

MDA
marist district of asia

news

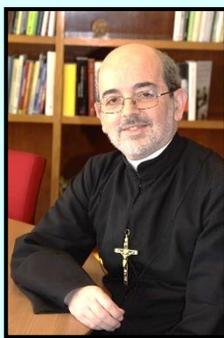


"A NEW BEGINNING"

JANUARY – MARCH 2017

"Disturb us, Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves, when our dreams have come true because we have dreamed too little, when we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore."

Brother Emili has sent his message to start the Celebration of the Bicentenary of the Institute to all the communities. Three words synthesize his Message: **GRATITUDE, FORGIVENESS AND COMMITMENT.** 2017 is the Bicentenary of the Institute and for us members of Ad Gentes is an opportunity to thank God for our ten years of life too.



The first brothers that arrived to these countries of Asia already completed 9 years in this adventure and they have requested to continue this mission, thanks to all of you for your generosity and courage. In this New Year, we start to see more concrete fruits of this commitment; our first local brothers are finishing their basic stage of formation and soon they will write a new page in the history of the District.

Our formation houses started to be not only international but also inter-regional. Young men from East Timor are going to join our Postulancy and novices from the Pacific also will be in Tudella.

Our first school in Bangladesh will begin soon with the children from the Tea Gardens. Cambodia is moving ahead in the Hostel project, what one was a dream is starting to be a reality. The Center for migrants in Thailand has been growing in the past few years and parents &

students find the richness of our spirituality through the contact with brothers and lay.

In Talit - India the work of vocations continues, the challenges to give the "Santali" boys a better education is still there. We know that in some places the problem of visas hasn't been solved yet. The authorities of those countries have not accepted some of our activities and our brothers had to move to other places...

We need new strategies, patience and trust in Him... In the middle of such difficulties I have seen the power of God acting through them. The challenges they find in the intercultural living are the challenges of "a radical discipleship", which neither are easy nor painless. Jesus told his disciples: "For you it is impossible, but not for God: For God, all things are possible. "It is because we take these words very seriously, said Anthony J. Gittins that we commit to intercultural living for the sake of the future of international religious life and the mission it serves." So, dear Brothers and Sisters I wish all of you to have the courage and commitment in our mission, that is not ours, it is God's mission.

"Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wider seas where storms will show your mastery; Where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars. We ask You to push back the horizons of our hopes; And to push into the future in strength, courage, hope, and love."



Fraternally

Bro. Hoan, fms

VIETNAM



In Vietnam, on 2nd of January, each community welcomed the dawn of the Bicentenary with a special prayer. Later on, the same day the three communities came together to celebrate our Marist

Bicentenary. Around 30 people, priests, religious men and women, candidates, Aspirants, lay people and friends gathered for the Eucharistic celebration in the Parish Church. Also we celebrated the Birthday of our Bro. Salvador.



After the Mass, we gathered at the Candidacy house, we had a toast expressing our gratitude and happiness of this unique moment of our Institute. Lunch was served to all after the cutting of Bicentenary and Birthday Cakes. We rejoice like Mary for the wonders oHe has done for us during last 200 years. It's a dawn of a "New Beginning" and we feel that we are one body as the Institute of 'the Little Brothers of Mary.'

Let us keep celebrating the Bicentenary throughout the year.

Thank you, Fr. Marcellin Champagnat, for this great effort of founding the Institute of Brothers in Mary's Name.

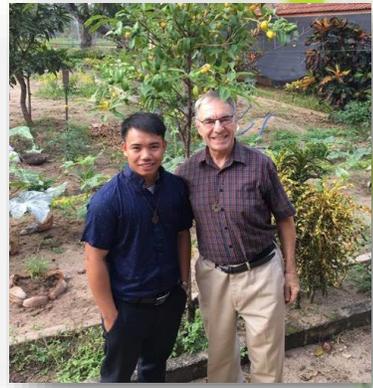


Br. Canisio Willrich

SRI LANKA INTERNATIONAL NOVITIATE

Lavalla-200 "Our Call" lived in the International Tudella Novitiate.

