

Words of Thanksgiving



**Do not be afraid to be few
But be afraid of being insignificant
Of no longer being light that illuminate all those
that are immersed in the dark night of history
Be afraid if you fail to be salt that gives flavour to the life
(Pope Francis)**

I am finishing my second term as the leader of our Marist District of Asia. What a privilege it has been to enjoy the opportunity to observe God at work in our lives and witness Divine Providence moving us forward in very creative ways. How the Lord's Way is not always our way. The Spirit has been moving in and through our lives.

From the bottom of my heart I want to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to each of you, my brothers and all our Marist Family. We walked together these last 6 years, sometimes this involved making our way through a dense fog, unable to see the road ahead of us. At other times we were able to clearly see and follow the Lord's path. We have heard the calls of the Chapter, and you have been open and generous in carrying out our journey.

Thanks to every one of you, my brothers! With your lives you have been a blessing for me, a blessing that is continuously supporting our efforts to follow the Lord and His invitation to move forward.



You are my heroes. Your names are not found on the pages of newspapers; seemingly your hidden lives go unnoticed. But you are constantly present to the needy, the forgotten and those whom we have yet to meet and serve in the Lord's Name. You are the embodiment of solidarity, keeping uppermost in our minds the meaning of human dignity.

When I have visited your communities and sensed the simplicity with which you live, when I have spent days at a time in those places where there is no drinking water, electricity is still unavailable, and Wi-Fi connections work only a few days a month... When I have experienced life in your communities, I have witnessed the affection and appreciation that your neighbours' feel for you for welcoming them as part of our Marist Family...

They may not know that you are Marists, but they surely understand that you are brothers, **universal brothers**. Your communities transmit a unique spiritual flavour. Your lives are characterized by the light of all who follow Jesus. You are vibrant personalities and communicate life with your eyes, your smiles and expressions of genuine concern. Those you work with you are impressed by the way you walk and talk. That's because you draw upon a supernatural source of energy, the energy of Divine Love.

I know that life is not always sunny, filled with non-stop happiness and joy. There are also dreary, cloudy days when the routine of daily life may seem pointless. Nevertheless, Divine Love is present and your faith gives you the strength to persevere even when difficulties and tensions abound.

At times when police forced you to sleep elsewhere, not allowing you to remain in your home. When on occasion they ordered you to close your centre the following day. Even when gave you an ultimatum to leave the country without any opportunity to go back and gather your belongings. When they expelled you from your mission field?



When I reflect on moments like that, the words of Jesus resound in my heart, "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies..." This is precisely what you are doing every day, encouraged by the Spirit. You are answering Christ's call to go forth each new day and listen to His voice that is always encouraging you, "You are the salt of the earth, the light of the world."

Thanks once again, dear brothers, for allowing me to play a part in your lives and mission. I am proud to have shared these years with you. We all have our limitations, but I know we are always relying on God's goodness and striving to do our best. No doubt I was unable to satisfy everyone's expectations. Please know that I did my best to give of myself and foster our efforts to realize St Marcellin's dream for us - that we persevere in animating and serving our precious Marist District of Asia and it's challenging yet rewarding mission, to make Jesus known and loved in this part of our world.

Bro. Juan Castro

From Vietnam Formation House

St. Marcellin feast day



The community in Saigon celebrated the feast of St. Marcellin Champagnat in the local parish with the community who always welcome us. It was a great opportunity to say thanks to God for the gift of Marcellin to the Church.

The Marist spirit is alive and connects people like living bridges!

Retreat of the Aspirants

The aspirants in Saigon had their 4 days discernment retreat in the monastery of the Cistercians in Dong Nai. It was a great time for each of them to have their unique experience of God in the silence and perceive how much God loves and calls them.

Thanks to our Good Mother for the gift of vocation. After the retreat each of them applied for the next stage of formation.



Acceptance for the Postulancy



We are happy to announce that our 5 Vietnamese aspirants were accepted to the next stage of formation: Postulancy. We rejoice with them for their generosity to say YES and continue their vocational journey with the Marist Family. They will be starting their postulancy program at the beginning of September. Congratulations, we wish them a wonderful experience of postulancy and may God bless them.

Bro. Canisio

FROM DAVAO POSTULANCY COMMUNITY

Time of Transitions (*Going Deeply in My Discernment Process Change of Phase in The Postulancy*)

In our Formation Program there is an important moment in the life of our Postulants.

At the end of the 1st phase of the postulancy, usually at the beginning of June, we have what we call "Time of Transition". It is about 3 weeks before to start the 2nd phase of the postulancy, typically the three weeks before start FIR (Formation Institute for Religious) modules.



The objective of this time is to help the postulants to be aware of the moment they are living, to see the reality of themselves and the community in this particular change of phase of the postulancy program. Specifically:

1. Be aware of the vocational process they have done. What have they discovered in their lives that helped them in their vocation discernment.
2. In the present moment
Develop the consciousness about how they are now.
 - a. Weakness / difficulties in their vocational discernment
 - b. Strengths they have, to continue their discernment
3. Look forward to the next steps realizing in which areas they should improve their lives as postulants.



