



PROVINCE OF SOUTH ASIA

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS August 2016

Thank you

Dear Marists,

This is the last issue of news and announcements from my desk as I am going to end my term of Office as Provincial in August this year. I thought it would be appropriate, and indeed essential, to express my gratitude to each and every one of you who have helped and supported me in my efforts to communicate news from our Marist family throughout the Province of South Asia.



I really appreciate your contributions. Communication is a vital human activity that enables us to keep in contact with one another. Reading news from the previous month and learning what will take place in the upcoming month helps us focus our attention on the activities of our Province and stirs up interest in the life and work of our fellow Marist brothers and sisters in this treasured region of the world.

First of all I want to thank all those who readily set aside time in their day-to-day work and regularly send news items to our office. At this moment I'm remembering with deep gratitude my dear friend Brother Gerard Brereton in the USA, whose diligent work in editing the news items each month has helped us publish the Letter in a timely way. I'd like to also praise the efficient work done by Mr. Sudarshana, our Provincial Secretary, whose expertise in formatting each edition make it so appealing. And I would feel negligent if I failed to thank all of you our readers, who look forward to receiving the Newsletter and enjoying the stories about what is taking place in Marist India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

As I bid you farewell through this final Newsletter my ardent hope and wholehearted wish is that the news and reflections that we have shared over the years will encourage and inspire all of us Marists to be God's ambassadors of **JOY**, which I interpret as **J**esus and **O**thers touching **Y**ou.



I will conclude my thank you note with the now familiar words of Pope Francis when he addressed a gathering of religious brothers and sisters in South Korea. "Joy is a gift of the Holy Spirit. He will grant it to us only when we nourish it by a life of prayer, meditation on the Word of God, and celebrating Christ's Presence in the Sacraments and our life in community."

AN EXCERPT FROM THE MESSAGE OF BROTHER EMILI TURU, OUR SUPERIOR GENERAL, CONCERNING THE BICENTENNIAL OF OUR INSTITUTE

La Valla

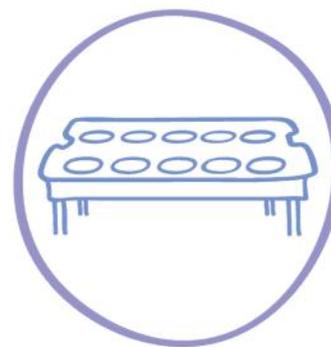
August 2016 – August 2017

The icon that will guide our third year, from August 2016 to August 2017, is the house at La Valla. The central celebration, as you can imagine, will take place around January the 2nd, when we will celebrate 200 years of our foundation. This recently renovated house has three floors. Each of them has a symbolism we can link with the three years of preparation for the bicentenary.

We are now on the upper floor. The Apostolic Community, also gathered together in the upper room at Pentecost, immediately comes to mind. It is the space of mission: go and make disciples all over the world... The room is spacious, bright, and open to the world. It evokes the 'Montagne Year', and the call to move to the frontiers and to the margins of society.

On the ground floor, we have the famous table of our origins, symbol of our fraternity. Father Champagnat and the first brothers sat around this table. Today it is enriched by the presence not only of brothers, but also of Marist laity, men and women, called to build a Church with a Marian face. This is the icon for the second year, the year of 'Fourvière': partners in the Marist mission.

As an immediate preparation for the 22nd General Chapter, the third year will focus more on this part of the house that remained, until recently, hidden to visitors. It is a small underground space. To get there we must 'go down'. It symbolizes that inner space in which each of us is inhabited by the Mystery. It is the space of interiority, the mystical dimension of our lives. We know that commitment to spiritual growth was a fundamental element for Father Champagnat: his deep spirit of faith opened him quite naturally to the Presence of God, whether in the forests of the Hermitage or in the noisy streets of Paris. To live like him involves cultivating silence, dedicating enough time to personal and community prayer, and listening to the Word of God, like Mary at the Annunciation. Like her, who kept and meditated everything in her heart, we strive to become contemplatives in action.



2016|2017
La Valla

Sri Lanka

FINAL VOWS-BRO. CHAMARA HETTIARACHCHI

The Final Vows ceremony of Bro. Chamara Hettiarachchi will be held on Sunday 28th of August at 4.00 p.m. at the Maris Stella College chapel in Negombo, Sri Lanka . During the Holy Eucharist Bro. Chamara will commit to live out the rest of his life through the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience within the Congregation of the Marist Brothers of Schools. The Chief celebrant is Rev. Father Sudam Perera, the Principal of Holy Cross College Branch School, Payagala.



