



marists 2017
a new beginning



Community Bulletin



Aotearoa New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji, American Samoa, Kiribati

November 2016

Among other things this edition contains:

- All Souls Day at Panmure
- All Saints Day celebrated in Samoa
- Champagnat Marists out and about
- World Youth Day
- Catholic Cathedral College goes visiting
- Beatitudes for Today
- Christian Meditation
- Fourviere History
- Our Formation Journey
- The Audacity of the Improbable
- Bicentennial Calendar of Events coming up
- Gospel commentaries for December
- District Calendar and 'A Passing Thought'
- New Principals for our schools in Samoa
- Champagnat Marist Pillars for Community Life

In 2016 each edition of the *Community Bulletin* will have an article related to the Year of Mercy and Fourvière Year.

Cover image

The image on the cover of the *Community Bulletin* is a model of the "Black Madonna" found in the Chapel at Fourviere. which has always been a popular place of pilgrimage. There has been a shrine at Fourviere dedicated to Our Lady since 1170. On 23rd July 1816 twelve Marist aspirants, priests and seminarians, climbed the hill to the shrine of Our Lady of Fourviere and placed their promise to found the Society of Mary (Marists) under the corporal on the altar while Jean-Claude Courveille celebrated Mass.



Marcellin Champagnat **The Apostle of Youth** **A New Beginning for us all**

All Souls Day at Panmure

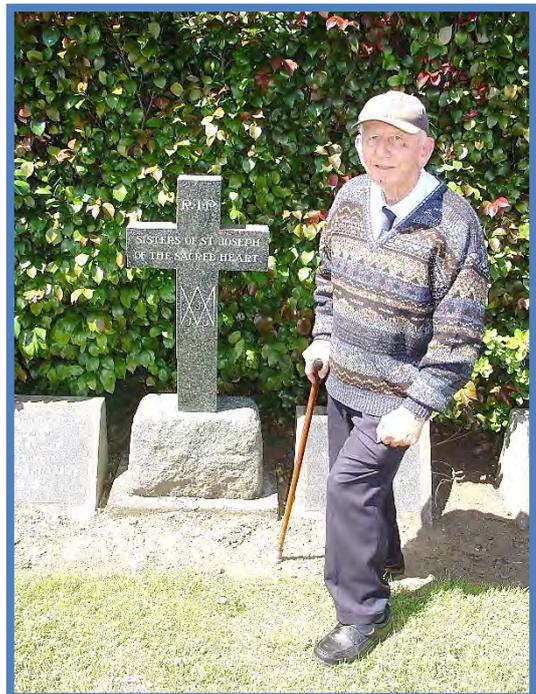
On the first Sunday afternoon in November thirty Brothers gathered at the Panmure Cemetery attached to St Patrick's Church to honour the twenty-nine Brothers buried there plus other people we knew of who had died over the recent months.



Gathered in the church we listened to various Brothers talk of Brothers and others that we knew of as we acknowledge their wonderfully generous lives. After prayers for these people we wandered the cemetery with our memories before retiring to the 48 Crossfield Community for afternoon tea and a continuation of our sharing the lives of these great people.



Brothers Michael, John and Peter checking out some of the graves while Brother John (on the right) checks out his aunt's grave among the Sisters of St Joseph section.



Not all the Brothers are buried together so the hunt was on to find the others.

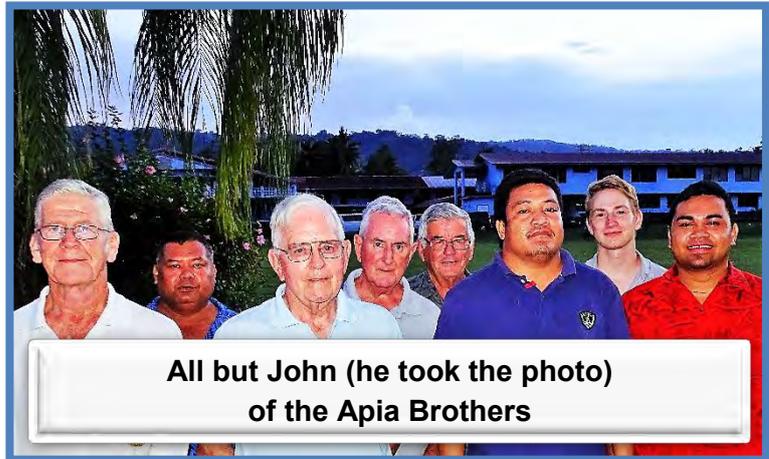


All Saints Day in Samoa

Brother Humphrey Reports

We had a very good school celebration for All Saints. Each classroom has a patron saint; whose name features above the door. Teachers and boys brought balloons and flowers, AND FOOD. They always give a share to the staff, so at morning break we were treated to a queue of boys bearing delicacies, e.g. roast chicken, palusami, taro, ice cream, fruit salad, cooked pork, cakes, buns, to name

just a few. We three Bros then toured the classrooms and gave each class a brand new gift - a rugby ball. Very well received! At lunch break every ball was being kicked or passed around by hordes of kids having a great time. All donated by local firms and Sacred Heart College Glen Innes. A very happy day.



**All but John (he took the photo)
of the Apia Brothers**



Year 4 - three class leaders

even better when a group of players appeared with a gift: four dozen bottles of Vailima lager, and very nice too.

That afternoon John and I did our weekly shop as usual at Chan Mow's supermarket, owned by Komisi Chan Mow, 71, old boy of Marist Mulivai and St Paul's Auckland. A very friendly and generous old boy, whom we try to avoid when we shop because he is always so good to us. Anyway we both ran into him as soon as we entered the place, so John said he'd do the shopping and I would talk with Komisi, who loves to chat. A most interesting man, 71, one of



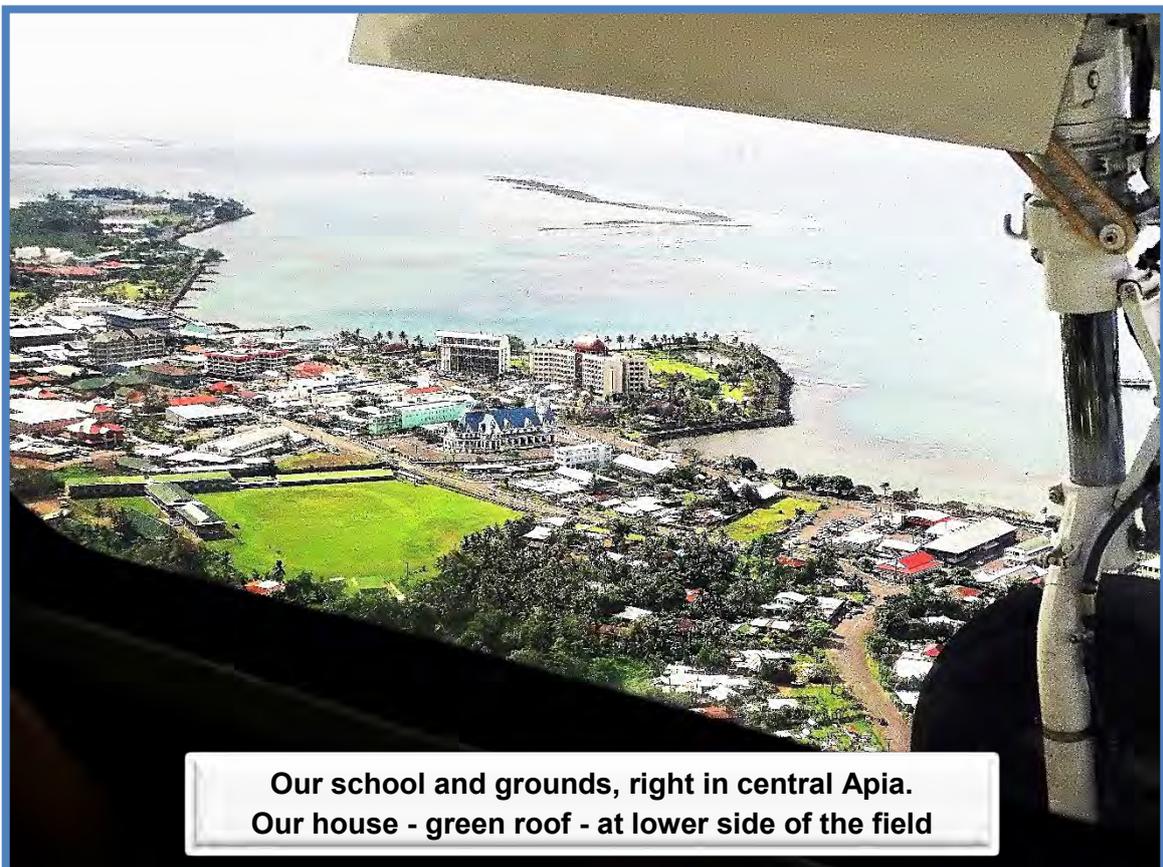
A Year 3 class

ALL SAINTS DAY IN SAMOA

the top businessmen in Samoa and not a line on his face. He said something to one of the staff and suddenly a huge leg of lamb appeared with the price tag removed, then as we finished at the checkout he spoke to another worker who soon appeared with a crate of beer "to go with the roast"! Then to finish off this festival of food, I called in at Rosie's Cake Shop near Apia Park with an A4 paper copy of a photo I took in 1966 of the family, Arnulf and Laura Keil and their five young children, the youngest still a baby, who had a little store just across the road from us at SJC in the 60s. I had heard that Rosie was a Keil, so I took the photo to her shop yesterday and asked her if she knew the people in the photo. She was very excited telling me that it was a photo of her parents and their five children, and that she was the baby! She had never seen the photo before, so I told her I'd make A4 copies for her, her mother, 81, who is in the only rest home here, and her brother and sister. I had them laminated at school and will deliver them this afternoon. I had kept all my slides in airtight containers here, and in cool dry places in NZ, with the result that they are as good as new - no mould or fading. So the copies have come out very colourful and clear still; they will make a nice gift. You have been waiting for the punchline, so here it is. Rosie said something to one of her staff and out from the bakery behind the shop came a fruit cake about 18 inches in diameter, followed by a very large tray of custard pie which was much too big for our fridge so it is now in the deep freeze waiting for a big crowd to turn up here. A great food festival to start the month.