After the period of formation in Italy and France in May and June 2016, I was assigned to the International Novitiate in Sri Lanka. After three months experience, I can say that, in many ways, it is probably the best place to live concretely the dream of a new beginning. This was the theme of our first group of Lavalla 200, when, at the end of our experience, we wrote



"Our Call" that expresses what the Spirit was telling us at this moment. I have outlined, below, some elements of this "Call" to present how we try to live it in the context of the Novitiate here.

"... We are moving beyond dreaming together for a new beginning, as we have done throughout the Institute in recent years in chapters and assemblies. It has been a 'long dawn' but now there is daylight: a time for decisions!"

In our lessons on the Constitutions, the first year novices have presented their dreams for the future of Marist Life in Asia. I would like to share some of these:

We are dreaming: ...to build community with love and warmth infusing it; ...to continue the mission among poor children and young people in teaching, refugee centres, orphanages, social youth centers, counselling; ...to develop intercongregational collaboration and formation; ...to deepen interreligious dialogue; ...to be a marian face in the church.



"...We believe that the Spirit is calling us to embrace a new way of sharing life in community: internationally, interculturally... Our relationships are core to our mission and central to a new beginning for Marists".

We are a very large international and intercultural community, with people coming from Bangladesh, CN, Viet Nam, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Australia, Canada. We take special care of our relationships, and with confidence and courage we are able to say to one another, in our fortnightly Community Sharings (our 'group accompaniment'), the positive we notice in each one and also the aspects that can progress. It is always a good moment of truth that makes us more free. We occasionally have internal Workshops and are preparing now for our next one, a two day workshop on intercultural issues for community life.

"...We experience the Spirit of God within ourselves, within one another, within all of life and creation. We contemplate. We cultivate silence. We meditate on God's Word. Our spirituality

encompasses every moment of our lives: our love, our passions, our hopes and fears, our successes and failures..."

As we are in the novitiate, this aspect is particularly apparent in many ways, for example in the animation of our daily prayer life with special reflection days. I can testify also, that even our failures become a springboard to walk new steps forward.

"...It is an annunciation moment for us and for all Marists: 'Do not be afraid. Nothing is impossible with God' ". And here we are now, even though it is not clear or easy for our Novices to imagine where the Lord is calling them for the future mission.

Bro. Réal Sauvageau

BANGLADESH – GIASNOGOR

Opening of St. Marcellin School

We just opened our high school in Giasnogor on January 2nd 2017, marking 200 years of our Founder Champagnat gathered together the two first Marist Brothers. It has been the result of a long way of conception, preparation, fundraising, construction, recruitment of teachers and students, training for teachers and etc... now begins a new stage, the



concrete realization of the educational project with the 80% of boys and girls from the Tea Gardens and other 20% from the neighbouring villages. These particular days we have had the presence of Brother Emili Turu,

Marist Education Centre- Pailin

Marist Brothers in Pailin, have been able to sustain existing projects. Thus, offering of English Language classes at different levels to various students, Korean and Thai Languages, feeding program for children from poor families and school supports. These projects have become possible due to your kind support to us during the year.

It is interesting to mention that apart from classroom teaching we also emphasis on personal hygiene, moral values and respect and care for the environment. As Marist, the idea of family spirit is strongly emphasized in



our approach of teaching and dealing with the young people that come to our center.

In addition to projects mentioned above we are pleased to announced that we have manage to extend our works to three distant schools from Pailin where we supported these poor schools in various ways. These schools are Boyaka Primary and Secondary Schools in Pailin, Sao Kraom High School which in 10 kilometres from Pailin, Phnom Priel Primary School, 30 kilometres away from pailin and Kon Domrai, which is 33 kilometres form Pailin

In Phnom Priel and Kon Domrai among other activities we work in collaboration with the Daughters of Charity, a Catholic Religious Organization of Sisters in feeding the children in the lower classes.

