



Memories of September...

During the last week of September, I was impressed by all the events that are occurring around me even without been conscious or interested on them. I heard about a World Churches meeting, about Xenophobia, racism and populist nationalism. The visit of Pope to some of the old Russia confederation states, the address by the **Sec. General Antonio Guterres** to the General Assembly of the United Nations and now the Tsunami and earth quake that is affecting Indonesia...in the middle of all these, I was able to have some quiet silent time to reflect about the voices that were coming from all those circumstances or events.

I felt inter- related with all of them; what was happening in Latina America, USA or Asia had some echo in myself and urged me to share with you... all these events have something to say to our communities and to each one of us in a personal way. The Sec. General of UN in his speech said "World is suffering from *"Trust deficit disorder"*. **Today world order is increasingly chaotic. Universal values are being eroded...** and quoting Kofi Annan He said "We share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together".

Talking about the ecological crisis added: **"We are not doing enough. We need a great sense of urgency"** these words reminded me of our calls of the Chapter ... Care of our common home. Is it a sense of urgency to do what we can do in this area?

Some days before on the 24 of September, Pope Francis visiting the Shrine of the Mother of God in Aglona, Lativia said : *"Let us go out to meet our people, to console them and accompany them. Let us not be afraid to experience the power of tenderness, to get involved and let our lives become complicated for the sake of others"*. And on the last part of his homily, I found a call for us, Marists, to live deeper the sense of fraternity in our communities.

He said;" Mary the woman who receives and the woman who is willing to be received, who humbly lets herself become part of the disciple's world. She accepts to go along with the pace of someone younger than herself. Harmony is always difficult when we are different and when our differences of age, life experiences and circumstances lead us to feel, think and act in ways that at first sight, seems to be opposed. In faith it becomes possible to build unity in diversity..." And at the end of the Mass added: "Welcome one another without discrimination."

Discrimination this is the last word that has been on my head and on my heart.

On September 19th the participants at the conference about Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the context of global migration appeal to all the believers adding in the last part of that document: "Churches are called to be places of memory, hope and love. In the name of Jesus, who shared the experience of the migrant and the refugee and offered the Word of hope to the excluded and the suffering, we commit even more strongly to the promotion of a culture of encounter and dialogue, recognizing God in the faces of migrants. For strong than the way of death is the way of life and love...

Dear Brothers 3 more months and 2018 will be gone. Let's continue our Journey in the direction that the Word of the Lord and the daily events invite us to take.

Fraternally **Hoan**

Some news from Thailand

Visit of General Councillors: From August 4 to 7 we had the visit of two Councillors Bro. Ben from USA and Bro. Oscar from Spain. They stayed short time but we could share a lot during those days. Thanks for your visit and your ideas that challenged us



At the Retreat House in Siem Reap Bro. Michael de Wass animated the Retreat. The communities of Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand took part on it from August 15 to August 20. Thanks Michael and the organizers of this meaningful experience.



The Mission of the Disciples of Christ

He summoned the Twelve and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He said to them: "Take nothing for your journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, and let no one take a second tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there and leave from there. And as for those who do not welcome you, when you leave that town, shake the dust from your feet in testimony against them".

Then they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the good news and curing diseases everywhere. (Lk 9,1-6)

In our community prayer we are used to read and meditate some Gospel text, normally we take the one presented in the daily liturgy. Some days ago, it was about the mission of the disciples in Lk 9, 1-6 and Lk 10,1-12. We find it also in Mt 10.5-9 and Mc 6, 7 – 13. In all of them the disciples were sent out with a very concrete job description of their mission. If we compare the way Jesus was thinking how to announce the Kingdom of God and the way we are used to do it, we can detect some differences. Normally we try to explain it with the different cultural environment and the long distance in time. Somebody mentioned that if Jesus living in our time he surely wouldn't use a donkey to move around, but I think so easy we will not run away from questioning our modern methods. The Gospel has to help us to make a better discernment in our mission work, especially in our MDA, where we were sent to find new ways of being a Marist Apostol.

I can imagine that not all disciples were very happy with the conditions Jesus put on their first apostolic mission, to go and announce the Kingdom of God. To send them like

sheep among the wolves, and to go around nearly without any material support, surely was not very motivating. Their only strength was their faith in the word of Jesus: he gave them power over all demons and to cure diseases.

Their task was very heavy: cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons and all this for free. The idea of auto sufficiency didn't exist in this model of management.