With a Year 3 boy



**Our school and grounds, right in central Apia.
Our house - green roof - at lower side of the field**

Champagnat Marists in Action



A number of Brothers plus Cilla and Catalina braved the elements recently to enjoy their Wellbeing morning with a ferry trip to Waiheke Island enjoying each other's company and refreshments on board. Here we see Brothers Bryan and Joseph, Catalina, Brothers David, Colin, Brian and Emilian.



Bishop Steve Lowe from Hamilton visited the Brothers at 48 Crossfield Road and brought along his friend Tony Scott, a former Brother and a cousin of Brother Paul Scott, who was always a great friend of the Brothers at Claremont and Timaru. Here we See Brothers Richard and Brian, Tony, Brothers Fidelis, Gabriel and Rupert.

World Youth Day

Brother Osmund Macnamara with Pope Francis



In July 2016, the Polish City of Krakow hosted World Youth Day (WYD). About two million young people from all over the world visited the city on the Vistula River to hear and see Pope Francis.

Pope Francis chose the city of Krakow for its strong ties with Saint John Paul II. The Polish Pope was not only closely connected to Krakow throughout his life as a Priest, he also initiated World Youth Day. The first such meeting took place in Rome in 1985. Since then, it has taken place every two or three years in various places around the globe.

See if you can spot Brother Osmund in the photo!

From the Catholic Diocese of Dunedin 'Tablet'

Catholic Cathedral College Visit Timaru

Brother Osmund Reports

Year 10 Students from Catholic Cathedral College in Christchurch made a visit to Timaru and environs recently guided by Brother Osmund.



Meeting Sacred Heart Primary School Principal (Mr David Armstrong) and DRS (Mrs Bernadette Grogan)



Marcellin Champagnat presentation by CCC students to Sacred Heart students





After a visit around the school grounds (formerly Marist Brothers' School) it was on to Claremont, our former Novitiate, and then a chance to visit the Brothers' Graves at Temuka



Visit to Temuka Cemetery and the Brothers' Headstones

Beatitudes for Today

The following is Pope Francis' sermon for the feast of All Saints in which offered a new list of Beatitudes for modern Christians.

Today, with the entire Church, we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. In doing so, we remember not only those who have been proclaimed saints through the ages, but also our many brothers and sisters who, in a quiet and unassuming way, lived their Christian life in the fullness of faith and love. Surely among them are many of our relatives, friends and acquaintances.

Ours, then, is a celebration of holiness. A holiness that is seen not so much in great deeds and extraordinary events, but rather in daily fidelity to the demands of our baptism. A holiness that consists in the love of God and the love of our brothers and sisters. A love that remains faithful to the point of self-renunciation and complete devotion to others. We think of the lives of all those mothers and fathers who sacrifice for their families and are prepared to forego – though it is not always easy – so many things, so many personal plans and projects.

Yet if there is one thing typical of the saints, it is that they are genuinely happy. They found the secret of authentic happiness, which lies deep within the soul and has its source in the love of God. That is why we call the saints blessed. The Beatitudes are their path, their goal, their native land. The Beatitudes are the way of life that the Lord teaches us, so that we can follow in his footsteps. In the Gospel of today's Mass, we heard how Jesus proclaimed the Beatitudes before a great crowd on the hill by the Sea of Galilee.

The Beatitudes are the image of Christ and consequently of each Christian. Here I would like to mention only one: "Blessed are the meek". Jesus says of himself: "Learn from me for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Mt 11:29). This is his spiritual portrait and it reveals the abundance of his love. Meekness is a way of living and acting that draws us close to Jesus and to one another. It enables us to set aside everything that divides and estranges us, and to find ever new ways to advance along the path of unity. So it was with sons and daughters of this land, including St Mary Elizabeth Hesselblad, recently canonized, and St Bridget, Birgitta of Vadstena, co-patron of Europe. They prayed and worked to create bonds of unity and fellowship between Christians. One very eloquent sign of this is that here in your country, marked as it is by the coexistence of quite different peoples, we are jointly commemorating the fifth centenary of the Reformation. The saints bring about change through meekness of heart. With that meekness, we come to understand the grandeur of God and worship him with sincere hearts. For meekness is the attitude of those who have nothing to lose, because their only wealth is God.

BEATITUDES FOR TODAY

The Beatitudes are in some sense the Christian's identity card. They identify us as followers of Jesus. We are called to be blessed, to be followers of Jesus, to confront the troubles and anxieties of our age with the spirit and love of Jesus. Thus we ought to be able to recognize and respond to new situations with fresh spiritual energy.

- Blessed are those who remain faithful while enduring evils inflicted on them by others, and forgive them from their heart.
- Blessed are those who look into the eyes of the abandoned and marginalized, and show them their closeness.
- Blessed are those who see God in every person, and strive to make others also discover him.
- Blessed are those who protect and care for our common home.
- Blessed are those who renounce their own comfort in order to help others.
- Blessed are those who pray and work for full communion between Christians.

All these are messengers of God's mercy and tenderness, and surely they will receive from him their merited reward.

Dear brothers and sisters, the call to holiness is directed to everyone and must be received from the Lord in a spirit of faith. The saints spur us on by their lives and their intercession before God, and we ourselves need one another if we are to become saints. Together let us implore the grace to accept this call with joy and to join in bringing it to fulfilment. To our heavenly Mother, Queen of All Saints, we entrust our intentions and the dialogue aimed at the full communion of all Christians, so that we may be blessed in our efforts and may attain holiness in unity.



Christian Meditation

This material is sourced from the website <http://wccm.org/content/what-meditation>

Open to all ways of wisdom and drawing directly from the early Christian teaching John Main summarised the practice of Christian meditation in this simple way:

Sit down. Sit still with your back straight. Close your eyes lightly. Then interiorly, silently begin to recite a single word – a prayer word or mantra. We recommend the ancient Christian prayer-word "Maranatha". Say it as four equal syllables. Breathe normally and give your full attention to the word as you say it, silently, gently, faithfully and - above all - simply.

The essence of meditation is simplicity. Stay with the same word during the whole meditation and in each meditation day to day. Don't visualise but listen to the word, as you say it. Let go of all thoughts (even good thoughts), images and other words. Don't fight your distractions: let them go by saying your word faithfully, gently and attentively and returning to it as soon as you realise you have stopped saying or it or when your attention wanders.

Meditate twice a day, morning and evening, for between 20 and 30 minutes. It may take a time to develop this discipline and the support of a tradition and community is always helpful.

Silence. Stillness. Simplicity: The elements of meditation

Silence means letting go of thoughts.

Stillness means letting go of desire.

Simplicity means letting go of self-analysis. (Simple isn't easy)

Meditate twice a day every day

The daily practice may take some time to develop. Be patient. When you give up, start again. You will find that a weekly meditation group and a connection with a community may help you develop this discipline. It is a discipline rather than a technique. Experience is the teacher and this allows the benefits and fruits of meditation to pervade your mind and all aspects of your life. John Main said that 'meditation verifies the truths of your faith in your own experience'.

Why Christian meditation?

Meditation has the capacity to open up the common ground between all cultures and faiths today. But why can we speak of 'Christian meditation'?

Firstly, the faith with which you meditate – some sense of personal connection with Jesus. Secondly, the historical scriptural and theological tradition in which we

meditate. Thirdly, the sense of community it leads to: 'when two or three pray together in my name, I am there among them.' Fourthly, the other means by which our spiritual life is nourished: the other enriching forms of prayer like scripture, sacraments and worship. Meditation does not replace other forms of prayer. Quite the reverse, it revives their meaning.

Finally - but this is central to any understanding of meditation - we meditate in order to take the attention off ourselves. (Jesus said, leave self behind). In the Christian tradition, contemplation is seen as a grace and as a reciprocal work of love. Not surprisingly, then, if we find we become more loving people as a result of meditating this will express itself in all our relationships, our work and our sense of service especially to those in any kind of need.