Why we have placed this time of transition in our program? Some facts for this time of transition.

- Already have passed 10 months since the arrival to the postulancy of Davao
- The learning English in the academy has finished.
- The FIR modules start soon.
- The community is growing in different areas:
 - Acceptance and respect of each one, with good level of integration.
 - Personal and community commitments.
 - Improvement of the personal and community prayer.
 - Seriousness in the weekly accompaniment.
 - The second evaluation has shown weakness and strengths of each one of them and know that there are the areas in which they have to grow.
 - The Personal Life Plan is going on.



We have developed this period of transition in four moments:

1. From May 30 to June 2: Retreat of “*Going deeply in my discernment*”; where they write a “Letter of commitment” that they read in the celebration of the Proclamation of the postulants.
2. June 6: Proclamation of the postulancy, celebration of the feast of Marcellin Champagnat, where the Marist Family of Davao gather for the celebration of the Feast of Marcellin.
3. June 8: Community outing (Samal Island).
4. From 10 to 12 of June: Workshop about “*Times of transitions*”.



We can notice in our community life how all postulants have taken seriously their commitments and continue growing in their vocational journey.

Greetings from Davao Postulancy Community

Bro. Paco

ASPIRANCY HOUSE — TALIT, WEST BENGAL - INDIA.

We are three aspirants from West Bengal (MDA) who are now preparing go move to the next stage of our formation in Davao - postulancy. June is the last month of formation here in South India and in the months of July and August we will go to visit our family and live our community experience in Talit (West Bengal). We would like to share with you our experience.



The apostolic work that we are doing weekly with old people and also with children with disabilities has helped us deeply in our discernment process to continue our Marist journey. At the beginning it was bit difficult, but through these difficulties we could discover our weaknesses and, with them, we could grow stronger.

Bro. Javier all the time is close to us, training us to live deeper our formation itinerary. We are also motivated by brother Saul, member of the community. When we look at his work, with poor children and with young people, we learn a lot from him becoming a very good example to follow the charism of the Marist brothers.



During meals, like brothers of a same family, we all share our happy and sad moments. Every day we are improving in our prayer life, classes and manual works in the house. We enjoy English classes with Mrs. Sabin. She is a very good teacher and concern on us more. We will never forget these days gave us the way to continue our formation to become a good Marist brother.

FROM QUÉBEC

You remain very present even though I have a time a little bit long here in Québec due to the circumstances. However, Facebook and Messenger help me to remain in contact with the joys, challenges and even sorrows that some of you are living. I am living everything with you. I will have a special thought and prayer for the Chapter. I send to you some photos of my activities here...



Bro. Réal



From Fiji – Perpetual Vows Preparation



The program has started on June, 24th and will be ended on July, 20th. There are 15 participants with 3 staff brothers.

The different topics were presented to us focusing on three vows Chasity, Poverty and Obedience. The program is well organized in the wonderful place with solitude and fine environment.

Thank you, Lord, for this blessing.



Bro. Cong.

From Cambodia

Here, just we finished our Celebration of St. Marcellin Feast day. I am so happy to be with the Brothers, young people and children here, and also, I can see the hope of my journey in Cambodia. I pray for all the brothers and their mission. May we become a bridge builder of the needy ones...





Br. Hoang Anh

From Mymensingh – Bangladesh

We have three young men in the candidacy program now. With the hard work of Bro. George as a Vocation Director, at the end of August, we will receive four young men who will begin their aspirancy program. They are in contact with us for last two years. Among them, two young men **Biplop** and **Mohan** are in our School community – Giasnogor at present for two weeks to know more about the Brothers and our mission with the Tea Garden Children.



Biplop Biswas



Micky Brain Gomes



Mohan Biswas



Soikat Lukas

Four of them coming from three different dioceses of Bangladesh with simple family background and we are happy to have youngmen from different part of this world.



Brother George is with two of the incoming Aspirants and their families

St. Marcellin's Feastday:

This year our Founder's feastday and the Ramadhan (a great feastday of Muslims) came together. We are living among the Muslim community. So we celebrated it in a simple way with our candidates by a special Prayer service and supper out. The day was a challenging one to recall our founder's last days in his life and his response to God's call.

Bro. Alex



BIRTHDAYS TO CELEBRATE

July:

- 1st Marti Enrich
- 7th Tran Long (N)
- 7th Pierre Joseph Rasolomanana
- 22nd Jose Javier Bometon
- 25th Vigilio Bwalya
- 26th Ismael Valls

August:

- 4th Malangmei Thaingamlung
- 5th Le Van Duy (N)
- 13th Bernhard Tremmel
- 15th Tran Dinh Luan
- 23rd Juan Castro

**Good wishes and
Prayers Brothers**

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