



marists **2017**
a new beginning



Community Bulletin

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



Champagnat Marists
DISTRICT OF THE PACIFIC

February 2017

What is in this edition?

Among other things this edition contains:

- Pope Francis on Religious Life
- Saying no to the culture of the provisional
- Samoa and Bicentennial Celebrations
- Further News from Samoa
- Wellington Marist School Beginnings - 1878
- District Calendar for March
- Pope Francis' talk on Migrants
- The Fight on Paedophilia
- A Passing Thought
- An Article on Spirituality
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- Gospel commentaries for March
- Xavier College planned gathering for Old Boys, Former Teachers & Brothers
- Invercargill Celebrations and Early Mission 1897
- Prayer Requests, Birthdays and Memorials

Cover image

The image on the cover of the *Community Bulletin* is of the table of the Brothers' community home at LaValla where Marcellin and the Community would gather to pray, meet and have their meals together. Well known by the many who have visited down through the years and some Brothers have been known to have taken a part of it away as a precious souvenir.



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

Pope Francis Speaks on Religious Life

Some “cracks” from Pope Francis about Religious Life in community

If there is something that the Argentine pontiff has demonstrated in his encounters with consecrated persons, it is that he has two very clear ideas.



First, the Pope emphasizes that for a religious community to work, there must be trust, fraternity, and a lot of frankness.

POPE FRANCIS

November 7th, 2014

"Sometimes you will come to blows but that is not a problem. That is better than the terrorism of gossip."

POPE FRANCIS

February 1st, 2016

"If you want to say something against a brother or sister, or launch 'a gossip bomb'... Bite your tongue! Strong."

Second, when faced with the problem of vocational shortages, Pope Francis points out that the solution is not to just accept anyone. In some convents and seminaries, the problem is that many of the people who want to enter have psychiatric problems, or simply seek material stability.

POPE FRANCIS

November 26th, 2015

"There are some who want to go in through the window. That doesn't work. If someone you know or friends have come in through the window, hug them. And explain that it's better for them to go and serve the Lord elsewhere because a work which Jesus himself did not begin, by the door, will never be brought to completion."

POPE FRANCIS

February 1st, 2016

"Some congregations do experiment with 'artificial insemination.' 'What do they do? They receive. They say, 'Yes, come, come.' And then there are problems from within. It must be received seriously."



We must say no to the culture of the provisional

Brother Emili Turú (SG) took part in the plenary session of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life on 27-28 January. The plenary is formed by 18 cardinals, 15 bishops and seven general superiors. The Congregation invited seven superiors of female religious congregations to also take part in this encounter. Pope Francis appointed Brother Emili as a member in February 2014.



On the first day, the group met with the Congregation of Bishops with the goal of increasing dialogue between the two Congregations, in the light of the document *Mutuae Relations* which describes the relationship between bishops and religious within the Church.

The rest of the meeting was focused on the theme "Faithfulness and perseverance". These reflections will be made public soon as "Orientations" of the Congregation.

On Saturday, 28 January, Pope Francis received the participants. He asked the religious to live the community life intensely, renouncing, prophetically, the culture of the provisional. Below is a google translation of the Pope's speech.

See more at:

<http://www.champagnat.org/400.php?a=6&n=4231#sthash.Xq4ZwhtO.dpuf>

We must say no to the culture of the provisional

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It gives me great joy to receive you today, as you meet in Plenary Session to reflect on the theme of loyalty and drop out. I greet the Cardinal Prefect and thank him for his words of introduction; I greet you all by expressing my gratitude for your efforts in the service of consecrated life in the Church.

The theme you have chosen is important. We can say that at this time loyalty is put to the test; the statistics that you have examined prove it. We are facing a "bleeding" which weakens the consecrated life and the life of the Church. Abandonments in consecrated life worry us. It is true that some leave for an act of consistency, because they recognize, after a serious discernment, he has never had a vocation. But others, with the passage of time are not to be faithful, many times only a few years after perpetual profession. What's happened?

As you have well marked, there are many factors that influence loyalty in this which is a change of epoch and not only exchange an era in which it is difficult to take on serious and lasting responsibilities. He told me a bishop, long ago, that a good guy with a

university degree, who was working in the parish, went to him and said: "I want to become a priest, but for ten years." The culture of provisional.

First Factor

The first factor that does not help to maintain the loyalty is the social and cultural context in which we move. We live immersed in the so-called culture of the fragment, the provisional, which can lead to live "*à la carte*" and to be a slave to fashion. This culture induces the need to always have the "side doors" open to other possibilities, it feeds consumerism and forget the beauty of a simple and austere life, causing many times a great existential void. It has also issued a strong practical relativism, according to which everything is judged in terms of a self, many times extraneous to the values of the Gospel. We live in a society where the economic rules replace those moral laws dictate and impose their own frames of reference at the expense of the values of life; a society where the dictatorship of money and profit advocates a vision of existence that makes those who do not is discarded. In this situation, it is clear that one must first be evangelized and then engage in evangelism.

Second factor

To this factor of socio-cultural context we have to add more. One of them is the youth world, a complex world, both rich and challenging. Not bad, but overall, yes, rich and challenging. Not lacking young very generous, supportive and committed to religious and social level; young people looking for a real spiritual life; young people who are hungry for something different from what the world offers. We are young beautiful and there are many. But even among young people, there are many victims of worldliness logic, which can be summarized as: the quest for success at any price, the easy money and easy pleasure. This logic also attracts many young people. Our commitment cannot be anything but stand next to them to infect them with the joy of the Gospel and of belonging to Christ. This culture must be evangelized if we want young people do not succumb.

Third Factor

A third conditioning factor comes from within the consecrated life itself, where next to such holiness - there is so much holiness in the consecrated life! - There is no shortage situations of counter-witness they bear allegiance difficult. Such situations, among others, are: the routine, fatigue, weight of facilities management, internal divisions, the search for power - climbers - a worldly manner of governing institutions, a service of authority that sometimes it becomes authoritarian and sometimes a "leave it." If the consecrated life wants to maintain its prophetic mission and its appeal, continuing to be a school of loyalty to the neighbours and those far (cf. Eph 2:17), it must maintain the freshness and novelty of the centrality of Jesus, the attraction of spirituality, the strength of the mission, and show the beauty of following Christ and radiate hope and joy. Hope and joy. This shows us how a community ticks, what's inside. There is

NO TO THE CULTURE OF THE PROVISIONAL

hope, there is joy? All right. But when there is no hope and there is no joy, the thing is ugly.

One aspect that you will have to pay particular attention to is the fraternal life in community. It must be nourished by community prayer, the reading of the word, by active participation in the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, by the fraternal dialogue and sincere communication between its members, the fraternal correction, mercy toward the brother or sister who sin, and by the sharing of responsibilities. All this accompanied by an eloquent and joyous witness of a simple life among the poor and a mission that privileges the existential peripheries. The renewal of fraternal life in communities depends very much the result of vocational ministry, the ability to say "come and see" (cf. Jn 1:39), and the perseverance of the brothers and sisters, young and old. Because when a brother or sister does not find support for his consecrated life within the community, will seek them out, with all that this entails (cf. *Fraternal Life in Community*, 2 February 1994, 32).

The vocation, like faith itself, is a treasure that we bear in earthen vessels (cf. 2 Cor 4,7); so we must guard it as you guard the most precious things, that no one steals this treasure, nor does it lose with the passage of time its beauty. Such care is first and foremost task of each of us, that we are called to follow Christ more closely with faith, hope and charity, grown every day in prayer and strengthened by a solid theological and spiritual formation, which defends the fashions and the culture of the ephemeral and allows you to walk firmly in the faith.

On this basis it is possible to practice the evangelical counsels and have the mind of Christ (cf. Phil 2,5). A vocation is a gift we have received from the Lord, who has set his gaze upon us and loved us (cf. Mk 10:21) calling us to follow him in the consecrated life, and is at the same time a responsibility of those who received this gift. With the grace of God, each of us is called to assume responsibility with first-hand the commitment of the own human, spiritual and intellectual, and, at the same time, to keep alive the flame of vocation. This means that in our turn we keep our eyes fixed on the Lord, always being careful to walk according to the logic of the Gospel and not succumb to the worldly criteria. So many times the big boot from infidelity take small detours or distractions. Again it is important to make our own the exhortation of Saint Paul: "It 'time now to wake from sleep" (Rom 13:11).

Speaking of loyalty and abandonment, we must give much importance to accompaniment. And this I would like to emphasize this. It is necessary that consecrated life invests in preparing qualified escorts for this ministry. And I say to the consecrated life, so that the charism of spiritual direction, the spiritual direction, is a "lay" charism. Priests have also; but it is "lay." How many times have I found nuns who tell me: "Father, you do not know a priest who is directing me?" - "But, tell me, in your community there is a wise nun, a woman of God?" - "Yes, there's that old lady ... but ... "-" Go to her". You take care of the members of your congregation. Already in the last Plenary Assembly, you have found such a requirement, as is also evident in

NO TO THE CULTURE OF THE PROVISIONAL

your recent document to new wine new wineskins (cf. nn. 14-16). We never insist enough on this need. It is hard to remain faithful walking alone or walking with the guidance of brothers and sisters who are not able to listen carefully and patient, or who lack adequate experience of consecrated life. We need brothers and sisters experienced in the ways of God, to be able to do what Jesus did with the disciples of Emmaus: accompany them on the journey of life and in times of disorientation and rekindle in them faith and hope through the Word and the ' Eucharist (cf. Lk 24,13-35). This is the delicate and demanding task of a companion.

Many vocations are lost for lack of good leaders. All consecrated persons, young and old, we need adequate aid for the human moment, spiritual and vocational we are experiencing. While we must avoid any mode of accompaniment that create dependencies. This is important: the spiritual accompaniment should not create dependencies. While we must avoid any mode of accompaniment that create dependencies, safeguards, checks or makes childhood, we cannot resign ourselves to walk alone, it takes a close accompaniment, frequently and fully adult. This will serve to ensure a continuous discernment leading to discover the will of God, to look around what is most pleasing to the Lord, as St. Ignatius would say, or - in the words of St. Francis of Assisi - to "the will always do what pleases Him "(cf. FF 233).

Discernment requires, on the part of the follower and the accompanied person, a fine spiritual sensitivity, a stand in front of himself and facing each other "without property", with complete detachment from prejudice and personal or group interests. In addition, it should be recalled that in the discernment is not only to choose between good and evil, but between good and better, between what is good and what leads to identification with Christ. And I would continue to talk, but we end up here.

