light."

So I ask you: "Do you make important decisions without first praying to Jesus for light? Rather, "wait for the light."

Yes, ***"Wait for the light"***.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following brothers

JULY

02/07/47	António Reis
09/07/92	Elia Madimba (nov. adm. 2014)
14/07/34	LAURENCE MORRISON 80
15/07/87	William Shibwengo
22/07/83	Ângelo Atibo
23/07/85	Boston Ngulube
25/07/70	Virgilio Bwalya
25/07/82	Jamal António
28/07/78	José Francisco (Richa)
29/07/69	Geraldo Medida



Br JOE WALTON - CALENDAR

JULY 2014

1 – 2	Lilongwe, Malawi
3 – 5	Likuni Malawi
6 – 10	Lilongwe, Malawi
11	Chassa, Zambia 60 th Anniversary Celebrations
12 – 13	Provincial Council Meeting, Chassa, Zambia
15 – 16	Chassa, Zambia
17 – 20	Lilongwe, Malawi
21 – 26	New Models of Animation, Governance & Management, Nairobi
27 – 31	Superiors of Africa meeting MIC Nairobi

AUGUST 2014

1 – 25	Lilongwe, Malawi
26	Fly to Johannesburg, South Africa
28	Fly to Luanda, Angola
30 – 31	Kuito, Diamond Jubilee of Brothers in Angola

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

Jul 12 – 13	Chassa, Zambia
Jul 21 – 26	Nairobi (New models for Animation & Government of the Institute –for African AU's)
Sep 1 - 2	Kuito Bié, Angola
Nov 13 -14	Lilongwe, Malawi



Celebrating 125 years in Jo'burg



Brave souls who ventured outside at dawn on Friday 6th June were battered by an icy gusting wind and discovered the cricket field and 4000 chairs covered in frost. Winter had arrived!! The mercury may have reached 13^oC that day but the wind chill factor plunged the maximum well below ten degrees!



After nine, well over 100 double-decker buses delivered the learners of St David's Marist College and Marist Brothers Linmeyer to join those from Sacred Heart and its Three-2-Six School for the children of refugees. Bright sunshine added but little comfort to the chill during the outdoor celebration led by the Archbishop of Johannesburg and half-a-dozen priests on a raised platform. There was a great spirit of family and collaboration among those preparing the event with each school playing a significant role – speakers, readers, a marimba band, a choral group, and a dramatization of the arrival of the Brothers by horse-drawn coach.

To mark the occasion participants were given a specially produced lapel button with a design based on the logo created for the 21st International General Chapter of 2009.



Champagnat Day Elsewhere



DETE

Brs. Ebel Muteveri, Misheck Mkanthama, Moffat Mbamera and Jacob Mutingwende prepare to multiply the Celebration Cake before sharing it with the multitudes!



ST MARCELLIN'S SKILLS CENTRE

Talk on the Founder (Kasongo Mwape), prayer, recreation, and a feast.



Teachers serve the luncheon while students enjoy it

Pilgrimage to Marian Shrine



Column with statue of Our Lady of Fatima

Each year during May, the Archdiocese of Maputo organises a pilgrimage to the shrine of Lady of Fatima at Namaacha on the border with Swaziland. Our novices and other Brothers took part this year.

Br **Felizardo Maceia** writes: *"It was inspiring to be in this place where thousands and thousands of pilgrims come for purification: Some come on foot for 24 or even 30 hours! I was amazed to witness the faith of those prepared to sleep under the stars during the chilly winter nights ..."*

Br **Paul Mbuyi** (novice admitted 2014) wrote of his personal experience:

"The D-day started very well with a lovely weather (at least for Matola) to embark on a journey of a life time. All energies were directed to the pilgrimage so as to get close and personal with Mary, our mother. I am sharing my experience during the recent pilgrimage to the shrine of our lady of Namaacha and how this experience enriched and changed my life for the better. For me, it was a journey to encountering God through Mary. Also a journey to self-discovery.

"The pilgrimage afforded me an opportunity to go a little deeper in my spiritual self to see the place of Mary in my life as I am contemplating Marist vocation. The occasion challenged me to look carefully at my devotion to Mary, my commitment to living out the Marial virtues.

"We arrived at Namaacha amid songs and dances of jubilation by the whole congregation of the faithful. Upon settling, we joined in. The rest of the day was packed with activities, starting with the Way of the Cross, led by the archbishop of Maputo himself, and later a well prepared and animated sacrifice of the Mass during which Mary our mother was interceding for all the sinners so that change of heart can take place through this journey of faith in Jesus.

The chilly weather did not deter the enthusiasm of the people, either the general ambiance.

"While some sick people were being ushered through to the shrine of Our Lady, with the hope of a healing through her intercession, others remained kneeling with lit candles in front of the statue of the Virgin Mary praying and singing for the rest of the evening. Seeing such devotion for the first time was inspiring.

"Then came the moment that everyone was anticipating: the procession. The event started a bit late in the night, with the weather plummeting below zero. What struck me in all this was the participation of the faithful. It was breath-taking! Men and women, young and old all alike, with rosaries in hands, behind the statue of Mary accompanying her during procession through the city centre. The procession lasted about an hour and half.



"The procession was then followed by an all-night adoration inside the main church. The adoration was organized into parishes and each parish had an hour of adoration. This exercise is another richness and blessing that God has endowed the Catholic Church with. The adoration went on till early Sunday morning.

"As they say, "After an encounter with God, one's life will never be the same." This pilgrimage has done exactly that to my life. Post-Namaacha has been different in a sense that, my outlook of Mary has changed for the better and in a positive way. My prayer life too, has improved drastically and, some deep rooted Christian values have been added to it. It was me journeying WITH and TO God.