An opening Prayer - John Main

Heavenly Father,
open our hearts to the silent presence of the spirit of your Son.
Lead us into that mysterious silence where your love is revealed to all who call,
'Maranatha...Come, Lord Jesus.

A closing Prayer - Laurence Freeman

May this group be a true spiritual home for the seeker,
a friend for the lonely, a guide for the confused.
May those who pray here be strengthened by the Holy Spirit
to serve all who come, and to receive them as Christ Himself.
In the silence of this room may all the suffering, violence,
and confusion of the world encounter the Power that will console,
renew and uplift the human spirit.

May this silence be a power to open the hearts
of men and women to the vision of God,
and so to each other, in love and peace, justice and human dignity.

May the beauty of the divine life,
fill this group and the hearts of all who pray here, with joyful hope.
May all who come here weighed down by the problems of humanity
leave giving thanks for the wonder of human life.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.



**The World Community
for Christian Meditation**

Fourvière on the way to the Second Centenary

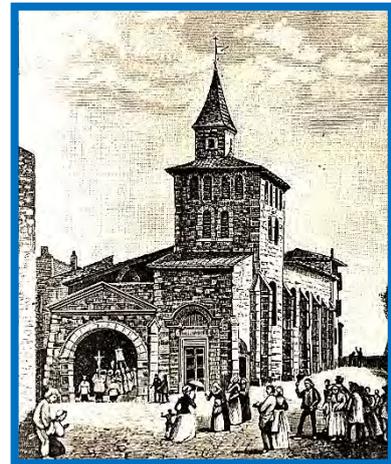
Looking at history from the perspective of our lives today

The following article written by Brother Antonio Martínez Estaún FMS is the last in this series marking the Fourvière Year.

A Breeding Ground for Shared Ideals

1. And they climbed the Fourvière Hill

1. Twelve seminarians came to the shrine of Fourvière after a long inner pilgrimage. Their spiritual path had begun in Le Puy, as it was the case for many other pilgrims who wished to visit the tomb of the Apostles in Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago. It was indeed in Le Puy where Courveille had started an inner process after hearing a voice “not with the ears of the body, but of the heart” that told him: *“My wish is that there can be a Society consecrated to me in these times of wickedness and unbelief”*¹.



2. Their inner pilgrimage had crossed the seminary classrooms and courtyards in Le Puy, and then in Lyon, when the diocese was subdivided. This is where Courveille met Champagnat and the other classmates: *“There were about twelve of us. We talked about the Society of Mary whenever we could. This lasted until 1816, when we went to Fourvière as a group to consecrate ourselves to the Blessed Virgin. I celebrated the Holy Mass. The others took communion from my hand, both the priests and those who were not ordained”*².

The seeds scattered throughout this fruitful spiritual path germinated and grew thanks to a breeding ground for shared ideals, and found confirmation in a profession of faith and a consecration at Mary’s feet.

2. Linking up with the early Christian faith

3. This group of seminarians climbed the Fourvière Hill, an elevated place, a “hill that prays”, where nature offers the universal language of beauty, and believers partake in transcendence. The small group carried a germ in their soul, the seed of a new way of being Church they wished to entrust to the Lord’s Mother, to the partner who walked along with them through the paths of faith. Fourvière was the first Marian reference point of the Marist foundational charism. Fixing their eyes on Mary, the believer, a new

¹ OM 718, 1-21.

² OM 718, 1-21.

cell of the Church was born – a Church that wanted to go in pilgrimage to the sources, to the cradle of the ancestors' culture, but also to the origins of the faith.

4. The shrine dedicated to Mary stands on the ancient pagan city where the bishop Saint Pothinus was martyred. He was arrested in 177, under the rule of Marcus Aurelius, together with a group of Christians, who became the first martyrs of Lyon. He died in prison because of the mistreatment he suffered at the hands of his torturers. His successor was Saint Irenaeus, who received the faith from Saint Polycarp, who in turn had received it from the Apostle John. This high land received the early seeds of the faith, and was irrigated by the blood of martyrs. It was a meeting point with the early Church agreed upon by the group of seminarians from Lyon, an early Church with which they connected through the witnesses to the faith, and a place that became a reference icon for their mission.

3. Stating their intentions and purposes

5. The pilgrims are twelve apostles newly elected for the mission. Advised by their spiritual director, they envisioned wide horizons for their future. Six were priests; the rest had not been ordained yet. They carried in their pockets a statement of intentions³ they wanted to place at the foot of the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Fourvière as they committed to devoting themselves to the new Society of Mary.

6. *“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. To the greater glory of God and in honor of Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. We, the undersigned, wanting to work for the greater glory of God and of Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, hereby state and declare that we have the sincere intention and determination to consecrate ourselves⁴, at the earliest opportunity, to the foundation of the very pious Congregation of the Marists. Therefore, by means of the present ceremony and our signature, we devote ourselves, with everything we own, irrevocably and as soon as possible, to the Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary”.*

7. The Mother of Fourvière welcomed and accompanied the project of this Apostolic Church cell that was being born. *“I was the support of the emerging Church, and I will be so again in the last days. These words presided over the beginning of the Society”⁵, and “acted as a foundation and a source of encouragement”⁶.*

³ *“The text is not actually a vow or consecration formula but a statement of intentions”.* Justin Taylor and François Drouille. *Ascent to Fourvière. Commemorating the II Centenary of the Marist Foundation Pledge, 1816-2016.* P. 21.

⁴ *“The consecration is a solemn and high-ranking document. The text was written in first person plural, ‘we’. Its authors formally identified themselves as ‘we, the undersigned’, suggesting that this text was a signed document not to be read aloud, in which case we could expect something like ‘We are gathered here’. The fact of writing it in Latin, with the use of a series of formal and emphatic expressions, indicates that the Marist aspirants wanted it to have the highest possible degree of solemnity”.* Justin Taylor and François Drouille. *Ascent to Fourvière. Commemorating the II Centenary of the Marist Foundation Pledge, 1816-2016.* P. 21.

⁵ OM 582.

⁶ OM 674.

The “*sincere intention and determination*” to consecrate themselves was a collective commitment. The pilgrims’ promise expressed by “*the ceremony and the signature*” took place on July 23, 1816. This is considered as the foundation date and the first official act, although private, carried out by the candidates to the Society of Mary.

4. Marcellin’s personal consecration

8. The following day, before leaving Lyon, Champagnat returned to the shrine of Our Lady of Fourvière alone to carry out his personal consecration to Mary and place his ministry in her hands. It was an initiative coming from the depth of his heart and expressing his personality within the group. After the Holy Mass, he prostrated at the feet of Our Lady’s image and consecrated himself using a formula he had written beforehand:

“Oh Holy Virgin, I raise my hands to you as the treasury of mercy and the channel of grace. I earnestly ask you to take me under your protection and to intercede for me with your adorable Son. Ask him to grant me the graces I need to be a worthy minister of his altar. It is under your auspices that I wish to work for the salvation of souls. I can do nothing, oh Mother of Mercy, I feel powerless; but you can do all things by your prayers. Holy Virgin, I put all my confidence in you. I offer you, I give you, I consecrate to you, my person, my labors and all the actions of my life”.

9. When they descended from Fourvière, the spiritual pilgrimage of this group of apostles continued along the paths of life: “*After this ceremony – says Father Courveille – each one went to the place where he had been appointed by ecclesiastical authority*”⁷. They independently came back several times to place at the feet of the dark-skinned Madonna, a symbol of inclusiveness and universality, the names of the missionaries – who were to take the faith to distant lands – within small hearts made of silver and gold. In the Hermitage, Champagnat placed within a silver heart, which hung as a necklace from the image of Mary, the names of the brothers he was to send on mission to the parishes and towns as catechists and teachers.

I. A New Beginning For Our Lives

1. Today we are also on pilgrimage to Fourvière

10. Today we follow a centuries-old tradition as we go on spiritual and material pilgrimage to Fourvière, following the example of Champagnat and his companions. Hundreds of Marists have done so. Among others, Brother François visited the dark-skinned Madonna on a spiritual pilgrimage when he wrote a circular on February 2, 1885, to mark the proclamation of the Immaculate Conception dogma.

11. “*But what need do we have, dearest brothers, to seek elsewhere the reasons we have to be confident, the signs of the powerful and maternal protection of Mary, the tangible proofs of her compassionate kindness, and her unrivaled tenderness for her*

⁷ OM 718 [20].

children? Is it not true that our Society offers all this to us continuously, and that each of us can give witness to it?