Dear brothers and sisters, I thank you again and I invoke upon you and upon your service as members and collaborators of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life the continued assistance of the Holy Spirit, as I cordially bless you. Thank you.



Marist Brothers Launch Bicentenary Celebrations

Brother John Hazel Man Reports



This year, 2017 the Marist Brothers around the world celebrate 200 years of education – worldwide. This milestone is celebrated together by all Marist schools globally on two days – **Monday, 2nd January** and **Thursday, 6th June**.

In Samoa, the Marist Brothers have started celebrating this Bicentenary with the following events:





**1) Tuesday 24th and
Wednesday 25th January
2017**

**Event: Teachers
Orientation two days.**

**Venue:
Marist Primary School
Mulivai**

**Theme: "Presenting
Ourselves as Marist
Educators for a New
Beginning"**

48 teachers from our two Marist schools St Joseph's College and Marist Brothers' Primary School Mulivai attended.

**(2) Thursday, 2nd February
2017**

**Event: Mass – for both
Schools' Communities**

**Venue: St Marcellin Hall at
Marist Primary, Mulivai**

Time: 9 a.m.

The Mass officially starts the Bicentenary celebrations. The two schools will combine to celebrate with parents, sponsors, friends and ex-students from both Marist schools. It will be followed by the unveiling of the Bicentenary sign board and fun games for all students.



Please Note

You will be advised of other forthcoming events in due time. For any clarification of the above information and any other questions please contact Brother Siasio Ioane at 7204881 / 21442

More News from Samoa

Steve Vaea's farewell from Brother John Hazelman



Members of the Samoa Formation Team, Champagnat Marist from St Josephs and three aspirants came together for a brief celebration to encourage Steve and farewell him as he moves on to the next stage of his Marist Formation. The celebration included a Mass, a social ... in which some individuals offer words of encouragement and best wishes to Steve. The evening was organized by the Formation committee under the leadership of Marist Lay Woman Silila Bell. Steve is now under the care of Brother Luke Fong at Carew Street, Suva Fiji.



**Jonas (German Volunteer) John, and two aspirants from Savaii
farewelling Steve at the airport.**

Being a Marist Educator for a New Beginning

Champagnat Marist Samoa organizers ‘Being a Marist Educator for a New Beginning’ The Champagnat Marist Core Team ... being co-ordinated by Fou Lauulu ran a successful two days Orientation program with the Theme: “Being a Marist Educator in Samoa for a New Beginning.”

Teachers from Marist Brothers Primary School Mulivai and St Joseph’s College Alafua came together for a two day’s workshop to strengthen their understanding and commitment towards being a teacher in a Marist Brothers School. Inputs were presented by Silila Bell (Life of St Marcellin Champagnat), Br John (5 pillars of Marist Education), Br Siasoi (Being a Marist Educator) and Br Sefo (Contextualizing the speech of Br Emili Turu on the 200th Anniversary a New Beginning). Other activities included group sharing and presentations on (1) 2017 overall focus on the 5 pillars: PRESENCE and (2) Ways to celebrate the bi-centenary.



**Champagnat
Marists, Samoa**
*Brother John
Hazelman*

Wellington Beginnings - 1876

The Wellington Mission - 1876

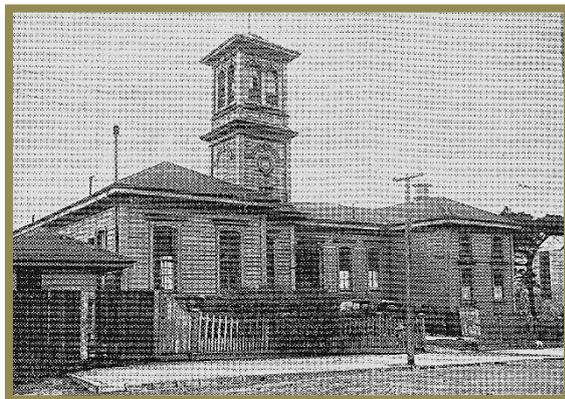
By 1876 there were already two schools for boys in Wellington, St Mary's, in Thorndon and the other, St Joseph's, begun in 1847 by the first Parish Priest in Wellington, Father O'Reilly OFM. Records of who taught in these schools is scarce but St Mary's, opened in 1851, was staffed in the first place by Marist Priests who arrived with Bishop Viard in 1850 however there were only lay teachers around when the Brothers arrived to begin work in 1876.

The arrival of the Brothers in Wellington is due in no small way to personal contacts – apparently the best way to carry out business as well as mission! Bishop Viard, who arrived in 1839, would have met Marcellin Champagnat during his visits to l'Hermitage. Father Forest SM was chaplain at the l'Hermitage and knew Father Champagnat well. He travelled out to New Zealand on the same boat as Brothers Luke and Deodat. Bishop Redwood had been sent to St Chamond by Father Garin SM from Nelson and made a point of dropping into the Brothers at St Paul-Trois-Chateau whenever he could.

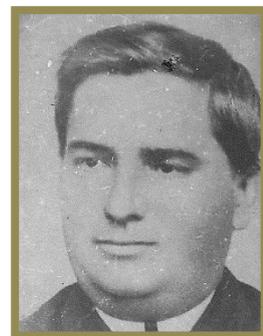
The Brothers, Sigismund, Papinien and Edwin – escorted by Brother John Dullea - arrived on the 15th May amidst much singing of Te Deums but they only began teaching at St Mary's School near the Cathedral in July. They were referred to in the New Zealand Tablet as Christian Brothers but this fudging of names, it was believed, was to appease the huge number of Irish immigrants.

The "new school" in Boulcott Street was really a hall divided by partitions, which was not really suitable – especially with the "petite classe" of 78 primer boys in an area fifteen by twenty feet. Despite this the school became the centre for Catholic life in Wellington. The First Marist Old Boys' Association began here as well. We will now take a quick look at the Brothers involved.

Brother Sigismond (Marius) Coustet (1844 – 1909):



**The Brothers' first school in New Zealand
Boulcott Street - Wellington**

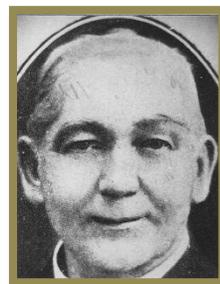


He was the French Brother who arrived in Wellington with his community to open the first of our schools in 1876, the pioneer of the 'second wave', the school masters. Marius was professed at Le Begude in 1859 taking the name Sigismond and spent the following ten years teaching in France and seven in Sligo and London where he gained considerable experience in the English

language. Then it was off to the Southern missions beginning as Director in Wellington. After a spell here he was then appointed to Sydney in 1887 then moved to South Africa teaching in various areas before ill-health saw him move to Cape Town and in 1909 he died in retirement at Uitenhage. He is buried there. He was 65 years old.

Brother Sigismond was a lovable character and the soul of generosity and hospitality. Brother John was able to comment after the second group of teaching Brothers arrived in Wellington enroute to Auckland, "A heartiest welcome – it could not be otherwise while Brother Sigismond was Director." Unfortunately, Sigismond had never mastered English well enough and the mainly Irish Immigrants could not make head nor tail of what he was talking about and this at a time when the Education Act of 1878 had Catholic Schools at the crossroads and public meetings seem to be the order of the day. Bishop Redwood requested his removal and he was replaced by Brother Mark Lenehan – and Irishman and former policeman – who could ask for more in a classroom. This move may have taken Brother Sigismond away but it took nothing away of the excellent start he gave Wellington and the ten years of devoted service there.

Brother Edwin (William) Farrell (1849 – 1923): William Farrell was born in England and came to Australia with his family when he was eight years old. At the age of 23 he was the second Postulant to enter the Novitiate at St Patrick's in 1872. As Brother Edwin he was destined to become a 'foundation' man. In 1875 he was on the foundation staff of Parramatta and the following year was chosen to be a foundation member of the Wellington school. As early as 1881 he had formed a post-scholastic society – the prototype of the Old Boys' Association.



In 1885 he led the first foundation in Auckland with eminent success. In 1891 he returned to Australia and taught at St Joseph's College putting that College well and truly on the map as regards sporting and debating prowess.

Brother Edwin inspired all he lived with. He was 'steeped' in English literature and revelled in the classics and was a big factor in the scholastic successes of St Joseph's College. When he died at the age of 74 one of his former pupils was able to say: "Of all the kind teachers we ever had he was the kindest of them all." (Father Ellis).

Brother Papinien (Jean-Pierre) Pelrosse (1838 – 1919): Jean-Pierre Pelrose entered the La Begude Novitiate in 1857. Between 1870 and 1876 he taught in Scotland and in Ireland. Negotiations had been going on for quite some time to get Brothers for Wellington and Napier and although the Parish Priest of Napier, Father Forest, had been a friend of Marcellin Champagnat it was the Bishop of Wellington who stole a march on them all by appearing at the Superior General's doorstep and getting the three Brothers for Boulcott Street in 1876. Two years later he was whipped away to finally begin the foundation in Napier. As in Wellington the Marist Fathers referred to the Brothers as Christian Brothers again to appease the Irish Immigrants in the area. Brother Papinien kept a low profile living in the Presbytery with the Brothers until a house became available and teaching in an old converted church. However, his health was not to hold out for teaching and was replaced by Brother Joseph after the first year and returned to Sydney. There he was commended by Brother John for his boundless devotedness. He finally retired to Mittagong where he died in 1919 aged 81. He is buried in the Diamond Field's Road Cemetery there.

Samoa Head of State Hosts Marist Brothers

Brother John Hazelman Reporting

Talofa

Here are a few photos of the Head of State hosting the Marist Brothers. It was a genuine Marist event. The Head of State continuing the legacy of his grandfather and father. Brother Humphrey spoke on behalf of the Brothers.

Cheers

John



District Calendar for March

1 March	Wellbeing morning (Auckland)
9 March	Oceania Partnership Council
	Property Committee
13 March	International Bursars' Conference (13 th – 14 th)
15 March	College Companies meeting
22 March	Asia Oceania Leaders meeting (22 nd – 23 rd)
24 March	Bicentenary celebration Invercargill (24 th – 26 th)
25 March	Bicentennial Mass Auckland
28 March	Bursars' Conference Rome
30 March	Marist Anniversary - 1817 Marcellin Champagnat placed Institute under the protection of Mary and called its members Brothers of Mary.



A PASSING THOUGHT ...

As foundation work for the new classrooms / administration Block continue here at St Paul's College, the statue of the Sacred Heart has been removed from the pedestal. In the process the statue has "lost an arm". I am sure that will eventually be fully restored. And with it may the proud tradition and reputation of St Paul's as a Marist / Champagnat College continue to bloom with renewed vigour and purpose.