As a preparation for his Final Profession, Bro. Chamara along with four other Brothers from the Asia region followed a two month discernment programme in Lomeri, Fiji under the guidance of Bro. Barry Burns of New Zealand.

While thanking Bro. Chamara for his commitment and for saying yes to God let us ask the grace of our brother Jesus through the intercession of Mary and Marcellin Champagnat for him to bring the love of God to all whom he will serve, and most specially to children and young people who are neglected and marginalized.

We invite all the Brothers residing in Sri Lanka to attend the ceremony.

TUDELLA NOVITIATE FOURVIERE BICENTENARY CELEBRATIONS 2016

On July 23rd, the International Novitiate community at Tudella invited the neighbouring Marist communities from Negombo and Nugegoda, including the two Marist youth groups, Marist ex-students and Marist associates to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Marist pledge at Fourviere. The ceremonies began with a cordial welcome and then a ceremonial climbing of the stairs to the place of celebration, which featured a model of the shrine of Our Lady at Fourviere crafted by Wang Peng, a novice from China. After a welcome from the Novice Master and a presentation on the significance of Fourviere by Brother Rod Thomson, twelve novices and postulants read aloud the Fourviere pledge and re-enacted its signing ceremony. All present were then invited to sign a shortened version of the pledge that was placed on the altar during the Mass. This will be kept in the Marist archives for the next 100 years.

The Novitiate Chaplain, Father Nandana, then led us in the Eucharist and all joined in the celebration in Sinhala, Tamil and English. Brother Rod and the Novices and Postulants led the singing and all joined in. Brother Peter spoke about Fourviere and the need for us to not only celebrate this event but rededicate ourselves to the Marist dream.



Bro. Peter Walsh

AGE GROUP MEETING

The 60 to 70 age group met in Jaffna July 2nd and 3rd to celebrate the 49th anniversary of the First Profession of Bros. Noel, Ephrem and Charles. It was the 48th Anniversary of Bros. Francis, Sunil and Shanthi. It was also a solemn occasion of installing the Blessed Sacrament in the Brothers' house. Fr. Jero, the Rector of St. Patrick's, celebrated Holy Mass for us, along with several priest friends of Ephrem and Francis. Fr.



Rector spoke in glowing terms of the work of Ephrem and Francis and paid tribute to the Marist Brothers. Holy Mass was followed by fellowship. Dinner was inimitable in the style of Ephrem.

Mr. Brian Sullivan, a close friend of the Marist Brothers in Scotland also was with us. He entertained us playing Great Highland Bagpipe music, the traditional folk music of Scotland.

The Sunday morning hours were devoted to discussions on the REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTIONS, a Consultation on the First Draft. It was heartening to see everyone getting involved with lots of enthusiasm.



We missed our friends Charlie and Victor who were not in the best of health, and Sunil who is stationed in Pakistan. The group is very grateful to Ephrem and Francis for their warm hospitality that made us feel very much at home.

Thanks Shanthi for driving us safely.

The 60-to-70 age group goes from strength to strength. Father. Champagnat can truly say of us, "See how they love one another."

Bro. Godfrey Perera

India

In June and July we had a busy time in India with our friends and visitors from Scotland and Australia. The opening of the New Academic year, with schools welcoming back their students after summer vacation, kept us on our toes.

IMMERSION GROUPS FROM AUSTRALIA AND SCOTLAND

We had the privilege of entertaining two groups of students from Australia and Scotland who visited us with their teachers. The two groups went to our Schools in P. Udayapatti, Mangamanuthu and Viyalanmedu for their immersion and returned speaking of the wonderful experiences and lifestyle they enjoyed with our students and their families. We were privileged to have them for the Rainbow family support group meeting. They were not mere



spectators but very active participants, singing and dancing beautifully and mixing with the Rainbow children as well as adults. The day brought great joy to both the visitors and their hosts.



FINAL VISIT OF BROTHER SHANTHI AS PROVINCIAL

It was a great gesture of love and affection for Brother Provincial to come to India for his final visit. He described it as a visit to say 'Thank you.' He arrived in India on July 7th and visited all the communities with personal interviews to boost the spirit of the Brothers and encourage them in their life and mission as Marists. The very warm welcome given by each and every Brother, and the positive response he gave them made all of us feel that we were blessed to have him as our Provincial for the past six years. Each community thanked him and organized a Farewell. We feel that the farewell we gave him and his goodbyes are not so much the end of a chapter but the beginning of a long-lasting relationship of love, care and brotherhood. Brother Shanthi left India on July 14th.



