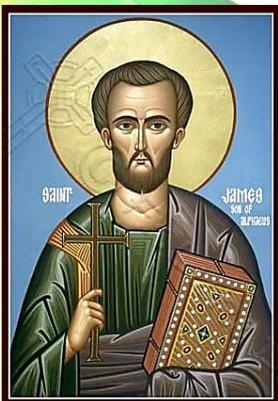




## THE HUG TO THE APOSTLE ST. JAMES

Bro. LUIS

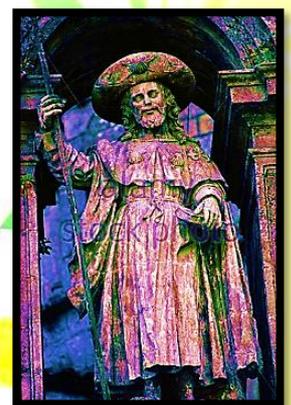
I am spending part of my home leave time here in Santiago de Compostela (St. James of Compostela) in Spain. My parents were residents in this town, of approximately 100,000 people, for over 25 years and four of my brothers and sisters have their homes and families here.



Santiago de Compostela is famous for his Cathedral in Romanic style that goes back in time to the year 1211. Much before that, it was already a center of pilgrimage for thousands of faithful who came to venerate the relics of St. James the Great. This custom grew through the ages and today there is an average of close to over a quarter of a million pilgrims every year. To qualify as a pilgrim, one has to walk or cycle a minimum of 200 kilometres. About 80% of the pilgrims come from Spain and neighbouring Countries: France, Germany, Italy, Britain and Portugal, but pilgrims from many Countries from every continent arrive also in Santiago de Compostela every year.

One of the rites that every pilgrim performs at the end of the way is the so called, ***“Hug of the Apostle St. James”***. The pilgrims queue at the entrance of a narrow passage and take turns to hug the silver bust of the apostle. They go up to the place where the bust is found and for a brief moment they place their hands on the shoulders of the apostle and touch his back with their cheeks.

This gesture expresses the tender love, confidence and sense of own fragility from the part of the pilgrim. Somehow is telling everyone who looks at it that the pilgrim is in need of help and that he places great trust in the help of the Apostle. This sentiment and deep need has been expressed in a very meaningful way in the ancient formula that many pilgrims used to mumble while hugging the apostle, praying to Jesus through the Apostle: ***“O Holy, the Strong One, Jesus Christ, have pity on me!”***



I have made the St. James Way twice in my life, on bicycle. I have embraced the Apostle every time I come to visit my family in Santiago de Compostela. Every time I go through this rite of the Hug of the Apostle, the ancient prayer comes to my lips and, together with it, the prayer of St. Marcellin, ***“If the Lord does not build the house, then in vain do we labour!”***

As I grow in the number of years, I become more and more aware of how fragile our lives, persons and ministries are. And together with this awareness grows the conviction that the Strong One and Our Good

Mother are always there: inspiring, supporting, making up for our own fragility and poverty. And from it all grows a sense of the need to be perseverant with a humble attitude and to abandon oneself to the good care and strength of Jesus and Mary and our intercessors – one of them being, in my case, the Apostle St. James.

## HEARTY WELCOME

Two members of LaValla 200, 2017 were chosen to be part of MDA. We give a warm welcome to both of them. **Bro. Ricardo Piña** from the Province of Mexico Central and **Mr. Aldo Cesar Farias** from the Province of Brazil Centro Sul. Bro. Ricardo was appointed to Cambodia and he will join soon the community of Pailin. Mr. Aldo Cesar has been appointed to the community of Isma. We wish all the best to both of them. Once again, we welcome them to our District.



## NEWS FROM BRO. ALVARO - FMSI



Brothers and friends, an international alliance against corporal punishment to children have produced a very useful and simple material. It's directed to children, adults and teachers.

You can find them in several languages at:

<http://endcorporalpunishment.org/resources/faqs/faqs-en.html>

Marcellin suffered the impact of corporal punishment during his first day of classes more than two hundred years ago. This sadly reality continue until now in different places around the world, however the Marists can do something and we must do something. The dignity of children is our first task.

