



Marist Brothers - Irmãos Maristas

Province of Southern Africa - Província da África Austral
Province Office, Area 9/290B, Box 1077, Lilongwe, Malawi

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Newsletter / Bolletim Informativo

From the Provincial's Desk ...

1 February 2013

Dear Brothers,

At the start of this letter I would like to apologise for sharing with you a hang-up I have concerning the title "Brother". At the end of last year, when I was visiting a community, an incident occurred where I was told that I was emotional about it. And that I am!

This is what happened. As we were leaving after Mass in the chapel belonging to a community of Sisters, I was introduced to a seminarian on pastoral duty as "Brother". My reaction was: "He is not a Brother!! He is a seminarian!"

The title is important to me and should be important to all of us because of what it stands for. A few days prior to this incident I was chatting with a young man who told me he would like to join the brothers, I asked him, "Why?" He said that he felt that God was calling him to be brother. He understood the brother's vocation and call better than a number of us do. I would like to share some of my feelings and thoughts on brotherhood as vocation that means so much to me and I hope to all of us.

Let me share some thoughts on our brotherhood in this letter to help us rethink our commitment to Jesus and Mary. Our Constitutions clearly explain the importance of our vocation in the church. (Constitutions Articles: 1, 3, 6, 8, 114, Statutes 170.3)



I know even at a young age I was clearly in search of something meaningful in my life. It was drummed into me by my initial formators – to live a life in Jesus' service as a Marist Brother. I also realised that very few people understood the path I undertook as there was little understanding of brotherhood.

Sometimes we misunderstand what religious life is. We can say all the right things like: "Religious life is a form of consecration to God, characterised by the profession of vows of poverty, chastity and obedience." In this consecration we are meant to give witness to a life given totally to God and to our brothers and sisters, in the imitation of Jesus, who made himself a servant out of love of all people. This is what we as brothers should make visible, the loving and saving presence of Jesus.



In his Encyclical *Vita Consecrata*, Pope John Paul II wrote, "The Church has great esteem for the kind of consecrated life in which religious brothers provide valuable services of various kinds, inside or outside the

community, particularly in this way in mission of proclaiming the Gospel and bearing witness to it with charity in everyday life. Indeed some of these services can be considered ecclesial ministries, granted by legitimate authorities. This requires an appropriate and integral formation: human, spiritual, theological, pastoral and professional."

The misconception of the brothers' vocation is evidenced by some laity, priests and sisters, who have asked me: "Why did you not go all the way and get ordained since we need priests?" I was called and chose to be a Marist Brother that I may put my whole attention and energy on nothing else than to make Jesus known and loved to those children and youth entrusted to my care since I was convinced that this ministry to young people is a vocation complete in itself.



Our brotherhood helps to give a balance to the church's concept of ministry as there is a tendency to put things in a hierarchy and to overemphasize the sacramental ministries to the detriment of the other ministries of the church. We as brothers can become a window for the whole Church in its search to become the servants of God's people.

Let me go back to the incident about the use of the title "Brother" mentioned at the beginning of this letter. Why does it annoy me when I hear the term applied to seminarians? Once again I will quote what Pope John Paul II said in *Vita Consecrata*. He says it so much better than I... "*.....the term brother suggests a rich spirituality. These Religious are called to be brothers of Christ, deeply united with him, 'the firstborn among many brothers' (Rom 8:29); brothers to one another, in mutual love and working together in the Church in the*

same service of what is good; brothers to everyone, in their witness to Christ's love for all, especially the lowliest, the neediest; brothers for a greater brotherhood in the Church."

By living in a special way this aspect of Christian and consecrated life, religious brothers are an effective reminder to religious priests themselves of the fundamental dimension of brotherhood in Christ, to be lived among themselves and with every man and woman, and they proclaim to all the Lord's words: 'And you are all brothers' (Mt 23:8)."

There are some key elements of the vocation of a brother.

1. Brothers should live an intensification of their baptismal consecration.
2. Brothers should make a total gift of self to God through their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.
3. Brothers' lives should be a fraternal life in common.
4. Brothers should imitate Jesus by a certain detachment from the world, in our case in the Way of Mary.
5. Brothers should live lives of prophetic witness to the Kingdom of God.
6. Brothers should offer themselves in practical and generous service to the Church.
7. Brothers should serve a common mission that flows from and nourishes their fraternal life.
8. By their identity and spirituality, brothers should reveal the fundamental dimension of "brotherhood in Jesus".
9. Brothers manifest that the profession of the evangelical counsels is a complete vocation in itself.