Brother John E. Fitzgibbon



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

APRIL DISTRICT CALENDAR

6 June Champagnat Day	Champagnat Day celebrations in schools and communities.
	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



Mediation And Ageing

The talks from the Mediatio Seminar on *Meditation and Ageing* are available now on the website below in audio format. The event was held on 19 and 20 November 2016 in Sydney, Australia. The talks include:

- Meditation and Ageing 1 and 2 by Laurence Freeman OSB
- Practising the Vocation of Ageing by Sarah Bachelard and Neil Millar.

<http://www.meditatio.co.uk/meditation-and-ageing-talks-are-available-in-audio/>

You can download the newsletter:

- Meditation with Children and Young People

<http://www.meditatio.co.uk/news/outreach-newsletters/>

One with God through Jesus

This is a series of eight talks by John Main OSB. The series is called *One with God through Jesus*. They can be found at: <http://wccm.org/content/meditatio-cds>

The titles of the eight talks are:

1. The Theology of Meditation
2. From Self-centredness to God-centredness
3. Contact with Our Own Spirit
4. No Intellectual Content
5. Expectations
6. Progress in Meditation
7. The Universal Christ
7. Onslaught on Egoism

I met somebody New on my Recent Journey!

For most of my life I have not had a real devotion for the Founder, I think mainly because he was not presented to me in a naturally positive way. After my pilgrimage to France I have a better insight into him. He was a person with boundless energy, which was translated into all that he did: physically, mentally, spiritually, e.g. care for the Brothers' promotion of devotion to Our Lady, his deep faith and trust in her, and in the providence of God. He took the risk of developing our Marist Order, for looking after and educating young people in the ways of God, these were the signs of the Holy Spirit, also sending young Brothers into Missionary work, with no doubts about the decision, What he believed in himself, he educated the Brothers in those beliefs.

Just seeing the various foundations of the schools and communities he established showed the dynamic life of the Holy Spirit which he communicated to others, which in turn encouraged many vocations that came along to spread his human and spiritual beliefs for the spread of the Gospel. It would be very hard to imitate him, because of his gift of the Charism, his love of Mary and the Eucharist, his faith in God, was given to him in abundance, to generate the Spirit and the Charism down through the ages to reach us, and go beyond into the future.

He was a really dynamic person. A person to lead and a person to follow. He is a person I have just met for the first time, on the pilgrimage to France.

Peace – *Brother Peter Henderson*

Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless

The following article is the message of his Holiness Pope Francis for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees – 15th January 2017.



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me” (Mk 9:37; cf. Mt 18:5; Lk 9:48; Jn 13:20). With these words, the Evangelists remind the Christian community of Jesus’ teaching, which both inspires and challenges. This phrase traces the sure path which leads to God; it begins with the smallest and, through the grace of our Saviour, it grows into the practice of welcoming others. To be welcoming is a necessary condition for making this journey a concrete reality: God made himself one of us. In Jesus God became a child, and the openness of faith to God, which nourishes hope, is expressed in loving proximity to the smallest and the weakest. Charity, faith and hope are all actively present in the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, as we have rediscovered during the recent Extraordinary Jubilee.

But the Evangelists reflect also on the responsibility of the one who works against mercy: “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin: it is better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea” (Mt 18:6; cf. Mk 9:42; Lk 17:2). How can we ignore this severe warning when we see the exploitation carried out by unscrupulous people? Such exploitation harms young girls and boys who are led into prostitution or into the mire of pornography; who are enslaved as child labourers or soldiers; who are caught up in drug trafficking and other forms of criminality; who are forced to flee from conflict and persecution, risking isolation and abandonment.

For this reason, on the occasion of the annual World Day of Migrants and Refugees, I feel compelled to draw attention to the reality of child migrants, especially the ones who are alone. In doing so I ask everyone to take care of the young, who in a threefold way are defenceless: they are children, they are foreigners, and they have no means to protect themselves. I ask everyone to help those who, for various reasons, are forced to live far from their homeland and are separated from their families.

Migration today is not a phenomenon limited to some areas of the planet. It affects all continents and is growing into a tragic situation of global proportions. Not only does this concern those looking for dignified work or better living conditions, but also men and women, the elderly and children, who are forced to leave their homes in the hope of finding safety, peace and security. Children are the first among those to pay the heavy toll of emigration, almost always caused by violence, poverty, environmental conditions, as well as the negative aspects of globalization. The unrestrained competition for quick and easy profit brings with it the cultivation of perverse scourges such as child trafficking, the exploitation and abuse of minors and, generally, the depriving of rights intrinsic to childhood as sanctioned by the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Childhood, given its fragile nature, has unique and inalienable needs. Above all else, there is the right to a healthy and secure family environment, where a child can grow under the guidance and example of a father and a mother; then there is the right and

duty to receive adequate education, primarily in the family and also in the school, where children can grow as persons and agents of their own future and the future of their respective countries. Indeed, in many areas of the world, reading, writing and the most basic arithmetic is still the privilege of only a few. All children, furthermore, have the right to recreation; in a word, they have the right to be children.

And yet among migrants, children constitute the most vulnerable group, because as they face the life ahead of them, they are invisible and voiceless: their precarious situation deprives them of documentation, hiding them from the world's eyes; the absence of adults to accompany them prevents their voices from being raised and heard. In this way, migrant children easily end up at the lowest levels of human degradation, where illegality and violence destroy the future of too many innocents, while the network of child abuse is difficult to break up.

How should we respond to this reality?

Firstly, we need to become aware that the phenomenon of migration is not unrelated to salvation history, but rather a part of that history. One of God's commandments is connected to it: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex 22:21); "Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt" (Deut 10:19). This phenomenon constitutes a sign of the times, a sign which speaks of the providential work of God in history and in the human community, with a view to universal communion. While appreciating the issues, and often the suffering and tragedy of migration, as too the difficulties connected with the demands of offering a dignified welcome to these persons, the Church nevertheless encourages us to recognize God's plan. She invites us to do this precisely amidst this phenomenon, with the certainty that no one is a stranger in the Christian community, which embraces "every nation, tribe, people and tongue" (Rev 7:9). Each person is precious; persons are more important than things, and the worth of an institution is measured by the way it treats the life and dignity of human beings, particularly when they are vulnerable, as in the case of child migrants.

Furthermore, we need to work towards protection, integration and long-term solutions.

We are primarily concerned with adopting every possible measure to guarantee the protection and safety of child migrants, because "these boys and girls often end up on the street abandoned to themselves and prey to unscrupulous exploiters who often transform them into the object of physical, moral and sexual violence" (Benedict XVI, *Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2008*).

Moreover, the dividing line between migration and trafficking can at times be very subtle. There are many factors which contribute to making migrants vulnerable, especially if they are children: poverty and the lack of means to survive – to which are added unrealistic expectations generated by the media; the low level of literacy; ignorance of the law, of the culture and frequently of the language of host countries. All of this renders children physically and psychologically dependent. But the most powerful force driving the exploitation and abuse of children is demand. If more rigorous and effective action is not taken against those who profit from such abuse, we will not be able to stop the multiple forms of slavery where children are the victims.

It is necessary, therefore, for immigrants to cooperate ever more closely with the communities that welcome them, for the good of their own children. We are deeply grateful to organizations and institutions, both ecclesial and civil, that commit time and resources to protect minors from various forms of abuse. It is important that evermore

effective and incisive cooperation be implemented, based not only on the exchange of information, but also on the reinforcement of networks capable of assuring timely and specific intervention; and this, without underestimating the strength that ecclesial communities reveal especially when they are united in prayer and fraternal communion.

Secondly, we need to work for the integration of children and youngsters who are migrants. They depend totally on the adult community. Very often the scarcity of financial resources prevents the adoption of adequate policies aimed at assistance and inclusion. As a result, instead of favouring the social integration of child migrants, or programmes for safe and assisted repatriation, there is simply an attempt to curb the entrance of migrants, which in turn fosters illegal networks; or else immigrants are repatriated to their country of origin without any concern for their “best interests”.

The condition of child migrants is worsened when their status is not regularized or when they are recruited by criminal organizations. In such cases they are usually sent to detention centres. It is not unusual for them to be arrested, and because they have no money to pay the fine or for the return journey, they can be incarcerated for long periods, exposed to various kinds of abuse and violence. In these instances, the right of states to control migratory movement and to protect the common good of the nation must be seen in conjunction with the duty to resolve and regularize the situation of child migrants, fully respecting their dignity and seeking to meet their needs when they are alone, but also the needs of their parents, for the good of the entire family.

Of fundamental importance is the adoption of adequate national procedures and mutually agreed plans of cooperation between countries of origin and of destination, with the intention of eliminating the causes of the forced emigration of minors.

Thirdly, to all I address a heartfelt appeal that long-term solutions be sought and adopted. Since this is a complex phenomenon, the question of child migrants must be tackled at its source. Wars, human rights violations, corruption, poverty, environmental imbalance and disasters, are all causes of this problem. Children are the first to suffer, at times suffering torture and other physical violence, in addition to moral and psychological aggression, which almost always leave indelible scars.

It is absolutely necessary, therefore, to deal with the causes which trigger migrations in the countries of origin. This requires, as a first step, the commitment of the whole international community to eliminate the conflicts and violence that force people to flee. Furthermore, far-sighted perspectives are called for, capable of offering adequate programmes for areas struck by the worst injustice and instability, in order that access to authentic development can be guaranteed for all. This development should promote the good of boys and girls, who are humanity’s hope.

Lastly, I wish to address a word to you, who walk alongside migrant children and young people: they need your precious help. The Church too needs you and supports you in the generous service you offer. Do not tire of courageously living the Gospel, which calls you to recognize and welcome the Lord Jesus among the smallest and most vulnerable. I entrust all child migrants, their families, their communities, and you who are close to them, to the protection of the Holy Family of Nazareth; may they watch over and accompany each one on their journey. With my prayers, I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing.

Francis

The Church and the Fight on Paedophilia **The Experience of the Marist Brothers**

The following article is from Marist News (Year IX - Number 461 | 24th January 2017). The SIR News Agency SIR (Servizio di Informazioni Religiose) of the Italian Bishops' Conference (CEI) held an interview with Brother Emili Turú SG highlighting the topic of paedophilia.

The starting point of the conversation was the apology for the abuses committed, which Brother Emili made in his message to the Champagnat Marists on the occasion of the celebration of the bicentennial of the foundation of the Institute. We reproduce the text of the interview, made by Riccardo Benotti.