We are happy to inform you that one of our main focuses of the year has been on the construction of future Hostel for the accommodation of poor and deprived students who live in remote areas of Pailin . We have managed to finish the the construction of the Brothers house which is one of



our Superior General, who came to celebrate the Bicentenary years of the foundation of our Institute with the "New Beginning". Before his departure from Bangladesh, he has left us some meaningful and challenging words. He expressed his likeness of our project, because it is a CLEAR PROPOSAL that bets on the Inter-Cultural (we have coexist of Bengali Students and Teachers, Mandi, Urao, Karia, Tripura, Kashia, Munda, Santal groups etc...), Inter-Religious (Muslims, Hindus, & Christians) in an Inter-Congregational Ecclesial work (collaboration among Marist Brothers, Marist Missionary Sisters, & Holy Cross Religious Society).



As he wrote in one of his facebook posts, captioning a group photo of the first teachers of our school: "First Marist Teachers in Bangladesh; Christians, Muslims, Hindus for a better world".

Br. Eugenio Sanz Sanchez





the components of the entire project. Next year God willing we will focus on the construction of the main hostel which will include two separate blocks for boys and girls with the capacity of holding at least 50 students each including those who are physically challenged.

Once again we will like to sincerely thank you for the enormous support that you give us each year. May the Lord richly bless you.



Br. Francis Attah

SAMUT SAKHON, COMMUNITY - THAILAND

Here in Samut Sakhon we enjoy a very active community life. There is never a shortage of new connections and interesting conversations, enabling us to enjoy the international Marist spirit. I myself was happy to join this community in September 2016, yet after only one month, Br. Andrew and I had to say goodbye to two members, Brazilian volunteer Flavia and Br. Andrès. While Br.

Andrès is spending a few months in his home country Spain and will return in March, Flavia has returned home after enriching our project with her caring work and skills for half a year. In January, Br. Alex from India joined our community for two months.



In Samut Sakhon we dedicate most of our time to the Marist Centre for Migrants, where we provide free education for Myanmar migrant children. In the project I experienced a unique spirit, shaped by our great students, the active team of teachers and not at least by the great amount of hard and dedicated work Br. Andrew and Andrès put in this center. I was happy to takeover Br. Andrès' English classes for these months and enjoy teaching and spending time with the students very much. An important part of our work is visiting the student's families in their homes and talking with them about the education of their children. It gives a special and unique view on the life of Myanmar migrants in Thailand, who struggle





with various problems caused by poverty and the government. Yet our students are hardworking and in their joyful way very inspiring.

Even if in a Buddhist country, our Christmas celebrations experienced no shortcomings. We celebrated with our students for two days and joined masses on our own terms. With the project "unity in diversity" we celebrated the Myanmar ethnic groups and sent a message of peace. Some of our students wore cultural dresses, participated in the Christmas ceremony and the pictures were distributed to all families. After an eventful Christmastime, we went on a relaxing community outing to a Sacred Heart Sisters' convent by the sea in Hua Hin. Together with Br. Juan and Br. José from Bangkok, we celebrated New Year and the Marist bicentenary there.



Ms. Sofie Bliemel, CMI-Volunteer from Germany

The Marist Brothers Bicentenary Celebration: A Family Day at MAPAC

On January 2nd the Bicentenary of the Marist Brothers was celebrated at MAPAC by the Brothers and their mission partners with their Families. almost 70 people were participated to celebrate 200 years of our foundation day.

At 9 am we began the Bicentenary celebration with the thanks giving Eucharistic celebration in a simple and



beautiful way. Before the Mass, we were all involved in the construction of a small model house which symbolized our congregation. Each one brought a brick made of foam to the front portion of the chapel and build the house which gradually took shape, but remained unfinished, for that is how we see the work begun 200 years ago. In the years ahead we shall continue with the building of our Institute. After the Gospel we watched a video of Br Emili delivering his massage of Gratitude-Forgiveness-Commitment.

After the Holy Eucharist, the celebration continued with activities which took place in the main dining hall.



The games brought much fun for all the participants. Our celebration ended on that day with the festive meal at 12:30p.m.

Br. Anton Cong

Saen Monourom - Cambodia A New Beginning 2017

Motivated by the 200 years' celebration of our Institute we try to elaborate a new Mission Vision for the next 3 years. In our particular case, we are confronted by a real NEW BEGINNING, which is coincident with the process of the whole Congregation before the next General Chapter.