There is so much to say on this topic that I could go on but I will conclude with just a final paragraph from an article written by Armin Luistro, a De La Salle Brother: *“The struggle of the Religious Brother to live in true brotherhood with his confreres is a counter-cultural statement against the prevailing views of masculine aggression, dominance and indestructability and can point towards a possibility for male bonding, friendship and fraternity which are essential aspects of Christian intimacy, maturity and commitment. A community where no one is called father – because they are all brothers and they have*

only one father who is in heaven (cf. Mt 23:8-9) – can become a window of the Church as a real community of believers.”

I trust that you now have some food for thought about our wonderful vocation as Brother.

May God bless you and Mary support you in your vocation as brother.



Joe

LENT: An introduction, a little bit of history, and a few ideas

As you know Ash Wednesday occurs in two weeks' time on 13 February, marking the beginning of Lent. What follows is the fruit of some research, some thoughts on the season, and some suggestions about ways to engage in Lent this year.

History

Lent has a long history. It began in the early church as a time of preparation for those who were going to be baptized and fully accepted into the Church. Baptism happened only once a year on the day before Easter. It was a time for fasting and prayer, as well as a time of study and learning about Christ and the doctrines of the church. Candidates were to prepare for the new life and new birth that would come with their baptism on Easter. Eventually the rest of the church joined in this practice (some say they did this as a way of showing fellowship with the new believers) and by the Council of Nicea it had become an official season of the church calendar as a 40-day period of fasting and repentance and preparation for Easter. It was a time to remember Christ's 40 days in the wilderness, a time to remember the suffering Christ

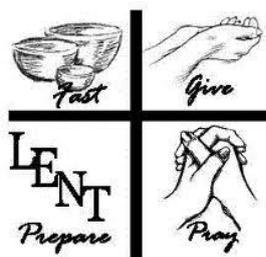
endured on the cross, and it was a time to remember the sin that put Christ on the cross and the sin in our own lives and world.

Reflections

At its heart, Lent is a journey to wholeness, a journey of joining God in his redemptive and saving work in the world. But that journey begins with a journey through brokenness – we join God in his redemptive work of wholeness by first confronting the brokenness in our own lives and in the world around us. We confront the barriers that keep us from God, the barriers that keep us from each other and the barriers that keep us from God's creation. This is not a onetime act. We do not overcome these barriers in a day or in 40 days, but the idea is that each year we go through this Lenten process and that at the end of it each time we find ourselves closer...closer to the goal of wholeness and of joining God in his loving work in the world.



Lent is not just about giving something up for a few weeks and it's not just about focusing on our sin and repenting for a few weeks – it's really about growth. The very word Lent means “spring” or “springtime”: falls during that season in the northern hemisphere. Just as spring is a time when we plant seeds and bury them in darkness it is a time when we plant ourselves in God and focus on and repent of the darkness in ourselves and in our world. It is a time when through repentance we grow and become a thing of beauty and restoration to the world around us. Lent is really about going through a process that should change us, that should bring us closer to being fully the people God has created and called us to be. Unfortunately, springtime in the southern hemisphere does not coincide with the church's season of Lent.



The church has traditionally made this journey through an emphasis on fasting, almsgiving and prayer.

Fasting has a way of making us more aware of what's really important in life, when we give up that which is not important we realize what is important. In the early centuries of the church there was a great deal of variation in the rules of fasting and abstinence for Lent. Eventually the Western church declared Lent to be 40 days long not counting Sundays. It was to include two days of fasting (Ash Wednesday and Good Friday) which meant that people were only able to eat one meal on those days (usually in the evening) though they were allowed two small snacks during the day to keep up their strength but these snacks could not add up to another full meal. For the Western church, Lent also included days of “abstinence” on each Friday during Lent. This meant that on Fridays during Lent the church community

was not supposed to eat meat or drink alcohol at all, with fish being allowed as an exception to the no meat rule. This practice was intended to join believers with Christ's suffering and the suffering of the world.