In the message you asked forgiveness for “all the times we were the object of scandal.” Why?

Throughout our history we had many reasons to give thanks and to acknowledge our sin. Situations of abuse have taken place in some of our institutions, meant to be safe places for all children and youths, which left deep scars in them. In many cases these scars will remain open wounds for their entire lives. Our Institute was created to help children and young people become good Christians and good citizens, as wanted by our founder. And fortunately this mission was accomplished for the majority of those who attended our Marist Education centres.

The abuses that have taken place caused deep suffering among us. They are in stark contradiction with our life and our mission.

How could all of this have happened?

In the past it was considered a moral problem. But today we know that it's also a psychiatric disorder and a criminal offence in most Countries. When it was believed to be a moral problem the offenders were given counsel and guidance for repentance, they were encouraged to devote more time to prayer, and they were transferred to opportune locations. But now we know that that “geographic treatment” failed, for the first person that the offender met in his new destination was himself, facing the same problem.

What measures did the Institute adopt to address these situations?

Clear institutional policies were adopted, designed to help us prevent situations of abuse and to react promptly before any suspicion or report of abuse, in compliance with the national legislation of the interested Country and the laws of the Church. In the past six years we held a set of international seminars on the protection of minors, attended by the leaders of all Marist provinces.

This kind of formation continued in the provinces, adapted to the various local realities. We are presently networking with the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome to offer

all Marist Institutes a formation programme on the protection of minors and the defence of their rights. Naturally, we ascribe primary importance to the careful selection of candidates to Marist brotherhood and their ensuing accompaniment.

Thus you adopted rigorous protocols?

Each Marist province has adopted a set of measures for the protection of minors centred on what for us is a cardinal principle, namely, the respect and the protection of children and youths. The wellbeing of children and the support to the victims come before everything else, along with the protection of the Institute and of the person that committed the abuse.

Transparency equally holds primary importance, both in terms of informing the competent bodies and the civil authorities. However, we always try to combine justice with mercy. Justice without mercy turns into revenge, while mercy without compliance to justice and truth is a deceit.

Are special forms of accompaniment of the victims envisaged, in case the latter request them?

Yes; also for those civil cases under the Statute of Limitations we always offer the victims the possibility of accessing appropriate treatment with various forms of counsel and accompaniment: psychological, psychiatric, spiritual, etc.

It is often said that cases of paedophilia occur more frequently inside the Church. But official figures show a different picture...

Unfortunately, there are more cases of abuse than most people imagine. Figures released by “One in Four”, the organization set up in Ireland and in Great Britain, show that one in four adults has been the victim of some form of sexual abuse before turning 18. It was for this reason that we launched a campaign in our Institutes to help families and minors protect themselves by identifying and reporting possible signs of abuses.

Approximately 30% of all sexual abuses were perpetrated by family members, while 60% of abuses occurred in the family environment. This fact further complicates the situation: when the sexual offenders are members of the family it's harder to denounce them. In fact, most cases of sexual abuse occur within the family or in the family environment.

This in no way diminishes the gravity of the sexual abuses committed by priests and religious, protected only by the image of persons “consecrated to God” who in reality cause not only psychological and mental damage but also spiritual damage, thereby giving a completely distorted image of God.

<http://agensir.it/chiesa/2017/01/02/the-church-and-the-fight-on-paedophilia-the-experience-of-the-marist-brothers-turu-we-ask-forgiveness-for-all-the-times-we-have-been-the-object-of-scandal-%E2%80%A8/>

Spirituality of Aging in Religious Congregations

Sister Janet Malone, who died in 2013 was a member of the Congr gation of Notre Dame (CND), Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. Sister Janet wrote several articles on religious life and was the director of communications for the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) in 2000-2002. At the time the CRC main office was in Ottawa. This article is from the CRC and was sourced at:

<http://www.crccanada.org/sites/default/files/files/A%20Spirituality%20of%20Aging%20in%20Religious%20Congregations.pdf>

**Contemporary men and women have few role models for aging.
We need voices/models that speak to the soul. Jane Pretat**

Introduction

Do you have a belt around your waist? Are you being led where you prefer not to go? Each of us is very familiar with the scripture passage from John 21:15-19, that might be a metaphor for aging, specifically aging in religious life. Intellectually, we know that aging is normal; we see it all around us and the cycle of the seasons shows us this natural rhythm. So why do so many of us chafe at the belt of aging? Why do so many of us deny our personal life pilgrimage to death and Mystery and even more so, this life cycle in our congregations? There are so many terms for the journey that each of us is on, our pilgrimage from life to death. How often do we hear that there are two experiences we have alone, the arrival into, and departure from this life. For both, it is a sense of learning to say both hello and goodbye. Indeed, we have heard often in our congregations when we moved around for our ministries, that unless we know how to say and ritualize our goodbyes, we never really learn to say hello. Why? Unless, we can live into the loss of the known, and often times, the secure, we have not released that space in our hearts where we can put out into the deep of the unknown and untried in both relationships and our way of life. The belt around our waist.

It is very difficult to embrace any aspect of our personal and congregational lives that we have been taught to deny, or at least ignore. From this perspective, we as religious, have not been prophetic about this particular aspect of our life-death journey because everything we see, read and hear is about eternal youth. Look at the billion dollar cosmetic industry that hoodwinks us into believing we are still young with dyes, nips, tucks, extreme diets and exercise. From a holistic perspective, we know that it is important to take care of our physical, psychological and spiritual health at any age so we know that a balance in diet and exercise is critical. Aging is not about going to seed, or going to pot. We know that life expectancy has increased so a spirituality of aging is all about aging in healthy and holistic ways. Yet, we are reminded that talking about aging is sort of frowned upon. "We can't really let go in public or celebrate an aging process we've learned to abhor. Yet we know instinctually that change is in our bodies, in our daily activities, and in our dreams (Pretat, 1994, 17).

Herein, we look at different aspects of a spirituality of aging in both ourselves and in our congregations. We admit to the hellos and goodbyes, the births and the deaths, the holding on, the letting go. We have a challenge before us because everything in our culture and in the culture of religious life denies, for the most part, the reality of aging, diminishment and dying. To begin, what do we do with the numbers?

Aging: A Question of Numbers, Stages, Theories

In 1982, the United Nations organized the First World Assembly on Aging in Vienna. At that time, the elderly made up 8% of the world population with a projection of 10% in 2000. In 1999, we celebrated the International Year of the Elderly with a focus on their human capital contribution to the economy and social life, mainly through volunteering. Then, in 2002, the Second World Assembly on Aging was held in Madrid. At that gathering it was noted, "In the 20th century, old age was but a footnote. In the 21st century, it is to become the main theme" (Stockman, 2007, 124).

How often do we hear that aging is a normal process moving from birth to death? Because ageism with its dismissal of older people and the concomitant push to hide our age is so prevalent in our society, we are afraid of aging. This is the main issue. Remember, the first gray hair, the first wrinkle, the staying at 39 forever? Today, aging has many appellations including, the second half of life (50 years ff), the Golden Age, and the Third Age, the boundary between 45-75 years (First Age: young years, Second Age: work years, Fourth Age: frailty, dependency).

Old age also has been divided into three stages: young-old (65-74 years), old-old (75-84 years) and oldest-old (85 years ff). In addition, some have postulated theories of aging. For example, in the **Developmental Theory** of aging, we begin at birth, then childhood, school years, teenage years, work/professional years, adult years of vocation/life choice (single, married, religious, priest/brother), retirement/elder years, and from there to death. In this theory, we negotiate the developmental tasks of each period in our lives. **The Activity Theory**, as it connotes, is our staying active with all our familiar ways of doing as long as is possible. **The Wear and Tear Theory** postulates that our bodies wear out with stress and living. **The Disengagement Theory** focuses a slowing down and a disengagement from most of our former outer life in order to "... gain more time for introspection ..., thus giving (ourselves) permission to proceed with inner tasks" (Pretat 1994, 63). For the most part, our daily lives are driven, determined and manic so that anything other than this madness is considered depression!

Elders Increasing

In a culture focused on being young and looking young, there are no real guidelines for how to age in wisdom, age and grace. It would seem that there are variations on the denial theme in religious life. Kubler-Ross' stages of dying come to mind: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Not linear, these stages are present in their various manifestations in too many of our congregations because of our fear that our congregations will die. This denial is antithetical to the reality that all religious groups follow the life cycle pattern as outlined by Cada et al (1985), of birth/beginnings, expansion, stabilization/institutionalization, breakdown/diminishment, with the final stage focused on refounding or restorationism or minimal survival/dying. Why then are we concerned about aging in religious congregations if we truly believe that consecrated life will always be but that models change as we read the signs of the times?

Our culture extols youth, looking young and vibrant. Many of us shy away from stating that we are aging or that our congregations are diminishing, even dying. Years ago in our congregations, we seemed to have a better sense of aging when we were multi-generational groupings. Some of us were called "the young nuns" and others, the "old nuns". Now, with few vocations and the ones who do join us (a number, just for a time),

are older and have had other lifestyles. Today, the average age in many congregations, both apostolic and monastic, is 75+ years, moving quickly to 80 years. Granted in the developed nations, with better diet, exercise, medical expertise and health care, life expectancy has increased and many are living much longer, some into their late 90s and indeed, their 100s. It has been reported that centenarians are expected to increase in the next decade, with more women in this age group than men. In part, we read, “New census data shows... a higher proportion of seniors than ever before—a development that has crept up on society with far-reaching implications for health, finance, policy and everyday family relationships” (The Guardian, May 15, 2012, A7).

Which Season?

Sometimes, when we are at a point of not knowing where we are going, the use of metaphor and analogy can help us in such in between times. It seems this is the case for many of us and our congregations regarding a spirituality of aging. One such metaphor is The Medicine Wheel of our native peoples. Based on the directions and the seasons, it can help us come to grips with where we are both personally and communally in our life journey. We begin in the east, the birth and springtime of life where the world is our oyster. Everything is new and full of possibility; we explore our own potential physically, psychologically, spiritually in these years. In the south, the summer of life, we are at the height of our adult years, in so many ways, in the bloom of our lives. Then we move to the west and harvest time of fall, a time in which we reap what we have sown. We are past our prime now and are moving in all ways from a chronos directed time to more of a kairos time of retirement, more time for contemplation, more of our inner, soul work. Then we move on to the winter and dying time of our lives in the north. We are readying for the last part of our journey home. To adapt T.S. Eliot’s words, we have moved from the **attachment** of the spring and summer of lives to the **detachment** of the fall season and then in the winter of our lives to a sense of **holy indifference**, that final letting go in the trusting of Julian of Norwich, “All shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well”.