Our present situation:

- Our Bishop finished to build a new Pastoral Center in Saen Monourom City and he wants us to take care of the Center.
- A new parish priest is in charge of the different Buonong villages.
- The students of the hostel are now nearly all from Primary school and Middle school, because the government opened a High-school in Bousra village where many of them were coming from, but now have to go to school in their home village.
- We Brothers continue teaching English, French and Computer for the students of the Hostel and Provide help when needed.
- We are happy to have one more brother in our community: Br. John from Cameroon.

We have had from the beginning of this year a permanent conversation about this new situation and how to manage the new Pastoral Center.



On Monday 16th of January 2017 we traveled to Kampong Cham for a meeting with our Bishop Antony, Fr. Francois (the new Parish Priest), Fr. Juan (the former Parish Priest), Mr. Maigne (the

builder of the new center), Br. Bernhard, Max and John.

Bishop Antony started to say that the Marist Brothers are in charge of the New Pastoral Center in Saen

Monourom. It is the Marist Brothers' House. They offer a stay for the priest, and welcome the pilgrim groups. They offer classes of English and Computer to the students of the hostel and the neighborhood. They run the house and are invited to prepare a budget.

During the meeting, there were coming out many practical things and also, we were talking about how to help the catholic communities of Bousra, Dak Dam and Keosema.



After the meeting and a dialogue among ourselves we can affirm the following:

New Mission Vision

1. We think that the option to work with the local Church is still a good and valid option, despite the difficulties in some moments in the past.
2. We have to bring in our way to be BROTHER in contact with our neighbors, the students, the other members of the church: lay, priests, religious, ...
3. Despite our limits, we offer our collaboration and support: we coordinate this actions with our parish priest.
4. The New Pastoral Center has to become a place where people from all over the diocese can feel and experience a spirit of brotherhood and welcome. We can help with our presence and concrete work to create this family spirit.
5. In the new center, we offer a place for our students to study, to have their meetings.
6. We are open to the new possibilities and surprises that every new beginning will bring with it.
7. We will elaborate our new Community Life project according to the new situation.

Brothers Bernhard, John and Max.



Postulancy House – DAVAO

The 2016-2017 Postulancy year began with two members in the Formation Team Bro. Luis and Bro. Mark Poro with 15 postulants from Vietnam, Bangladesh, China and India. Since Paco, our Director, was away in Spain recovering from a cancer of the colon. We have been praying for Paco and being in touch with him often all through this past year. We are now all awaiting with joy and expectation his arrival on the 26th of this month of January.



We were very happy and grateful to have Brother Alex Arockiasamy with us for over two months. He proved to be a precious help and a first class formator. Thank you, Alex, for your fraternal presence and help in this Postulancy. Brother Larry Lavallee (USA) replaced Brother Alex when this one went back to India. Brother Larry is one of the new MDA members that arrived in the District after an orientation program in Italy (Volunteers for new International Communities) and about a month of more specific orientation about the life and ministries in MDA, in Bangkok. Brother Larry is adapting well. He soon became an active and much appreciated member of the Formation Team, giving a very much needed helping hand for personal accompaniment of the postulants, taking care of the English language piece of the program, organizing the “Cooking Club” on Saturdays and being most participative in all the community activities. Welcome,

Brother Larry and thank you very much for your fraternal presence and good work.



In July 23, we had the joy of participating in the Bicentenary Celebration of the Fourvier Pledge in a way that has proved very formative for the postulants and meaningful to all of us. In preparation for this celebration, the Fourvier Bicentenary Committee made of one Marist Father, one Marist Brother, one Marist Sister and one SMSM Sister, organized a Day of Reflection on the theme of the Fourvier Pledge. It was facilitated by the Brothers in GenSan where it took place. Brother Michael Green (Australia) was the facilitator of this day of reflection that he introduced the day of reflection with a well informed and interesting presentation.

In Davao and as part of the Bicentenary celebrations, we also organized together with the Marist Fathers, Marist Sisters and SMSM Sisters a novena in preparation for the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary (12 September). We hosted and facilitated two of the days



of the novena, taking responsibility for the animation of the Eucharist, the homily and the dinner for those attending the occasion. About 50 people from the different Marist branches and Lay Marists gathered for each day of these two days of the novena. This kept the community quite busy preparing for the religious celebration as well as for the dinner.