But, fasting was never just for the sake of denial and self-discipline (though those things were part of it). There was a broader purpose to the fasting, a purpose to the denial that went beyond the spiritual development that this practice created and touched on a very practical purpose. The money saved during the fast was to be spent in almsgiving – in giving to the poor. This fast was a way to join with the suffering of the world and to play a part in diminishing that suffering. There was an emphasis during Lent on giving to and suffering on behalf of the poor and needy in the world. This was the part of Lent that I had known nothing of before and struck me very much.

The third practice of Lent is that of prayer. Christ came. He joined us in our suffering – so much so that he joined us in our death. And so at Lent when we remember and dwell on the suffering of our Christ it seems only right that we would in thankful penitence turn our hearts and lives back to Him through prayer. Through Lenten prayer we recommit ourselves to Christ, the His church and to the redeeming work He is doing and desires to do in the world around us. Through Lenten prayer we silence ourselves and listen to Christ's heart for us and for the world.

The Season of Lent



*Remember man thou art dust
and to dust thou shalt return*

As I have read about Lent I have learned most of all that Lent is not a means and end in itself... it is a beginning. During Lent we dwell

on the suffering and hardships of Christ, the suffering and sin in our own life and the suffering and brokenness in our world and we do this in ways that change us. So that when Easter comes we have a real sense of the great glory that is found in Christ's resurrection. Yes, our world is broken; yes, our own lives are broken, but Christ didn't just suffer and die: he rose and with his resurrection he brought new life for all of us. So after a time of penitence and brokenness we can come to Easter knowing fully the importance and necessity of Christ's resurrection and rejoicing fully in the complete and eternal fullness of life that he brings. And we can move on from there hopefully further along in our journey, more fully in tune with Christ, with ourselves and with the world around us.

There is a much variety in how the church has practiced fasting, almsgiving and prayer during Lent. As we enter Lent, it is important for each of us to search our hearts and figure out how best we can practise these aspects of Lent in ways that connect us more closely with the Man of Sorrows and the sorrow-filled world around us.

Suggestions



1. Take 30 minutes to pray, asking the Holy Spirit's guidance, look over the list below, and make a few practical Lenten resolutions. Be careful. If you try to do too much, you may not succeed in anything! Turn off your phone and computer. Don't put it off and don't allow interruptions.
2. Carry a pocket size cross with you continually throughout Lent as a reminder of the season.

3. Get up earlier 15 minutes earlier than usual and spend that time thanking God for the gift of life and offering your day to Him.
4. Recover the Catholic tradition of making frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament throughout the week, even if it is only for 5 minutes.
5. Make a decision to read at least some Scripture every day.
6. Find a form of fasting that is appropriate for you, given your age, state of health, and state of life.
7. Plan a recollection this Lent. It could be simply a half day, out in nature, or in a Church. Or it could be a full day or an overnight. This could be done as a community.
8. Unplug—TV, Facebook, Twitter, Netflix, etc. at least once a week during Lent. This is perhaps the single best way to carve out some extra time in your day for prayer and meditation.
9. Give a donation to charity. This could be done as a community.
10. Think of a person with whom you have a strained relationship and make some gesture toward improving that relationship.
11. Be generous with your compliments during Lent, especially to those who appear to be "down".
12. Participate in the Stations of the Cross
13. Volunteer somewhere
14. Read some of the original church fathers as a way to learn more about the life, death and resurrection of Christ and the work of His church.
15. Commit to praying for the poor, the broken hearted, the prisoners, the hungry, and the sick around the world and in your own city/neighbourhood

16. Wear simple clothing during Lent as a symbol of mourning the death and brokenness of our lives and the world

17. If you find that you are really busy and don't have time maybe make your discipline for Lent that you make time, that you say no to added activities and commitments and instead say yes to rest and spending time with God

18. Make a commitment to have a minimal impact on the environment during Lent in an effort to restore the brokenness of God's planet – recycle more, walk more, take public transportation, re-use things in an effort to create less garbage, don't buy a lot of "stuff", etc.

19. Take time to clean out your community house/cupboard and donate those things you don't need to those who may need them as a way to restore (in some small way) some of the brokenness in the world

20. Take time to educate yourself more about the human rights violations in the world, the injustice in the world, and in general the brokenness in the world and what you can do to participate in restoring wholeness and health to people.

21. Keep a journal during Lent as a means for self-examination and prayer

22. Set an extra place at your dinner table each night during Lent as a reminder to "pray that God would fill up the emptiness of those in need." And as a reminder "that all (no matter their station in life) are invited to come as guests...as family." Be creative and find ways in your life to remember the brokenness in the world and join God in restoring wholeness and health to all.