Erikson’s Stages of Maturation

Another way to look at our aging is to revisit Erikson’s stages of growth and maturation. In their classic bestseller, *Christian Life Patterns* (1979), husband and wife, Evelyn and James Whitehead detail Erikson’s last three stages of maturation: intimacy, generativity and integrity within a Christian perspective of aging. They invite us to explore our aging not just within the proverbial chronos time of regularity and control but the transformative kairos time of Mystery in which we are invited into the unknown: letting go, letting be, letting come. They note, “It is not easy to be old.... It is an affront to one’s self image, a deterrent to one’s plans, and a general inconvenience to society” (179).

To look at these stages within a spirituality of aging in religious congregations breathes new life into them. Now, in this second half of life, we view intimacy personally and communally as a mutuality of cooperation, community and group solidarity. With a more supple sense of who we are, we are more empathic with others and are more willing to be influenced by them in concrete ways in our lives. In these twilight years, we are mellower, ripened in the seasons of life. Generativity in these years is all about fostering new life in ways we were too busy to even conceive years back. With our drivenness for success (Saviour complex?) more balanced, we are able to foster community in which we live more of the servant leadership Jesus modelled in the washing of his disciples’ feet. Integrity at this age and stage is all about a living into

how each individual life has unfolded and how each congregation has come to this moment. It is all about how we forgive and allow opportunities for forgiveness, and reconciliation when it is possible.

Purpose of Aging

There is a purpose to aging for all groups in society. It is that time of making better sense of our lives now that we are out of the fray. We resonate with the saying, “We live life forwards but understand it backwards”. It is that time in our lives where we have the leisure to reflect on the good and the enough in our lives. In consecrated life, what are the goals for these years, both personally and congregationally? Throughout these reflections, the invitation is to ponder the purpose of aging and what a spirituality of aging would look like for me and the congregation of which I am a member. Undoubtedly, each of us in the second half of life has noted changes in ourselves, physically, mentally, psychologically and spiritually. Perhaps, we can reiterate the line of the song, “The old gray mare, she ain’t what she used to be..., many long years ago.” Physically, we have our aches and pains, we may be less agile and some of us may have chronic diseases. Mentally, we notice our forgetting, particularly names (anomia which really begins in our early 40s!) which we know as well as our own, but can’t retrieve when we want them. Others of us may have the beginnings of dementia, the most common of which is Alzheimer’s. Psychologically/Socially, we live into the loss of certain relationships, particularly through retirement and death. Spiritually, we may experience a certain ennui, a certain acedia because this is the season we are called to be more than do, to be more contemplative. However, if in our active ministries, we “got our prayers in” and never really learned about the desert of contemplation and mysticism, we may experience a sense of “Is this all there is?” One of the main telltale signs in congregations is our selective memory of the good old days when we thought we were in control. In fact, it has been suggested that “religious tend to live in the past and not the present” (Stockman 2007, 11).

Each of us knows deep down that there will always be some form of consecrated life because of its ideals of giving all for God. Today, more than ever before, if we are going to be countercultural, we are called upon to be prophetic. In what ways? We need to move beyond the stages of dying (denial, bargaining, anger, depression) the aging, diminishment and dying happening to us both personally and collectively and accept this reality. Then, we will have freed up our energy to work proactively toward developing a spirituality of aging in our congregations. What would it look like?

A Spirituality

First, spirituality (Latin: *spirare*) is about the breath, the spirit, the deepest meaning of our lives. We are called to look at spirituality as integral to us as our breath, both of which we were born with. Spirituality is a life gift, one that can be explored, nurtured and deepened over our entire lives. In contrast to religion, which is about the externals, the rites, the dogmas of our lives, spirituality is about that inner journey of finding ultimate meaning in an integration of the fragmented strands of our lives. Spirituality is about going deeper, going inward, letting go, letting be, letting come the great Mystery of God.

“Spirituality concerns an ancient primal search for meaning and (is) an inherent energy” (Malone, 2007, 40). The fruits of spirituality are numerous, including love, patience, joy, kindness, self-control and faithfulness. These fruits develop and mature over a lifetime of moving inward. Having set our parameters for aging, and spirituality, let’s look at some qualities of a spirituality of aging.

A Spirituality of Aging

Doing and Being

We aren't seekers at all; we are the sought. Barbara Fiand

Our vocation as religious is that lifelong commitment of ourselves to God. At the time of our profession, we committed ourselves to God, first and foremost. That is our mission, a mission which never changes, no matter our age and stage. The charism in which we live this mission is the particular gift that each congregation offers to the people of God, be it within an apostolic, monastic or missionary ministry. In our aging years, when we are no longer involved in ministry 24/7, we are called to the ministry of being in which we learn anew what it means to be.

Because we were taught that we are what we do, some major identity questions arise as we become old. Who am I when I pass from doing to being? Who am I when I am nothing other than who I am? Who am I when I am no longer what I used to do? In the beginning of this transformation, I move into the desert experience akin to Jesus' temptations where he dealt with the kenosis, the emptying out of the false self of power, possessions, prestige.

What makes this kenosis very difficult is the lack of understanding in many of our congregations that this time of aging in our lives is blessed time and not a time for feeling guilty if we are not working all the time. In effect, this kenosis is about finding a much better balance in our doing and being with allowance for more contemplative time of silence, stillness and solitude. This is a real challenge for most of us so we ask our leaders for a "ministry". This so-called ministry (make-work projects?) keeps us out there and delays the inevitable facing of our demons in here.

One main goal at this time is learning to live with oneself and with a mundane daily routine without frittering it away on escapes. Escapes dull our pain, our boredom, and oft times, we overuse/abuse travel, shopping, TV, gambling, novels, smoking, drinking as ways to escape the present. However, we read, "A person with an inner sense of their own identity and goal in life has a high tolerance of daily routine, an inner strength to face the desert" (Cummings, 1978, 40).

There is a Zen saying that the zazen (zen master) sits for the universe. One of the biggest contributions we religious can make to a spirituality of aging is our ability to be, to be quiet, to be still, just to be and in this being to be gradually stripped of our need for possessiveness, control, and power. This is in no way a quietism but rather a rich sense of the journey inward where God awaits us. But first, we have to quiet all our fretting about wasting our time, not being useful. Learning how to sit in silence, solitude and stillness takes learning because for many of us we quickly "said" our prayers (got them "in") and now, we are called to contemplatively "be" our prayer. Not easy for many of us.

Not much has been written about the ministry of being. As noted above, this is not an either/or. Rather it is more of a both/and but now with a shift in emphasis. Now, we focus our prayer, contemplation time as a time of receptivity rather than activity. Barbara Fiand has written about this much needed exploration in her book, *In the Stillness You Will Know*. The ministry of being is a depth call that moves us to both personal and cosmic transformation and wholeness. "We can change humanity, society and the world simply by our sitting and changing ourselves" (2002, 82).

Letting Go, Letting Be, Letting Come

Jean Paul Sartre reportedly said that our early years are “pour soi”, (for self) a time of focus on externals, accumulating, rising, climbing. Our aging years are “en soi” (in, within self), a time of divesting, letting go, letting come in a rhythm of inner work. The answers must come from within....

In exploring a spirituality of aging, we are challenged to “act our age” and recognize our crossover time from accumulating to divesting. Once we cross over, we start our en soi time, a time in which we realistically come to grips with where we have been and where we are going. It is a time of letting go the past, letting go living in the past both personally and communally (notice our conversations when we get together). It is a stripping down to the essentials of who each of us is before God in the wholeness of creation. We are reminded, “Letting go of our past is one of the most difficult challenges in life” (Kalellis, 2005, 139).

What we are called to let come are our fears and regrets in order to look at them from deep within. A great deal of forgiveness of self, others and God can happen at this very special time. Why? We are taking off our masks when we move inward; we don't have to impress anyone and our God is all loving and knowing. In this time of naming our fears (the worst fear is fear itself), we are inviting ourselves to enter into the forgiveness and mercy, necessary for releasing our resentments and our wanting revenge to even the score. Forgiveness is about the choice of staying bitter or getting better because forgiveness is all about self-healing and letting go our making bile about something that happened in our past. Reconciliation might happen and it might not because it requires the goodwill and mutuality of the other; it is a mutual forgiveness. When we forgive, we self-heal. Once we have let come the hurt, the embarrassment, we let it go in order to move on.

Letting come is all about the freedom from the inside out when we have let go, as much as is possible in any given now, our fears and regrets, recognizing in gratitude all we have been given. This is the being time of ensuring we are disciplined to take the time, love and energy to nourish our inner being, our heart sense. This journey of letting go, letting come, letting be is not magic. Yes, we are committed to being in this season of our lives. However, “things may not have changed much on the surface of our lives but things change considerably in the depths of our lives... in our new beginnings...” our aging years. (Dorff, 1988, 101).

Drivenness and Meaning

Another aspect of a spirituality of aging is meaning. We have heard it said that we can live any now if we have meaning in our lives. In our younger years in religious life, we were very caught up in our ministries. The meaning we sought was primarily prestige and success, not just personally but in the name of our congregations. True, we were all about the peace, justice and compassion of the new reign of God but we were driven for the position and success involved in our ministries. Our younger years, whether in apostolic or monastic life, were in some ways, our heyday years. We never seemed to have enough time; we were always busy and our prayer life was “squeezed in” midst all our busyness. We had a good sense of who we were because in those days, we were what we did. Now is the season, in that fall and winter of our lives where we are challenged to come home to self, our true self. And what a challenge that can be! Because we have suppressed what we really believed and thought, the only self in these golden years is our false self of ego and hubris. A good check-in for ourselves is how often we catch ourselves telling any person willing to listen, about all the good

things we did in the past. A sure sign for each of us that we don't know our true self is this constant living in the past of our selective memories.

And now? In a spirituality of aging, we are challenged to find meaning in who we are without all these extras. No, it is not a matter of folding up one's tent, pulling out the last pegs of our former selves and wait to die. Nor is it a matter of not having some small ministry but it must be different. No longer looking for self-worth, success and status, what we do, how we minister now comes from a truly realized sense of who we are, a self-worth that has been honed and shaped in the desert of letting go, letting be, letting come. Now should be the season of I choose to, rather than I have to....