Let us ask a pious novice, a young brother, those who are teaching, the School Directors, everyone in any position, let us ask who has supported them in times of trouble, suffering and danger; who has preserved them from the misfortune of offending God, from succumbing to temptation, and even from losing their vocation; who has helped them overcome every obstacle; how have they succeeded in their tasks, positions of responsibility, and in running their schools; who has made their children pious, docile, diligent and respectful; we all respond:

We owe all this to Mary; all these graces were granted to us because we have turned to Mary, we have invoked Mary, we have consecrated ourselves to Mary, and we have placed under her protection and in her good hands our children, our work, and our schools. Oh! What great things, how many miracles and wonders of goodness, mercy and love this tender Mother brings about in favor of the children who love her, and who strive as much as they can to make others love and invoke her!”⁸

“This tender Mother, our life and our hope, will not be outdone in generosity and love; she will surely give us new and vibrant signs of her goodness and powerful intercession. The past is indeed a sure guarantee of the future. Who has invoked Mary without being heard? Whoever craved her patronage and received a refusal? No one will ever say that this powerful and faithful Virgin, in whom goodness and love go hand in hand with power, whose gift is always tenderness and mercy, has let down anyone who has invoked her in any situation, circumstances, and spiritual or bodily need”⁹.

“Blessed is the Brother of Mary who instructs his students about the grandeur and goodness of this tender Mother, who instills in them the habit of consecrating themselves to her every day, and of looking for her maternal protection in all their needs, invoking her in all dangers they face, and in every illness of body and soul!

Blessed are also the children who are entrusted to such a Brother! It can be said that his teachings will be for them a source of virtue and holiness, and that the love for Mary he will inspire in them, which will divert them from vice, will surely direct them towards the path of salvation, making them get back on track, sooner or later, when weakness or ignorance sometimes take them astray. What a great consolation for a teaching Brother! What a good reason for trust and encouragement! He will be so happy seeing all his students praying to Mary, consecrating themselves to Mary, loving and honoring her, and being educated under her sight to serve her every day of their lives!”¹⁰

⁸ Brother François. *Circulaires*, T. 2, p. 214. February 2. 1855.

⁹ Brother François. *Circulaires*, T. 2, p. 214. February 2. 1855.

¹⁰ Brother François. *Circulaires*, T. 2, p. 214. February 2. 1855.

12. A number of spiritual guides and pilgrims, such as brothers Juan María Merino, Alexandre Balko and Gabriel Michel, helped many people discover the history of the Marist charism in the Basilica of Fourvière.

2. The Marist laity in Fourvière

13. The laity, men and women, to whom Champagnat's charism would give birth, climbed the Fourvière Hill together with him as father of a new charismatic family. As he went up the hill on his pilgrimage to Fourvière, the young Champagnat – who had just turned 28, with his choice of life as a priest clearly assumed the day before – carried on his shoulders all the young people that, attracted by his charism, would follow him throughout history. All the people that eventually would be enriched by Champagnat's charism were there together with him. These are some of the historical consequences of a small act of pilgrimage to a shrine. The future is already in our heart. Marist youth today illuminate their journey of faith with the light that shines in Champagnat's eyes at the feet of Mary in Fourvière.

14. The young Founder who one day would cut the rock of the Hermitage, who would provide water from the rock to quench our spiritual thirst, who would gather a community of brothers around the table, who would give birth to a charismatic family that would reach many dioceses of the world was already there under the dark-skinned Madonna's sight.

There he prayed to Mary for each of the brothers and sisters he would need to carry out the project he was placing at her feet. There, in Marcellin's young heart, the Marist Family of Champagnat – a new charismatic family he would build in the future to consolidate the Church of communion – was already entrusted and consecrated to Mary. All of us were there within Champagnat's heart. We want to return there to find a new awareness of our origins.

II. Consecrating The Path Of Life

1. The path of life understood as a consecration

15. Consecrating ourselves means giving ourselves fully. Fourvière inspires the path of our consecration, the new future of our existence, and the new beginning of the Marist Foundation. Consecrating ourselves to Jesus through Mary amounts to updating our baptismal commitment and our religious profession in order to welcome the dawning of a new era. Baptismal and religious consecration: Fourvière invites us to understand the path of life as a consecration connecting us with our Marist origins, so that we can set out for the new lands of our mission.

When the twelve seminarians consecrated themselves to Mary in Fourvière, they underwent a new birth, which we can compare to the rebirth of baptism through the Water and the Word.

The consecration of Champagnat and his companions in Fourvière is a sign of resurrection and new life, an option for Jesus Christ guided by Mary, and a dedication to his Church forever. Consecration to Mary also amounts to a prophetic denunciation of the malignancy that dominates so many human minds and behaviors, which prevent the arrival of the Kingdom of God.

16. Consecrating ourselves to the work of Mary means devoting ourselves to the construction of a Church of communion by taking Mary as our guide. Consecrating ourselves to Mary entails an option to offer a quality service to the Church by educating the faith of children and young people. Consecrating ourselves to Mary implies taking sides with those who are small and marginalized.

2. Discovering the Marian face of the Church

17. For this group of pilgrim seminarians, the promise of Fourvière was a solemn and explicit renewal of their baptismal promise. Faith and trust are at the basis of any promise. This is the unavoidable baptismal commitment of every Christian: *“I give myself to Jesus Christ and his Church forever”*. Marists have expressed this dedication to Jesus and to the expansion of his Kingdom by taking Mary as mediator: *“To Jesus through Mary”*, as their motto reads. Consecrating all our being and actions to Jesus through Mary is a way of bringing up to date the commitment of our baptism and religious profession in order to welcome the dawning of a new era.

Commitment to the Church was a specific call for this group of seminarians. *“Mary, who comforted, protected and saved the emerging Church, will save her in the last days”*. In this mission, *“Mary will make use of us, her children. Let us be worthy of it. Through us she will fight against the devil and the world; and through us she will win, if we stand on her side thanks to the purity of our life, and the innocence of our hearts, being worthy of her graces and favors”*¹¹.

18. Those who signed the Fourvière pledge stated: *“We devote ourselves, with everything we own”*. Champagnat expressed this clearly adding a very personal nuance: *“I offer you, I give you, I consecrate to you, my person, my labors and all the actions of my life”*. The pledge of Fourvière was a practical consequence of their baptismal pledge, and gave birth to the Society of Mary.

19. This historical moment, when we gratefully recall the pledge of these young seminarians in Fourvière, is a favorable time for a new birth through the Water and the Word within our hearts. *“Through Baptism we are (...) reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission”* (Catechism 1213). When Father Colin saw the first concrete expressions of the Society, he encouraged his followers with these words: *“We must try to do what we can now, in the present moment; the work will grow later. God will send someone; men do not grow up suddenly, neither do works, which are never grandiose at the*

¹¹ Colin. *Au réfectoire pendant la retraite général*. Mayet 3, 271.

*beginning*¹². Therefore, he invites them to act with no delay, trusting God in order to solidify their decisions. *“We are fools if we pretend to act on our own. Our personal views can only have temporary effects, but the Society must be a lasting work in the Church”*¹³.

III. An Original New Face Of The Church

1. A future of prophetic novelty

20. The first Marists sensed the future of their lives would be a prophetic novelty. *“The Society of Mary should not follow the model of any previous groups. None of that! Our model, our unique model, is and must be the early Church. The Blessed Virgin who did great wonders then will repeat them now, in the last days, and even in a more powerful way, because humankind will be sicker”* (OM 631).

They strengthened their identity around a charismatic name: *“Let us rejoice in being members of her Society and bearing her name; other new-born communities envy us because of this beautiful name”* (OM 674). The Constitutions of the Brothers also highlight this inspiration: *“In giving us Mary’s name, Father Champagnat wished us to live her spirit”* (C 4).

2. Mary in the early Church

21. The role of Mary in the early Church after the Ascension of Christ became a powerful source of inspiration for Father Colin in his reflection on the origins of the Society of Mary. *“The beginning of the Society is like that of the Church”*¹⁴. At that time, when the French post-revolutionary Church was considering herself as a fortified city, and the believers as an army who had to fight the last battle against evil, crushing the snake’s head under their heel, the seminarians who went on pilgrimage to Fourvière sensed a new way of being Church, and understood their identity as something new: in the same way as the followers of Ignatius of Loyola envisioned the “Society of Jesus” at the service of a new Church, and called themselves “Jesuits”, the members of the new “Society of Mary” were to be called “Marists”.

*“The Society should not follow the model of any previous groups”*¹⁵. *“We have no other model but the early Church”*¹⁶. *“The Society began in the same way as the Church; we must be like the Apostles, and like those who joined them, who were many: Cor unum et anima una! They loved each other like brothers”*¹⁷.

¹² Colin. *Au P. Alphonse Cozon*. APM 249, Agenda Cozon.

¹³ Cozon. *Postulatum au chapitre général de 1880-1884*. APM 322.581 et 811.3 (A5).

¹⁴ Colin. *Entretien à table*. OM 425 [2].

¹⁵ Colin. *Entretien à table*. OM 425 [2].

¹⁶ Colin. *Remarques au P. Mayet*. Mayet 1, 286.

¹⁷ Colin. *Remarques au P. Mayet*. Mayet 1, 286.