*Juan Castro, Fms*

## News from VIETNAM

### *Celebration of the feast of Saint Marcellin Champagnat in Saigon*

On June 6, we celebrated the feast of St Marcellin in our parish with the presence of brothers, young men in formation, other religious, lay people and friends. **Fr.Tien**, close related to us for several years, presided the Mass.





The Mass was organized by the young brothers and we had a wonderful choir with young voices singing in English and Vietnamese. After the Mass, we were invited for the party in a local restaurant, followed by a happy hour in the Aspirancy community. On the same day, we also celebrated the birthday of **Br. Tri**.

### *Young Marist Encounter in Saigon*

On April 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, 11 young men in Marist formation gathered in the Aspirancy community.

**Topics of the 3 days were:** *Spirituality, Community Life, Mission – Apostolate, Reflection on possible housing and ministry for the future.* We had several activities during the encounter: *Prayers, Eucharist, group dynamics, questions for reflection, sharing, personal time, meals, videos and PowerPoints, movie, soccer game, evaluation.*



29<sup>th</sup> was the day of the liturgy for sending off the 3 new Novices to Tudella Novitiate and the 3 Newly Professed Brothers to MAPAC.



### *Candidacy in Saigon*

During the month of April and May we have had several group of young men in Marist formation living with us for a short community experience, and helping in several tasks including vocation ministry. It brought life and hope for all of us. In addition to those people we had also 3 young men who came for a month “come and see” program.

On 23 to 25 of June the 3 candidates did their retreat, as well an evaluation to the formation year. At the end, they wrote a letter to the District Leader about their life, experience in the candidacy and desires towards their future vocational journey.





The Candidacy program 2016-2017 ended on July 02. Now we will continue with vocation ministry in several places of the country.

*Br. Canisio José Willrich.*

## My volunteering story

*Sofie Bliemel – Samut Sakhon*

The nine months of volunteering in the Marist Centre for Migrants have been a truly outstanding and life-changing time for me. Our centre provided free education, meals and supervision for the children of Burmese migrants in Samut Sakhon, Thailand. I taught English, art and guitar.

Teaching and spending time with the students was certainly challenging, but a task I always loved. In the Marist Centre I found a team of very committed teachers and Marist brothers. They enabled me to experience their passion for the work, which was very inspiring. The educational center tries to offer a wholesome education to the students and keep them from going to work. Because of this, we also visited them in their homes and keep close

contact with the children. The students receive further teaching and understanding of their own culture and Buddhist religion, which is an important part of the project that I highly appreciate.



All these experiences gave me a sense of what a life as a Burmese migrant in Thailand can be like. I could understand some of their problems and why they behave in a certain way. This changed my outlook on life and on the relevance of things. It was not easy to cope with the unfair structures the people



were caught in, however it led me to redefine my views on justice. Feeling like a part of the project and my close connection with the children really sparked the urge in me to change something. Of course, my possibilities as a volunteer are limited. Nevertheless, I am proud of the progress my students made in the English lessons and I hope that I was able to act as a good role model in friendships with them. Because they sometimes told me about their problems or how they felt, I tried to help

them and influence their life in a good way. We shared a lot of joy and laughter, which had a positive impact on all of our lives for sure.

The community life offered me a true home. In this way I am very thankful to the brothers, their great kindness and how they took care of me. They were very patient with my learning process. Even in our international community we faced a mix of different cultures that each had their own ways of dealing with things. Seeing how the brothers live in a simple way together with the people they are working with, was very inspiring for me and had a big impact on my life. I appreciate their critical approach on consumerism and capitalism, which they shared with me. Joining their life there, gave me the possibility to really experience the culture. It also made me realize, that thinking that one's own culture does everything right, is completely wrong.



I was inspired and taught to understand and learn about the ways of other cultures, which even led me to adapt one or the other thing. I was lucky to meet many brothers in the Marist District Asia, who shared their vision with me. I experienced the Marist hospitality in our home and when visiting other communities, which was an incredible learning experience for me.

CMI Germany and our group of volunteers offered helpful and important support before, during and after the 9 months I spent abroad. It was a family like community, that still persists and offers further engagement in



Marist activities. We as volunteers have a strong connection and share a somewhat similar story, which is why I feel that there is a communal drive to share our experience and participate in more activities together. Not only the connections to Thailand, but also the Marist community in Germany are an important part of my life now and inspire me to take more action. In the past year, I have learned so much and I am now happy to carry a part of the Marist spirit within me.