The leaders/administrators among us have to ask ourselves whether we are any kind of model in a spirituality of aging when we are demanding aging religious to carry full-time jobs or as members, we are not content to live into a ministry of being. We have to look at keeping aging members in such full-time positions. Is this not the time to transfer these positions to qualified lay staff? And if we are not able to pay such staff, then perhaps we have to look at holding on to such positions. It is all about nurturing a new meaning in our lives about who we are and where we're going. Can we live into the secure meaning of "I am only what people see when they look at me now.... I am only what I have prepared myself to be beyond what I did" (Chittister, 2008, 11).

Regrets and Forgiveness

Each of us is too well aware that we have regrets in our lives, and perhaps we don't want to have to deal with their underlying issues. If we keep ourselves busy, then we don't have to really sit down and be. We don't have to think. In a spirituality of aging, as noted above, these years are all about integration and indeed, transformation. The task before us is allowing these regrets to surface so that we can look at them with the experience and wisdom of our years. It is said that regret has two faces: regret about life choices and regret about life failures.

In a spirituality of aging in religious life, we need to look at our life choice, of a call-response to religious life. Do we have regrets about this life choice, the mystery of the call-response in which we were asked to make God our first and principal life choice? Do we find ourselves musing about why we came and more importantly, why we stay in religious life? It is not so uncommon for our lay brothers and sisters to regret their life choices, their life partners but like us, they hang in, they stay. Why? For many of them, it's economics, fear, stability for the children. But if I have regrets about why I stayed in religious life, am I ready to look at that truthfully now and to focus any self-forgiveness critical to letting go, letting come, letting be in these last years?

The second face of regret is about life failures. No one is immune to the ups and downs of life and which one of us has not said if we knew then what we know now, we could have avoided certain of our mistakes and failures? However, that is what the experience of life teaches us: to learn from our mistakes and move on. This is the crux of both wisdom and deep inner peace: dealing with our failures, letting them go and moving on. Otherwise, we can turn ourselves into worrying and scrupulous people. One has to wonder whether it is true what some of us may have noted that people in consecrated life would appear to have more regrets and fears about their life failures and how they will be "judged" before God. A spirituality of aging invites us to transform our regrets to forgiveness and move on.

Fear and Gratitude

A grateful heart is an open heart. A grateful heart is a loving heart. A grateful heart is a forgiving heart. “Gratitude keeps alive what has meaning for us and fosters our capacity to apologize and forgive” (Arrien, 2007, 78). An important transition in our aging is to transform our fears of loss to new beginnings, to a metanoic stance of gratitude. It is just so freeing when I can accept who I am now without all my masks. Learning to be grateful is grace, gift and process. Well aware, that for most of our lives, we didn’t feel we were enough, we didn’t do enough, we became dissatisfied and our fears and regrets multiplied. It was a natural next step to feel ungrateful. Why? Our fears took over and we became critical with the imperfection of life, given we were ingrained with always straining for more in our “life of perfection”.

Now is the time to move from such dissatisfaction to a life stance of gratitude in which grace and gift are the cornerstones. We can begin by learning anew how to feel and express our thanks, our appreciation for even the smallest aspects of our lives. Gratitude involves satisfaction with life, with oneself, with one’s congregation and with the world. I am enough. I am good enough. I have enough. “Ingratitude lies at the root of our difficulty in loving God beyond guilt and in loving others freely” (Leddy, 2002, 61).

Because many of us live the adage of “returning the favour”, we find it difficult to give without counting the cost. Each of us has met grateful people who exude the “enoughness” of this here and now, people who give and do generously with no implied sense of having the favour returned. I only have to think of my own mother as a model of this generosity and gratefulness. When we learn to be grateful and gracious, we come to a new understanding of the divine nature of God’s unconditional love for us.

Loneliness and Solitude

St. Augustine reminds us, that our hearts are restless until they rest in God. What does this mean? To be lonely is to be alone but not contented with this state. There is a sense of restlessness, isolation, and even rejection or abandonment. To be lonely means I don’t have a place of so-called security, a place where I can be myself, a place where I am accepted for who I am in my essence without all the masks.

Everyone of us is lonely to a greater or lesser degree. Loneliness is not all bad. In fact, loneliness tells me something about me, tells me that I am my best self in relationship. Loneliness reminds me that no one of us is an island; we need others in our lives. Ultimately, as a person of faith, loneliness reminds me of my burning desire to be united with God. Loneliness is about our desire for depth, for union. “Pray that your loneliness may spur you towards finding something (Someone) to live for, that’s great enough to die for” (Dag Hammarskjold as quoted in Rolheiser, 2004, 129).

Recognizing loneliness as part of our lives, it seems in this desert stripping of loneliness to solitude, we realize its necessity in a spirituality of aging. Loving others without the security of attachment, without possessiveness, necessitates our coming home to the searing loneliness that is part of consecrated life. No, our life doesn’t have a “patent” on loneliness but our life is the vocation in which we vow that God, that Mystery in our lives will be our sole “attachment”.

We know that our lifestyle is ripe for both intense loneliness and ancillary selfishness. We compensate for our loneliness in many different ways, the most obvious of which is how we become overly attached to our family of origin. This can look differently for

each of us, depending on such factors, as physical proximity, age and stage of life. The bottom line is no one of us likes to experience loneliness and our models of community living (common life or apartment living) have not addressed this issue directly. The sad result is a great deal of “vocational” loneliness in our lives. One way that it is handled is for us to live near our families and to spend important occasions with them. We might ask ourselves whether it has become a norm that such occasions in our congregations are scheduled around family commitments.

In a spirituality of aging, we are challenged to embrace our loneliness in ways in which we can withstand the silence and stillness so that over time, we transform it into solitude. It becomes a matter of being comfortable with our own company rather than covering it over in our different escapes, including the newest addictions of IT technology: surfing the net, being on Facebook, tweeting, texting, talking on mobile/cell phones, skypeing. As we age, we recognize our restlessness; we recognize that the psychological and emotional aspects of aging are in some ways more difficult than its physical aspects. Part of being a pilgrim on our journey “home”, is embracing our solitude as time for more in-depth contemplation, reflection, lectio divina. The bottom line is there are no short cuts to solitude; we have to go through the letting go of our attachments to people and things. A commitment to solitude requires a great deal of patience and starting anew each day. We know we are coming home to solitude when “...we feel less compulsive and driven, less restless and frenzied, less greedy and possessive... Perhaps we feel really free” (Rolheiser, 2004, 168).

Leisure and Contemplation

Is it your sense that we are afraid of free time, of leisure in religious life? Was our badge of pride that religious never retire; they burn out rather than rust out? Perhaps we are well aware of religious in their mid-80s who are still working full time and are proud to let others know about it. Perhaps we are also aware that others, retired with a pension, may feel entitled to “put their feet up”. Does either example focus aging for us religious as gift for more balance between doing and being, outer work and inner work? Aging is not an end-of-life sentence but rather a golden opportunity to come home to our true selves, dispensing with the ersatz of hubris and ego.

Such kenosis and metanois require time, leisure time. When we speak of leisure, we may associate it with laziness, dissipation, wasting our precious time (remember, “time is money”). We may have learned to mistrust anything that we haven’t worked for. In fact, this is the season of our lives for nurturing our contemplative, mystical yearnings. Was it Jung who referred to this time in our lives as our contemplative season? Learning to be requires time and leisure, being contemplative requires time and leisure. According to Scott Peck, if we wish to be more contemplative, we need much more solitude; we need to learn how to withdraw from life’s busyness. (1995, 90)

What is leisure? Perhaps not what we think... We may think of leisure as rest, a restorative for our fatigue from work or even a well-earned compensation or vacation. Leisure does not exist as an antidote to work. Rather, leisure, in its true sense, is about becoming whole as a human being, becoming integrated. “Leisure is a mental and spiritual attitude..., a condition of the soul..., an attitude of non-activity, inward calm, and silence. Leisure means not being busy but letting things happen. Leisure is a form of silence, the soul’s capacity to steep oneself in the whole of creation.... Leisure is a contemplative attitude, not active intervening but openness to everything... Leisure is letting oneself go.... Leisure is only possible when a person is at one with self.”

(Pieper, 1963, 40, 41). In other words, if we want to be true mystics, full of awe and wonder in living the gracious gift of this. Now, we have to take time and cultivate leisure. Being a contemplative, being a mystic requires our moving from the chronos clock time to a more open-ended kairos time of mystery, letting go. Contemplative life is closely linked to the notion of leisure. “To achieve leisure is one of the fundamental powers of the human soul.” (Pieper, 1963, 449).

In this contemplative leisure, we give ourselves “permission” to let go of our book prayers (getting them in), to move away from discursive, kataphatic prayer to more apophatic transconceptual prayer of being, being in the silence, being in Mystery. We don’t watch the clock; we turn our vision inward to the faith-blindness of God within. In so doing, we cultivate that mystical eye of wonder and awe of God in all beings, in all creation.

The question then becomes how can we not take more leisure time? There is a justice aspect to leisure as we have been exploring it. Leisure goes hand in hand with contemplation, mysticism, transcendence. Leisure must be embraced because it stands for that poetic wonder beyond the utilitarian of our lives. And what better way to start than ensuring we honour a day of sabbath each week, a time when we pray and play, rest and remember. We commit ourselves, in the spirit of the Jewish sabbath to this special kairos time in which all unnecessary work (each of us knows what those aspects are in our lives) is put aside. I ask myself on each sabbath whether what I am doing on this day of rest could be done on any other day, could wait. Often, we treat our sabbath like a regular work day because we can’t stand the quiet and stillness. “Remember, keep holy the sabbath day”.

Mystery and Wisdom

In the end, a spirituality of aging is all about the wisdom to “know the difference” as noted in the serenity prayer. Over many years, each of us has accumulated lots of information (facts and trivia) and some of that may have been transformed to knowledge (facts and trivia honed in the “school of hard knocks”) but wisdom? Wisdom is a gift, a grace; we can’t acquire it as such but if we are blessed, it somehow roots in us. We recognize its gift through the heart landscapes of others who quietly say to us on one or other occasion, “You are so wise.” This wisdom time is not about holding on to the past but taking from its information and knowledge the prophetic wisdom as elders passing on a gift to future generations.

Wisdom is so tied into mystery, the mystical of our lives, that time in our lives where we have become free of the confines of social rigors, personal needs and public roles. It is that graced time when we come home to the mystery that old age frees us from ourselves in which we are open to life evolving rather than our trying to control it. “In our life we have learned to deny the right of the unexpected, the mysterious... (Chittister, 2008, 76). In our spirituality of aging, when we create that sacred space of leisure, that Now of openness, we somehow experience the thin moment, the thin space of mystery, the mystical in the warm breath of Mystery. And somehow, in a flash of wisdom, we know the difference. “Our goal now is to be what we have discovered about life” (Chittister, 2008, 125).