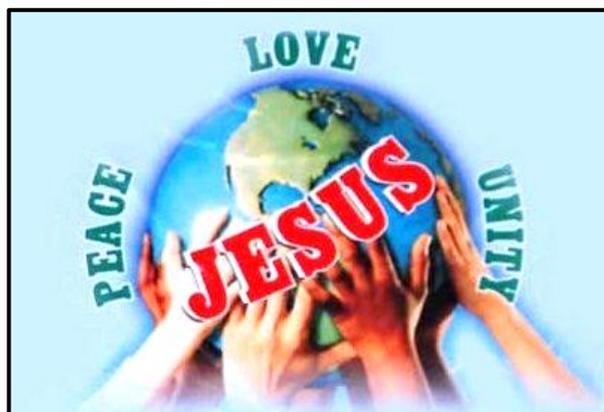
These signs were a prove that the Kingdom of God was already present. The question is, how do we now a day announce that the Kingdome of God is present and growing among the people? We can somehow imagine that to cure the sick and the lepers is possible because we have science and modern medicine, now to drive out demons and to raise the dead there is some problem and I do not know may examples where really dead people were called back to life and to drive out demons in the 21 century is for many like to go back to the dark ages of history. And just this is an important sign of the Kingdom of God: to eradicate the bad spirit. Maybe we have to look a little bit deeper into our reality. There is a lot of bad spirit going around in our world and in our personal and community life. This is the reason why we need to enter a process of discernment to distinguish among the good and the bad spirit.

We have to drive out these bad spirits if we want to proclaim the presence of the Kingdom of God in our time in a credible way.

There has to be driven out the spirit of hate, of gossiping, of egoism, of power, of greed, of building walls, of exclusion and racism, of violence and abuse, of war, ... I invite you to look around in your own environment and you will find enough bad spirits sneaking around. And we are called to drive them out in the name of Jesus living the opposite: building bridges, including people, living in communities without borders, cultivating family spirit y a global family, serving instead of looking for power.

There are also many dead bodies to be called again to life: young people without perspective in life, persons near us with depression and lack of vision, victims of violence and abuse, addicts to drugs and internet, and the list is growing day a day. Our mission as educators and brothers is to help them to find a new life perspective and recover the capacity to dream a better life.

This apostolic work starts in our own life. Our presence as people who believe in the existence of a merciful God and a future life near Him is a strong call and a challenge in middle of a materialistic vision of the world and life. Only full of the power of Jesus we can do this. It is not because of our personal skills or sophisticated resources or the money support from overseas.



In all this we are asked to put our confidence not in material and human resources but only in the faith in Jesus. May be sometimes we are afraid, like the apostles, of the fragility of our instruments and material support. Who of us is not getting a little nervous if the bank account is diminishing and there is no donor on the horizon? Or if we compare the vastness of our mission with our institutional and personal limits, or if we feel like sheep among wolves when we go out?

The mission to be disciple of Jesus and to go ahead of him to announce the Kingdom of God is as challenging today as in the apostolic times.

Brother Max

PAILIN, KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

News from Vietnam

Retreat in Siem Reap

The cluster country retreat for Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand was held this year in the Jesuit Centre in Siem Reap (Cambodia), from August 14 to 20, 2018.

Br. Michael the Waas was the facilitator, and the theme was about the calls of the General Chapter.

The brothers were happy with the retreat, with time of silence, contemplation in group/personal, sharing and celebration of the Marist day.

We were challenged to focus in what God is calling us to be and to do





SAIGON COMMUNITY



It was a blessing to receive in August the visit of **Br. Ernesto and Br. Sylvain**. We had a good time to share about our lives, mission, dreams, and enjoy the food and brotherhood around the table.

They also had the opportunity to see 2 houses that could give an idea on the kind of house we are thinking to purchase. In the same morning we went to see the land that might be donated to us.

Thanks for being close to the people on the peripheries. We wish you a great time of leadership in our Institute!



Community outing and meeting

From August 23 to 25 we the 5 brothers had the trip to Vung Tau to welcome our new community member Br. Anselmo Kim and share about ourselves.

It was also the occasion for us to make our community life plan, and foresee the activities of the year to come. A new community with new life and strength.

Welcome Br. Anselmo Kim to MDA, to VN!

Br. Kim and Br. Salvador are keen to study Vietnamese.



Arrival of the new Aspirants

It is the Aspirancy batch #10! On September 3rd, 5 new aspirants arrived: **Cuong, Nga, Dan, Mai, Trung**. On the second week of September we did a pilgrimage to our Lady in Vung Tau and visited some other places.

We wish them a wonderful stage of formation in the Aspirancy.



Arrival of the new candidates

On September 6th arrived the new batch of 10 candidates.

The candidacy house is full of life!

Wish them all a nice experience of *"come and see"*, as well candidacy.

We give thanks our Good Mother for the gift of vocations.

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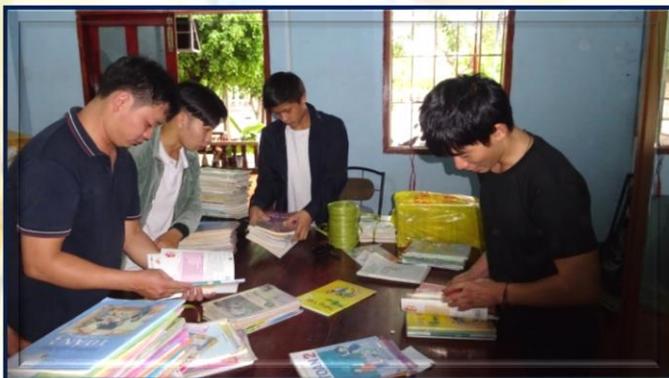
Tan Chau

I have been here in Tan Chau community for almost three months and have been working with Vietnamese returnees coming back from Cambodia, trying to help the children learning Vietnamese literature and other basic academic skills. It is challenging and difficult mission since we are not supported and allowed to get the works done legally; often I feel the insecurity of going to the mission areas, but I have never been discouraged. I find my presence among these children a great blessing.