3. Open to universality

22. Claude Colin's insights are similar to Marcellin's when they dreamed about reaching all the dioceses of the world. This is a very up-to-date perspective when speaking of internationality: *"Marists must conquer the entire world; they will scatter themselves everywhere, and will never be as united as when they are dispersed by the will of God for the salvation of souls"*¹⁸. *"We want to invade everything"*¹⁹, Colin said, *"because Mary wants to cover the entire world with her mantle"*²⁰. *"We have no other goal than making the universe become Marist"*²¹. A conversation with Cardinal Castracane followed the same line: *"So then all the world will be Marist? Yes eminence, even the Pope; we want him as our leader"*²². *"No one will be able to resist the Society, and its members will have so much courage that no one will be able to stop them"*²³.

4. Mary presiding over the believers

23. Colin recalled the central role of Mary in the Society: *"Remember, reverend Fathers, that we have acknowledged her for what she is indeed, our only and true Founder, and that we have elected her as our first and permanent Superior"*²⁴. *"She is in charge of the boat that brings all her children to harbor. How could we perish under the banner of such a General? No! Let us have faith!"*²⁵ *"Let us start walking, going at the head of the believers!"*²⁶

The Society of Mary was aware of being a militant Church: *"I always thought – says Colin – that the Society was destined to fight until the end of time. Mary was the support of the early Church. She will be so again at the end, and will do it through you. We need, therefore, to fill ourselves up with her spirit, and we must get this spirit from her heart. The Apostles did nothing without consulting her, for the new law was written in her heart, and even before the Incarnation she had been instructed by the Holy Spirit"*²⁷. *"Mary will make use of us, her children; let us become worthy of it; she will fight the devil and the world through us, and through us she will defeat them"*²⁸. Mary's heart is now open to welcome the new Marists in mission.



¹⁸ OM T. 2, p. 124, footnote 3.

¹⁹ Colin, OM 427.

²⁰ Colin. Mayet 5, 668.

²¹ Colin, *Remarques au P. Mayet*. Mayet 1, 275s.

²² Colin, OM 427 [2].

²³ Colin OM 452 [1].

²⁴ Colin. *Au chapitre général, relation Ducournau*. APM 322.459.

²⁵ Colin. *Au chapitre général, relation Ducournau*. APM 322.459.

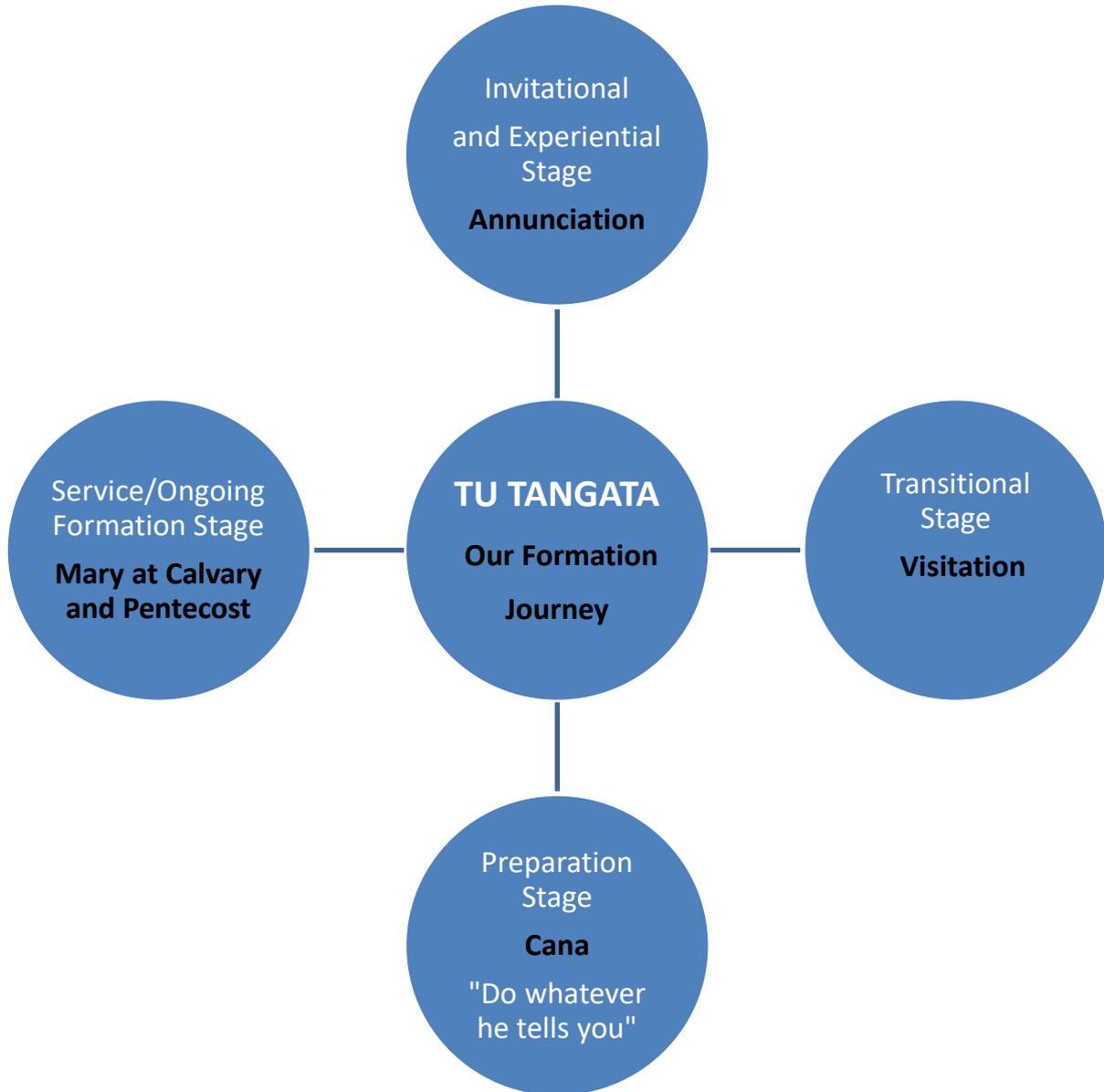
²⁶ Colin. *Au chapitre général, relation Ducournau*. APM 322.459.

²⁷ OM 897, 4.

²⁸ Colin ES 160, 6.



District of the Pacific



Tu Tangata: Our Formation Journey

Preparing Young Men to Stand Tall

It is a very common practice throughout Oceania to choose young men with a yearning for a deeper spirituality and to embark with them on a journey of discovery; of self of the world they live in and of the way in which they will interact with that world for the betterment of the community.

This encounter is lived out in the company of and under the guidance of experienced men and is focussed on 'learning by doing', learning by watching' learning by talking'. It is a very informal process based on the wisdom of those doing the shaping and guiding.

It is based around a spiritual relationship with God, with each other and with the land and become a tangible means whereby they are able to articulate and make sense of their unique view of the world.

Today there are young men who seek to follow a similar call in their lives emanating from God and conveyed through their own particular context. They also seek a closer relationship with God and through deepening their relationships with the people around them, they are able to walk their land (understand their culture) and move out to other lands (understand the culture of others).

Streams of Living Water – Marist Life

These relationships that tug at the heart of young men are echoed in our Marist Writings, Water from the Rock.

42. Our present age is characterized by a thirst for spirituality. We disciples of Marcellin believe that our way to God is a gift to be shared with the Church and the world. We are invited to join with Mary in a journey of faith. If we are able to give witness in our daily lives to the vitality of this spirituality, people - particularly youth and children - will feel themselves attracted and invited to take it up as their own way to become "living water."

43. The story of our spirituality is indeed a simple one. It is a story of women and men who find within a thirst that only God can quench. Having drunk deeply, they find themselves filled with Jesus' own desire – to give flesh to God's Good News. Moved by the Spirit, urged by God's own longing to bring life to the world, we become streams of living water, flowing through the personal, communal, and ministry aspects of our lives.

Rationale

The rationale for this **Tu Tangata Programme**, emerges from our observations, experiences and understanding of the current structured model, we are using for the formation of the young men who want to become Marist Brothers.

It recognises the need for the content and structure of the model to acknowledge and respect our Pacific traditions and identity in order to better encourage and motivate Pacific young men to understand themselves better as they become seekers of God's call in their lives.

The world today is in a constant state of change. Our cultures and societies have shifted dramatically over the last ten years which has meant that young people also have a different framework of belief and thinking. Therefore, as people with vision and implementers of Marcellin Champagnat's mission, "*To Make Jesus Known and Loved*" we must change the way we seek to shape and guide young men responding to the Call to be a Marist brother.

Brother Charles Howard during his term as the Superior General wrote, "***We are at a very important moment in the history of the Church - a moment of rebirth, a return to the practice of the early Church when lay people played a full role in the mission of the Church. One of our most urgent calls now is to promote that re-birth, with sensitivity, courage and vision. If we do not do this then we will have diminished the Church of the future, the Church, the people of God, the body of Christ, that we all love.***"¹

Formation Stages

There are four stages in the Formation Journey of young men called as Marist Brothers.

The first stage is the **Annunciation** characterised by an invitation to share and experience community life and mission for a period of three months.

The second stage is the **Visitation**, a transitional stage, where young men are given the opportunity to deepen God's Call in their lives by joining the initial formation community, a community of formation brothers living with young men interested in religious life. This stage can vary depending on the preparedness of each individual.