Crossing Over and Death

Personal Death

For so many years, our own personal death has been an intellectual assent. Now, as we continue to age, we realize that we have lived many more years than we have remaining, even with the stats for increased life expectancy. Even with our faith in the

belief of death as a transformation to new life, we still don't know about it. We hear things about going down a long tunnel toward the light, toward God, but in our gut, we still don't know. Despite the marriage of science and religion and even John Paul II's papal statement back in the late 1990s, that within the parameters of the new story of creation, heaven and hell are not physical places but states of being, still we don't know. We don't know because no one has come back to "reassure" us. No doubt many of you have read Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie*. Do you remember the line that Morrie stated on one of Mitch's visits? Moving steadily toward death, Morrie told Mitch... "The truth is... once you learn how to die, you learn how to live" (1997, 82). Something worth pondering.

How important then it is for us in consecrated life to be a model of waiting in hope for what is to come when we die. After our years of a life dedicated to God alone, are we able to accentuate, in a spirituality of aging, the normalness of death in the life cycle? Of course, to be peaceful about our own death doesn't start on our deathbed. It is a grace and a daily letting go, letting be, letting come.

I remember in the days of formal retreats of the month in my congregation and in our annual retreats, we were encouraged to "pray for a happy death". Over the years, I have reframed that admonition to praying for an acceptance of my own death, a death that can be peaceful from the inside out as my body; mind and spirit prepare to take leave of this way of being for the transformation in eternal life. In accepting my own life as I have been gifted, its culmination is acceptance of my own death. To help prepare, I have taken time in the life of leisure and contemplation as explored herein, to determine and put in writing how I want to be celebrated in death. Have you put in writing your wishes for a mourning ritual, departure liturgy, favourite songs, chants, prayers, poems from which your congregation, family and friends can choose? This is all part of a spirituality of aging. Making these wishes known and available for when that time comes, is our affirmation that yes, I was born, and yes, I will die. "The recognition of death, my own death, can liberate my concern for life... The final acceptance of my own life is the acceptance of my death as its finite boundary" (Whiteheads, 1979, 193).

Congregational Death

Likewise, a spirituality of aging demands of us to look at the life-death cycle in our religious congregations. As many realize, speaking of our congregations dying is basically anathema. We know the life cycle of any group, we recognize its stages as noted earlier, but some of us conclude, perhaps in our denial and fear, that life seasons and cycles are for other religious groups, not ours.

Tied into this very prickly question of congregational dying is the topic of vocations. Yes, we know that consecrated life is a gift, a call-response that is wedded to the signs of the times. Yes, we know that such a life will always exist but do we know, can we accept that such a call may not be within the present models of religious life most of us are now living? We know the statistics about our diminishment in numbers, the increase of our average age to 75+ years, yet we hold on to putting personnel and financial resources into attracting women and men to our ranks, to this model we are living. We know the numbers and retention rate of those who may come. Do we have the wisdom to know the difference between holding on with gritted teeth and letting go in faith, hope and trust? Is this our last hold out on control in our declining years? Some congregations have had the wisdom to let go, let be, let the Spirit come, awaiting in hope for the models of consecrated life, reflecting these signs of these times. We seem to think that accepting the reality of the life-death cycle of our congregations is

the final straw, the ultimate admission of defeat. We seem to think that such acceptance means admission that somehow we have not been faithful that somehow we have failed, that all we have been and done was for naught. In a spirituality of aging, this could be our greatest challenge: letting go, letting be, letting come. No one of us wants to see our congregations die but we are not the first and this normal cycle of seasons started before us and will continue long after us. Again, the serenity prayer is very evocative of our congregational desire for wisdom: God grant me the serenity to change the things I can, accept the things I cannot change and the wisdom to know the difference.

Conclusion

A spirituality of aging in consecrated life has been the focus of these reflections. Having looked at the statistics of aging today, including aging in our congregations, I have highlighted only some of the myriad possibilities of the qualities such spirituality might entail. My invitation to each of you, as you read these reflections, is to take the leisure-contemplation to write your own personal and congregational spirituality of aging. Remember as you ponder and write, “the belt around your waist”.

Resources

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Barbara Fiand. *In the Stillness You Will Know*. Crossroad, 2002.
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Peter M. Kallelis. *Five Steps to Spiritual Growth*. Paulist Press, 2005.
Janet Malone. *Transforming Conflict and Anger into Peace and Nonviolence*. Novalis, 2007.
M Scott Peck. *In Search of Stones*. Hyperion, 1995.
Jane Pretat. *Coming to Age: The Croning Years and Late-Life Transformation*. Inner City Books, 1994.
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Rene Stockman. *Ubi Caritas*. Novalis, 2007.
Evelyn Eaton Whitehead and James Whitehead. *Christian Life Patterns*. Doubleday, 1979.





March Gospel Readings



5th March. 1st Sunday in Lent. (Matthew 4:1-11). The Temptation of Jesus. After his fast of 40 days, paralleling the 40 years of desert wandering by Israel, Jesus is driven out into the desert by the Spirit to undergo the testing of the devil's temptations. What is at stake here is the nature of Jesus' messiahship. Is he to be the wonder worker, or the messiah of spectacular signs, or the powerful political ruler of the world? Or is he to be the suffering savior for whom obedience to the Father's will is his priority? The temptation to be a different type of messiah returns in Gethsemane with the prayer to remove the cup, and on the cross with the request for Jesus to come down from the cross to gain belief from passers-by, the mocking leaders, and those crucified with him. These temptations were the temptations of Jesus' whole lifetime, not just one moment, for acclaim, acceptance, and a certain kind of success that would meet popular expectation.

Jesus chooses a second path, that of the Suffering Servant, obedient to the will of the Father. On this way he clashes with popular values of power and prestige. It is a road that entails rejection and a certain kind of failure, but ultimately leads to eternal triumph. The only security is dependence on God (not on bread), giving priority to the will of the Father (not seeking to gain crowds through spectacular signs), and refusing the power of this world as given by Satan (but accepting 'all authority in heaven and earth...given by my Father'). Because Jesus proves faithful, he is now ready to begin his mission.

12th March. 2nd Sunday in Lent. (Matthew 17:1-9) The Transfiguration combines a decisive moment in the life of Jesus with the glory of the post-resurrected Christ. During his ministry Jesus became increasingly aware that the mounting hostility of his enemies pointed to a death such as had befallen the prophets before him. As a Jew he believed that all of history was under the control of God, his loving Abba. Jesus had been given the great mission of bringing in the reign of God, but he could see that it would not be completed if his life was cut short. As with all else, he took his concern to God. On the mountaintop Jesus learns the great truth that it will be through his death that God would bring about the kingdom of heaven.

Now that Jesus can entrust his mission to a God that will bring it to completion, his enlightenment is described. In him is the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets (Moses and Elijah both conversed with God on Mt. Sinai). The details of a transfigured Christ, face shining like the sun, garments white as light, and recognition as the beloved Son of God in the fullness of its meaning, are details that belong to the risen Christ. The link between the passion and the glorification of Jesus is made explicit as the group come down from the mountain.

19th March. 3rd Sunday in Lent. (John 4:5-42). The Samaritan Woman at the Well.

The theme of water given for life dominates our readings. The theme of thirst is appropriate to our Lenten response. This story in John brings together the vital issues of 1. Living water; 2. True worship; 3. Mission; 4. Self-revelation; 5. Response in faith. Jesus replaces the well of Jacob by living water (water that flows, symbol of the Holy Spirit), just as he replaces the Temple by worship in Spirit and truth. The issue is not 'where' God is worshiped, but 'how'. There is a wonderful progression in faith on the part of the woman as she sees Jesus 'a strange Jew', 'greater than Jacob', 'a prophet', the Messiah', and 'the savior of the world'. The woman brings her townspeople to Jesus and steps aside in true missionary spirit to allow Jesus to complete the work of conversion. From Nicodemus (a Jew), to the Samaritans (Jew-Gentile), to the official whose son was at the point of death (Gentile), the mission of Jesus takes on universal proportions.

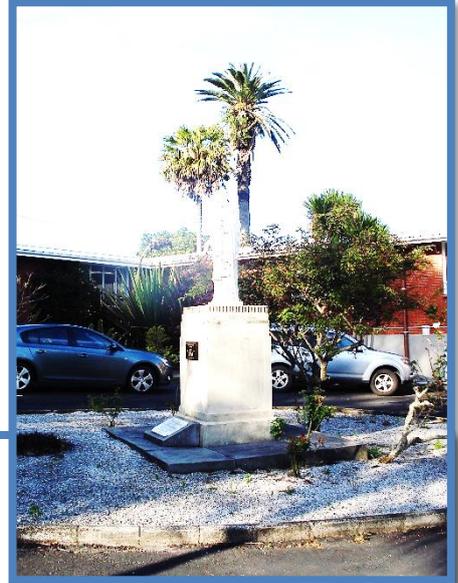
The fact that the woman comes at noon is not because she is a disreputable and isolated character. She comes at the lightest time of the day to meet the source of light and wisdom, Jesus. She is a contrast to Nicodemus who came by night. The five husbands represent the Samaritan faith journey as a people who suffered the indignity of having five pagan ba'als (the word also means 'husband') imposed on the land by their Assyrian conquerors. The Samaritan people are honoured in Acts as among the first to come to faith in the Christian message. Jesus the prophet draws on the prophetic image of the straying Israel as the unfaithful wife.

26th March. 4th Sunday in Lent. (John 9:1-41). The Man Born Blind. This dramatic miracle shows the growing hostility between Jesus and his enemies. It points out the need to have our own spiritual blindness healed by the Light of the World. The story moves from stating that physical blindness is not caused by sin to affirming that sin causes spiritual blindness. The paradox is that the blind see and those who think they see are blind. The name 'Siloam' means 'sent'. As the Father *sent* Jesus, so Jesus sends those enlightened by his word. The Man Born Blind now becomes a witness to Jesus as a prophet then as one from God. He is cast out by the Pharisees, but brought into the light of the new people of God.

The work of Jesus produces a new creation; light was the first of God's creation in Genesis, and is essential for life in Hebrew thought. Clay is present for the creation of the first human being. Even the spittle is a sign of bringing an incomplete creation to completion as Jesus shares of himself. Genesis begins with watery chaos. The entire chapter follows the great Feast of Lights, when the city was lit up with the great light of the Temple. Jesus is the light of the world, replacing the darkness, for those who follow him have the light of life.