## NEWS FROM MAPAC

Bro. Bao,fms

A workshop on *Multicultural Living* run by **Br. John Hazelman** and **Br. Ray Arthur** was a significant one to start of the 2017-2018 school year and formation at MAPAC. *"It takes an attitude of respect, patience, openness, and not to mention a certain degree of maturity to live and grow within an inter-cultural setting"*. **Br. Samuel Joseph D. de Guzman (PHS)**. Thanks to John and Ray for your effort and knowledge.



Renewal of vows of **Bao** and **Thuan** on June 6, 2017. They were in the immersion place up on the mountain of Palitaw, on June 6 they came down with the host families. We had a simple celebration after the Eucharist which was celebrated by **Fr Ed**, priest of the Disciples of Christ the Divine Healer, who lives just next door-Lorenzo Fraternity. Joining with us were the presence of the Lay Marists, the school community and some other friends.



**Bao** and **Thuan** with the families where they stayed during the immersion. They were very happy to be invited over.

**MAPAC** community welcomed the new six talented young Brothers, who arrived on June 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, as members; three of them come from the Pacific. They have, so far, been settled down and get along with the activities of MAPAC and soon they will go for studies at IFRS where **Thuan** and **Bao** have been going. Let us wish and continue to pray for these young men to continue their journey to follow Christ in the way Mary and Champagnat did.



“Growing together, we move together towards a new beginning”.

## NEWS FROM THE NOVITIATE – SRI LANKA

*Bro. Real Sauvageau*

### New beginning at the Novitiate of Tudella

Finally, after some visa problems, all the new novices were in Sri Lanka for June 11<sup>th</sup>, we begin the orientation programme. For ten days, we had the opportunity to share, to reflect and to help one another to enter in the spirit and the structures of the novitiate in order to live it in the most responsible way. To conclude this, we could live a nice moment of three days retreat at the beautiful house of the Good Shepard Sisters at Negombo.



### Celebration of Initiation

In the night on June 24, we lived the Celebration of Initiation. **Br. Noel Fonseka** accepted officially the request of the Novices and gave to each one a *Marist Cross*, the *Holy Bible* and the *Marist Constitutions*. At the end, each Novice consecrated himself to Mary in his own words to put in the hands of our Good Mother this important commitment.

These Novices are from East Timor (**Gabriel, Benjamin, Jacinto and Melquiano**), from Vietnam (**Hoang Anh, Luân and Binh**), from Papua New Guinea (**Cyril, Carlvin**), from Sri Lanka (**Sheron, Sasmika**) and from Bangladesh (**Robert**).



### Visit to the Nuncio Mgr. Pierre Nguyen Van Tot.

On June 26, we have been received by **Mgr. Pierre Nguyen Van Tot**, the Apostolic Nuncio. It has been a great moment of communion and joy, feeling all his friendship and blessings for us. As a gift for him, each group of the Novices sang some songs of their countries.



### Regular program and workshop on Spiritual Direction.

After all this period of initiation, we entered in the regular programme. However, on July 4 and 5, we had the opportunity to reflect more on our Spiritual Journey with **Sr. Canice** who animated a very meaningful workshop on Spiritual Direction.



## NEWS FROM THE POSTULANCY – DAVAO

*Bro. Paco*

### Entering into the Postulancy

Feast of Corpus Christi

#### **Bro. Paco's word of welcoming and Accepting the New Postulants:**

Dear Marist Fathers, Brothers Mark, Larry, Walter, dear Sisters, Postulants and Friends, we are gathered here in the presence of our loving God, One who calls each one by name, to offer these young men with their hopes and prayers while they move from the Aspirancy to Postulancy. They spent time on to think about their vocation journey and now ready to enter in their next stage of formation to become Marist Brothers in near future. Prior to the Postulancy, an Aspirant must have attained a certain degree of readiness in terms of his capacity for discernment and personal growth. During these 10 months Postulancy program, is actually a stage of preparation for the Novitiate. Consequently, the demands at this level of formation become more challenging one.



These days to become a Brother or Priests, or Sister is a New Beginning, and it requires a strong spirituality and commitment. above all, we have to allow ourselves **to be led by the emerging newness of the Spirit as Mary** (*Br. Emili in his video on the feast of S. Marcellin, 2017*).