Our mission with the returnees attracts attention of many people; among those were local donors as well as enthusiastic young men and women from the places nearby. There have been quite a good number of people who came and shared life with us these past few months. Among the visitors, were donors coming from Ha Tinh, Can Tho and Sai Gon, and also people who associate with us; they not only brought with them gifts and goods, books and things for the children, but also kind words and encouragement; they have been many of God's blessings to us. Thanks to all and their generosity in giving their time and talents. Please continue to keep us in your prayers. May God bless us and what we do.



Mid-Autumn festival was an opportunity to share the joy with the children in a sweeter way. Lots of cakes, candies, biscuits and gifts were given. We worked very much close with the parish in organizing the activities. Hoàng, Hải and Lý were very much involved in the Mid-Autumn festival, preparing and distributing gifts for the children. Their joyous presence encouraged us to keep the mission going.



Most of us know Thành and Hoàng, who had been in Marist formation for a while. Currently, they are working in Sài Gòn and are quite happy with their present life. They came to visit us here in Tan Chau and were very much enthusiastic about what they can offer to the children at the lake; thanks to them and their generosity in showing their Marist spirit for poor children.



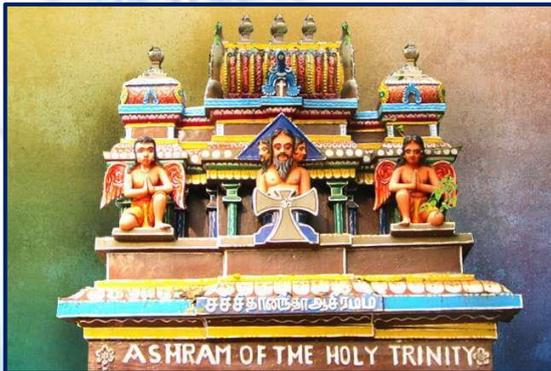
My sister, who is working in Sài Gòn, also came to visit me during the mid-autumn festival. She enjoyed very much the children and plans to come back again soon.



Recollection with the Indian Aspirants

At the end of September, the three Aspirants; **Sylvester, Manoj, Augustin** and I had three days of Recollection in the Benedictine Ashram of Shantivanam. It is situated forty Kilometres away from the Brother's house in South India where we have our formation program. After a month of our Aspirancy program, we planned to spend sometimes in reflective prayers about our Vocation.

Shantivanam is an old Monastery that follows the Catholic Liturgical ways with the Hindu symbolic



ways... which connects the Indian Culture. It's also opens the door to all other Religions who can find God in Silence. We followed the daily spiritual schedules of the Monastery and in our own times we had our personal prayers and sharing.

We started every morning with the "Namayapa" (Sanskrit Chant/Bajanon Jesus) at 5.30am. After an hour of personal meditation, we had our Morning prayer with the big group who stays in that Ashram, followed by the Eucharistic celebration. Here usually they provide Vegetarian food, but simple and delicious. We help to clean and cut the vegetables for lunch after breakfast.

Everyday the Aspirants had talk in the morning. First day, "Who am I?" Second day, "Discovering my Vocation". Third day, "Preparing my Answer (following Jesus)". The rest of the morning was their personal time. After the midday prayer followed by Lunch, we had our sharing together, reading our personal Dairy and answering the questions of the day. In the evening, we



had second talk by a Benedictine Monk; Fr. Dorothy. The first day on Vocation, Second day on Holiness and the third day about the Prayer. We spent the rest of the day for our personal

reflection. In the evening with the group we pray Rosary, evening prayer and supper. At 9.pm we have night prayer as "Namayapa" along with the others, then we go to bed.



These days, we could go deep in ourselves, discovering 'how the seed of our Marist Vocation is growing inside us'(Mt,13:8) and they were a privilege time to be in silence to

listen the inner voice of us and to learn to listen in the solitude of our prayer. (1Kng,19:12-13, 1Sam 3:10)

May the Lord give us wisdom to discover Him like the treasure (Mt.13:44-46) and to abandon all the other things. (Lk.18:22)

Br. Jose Maria



BIRTHDAYS

October 2018

5th Geoffrey Kelly

5th Bui Van Duc (N)

7th Francisco Garcia

11th Pham Thuan

12th Dong Ryeol Anselmo Kim

25th Nguyen Hoang Anh (N)

November 2018

14th Rubel Nokrek Raphael

21st Anphongso Quay

22nd Liu Cong (N)

**Good wishes and Prayers
Brothers**

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

Yannawa, Sathorn,

Bangkok 10120, THAILAND.

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