"All Glory and Honour be to Jesus through Mary."

Pilgrimage to Rome & Champagnat Country



South African Marist Educators ...

Seen here at the renovated Cradle of the Institute in Lavalla, and in Marlies, at the École Marcellin Champagnat. Interestingly, Brother Tomás Sawayenga was able to take part in the pilgrimage at the expense of his government. (Funding is allocated for educational trips for teachers.)



Official Reception of Postulants 3 June 2014



POSTULANTS 2014

ARMANDO Antonio, MO
 CHAULA Benson, MA
 CHIBENGWA Mugove, ZI
 CHIMANGENI Aubrey, MA
 JAIRUSO Lazarus, MA
 KAPITO Oscar, MA
 KUDAKWASHE Blessed, ZI
 LAZARUS Joseph, MA
 MATEYU Augustin, MA
 PAULO Rufino, MO
 RAIMONDO Gerónimo, MO
 RODRICK Patrick, MA
 SOKO Jimmy, MA
 TATI Golden ZA

On behalf of the Provincial, Br Frank Mwambucha received 14 postulants at a simple ceremony attended by a number of Brothers and friends in Mtendere.

Special Patrons of the Brotherhood

ST. JOHN MASSIAS



1585-1645, (Feast: September 18). Born to a pious and impoverished Spanish noble family, he was orphaned young and worked as a shepherd on a South American cattle ranch around Cartagena. Feeling called by God to religious life, he entered the Dominicans in Lima, Peru on 23 January 1622. As a lay brother, John worked as porter or doorkeeper for his friary for over twenty years. Noted for visions, for his care for the poor of Lima, and for his endless praying of the Rosary, he offered all his prayers for the release of souls in Purgatory; tradition says that he freed over a million through his prayers. St. John was a friend of St. Martin de Porres. He was canonized in 1975 by Pope Paul VI.

Something to Think About

So, you ARE very wealthy!

A young man muttered at his bad luck and lack of money. He frowned all day. A wise senior came across to talk to him, 'Hey young man, why you are so unhappy?' 'I don't understand why I'm always so poor!' he said.

'Poor? I think you are very wealthy!' the wise senior said sincerely. The young man was puzzled. 'Why are you saying like that?' The wise senior asked, 'Suppose someone offers you one thousand dollars to cut your finger off. Will you do that?' 'Of course, not!' the young man replied. 'Suppose someone offers you ten thousand dollars to chop your leg off. Will you do that?' 'Certainly, not!' the young man replied. 'Suppose someone offers you hundred thousand dollars to scoop your eyes out. Will you do that?' 'Surely, not!' the young man replied. 'Suppose someone offers you one million dollars to turn you into a ninety-year-old man in a blink of an eye. Will you do that?' 'Definitely, not!' the young man replied. 'Suppose someone offers you ten million dollars to take your life right away. Will you do that?' 'Absolutely, not!' the young man replied. The wise senior said with a smile, 'That's right. You are already in possession of wealth more than ten million dollars. Why you are still lamenting for being so poor? We came with bare hands; we will leave with bare hands as well. Even though we have owned a kingdom of wealth, we can take nothing with us when the time comes. The real wealth is concealed in our innermost. If only we have our hearts at the right places, If only we do the right things at the right times, If only we are content with what we are have, we are never being poor! Happiness is to the one who is content!' After listening what to the wise senior was saying, it dawned upon the young man at last.

The more kindness we leave behind, the more harmony we will have in our world. I have always believed that if everyone does a good deed, bit by bit, we can create a harmonious world.

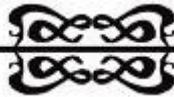


MARIST BICENTENARY

Message of Br Emili Turú, Superior General

It was January 2, 1817. Marcellin Champagnat returned home with two young men. He dreamt that they – together with many more in the future – would carry the Gospel to the children and young people most in need. We consider this as the date of foundation of the Marist Institute. January 2, 2017 will mark the bicentenary of this event. What a wonderful moment to recall with grateful hearts, all the good the Holy Spirit has accomplished in the Church and in the world through the Marist Institute. In the course of these 200 years, many generations of children and young people have benefited from Marist education throughout the five continents. At the same

time, it will be an opportunity to ask forgiveness for our infidelities and for the times we have failed to serve faithfully the children and young people entrusted to our care. But, above all, it must be a moment to launch ourselves into the future, into the third centenary of our Marist Institute. What a wonderful opportunity for A NEW BEGINNING!



2017: A new beginning

Bicentenary of the foundation of the Institute

January 2, 2017 will mark the bicentenary of the Institute. On the road to 2017, Father Champagnat himself invites us to a **new beginning**. And this requires the commitment and cooperation of each one of us. To help us, **three Marist icons will guide us** on our journey. Three icons that recall essential aspects of our life and mission. Three dimensions that will most probably impact Marist life in the near future:

1. **Montagne - October 2014 – July 2015**

On October 28, 2014, anniversary of Father Champagnat's meeting with the young Montagne, we will begin the 'Montagne Year'.

2. **Fourvière July 2015 – July 2016**

On July 23, 1816, the day after their ordination, a group of young priests, full of enthusiasm, travelled to the shrine of Fourvière in Lyon.

3. **La Valla August 2016 – August 2017**

The icon that will guide our third year, from August 2016 to August 2017, is the house at La Valla.

Three Icons preparing for the Bicentenary



2 Fourvière Marian Shrine



1 Marcellin Champagnat meets Jean-Baptiste Montagne



3. Lavalla, Cradle of the Institute