RAINBOW FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

The Rainbow family support-group meeting was held on July 10th and our Honorable Guest was Reverend Brother Shanthi fms, South Asia Provincial. Our special guests were Reverend Brother Johnson fms, P.U. Community leader, and Miss Priyanka, Professor at Bharithi Dhasan University. The program was designed and organized by our Rainbow children from the Marcellin Club. They entertained us with some remarkable performances. Brother Saul, Director of the Marcellin Trust, Brother Rajakumar, Mr. Raja and the Rainbow staff had invited several artists who entertained the members of the Rainbow Project free of charge. Brother Shanthi was commended for his great support for the Marcellin Trust and in particular the Rainbow Project. In his remarks, Brother Shanthi said that this was a unique place where Marists demonstrate and share the love of Jesus with underprivileged children, youth and adults who are most in need.

EXTENSION OF "LAVALLA TUITION CENTERS"

We are happy and proud to announce the extension of the Lavalla free tuition centers in six places in and around Trichi, after the summer holidays. There are many children, boys and girls, who come to these centers in the evenings to learn more and do their school assignments. The brothers along with volunteer teachers help the children with school stationery such as Note Books, Pens, Pencils, Drawing Books, Color Pencils etc. We firmly believe that the children who attend these centers will not only derive personal benefits but also be an example and inspire their brothers and sisters.

Bro. Saul Placious

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The birthday celebration of Brother Johnson Sekar, the Community Leader at our P. Udayapatti community was held on 18th of July. It was a joyful day for the Brothers as well as the children in the school. The three senior members of the community sang



HAPPY BIRTHDAY and appreciated the love and care he has for them. A thanksgiving Mass was offered by Father Philip Anthony for the gift of life of Johnson. Cutting the birthday cake, followed by fellowship and planting a sapling with assistance from the school children were special features of this wonderful celebrations



Pakistan

CLASSES FOR STUDENTS NEEDING EXTRA HELP, ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL, PESHAWAR

In collaboration with the 'Year of Mercy' during these summer holidays we have organized some extra classes for the students who are doing poorly in their studies. Although we wanted to start this project at the beginning of the month we had to postpone it to the last week of July due to the scorching heat and the Ramadan fast. We thank the teachers who consented to conduct the classes without any remuneration. Most of these students are from poor families and are unable to go for tuition classes. The program will end on August 12th.

MARIST YOUTH SOCIETY

After the recently concluded vocation camp in Sargodha, the 6 young lads from Peshawar who participated in the camp have shown a keen interest in forming a 'Marist Youth Society'. We are very much touched by their enthusiasm and are in the process of forming the society.



ANNUAL RETREAT OF THE MARIST BROTHERS IN PAKISTAN

Brothers of Pakistan Sector of South Asia began their annual retreat on July 7th 2016 in Murree Hills. We had Reverend Father Jamil Albert, OFM as our facilitator. The theme of the retreat was 'Year of Mercy.' We are grateful to Father Jamil for accepting the invitation and coming to conduct the retreat although he had a busy schedule. Father Jamil, with his knowledge and life experiences, gave us a wonderful retreat. We Brothers made a resolution to apply what we have learned from the retreat, in our schools and in the places where we live and work. We seek the blessings of God Almighty so that He will help us carry out acts of Mercy in our communities, schools and society. Let all of us be good Samaritans.



SEMINAR ON “IDENTITY AND MISSION OF RELIGIOUS BROTHERS”

On July 12th we Brothers attended a Seminar on the Vatican document “The identity and Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church.” It was conducted by our own Brother Kamran. We are very thankful to Brother Kamran for having taken the initiative and organized the seminar. It was well prepared and very informative, inspiring as well as challenging. The Brothers had a fairly lengthy discussion about how we could be Brothers in a new way. The sharing was life-giving and deepened our understanding of our vocation. Each one took an active role and we are all determined to embrace our future as dedicated Brothers in making Jesus Christ known and loved to children and young people on the peripheries.



REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

After having studied the draft and set aside the entire morning for personal reading and reflection, the Brothers came together in the early afternoon to share their responses to the questions provided. Brother Paul Bhatti facilitated the day and also acted as the secretary for the group. The Brothers were very happy with the draft and felt that it was well done, quite accurate, precise and to the point. They expressed their gratitude for the hard work of the commission.



Bro. Anthony Qummar

VOCATION CAMP

On the 18th and 19th of July a Vocation Camp for the young men was organized and held at Sargodha Catholic High School. Out of 10 expected participants, 6 young men from Peshawar and 1 from Sargodha attended this vocation Camp. The two candidates, Imran and Sharoon along with Brothers in the Sargodha and Peshawar Communities attended the camp.

Br. Francis facilitated the program for the first day, July 18th. The theme of the day was Christian Vocation. Some of the themes addressed included the meaning of Vocation and how and why God calls us. The Vocation stories of the Prophet Isaiah and of Mary were highlighted.

To introduce the next day’s topic, Mrs. Josephine and Ms. Maria Nelum, our lay Marists and teachers from Sargodha Catholic High School, shared their



experiences of being Marist. Their experiences were rich and inspiring.

Brother Karman facilitated the second day of the Camp. The specific theme of the day was the Marist Vocation to Brotherhood. The Vocation of St. Marcellin Champagnat, Marist Spirituality and other elements of Marist life were shared with the participants.

Mr. Anil, our Lay Marist, shared his experiences about how he and other men and women, in working with the Brothers and practicing Marist Spirituality, have had their lives changed and as a consequence are becoming streams of living water for others.

In the afternoon participants went to a nearby swimming pool to enjoy relief from the very hot weather.

The afternoon session was given by Brother Paul Bhatti. He explained the nature of our Marist Institute, requirements to join the Brothers, and the various stages of formation.



The Camp ended with a Eucharistic celebration on the morning of the 20th morning. Father Nasir William celebrated Mass and prayed in thanksgiving for the life, Vocation and services of the Brothers, and also for an increase in Vocations to our Marist Brotherhood.

Bro. Paul Bhatti

EVENTS IN AUGUST

- 1st to 7th Directed Retreat at Fatima Retreat House, Lewella
- 2nd to 10th Personal retreat Nick and Godfrey, Kanduboda Vipassa Meditation Center
- 7th Chinnappan will leave to participate in the Threshold Program in Rome, August 8th to October 13th
- 11th Arrival of Brother Michael de Waas
- 14th Province picnic
- 15th Pakistan schools reopen for the 2nd Term
- 24th ... Arrival of Chapter members and the facilitators, Brothers Philip Pinto and Joe McKee, and our Brothers from Pakistan and India
- 26th - 28th 5th South Asia Provincial Chapter at Bolawalana Good Shepherd Retreat Center
- 28th Final vows ceremony of Bro. Chamara Hettiarachchi
- 31st Sri Lanka Schools reopen for the 3rd Term

Birthdays August and September

Happy Birthday

August

04th Malangmei T. (91) 8967499020
05th Lazar H. Sebastian (91) 9786438418
23rd Michael De Waas (39) 3298089009
31st Chamara Hettiarachchi (94) 710999371

September

04th , Remigius Fernando (92) 3067153403
08th , Biniamin Masih (92) 3360966161
13th , Lawrence Perera (94) 317200873

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR

- ❖ A/L students of Sri Lanka sitting for the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination from the 1st of August
- ❖ Brother Eugene Kabanguka, General Councilor
- ❖ Our Senior Brothers
- ❖ Brother Mervyn's Sister,
- ❖ Success of the Chapter

THE MASTER'S LESSON ON GRATITUDE



According to legend, while roaming the desert a young man came across a spring of delicious crystal-clear water. The water was so sweet he filled his leather canteen so he could bring some back to a tribal elder who had been his teacher.

After a four-day journey he presented the water to the old man who took a deep drink, smiled warmly and thanked his student lavishly for the sweet water. The young man returned to his village with a happy heart.

Later, the teacher let another student taste the water. He spat it out, saying it was awful. It apparently had become stale because of the old leather container.

The student challenged his teacher: "Master, the water was foul. Why did you pretend to like it?"

The teacher replied, "You only tasted the water. I tasted the gift. The water was simply the container for an act of loving-kindness, and nothing could be sweeter."!!!

May God Bless you!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bro. Shanthi Liyanage".

Bro. Shanthi Liyanage, FMS
Provincial, South Asia.