St Paul's College on the Move!



*A gathering has been suggested for
Xavier College & Marist Old Boys
to celebrate our 200th Anniversary*

In **CHRISTCHURCH** we have a committee that has decided that we will mark the 200th Anniversary of the founding of the Marist Brothers on the weekend of **SEPTEMBER 1st, 2nd and 3rd 2017**.



The Weekend will commence on Friday September 1st with a gathering of all Old Boys and their partners and any Marist Brothers available at **CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL COLLEGE** (formerly Sacred Heart College) in Ferry Road from 5 o'clock onwards.

On Saturday 2nd we will have a MASS at 5 o'clock in the old **Xavier College Hall** in Barbadoes Street and this will be followed by a meal in the Catholic Cathedral College hall. Sunday will be free for any nostalgic visits to the site with possibly a BBQ lunch and assorted games on the playing field. If you would like to attend please let us know by **APRIL 1ST**

OLD BOY BROTHERS

Fergus Garrett
Denis Gallivan
Denis Turner
Kevin King
Peter Henderson
David Greenlees
William Lawley

FORMER TEACHING BROTHERS

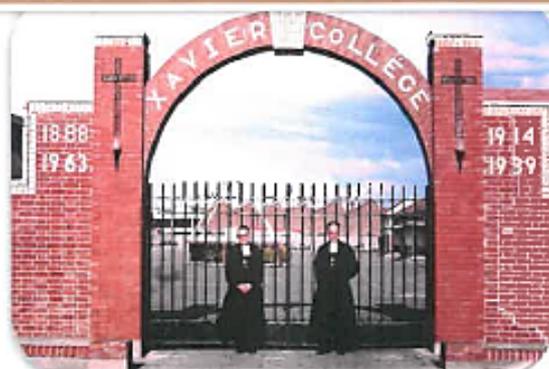
Brian Wanden
Rupert Woods
John Paul Wilson
Kevin Wanden

Dunstan Henry
Douglas Dawick
Emilian O'Dowd
Peter Brown
Alan Henley
Osmund Macnamara
Joseph McDermott
Marcel Hall
Donald Teixeira
William Lawson
Henry Spinks
Bryan McKay
Bernard O'Malley
Christopher Maney
David Lavin

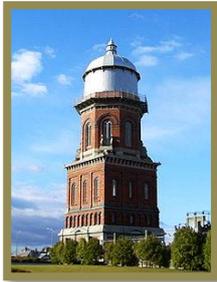
FORMER BROTHERS

Desmond Crowther
Gordon Healy
Richard Macnamara
John Gourley
John McLaughlin
John Dromgoole
Harvey Rush
Kevin Walsh
Desmond Corcoran
Owen Doody
Peter Luiten
Stephen Woodham
Anthony Byrne
Kevin Frewen
Adrian Bonner

Do you know of anyone we have missed out? Please Let Alan Henley Know



Marist Invercargill Bicentenary Celebrations



Old Boy Brothers, Old Boys of Marist Brothers' Schools in Invercargill [Clyde Street, Mary Street, and Marist / Verdon College, Rockdale Road] and friends of the Brothers are welcome to share the celebrations of the Bi-centenary "The Founding of the Marist Brothers Order in France in 1817." Also to celebrate the arrival, in 1897, of the Brothers 120 years ago.

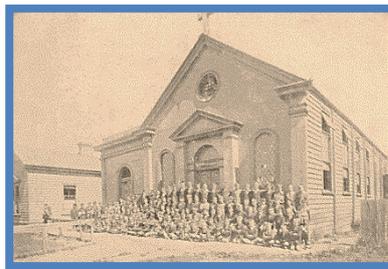


Order of Events

Friday 24th 'Conversatione' Northern Hotel from 6.00 pm

Saturday 25th
9.00 am Mass at the Basilica – Tyne Street
10.00 am Blessing of the two plaques in Clyde Street
Site of the first Catholic Church and Marist School
11.30 am Eastern Cemetery (Brs Eric Ryan & Daniel Traynor)
Prayer for all deceased Brothers and Marist Old Boys
12 noon – lunch at Marist Pavilion – Verdon College
Followed by a tour of the College – then free afternoon
7.00 pm – Meal at Verdon College

Sunday 26th **10.00 am** Mass at the Basilica followed by group photo on steps
Followed by light luncheon in the Basilica foyer.



The Clyde Street St Mary's School (formerly St Mary's Church before the Basilica was built) with pupils lined up outside – plus one of the two plaques showing where the school and church once stood in Clyde Street.



Our Invercargill Mission – 1897

With the death of Bishop Moran of Dunedin in 1895, Father Verdon, Superior of the Seminary in Sydney, was appointed his successor and he wasted no time in asking Cardinal Moran of Sydney to speak to Brother Felix, the Provincial, about having Brothers for his boys' school in Invercargill. He then wrote to Brother Felix himself asking for Brothers and guaranteeing sixty pounds a year per Brother. He asked for three Brothers initially with the thought of opening another school later on. Brother Felix wrote to the Superior General and then the Provincial Council agreed on the recommendation of Brother Basil who had taught in Invercargill before joining the Congregation and spoke highly of the people there and said it would be a good source of vocations.

Brother Felix visited Invercargill himself in 1896 and found that the Parish Priest, Dean Burke, was prepared to hand over the presbytery in Clyde Street and all his furniture to the Brothers. Brother Felix thought the offer too good and too expensive for the Little Brothers of Mary. The school existed of one room for sixty pupils but part of the Church could be screened off as a classroom. Before long the whole church would become available as a new presbytery and church was being built in Tyne Street – Saint Mary's Basilica. Brother Felix was impressed with the amount of grassed area the boys would have to play on the amount of vegetable garden space for the Brothers and left promising a supply of Brothers – only a month away. The agreement he signed said that Brothers would become owners of their furniture at a rate of one tenth per year and the school would be open for the State school inspectors as well as the proper ecclesiastical authorities.

Brothers Dunstan (Director), Canice and Theophile duly arrived and began teaching at St Mary's Boys' School on the 1st February 1897 with 96 pupils, compared with 45 the year before. By April the roll was 110. On three nights a week the Brothers ran a night school at a shilling a week – with ten pupils enrolled.



Socks up and caps on at Marist

Brother Dunstan wrote to the Assistant General and spoke of the Brothers having to adjust to the very difficult climate in Invercargill and finding the pupils a bit backward though well intentioned enough. (Dearie me – is this slander of the first degree?)

The results of Brother Duncan's efforts to improve standards are reflected in the inspector's report at the end of 1897. "The results of this examination, both as regards

OUR INVERCARGILL MISSION

the essential and non-essential subjects, are extremely satisfactory. It gives me great pleasure to report that in one year the Marist Brothers have made their school one of the most efficient in the district". – James Hendry. ("A bit backward indeed!")

As for Brothers Duncan, Canice and Theophile – these three hard working missionaries also disappear into the history pages without much known of them after their stay in Invercargill.

Invercargill scenes our early Brothers would have been familiar with – The Clyde Street School where the Brothers taught in the former church replaced in the early 1900s by St Mary's Basilica just down the road in Tyne Street - on the right. We also have the school emblem and the Marist Rugby Club emblem. In the title we have the Invercargill water tower built at the time the Brothers were beginning their mission there. The Clyde Street St Mary's School was abandoned in the early 1920s and the Brothers moved to their new home and Marist School in Mary Street. By the time they moved the former church was being propped up either side to ensure it did not collapse while the pupils were attending their classes inside. (OSH would have had a field day on that school site)



**Marist Mary Street grounds,
Invercargill, with the "Puni" in flood**



Verdon College Pupils today



For Our Recently Deceased

Father Fred Bliss SM: Died at the Home of Compassion on Wednesday 15th February

Brothers with Health Concerns

**Brother Eugene Kabanguka
Brother James McBride
Brother William Lawson
Brother Roger Dowling
Brother Campion McMahon**

Others to keep in our prayers

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

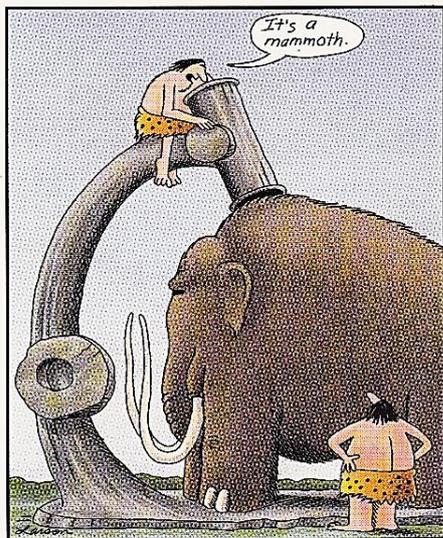
Other Intentions

**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**

On behalf of my mother Anne and my brothers and sisters, Brian, Bernadette, Timothy, Patricia, Richard, I would like to thank you for your prayers, thoughtfulness, support and the love you have shown to us on the death of Peter. It has been a comforting blessing to each of us.

Brother Kevin Wanden





Early microscopes

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March Birthdays

2 nd	Br Peter Horide
6 th	Br Gabriel Power
7 th	Br Bryan McKay
11 th	Br Kevin Wanden
15 th	Br Mark Oliver
25 th	Br Murray Kelly

March Memorials

1 st	Br Ulbert Romestan 1898
1 st	Br Ludovic Laboureyras 1924
3 rd	Br Basil Kelly 1931
5 th	Br Columbanus Brady 1928
5 th	Br Paulinus McColl 1949
7 th	Br Edmund Pope 1932
7 th	Br Vincent Degruel 1936
7 th	Br Vincent Scannell 2004
8 th	Br Ambrose Bailey 1994
10 th	Br Columban Traynor 1890
10 th	Br Nevil Bingley 2014
11 th	Br Anastasius Moran 1962
12 th	Br Papinien Pelrosse 1919
15 th	Br Wilfred Byrnes 1989
16 th	Br Calixtus Higgins 1932
17 th	Br Loetus Cerf 1921
19 th	Br Ephrem Anisy 2009
20 th	Br Joachim Dwyer 2005
22 nd	Br Hippolyte Krauth 1950
23 rd	Br Basil Neville 2004
24 th	Br Leo(n) Moog 1961
25 th	Br Virgilius Leahy 1960
30 th	Br Daniel Traynor 2002
30 th	Br Ronald Henry 2008



Let's remember all refugees at this time



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