On the 2nd of January, this year, postulants and members of the Formation Team travelled to GenSan to join with the Brothers of the Sector of the Philippines (Province of East Asia) for the celebration of the Bicentenary of the Marist Brothers' Foundation. It was a very meaningful gathering intended mostly for Brothers. We intend to have a second celebration here in Davao, on the 6th of June, inviting the other Marist branches, Lay Marists and friends around us.

During the month of December, before Christmas, we went around the different Formation Houses and Parish in our vicinity singing carols. It took time and effort to prepare all those carols in English, Vietnamese, Bangla, Mandarin and Spanish. The Parish Priest, after listening to our carols requested us to offer a performance in the Church during one of the Misa de Gallo celebrations (3 am). We all were happy and proud with these performances. We also took responsibility for all the singing during one of the Misa de Gallo celebrations as we are doing on Saturdays (twice a month).

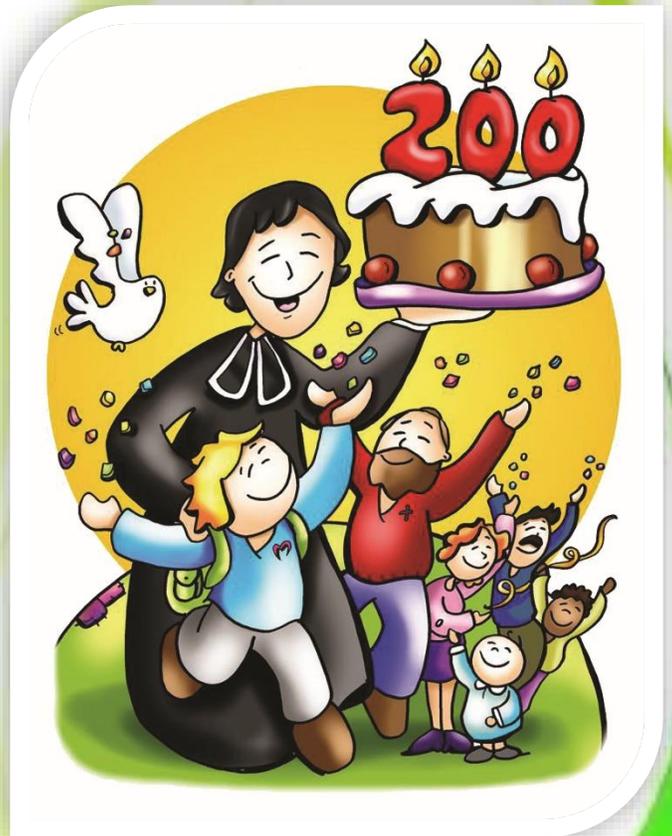


We are having now Brother Ricky Gomez (Venezuela) with us. He will be here for a few months trying to improve his fluency in English. Like Brother

Larry he is a new member of the MDA District coming from the Orientation Sessions of the "New International Communities" organized in Italy. His presence is very much appreciated by all of us, postulants and members of the Formation Team.



Br. Luis Sabrado



BIRTHDAYS

January 2017:

- 2nd Br. Salvador Salinas – Vietnam
- 5th Br. Peter Wang Peng – Sri Lanka
- 26th Br. Francis Attah – Cambodia

February 2017:

- 1st Br. Sanchez Antonio
- 6th Br. Ramon Doroteo
- 17th Br. Willrich Canisio
- 22nd Br. Valle George
- 26th Br. Arockiasamy Alex

March 2017:

- 12th Br. Grande Jose Luis
- 15th Br. Codato Pietro

**GOOD WISHES AND PRAYERS TO
YOU ALL BROTHERS**

**Being Brother... ..
Prophetic Memory of
Jesus**

BROTHERHOOD... ..

*The Gift We Receive
The Gift We Share
The Gift We give away*

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*Heartfelt Congratulations and
Good Wishes to each and Every
Marists with our prayers.
Happy Bicentenary!!!*