The Feast of Corpus Christy today, reminds that *whether we are priests, sisters, brothers, lay people... we cannot receive the body of Christ if we do not feel hurt in our hearts for the painful and dramatic situation in the world and around us: to know that, there is people drowning in the sea, refugees, people dying for radicalism of the religions, ... We could not celebrate the Corpus Christi if we do not do what is in our hands to repair these sacrileges, because they are the Body of Christ.*

As we gather here to celebrate with our young men, their entry into Postulancy, we praise and thank God for His grate love and also for being with us in our lives. We pray that God may bless and guide these young men as they continue in their journey of **DISCERNING GOD'S CALL**. We also ask for the intercession of Mary and St. Marcellin, our models of following our Lord Jesus that **Long, Hoang, Liu Cong, Prem, Duy, Nghi, Ly, and Duc** shall be given the grace of **"clarity of response"** to God's call.

Now behalf of our MDA, the brothers of the Postulancy community, I welcome you all as Postulants for your further formation program. Do not be afraid, in this journey, you will not be alone, we too journeying with you as your brothers. Above all, the power of the Holy Spirit the one who leads you all, will help you and strengthen you in this challenging journey...

Thank you for joining with us as one family of Marist Brothers.



## News from Talit – West Bengal

BR. MALANGMEI

### The richness of sharing our mission with others

Our 20<sup>th</sup> General Chapter invited us to have **“a heart that knows no bounds”**. The Marist Community in Talit, West Bengal – India, after a few years our presence, little by little welcoming others too to share our mission particularly with the Santal Tribal Children. In 2010, The Diocese of Asansol entrusted to the Marist brothers, this mission of taking care of the Tribal children’s education, health, spiritual, and all other moral values which will help them in many ways.



Couple of years later, some of the volunteers from *Australia Northshore college* students and teachers, and last two years *Marcellin college from Randwick* students and teachers, come to our place spending almost two weeks for their exposure. Also from *SED NGO from Spain* three volunteers coming every year for few weeks. They help us in many ways... particularly for the growth of our Children. Our hostel Boys enjoying by having very good and health relationship with them and willing to learn from them. It was worth enough for us to allow them to be with our children and share our mission.

Likewise, this year, last 10 days a group of boys and staff came for their exposure. It was a wonderful experience for all of us. Usually they spend a couple of days in Kolkata for a short visiting of some important places, then from there they moved to a Santali tribal village with the help of the local priests and people, they could have bit experience of the local people’s life style. Then they came to our hostel for five days, join with our boys play soccer or Cricket, later spend some time with them by teaching and playing some Indoor games by group. The last day, while it was Sunday holiday, whole day they spent their time with boys with different type of program. Evening we had a special cultural program part of saying good bye to our visitors as well as they too said good bye to us by performing their own dances and songs. At the end, our visitors share their gifts with the boys and also having fun by coloring each one’s faces.



Every time when the group comes, our boys become so alive and eager to welcome them and learn from them. The presence of this Australian group enriches the life of our boys and open their minds. It supposes a testimony of commitment and a witness of service and solidarity. Next group, in few days we are waiting to welcome SED NGO Volunteers for a few weeks... thank you friends for sharing our mission here in Talit.

### **Terrace wall and shed at Chetana Tribal boys' Hostel- Talit**



The work of building terrace wall had begun in the month of May and still under construction. By now 80% of the wall have finished. It will be able to complete at the end of this month. This project is financed by Australian Marist Solidarity. It has been a great help from them. They have been helping in many areas like provision, sports materials, hygienic and etc. This wall will provide safety and good place to dry to clothes especially during rainy season.

This project has five parts: 1. Terrace wall, 2. Shed for clothing to dry, 3. Provision, 4. Beautification, 5. Painting. At the moment terrace wall and shed are nearing completion while painting and beautification yet to begin. Provision has been already in progress providing daily necessities for the boys.



**District Leader/ Publication Director:**

*Bro. Juan Castro, fms*

**Production:**

Bro. A.H.Alex, fms

**Administration Address:**

58/54 Soi Pichai 2, St. Louis 3

Southern Sathorn Road

Yanḡawa, Sathorn,

Bangkok 10120, THAILAND.

Tel.: (Mobile) +66 (0) 624632826