The third stage is the **Cana** story where young men respond to Mary's offer, to "do whatever he tells you" and enter into a more-deeper communion with God and the Marist brothers following the novitiate programme for a minimum period of one year.

The fourth stage is **Mary at Calvary and Pentecost** and focuses lifelong learning through service and ongoing formation.

This should be seen as a continuous process of formation that will continue throughout the life and ministry of the brother.

THE ANNUNCIATION

Luke: 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.¹

The Annunciation

When the angel appeared to Mary, a momentous moment happened in her life. That moment and the subsequent decision she made stretched her to the limit. The angel's presence was immense, invasive which resulted in a change of everything.

So too is the experience for young men interested in joining the brothers.

They are invited to respond to the Call by living in the community and fully participating in the life and mission of that community with the brothers for a period of three months.

Invitational Stage

The Formation Team in each country consists of a small group of brothers and Champagnat Lay Marists.

The Team *create* opportunities to meet with young men either through organising a Marist event or by visiting parishes, youth groups or other venues.

They *advertise* the opportunity widely through the brothers' communities, social media and other communication outlets.

They *invite* young men to know more about the five pillars of the brothers' life and to discern if like Mary, God is Calling them.

They *offer* the chance for young men to know more about the brothers by living in community to experience the community life, prayer life and ministry life of the brothers.

They *initiate* Invitation Gatherings at least three times a year.

They *maintain* contact with those interested but not yet ready to respond.

Experiential Stage

The Formation Team orientate provide and orientation into the Annunciation Community of brothers.

An integral part of the Annunciation community is that all brothers in the community warmly invite young men to get closer to the essence of Marist brotherhood in order for them to encounter the nature of the brothers.

It is the sacred space place where they ***encounter the Heart of the Marist and the Marist Pillars of Community.***

All brothers in the community actively participate in sharing community life and mission with the young men.

The community and the Formation Team work together to ensure that the young men have a creative and worthwhile experience of community life and mission.

A member of the Formation Team has overall responsibility for the accompaniment of the young men and coordinate their activities with those of the community.

Marist Pillars of Community

We are:

Seekers of God

Mystics and Prophets - Prayerful – Contemplative dialogue and reflection

Followers of Mary

“Do as He tells you’ - Being open to God’s Call - Respond whole heartedly

Weavers of Brotherhood

Attentive to the needs of others - Sense of belonging - Warm and welcoming

Promoters of Mission

Solidarity - Global Availability - Working with others

Signs of Simplicity

Genuineness - Open to potential of others - Accepting people as they are

MARY'S VISIT TO ELIZABETH

Luke 1:39-56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.¹

The Transitional Stage

Here the initial formation process begins led by the Initial Formation Community Leader and his team.

Guidance – to experience the real life of the brothers

1. Modeling – learn by doing

The brothers through their own personal experience will model community living, community and personal prayer, celebrations, gatherings, interaction with other brothers and communities so that the young men are able to gain in depth understanding of how it is done.

This will help build their own experiences and allows them to build a mental conceptual model of the specifics involved in community living.

Meetings held with community members that give step-by-step guidance to young men on what they need to achieve themselves to understand community living are held regularly.

2. Coaching – find a mentor

Coaching is provided where members of the community allow the young men to participating in community and then offer them feedback on their performance.

This enables young men to understand what they may want to do differently to improve and to reflect on how they see the experiences for themselves and for the brothers.

This also enables young men to found out and to get 'hands on' experiences on what the brothers are doing and to know more about religious life.

The Initial Formation Leader will encourage the young men to articulate what they know about community life and mission, what they have learnt about the brothers and more importantly, what they have learnt about themselves.

3. Reflection – Master yourself

The programme will be adapted to suit the needs, skills and abilities of each individual young man.

During their time with the community, the brothers will observe, assess and reflect together and with each young man on their skills and knowledge acquired.

Regular reflection time with a brother will allow the young men the opportunity to compare and discuss their growing insights, questions and thoughts with a brother.

4. Exploration - Learn by doing well

An essential part of the community living experience for the young men will be to become actively involved with the brothers in their ministry. They will have the opportunity to interact with young people and other Lay Champagnat Marists where they will be encouraged to help others and to gain practical experience in ministry.

The young men will be free to reflect for themselves or to be guided by the community about the suitability of religious life for them.

When the young man is ready to deepen his Call, he would go to the next stage of formation.



CANA STORY

John 2: 1-11

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.¹

Cana - John 2:1-11

The Preparation Stage

"Tu Tangata"

Under Construction:

This stage has traditionally been known as the novitiate.

Traditionally this model has been prescribed by Canon Law, the Constitutions and Formation Guides. All of these entities are currently under consideration and review.

An International Marist Brothers Colloquium on Formation held in 2015 and attended by two brothers from our district indicates a move from "a structure in stages to one of processes in itineraries."

A number of documents have been written both in our District and others to assist those formators working at this stage.

There is a need to adjust the processes of this stage so that it too reflects the formation community concept rather than the traditional 'boarding school' model that is generally still being used throughout the world in our formation programmes.

The formators and young men must live together forming community and in the process embed a life-long ongoing learning process

Footnote:

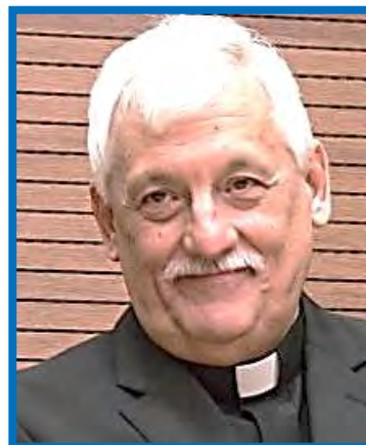
The document "Tu Tangata" is a reflection paper that supports the model being considered in this document.

The Audacity of the Improbable

The following article is the first sermon of Fr Arturo Sosa SJ the newly elected Superior General of the Society of Jesus. You can read a commentary by Fr James Martin SJ at

<http://www.americamagazine.org/content/all-things/new-jesuit-general-not-only-improbable-impossible>

Dearest Brothers, A few days ago, in this very Church of the Gesù, where the remains of St. Ignatius and Pedro Arrupe are laid to rest, Fr. Bruno Cadorè invited us to have the audacity of the improbable as the distinctive stance of persons of faith, who seek to bear witness to such faith in the complex reality of human life. He invited us to leave behind our fear and to row out into the deep, as a kind of attitude for being at once creative and faithful during the General Congregation.



Certainly, the audacity that we need in order to be servants of the mission of Christ Jesus can flow only from faith. For this reason, our gaze is directed first of all to God, since you have only one Father, and He is in heaven, as the passage from the Gospel which we have just heard reminds us. And as the Formula of the Institute reminds us at paragraph no .1: “Let (the Jesuit) have before his eyes, as long as he lives, before anything else, God, and then the form of this his Institute.” In fact, it is the whole heart that we wish to have in tune with the Merciful Father, the God that is only Love, our Principle and Foundation – the heart of each of us and also the heart of the body of the Society.

If our faith is like that of Mary, Jesus’ own mother and the Mother of the Society of Jesus, our audacity can go even further and seek not only the improbable, but the impossible, because nothing is impossible for God, as the Archangel Gabriel proclaims in the scene of the Annunciation (Luke 1:37). It is the same faith held by St. Teresa of Avila, or St. Teresa of Jesus, whose memorial we celebrate today. She too, without fear, entrusted herself to the Lord in order to undertake the improbable and the impossible.

Let us ask, therefore, for this faith from the Lord, so that we, as the Society of Jesus, can also make our own the words of Mary in her response to the extraordinary call that she received: “Behold the servant of the Lord: Be it done to me according to your word.” Like Ignatius and the First Companions, like so many Jesuit brothers who have fought and who fight today under the banner of the cross, in service only to the Lord and to his Church, we too desire to contribute to that which today seems impossible: a humanity reconciled in justice, that dwells peacefully in a well-cared-for common home,

THE AUDACITY OF THE IMPROBABLE

where there is a place for all, since we recognize each other as brothers and sisters, as sons and daughters of the same and only Father.

For this reason, we reaffirm even today the conviction of Ignatius as he wrote the Constitutions: “Since the Society of Jesus was not instituted by human means, it is not through them that it can be preserved and increased, but with the all-powerful hand of Christ, our God and Lord; in Him alone must our hope be placed.” With our hope placed in God and in God alone the General Congregation will proceed with its deliberations and it will contribute to its duty to preserve and grow this whole body (Const. 719).

The preservation and growth of the body of the Society is tightly bound to the depth of the spiritual life of each of its members and of the communities in which we share life and mission with our companions. At the same time, it is necessary to have an extraordinary intellectual depth in order to think creatively about the ways in which our service to the mission of Christ Jesus can be more effective, in the creative tension of the *Ignatian magis*. To think about ways of deeply understanding the unique moment of human history in which we are living, and to contribute to the search for alternatives for overcoming poverty, inequality, and oppression. To think so that we never cease posing pertinent theological questions, and so that we continue to deepen our understanding of the faith that we ask the Lord to increase in ourselves.

We are not alone. As companions of Jesus we too want to follow the journey of the incarnation, to identify ourselves with the human beings that suffer the consequences of injustice. The Society of Jesus can develop only in collaboration with others, only if it becomes the least Society that collaborates. Let us be attentive to the linguistic pitfalls here. We want to increase collaboration, not just to seek that others collaborate with us, with our own works, only because we don't want to lose the prestige of the position of who has the last word. We want to collaborate generously with others, inside and outside of the Church, in the awareness, which comes from the experience of God, of being called to the mission of Christ Jesus, which doesn't belong to us exclusively, but whom we share with so many men and women who are consecrated to the service of others.

In the journey of collaboration, with the grace of God, we will also find new companions to increase the number, always much too small no matter how great, of collaborators who, along with the others, are invited to be part of this body. There is hardly any doubt about the need to increase our prayer and our work for vocations to the Society, and to continue the complex commitment to provide the formation that makes of them true Jesuits, members of this multicultural body that is called to testify to the richness of interculturalism as the face of humanity, created in the image and likeness of God.

Let us, therefore, today make our own the words of the Apostle Paul: may the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward the other according to the example of Christ Jesus, so that you may give glory to the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ with one heart and one voice (Rm. 15:5).

In the Church of the Gesù in Rome, October 15, 2016



Bicentennial Calendar of Events

New Zealand

Date	Event
3 December	Marist Old Pupils Ass. Samoa – Dinner Our Lady of the Assumption Hall, Onehunga TBA
15-17 December	Champagnat Marist Assembly Blessings of bicentennial plaques
18-22 December	District Chapter
2 January	KAIKOHE Broadway - Lunch, gathering 11am
	AUCKLAND Onslow Ave - lunch, gathering @11am
	LOWER HUTT Birch St - lunch, gathering @11am
	CHRISTCHURCH Catholic Cathedral College /Marian College Grounds - B.B.Q 10.00am-3.00pm
20-22 January	PILGRIMAGE to North
25 February	Dinner for schools and organisations
	AUCKLAND – Sacred Heart College Hostel. Mass 5:15pm / Dinner 6:30pm
	LOWER HUTT/WELLINGTON - date and venue TBA
	CHRISTCHURCH - date and venue TBA
11-12 March	Spillane Tournament in PALMERSTON NORTH
25-26 March	INVERCARGILL celebration Saturday / Sunday
25 March	AUCKLAND Mass at Cathedral 4.30pm / Reception 6pm
16 April	Easter Sunday
20 May – 6 June	Champagnat Marist Schools' Week
4 June	AUCKLAND Communities lunch at 48 Crossfield Road
5 June	Marist Studies Seminar at Good Shepherd College. 10am-4pm Book Launch of our history in NZ and Pacific
6 June Champagnat Day	Champagnat Day celebrations in schools and communities.

BICENTENNIAL CALENDAR

	AUCKLAND – Sacred Heart College - Mass at Cathedral
	AUCKLAND – Marcellin College
	AUCKLAND – St Paul’s College
	CHRISTCHURCH – Catholic Cathedral College Mass
11 June	Book Launch (Marist Past Students) - To be confirmed
23 July	Fourvière Day - Location & time TBA
15 August	AUCKLAND - combined schools’ Mass
	CHRISTCHURCH – Mass Catholic Cathedral College
1-3 September	CHRISTCHURCH - Marist/Xavier Friday/Saturday/Sunday
9-10 September	TIMARU Saturday/Sunday
16 September	Gathering for the Religious and Clergy of the diocese
	AUCKLAND - @ Sacred Heart College, lunch
	KAIKOHE - date TBA
	LOWER HUTT - date and venue TBA
	CHRISTCHURCH - date and venue TBA
23 October	Brothers lunch
	AUCKLAND Onslow Ave - gathering @11am
	LOWER HUTT - venue TBA
	CHRISTCHURCH - venue TBA
29 October	Commemoration of the dead and visitation to cemeteries.
November	Pilgrimage - Tuakau - Date & time TBA
	AUCKLAND Marist Schools RE/SC Seminar Day - Date, location & time TBA
2-3 December	GREYMOUTH Saturday/Sunday
15 December	Foundation of the District of the Pacific – Champagnat Marist gatherings in Auckland, Christchurch, Kaikohe, Lower Hutt. Jubilee celebrations. Date, location, time TBA



December Gospel Reflections

6 December | 2nd Sunday of Advent | Matthew 3:1-12 - The approach of the Messiah

After several hundred years of silence, the prophetic voice, like to Elijah, is heard again in Israel. John, presented as a new Elijah, preached that **repentance** (the great message of all the prophets!) was necessary with the nearness of God's Kingdom and the coming of the Messiah. It is the *doing* of the will of the Father (cf. *your will be done on earth...*) that is the great concern in Matthew for the disciples of Jesus. Exactly the same words will be the first message of Jesus in 4:17: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Both preachers demand a radical conversion of the whole person to God, and both urge it as preparation for the new age when the God of Israel will be acknowledged as the Lord by all creation. That time is very close at hand.

John speaks directly to members of two Jewish groups ("the Pharisees and Sadducees") who will be responsible for continuing opposition to Jesus throughout the Gospel. They are warned to reform their lives as a preparation for the decisive intervention of God ("the coming wrath"). They are warned not to rely on their Jewish descent ("Abraham as our father") to protect them. The references to "children" and "stones" probably reflect a play on two very similar Aramaic (or Hebrew) words. Finally, they are warned that the time is short ("the ax lies at the root"). In the coming time of judgment prior to the fullness of God's kingdom, it is the fruit of good deeds that will count. John's stress on repentance, action now, and "bearing fruit" in good deeds foreshadows Jesus' instructions to his own disciples.

11 December | 3rd Sunday in Advent | Matthew 11:2-11 - A spiritual Messiah

We continue through Advent with John the Baptist, who witnessed to Jesus as the one who is to come. The Lord identifies himself as the Messiah, not a fiery political one, but the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit (leaving out John's baptizing 'with the fire of judgment'). There is a difference between Jesus in his ministry and the rather harsh expectation of the Messiah of judgment John had preached: *'The axe is ready; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down; he will gather his wheat into his barn, but burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out'* (3:10-12). The works of Jesus are preaching and healing, for of this Messiah, Isaiah spoke the words *'He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smouldering wick'* (12:20).

John was in prison because he had the courage to denounce the marriage of Herod. He was a prophet who was granted the privilege of seeing the dawn of the age of fulfilment, the coming of the kingdom. The Baptist is the one spoken of by the prophet Malachi (4:5-6) at the closure of the Old Testament, the new Elijah sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. The new era that Jesus would bring about, God's reign, would mean that the least in that time would be more fortunate than John. Jesus the Shepherd heals and lifts the burdens of afflicted humanity; a perspective not to be eclipsed by his coming role as judge.



18 December | 4th Sunday of Advent | Matthew 1:18-24 - Events leading to birth of Jesus

The first concern of the Gospel writer in telling this story is the identity of Jesus as Son of God from his birth (not just his baptism as in Mark). This makes Matthew's focus on the virginal conception primarily a truth about the Christ - that Jesus comes to us completely as God's gift. Joseph is told (in a dream - as befits a man named Joseph) what he needs to know. By accepting Jesus as his legal son, Joseph gives Jesus his Davidic identity. Many of the traditional elements of an annunciation story are found in this *Annunciation to Joseph*. In Matthew, Joseph is the focus of the story (he is told, he dreams, he decides they will go to Egypt, and he decides where the family will live on their return home). Note that Joseph and Mary live in Bethlehem at the time of the birth of Jesus, in a house where the child is born. This is a very different story to Luke.

Do not underestimate the anguish of Joseph as he becomes aware of Mary's pregnancy. Betrothal is far more serious than 'engagement'. It was a binding marriage contract. Joseph did not know from the beginning what was happening. Matthew sees prophetic fulfilment through the text from Isaiah 7:14, a text that in Hebrew spoke of a birth to an *almah* (young woman) that in the Greek translation became a *parthenos* (virgin). The name 'Emmanuel' (God is with us) will come back in a full and binding commitment on the part of Jesus at the end: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (28:20).

25 December | The Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Eve Mass | Matthew 1:1-25. (The gospels on the day are from Luke and John).

This gospel from Matthew opens with what it claims to be, a record of the ancestry of Jesus Christ. It evokes the earliest of all records, that of how creation came to be in Genesis 1, the story of creation. Jesus Christ will be nothing less than the renewal of all creation. The whakapapa of Jesus will show him to be 'Son of David', the main title for the Messiah, the longed-for Davidic ruler who would bring freedom for the people. But what kind of Messiah would he prove to be? 'Son of Abraham' is a title every Jewish male laid claim to, but so could many other peoples, so openness to non-Jews is hinted at from the beginning.

There are riches to be drawn from the long list of names in the genealogy. It is not completely accurate. Its aim is to fill out the two titles above. Descent from Abraham weaves Jesus' story into that of his own people and descent from David establishes his credentials as Messiah. The number 14 is emphasised and 14 is David's number in the Hebrew alphabet (Dalet = 4; Vav = 6; Dalet = 4). David's name and number is emphasised three times through the use of the ruling line of Judah). Of note is the rare occurrence of the names of the four women who stand out for their non-Jewish connections, and the mysterious circumstances in which they give birth to sons within the line of Judah. It is through Mary that the greatest and most mysterious birth takes place.



District Calendar for December

Thurs, 1 Dec.	College company Directors
Tues, 6 Dec.	NZ – Term 4 ends
Fri, 9 Dec.	District Council Samoa – Term 4 ends 12:00-1:30 MAEL Annual Awards
Wed, 14 Dec.	People begin to gather for the Assembly
Thurs, 15 Dec	Foundation Day – District of the Pacific District Assembly @ Friary till 17 Dec.
Fri, 16 Dec	9:30 Finance committee Pago Pago Christmas break till 03/01/17 Incl.
Sun, 18 Dec.	District Chapter begins (till 20 Dec, incl.) @ SHC
Tues, 20 Dec	Jubilee Celebrations @ SHC
Fri, 23 Dec.	1:00 Pacific Rise office closes for Christmas
Sun, 25 Dec.	Christmas Day
Wed, 4 Jan. 2017	Pacific Rise office opens for 2017



A PASSING THOUGHT ...

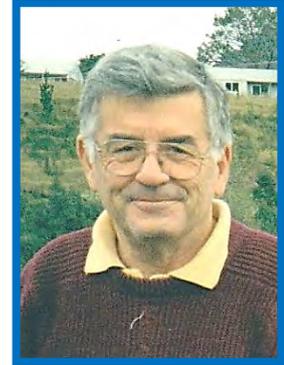
In the Catholic Press recently some disquiet expressed about behaviour within the church in front of the tabernacle. Perhaps a timely reminder to all of us to be ever conscious of the Real Presence of Christ in the tabernacle and our conduct within the precincts of the church.

Brother John E. Fitzgibbon

New Principals for our Schools in Samoa



The search for principals to lead Marist Brothers' two schools in Samoa has ended following the appointment of Brother Siasio Ioane and Brother Bryan Stanaway. Both principals are Marist Brothers.



Brother Siasio has been appointed Principal of Marist Brothers' Primary School, Mulivai for 2017 - 2019. Brother Siasio is no stranger to this position as he was the principal of Marist Primary from 2000 to 2002. Aside from postings overseas, Brother Siasio was also the principal of St Joseph's College and Ulimasao College. Brother Siasio is Samoan and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Brother Bryan Stanaway will be the principal of St Joseph's College, Alafua for 2017 - 2018. Brother Bryan has been at St Joseph's College for several years now as its Deputy Principal. In the middle of this year, Brother Bryan was appointed Acting Principal of St Joseph's and later Principal for 2016. He enjoyed the role so much that he decided to apply to be St Joseph's principal for next year. Brother Bryan is of Maori descent and is a Registered Teacher in New Zealand who has vast educational experience having taught at schools in New Zealand and the Pacific for 50 years.

According to the Chairman of the Board of Governors for the two schools, Tuatagaloa Aumua Ming Leung Wai, "Appointing two vastly experienced Marist Brothers who are passionate and committed to educate our students is a new beginning in making the Marist Brothers' schools in Samoa learning institutions of excellence. We have just completed our Strategic Plan for the two schools so the next phase is to ensure that such plan is properly implemented."

The Marist Brothers' schools have produced many leaders for Samoa, both past and current. For example, the current Head of State, Prime Minister, Speaker of Parliament, Chief Justice and Controller & Auditor General, to name a few are former students of Marist Brothers' schools. The Marist Brothers also introduced the sports of rugby and boxing to Samoa.

"The Marist Brothers want to ensure that our schools continue to provide education in Samoa based on Marist spirituality so we can produce citizens who are of good character and leaders at home, village, church, business and Government," said Br John Hazelman on behalf of the Samoa Marist Brothers' Trust Board. Br John also thanked the outgoing principal of Marist Primary, Tualasea Kalala Samuelu for stepping up to lead Marist Primary when there was a shortage of Marist Brothers.

"The Marist Brothers' celebrate next year their 200 years of existence with the theme: *A New Beginning*. It is therefore fitting that we are putting in place new strategies to improve our schools starting 2017", added Br John. The two Marist Brothers' schools in Samoa are owned by the Samoa Marist Brothers' Trust Board but are governed by the Governance Board.

Champagnat Marist Pillars for Community Life



To Make Jesus Known and Loved

Our charism today is clearly expressed through the implementation of the Champagnat Marist Pillars in our schools and other ministries.

In community we express our charism through the Champagnat Marist Pillars for Community Life. These Pillars are to be incorporated into the design of the new community residence in Onehunga.

Seekers of God

- Prayerful
- Silent reflection
- Mystics and Prophets

Followers of Mary

- 'Do as He says'
- Being open to God's Call
- Respond whole heartedly

Weavers of Brotherhood

- Sense of belonging
- Warm and welcoming
- Attentive to the needs of others

Promoters of Mission

- Solidarity
- Global Availability
- Working with others

Narrators of Simplicity

- Genuineness
- Open to potential of others
- Accepting people as they are

For Our Recently Deceased

Mr Guy Davis: former Brother Roland, Died in Fiji recently

Mrs Barbara Bollins: cousin of Brother William Lawley, died in England recently

Mr Leala Peter Reid: Marist Old Boy and generous benefactor of our schools in the Pacific, died recently in Hawai'i

Mr Reginald (Reg) Wilton: (formerly Brother Reginald) died in Whanganui, November 5th

Brothers with Health Concerns

Brother Emilian O'Dowd

Brother Eugene Kabanguka

Brother James McBride

Brother William Lawson

Brother Roger Dowling

Brother Kevin Blyth

Others to keep in our prayers

Mrs Janne Pender

Mrs Linda Kilkenny, of Liston Village, generous friend of many Brothers

Mr Hugh Lavelle, brother of Brother Paul RIP

Pa Tony Brown

Mrs Val Moynihan, sister of Brother Ray Harold RIP

Mr Thomas Brown

Mrs Vitalina Guibreteau

Mr Brendan Cole

Mr Philip Fenn, brother of Brother Kieran, ill with terminal cancer

Other Intentions

For our New Era Leadership Projects

For Refugees throughout the Word

For our active part during the Year of Mercy

For our Jubilarians of this year - 2016

Our young Brothers in Temporary Profession

Our Brothers involved in School Apostolates

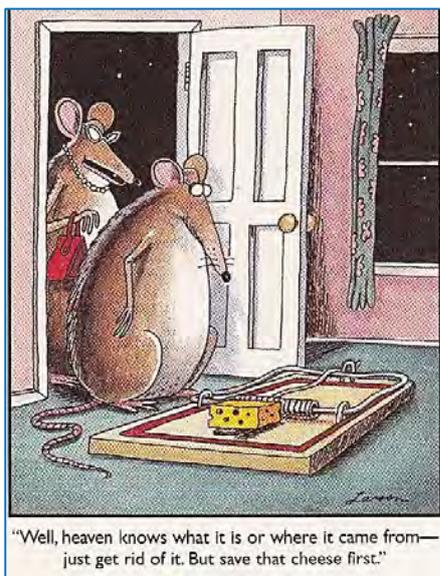
For our Ad Gentes Projects & Personnel

For our District Leader – Brother David

For our Provincial – Brother Peter Carroll

For the members and work of the FM Connection Community, Auckland





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December Birthdays

1 st	Br Brian Callaghan
1 st	Br Kieran Fenn
3 rd	Br David Greenlees
6 th	Br Aidan Benefield
6 th	Br Amberoti Nantei
7 th	Br Samisoni Talia
15 th	Br Roger Dowling
16 th	Br Richard Dunleavy
20 th	Br Michael Potter
21 st	Br James McBride
22 nd	Br Fidelis Kiely
24 th	Br John Fitzgibbon

December Memorials

1 st	Br Benedict Bulled 1993
2 nd	Br Patrick Quirk 1933
2 nd	Br Borgia Coughlan 1954
3 rd	Br Leonard Tobin 1982
4 th	Br Lawrence Bennett 2006
5 th	Br Timothy Montague 2003
6 th	Br Kieran O'Sullivan 2011
12 th	Br Eric Ryan 1973
14 th	Br Walter Hansen 1938
16 th	Br Germanus Marin 1907
17 th	Br Deodat Villemagne 1842
17 th	Br Egbert Jackson 1970
18 th	Br Joseph Murphy 1895
18 th	Br Maurice Moore 1922
18 th	Br Hillary Pennington 1978
20 th	Br Sean Hanaray 2011
21 st	Br John Baptist Ululima 1902
21 st	Br Desmond Dillon 2005
22 nd	Br Anthony Biersach 1915
25 th	Br Justin Cooper 1958
28 th	Br Phillipe Charavay 1930
30 th	Master John Hanley (Junior) 1893
30 th	Br Camille Edward Mayer 1910
31 st	Br Priscillien Blanc 1960



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