I'd love to hear any other ideas you may have for practising the season of Lent and partaking in the sacrifice of Christ. I personally have been really challenged by Lent this year and I look forward to engaging more in this sacred season of the church.

[Sources: (1) *Rejoicing in the journey: Ideas for Lent* Beth Stedman; (2) Sundry web sources; (3) Marcellino D'Ambrosio, *Catholic seeking*; (4) personal thoughts]



MANZIANA – THIRD AGE GROUP (Marist Brothers only) 17 OCT – 14 DEC 2012

Left to Right: Charles Gay (W-C Europe), Denis Itumah (Nigeria), Dominic O'Brien (USA), John McDonnell (Aus.), Antoine Kazindu (Africa C-E, Assistant Leader), Carl Tapp (New Zealand), Emili Turú SG, Barry Burns (Leader), Joseph De Meyer (W-C Europe), John O'Brien (Aus.), Mario Colussi (Stern. Africa), Anthony Francis (South Asia), Augustine Hendlmeier (W-C Europe), Paul Ching (East Asia), Brian Callaghan (NZ-Samoa), [Absent] Anthony Hunt (Aus. - Administrator)

WORKSHOPS AT MIC - Dec. 2012

Marist Patrimony (1st- & 3rd years)

The animators of this 10-day programme for the first- and third-year Brothers in formation were Brothers Vincent de Paul Kouassi of the District of West Africa, Brother Pierre Joseph from Madagascar and Br Spiridion Ndanga of Africa Central-East. The animators made good use of IT in their presentations. We participated so actively that signs of gratitude could be noticed in the facial expressions of the presenters.

Whereas in the minds of many the word Patrimony had meant “Champagnology”, we later on came to a clear understanding that the term included heritage, charisma, origins, archives, ancestors, and customs. This means that Marist Patrimony it is more than the study of Champagnat only.

Through research on the letters of Champagnat to different persons, we discovered his true personality and saw that teaching was not the only dream of Champagnat. Our time together was shortened due to the travel arrangements of our animators.

Thanks to the programme, we came into more direct contact with the reality of the Institute and many words of gratitude were expressed to the leaders. *‘There are difficulties in leading a life of a good religious’* said Champagnat in his Spiritual Testament, *‘but grace makes all things easy’*. It was a grace for us to have this opportunity to deepen our understanding of Marist Patrimony during the holidays. *‘Life is very short and eternity never ends’*. So I wish all of you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. (Br Daniel Jariosse 1st-year student)



Children’s Rights (2nd & 4th years)

The **FMSI child rights course** was included as a module in the general formation programme offered to students, future formators, and teachers who will be working with children and young people in need. The animation team comprised **Br Jim Jolley**, FMSI Director of Advocacy and Training for Child Rights, **Br Geraldo Medida** and **Br Maurice Juence** (staff members at MIC). They ensured that our workshop was successful. A Marist sister and two Franciscan sisters joined us for this important exercise. The participants were invited ***to see the world with the eyes of young people***. A call to change ourselves and respect the dignity of young people sums up the entire focus of this 9-day training program.

However, it is frustrating to realise that **corporal punishment is administered in many countries in Africa**, even though state leaders have signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child which strictly prohibits any act of violence against children. Furthermore, whilst the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most ratified treaty in the world, in reality respecting the dignity of young people remains a challenge.

Who is to implement these children's rights as agreed to by world nations?

A role play helped us realise how difficult it is to change the mentality and perception of teachers towards corporal punishment

Finally, a challenge is that whilst several countries in Africa have abolished corporal punishment through legislation, the reality is that in practice many teachers in schools still carry weapons in their hands when going to classes as part of their teaching aids! **We Brothers here at MIC are the future teachers in our Marist schools. So if change does not start with us, who will it start with? If not now, when?**

(Student Br Joseph & Marist News.) Abridged – Ed.)



Workshop on Rights of the Child at MIC Nairobi 10 – 20 December 2012

Assembly in Mozambique - 11 & 12 January 2013

The Brothers in Mozambique assembled for two days to consider their presence in Mozambique and how they could best serve the people of the country. We looked at the good that is being done by the Brothers and acknowledged their service to poor children and youth. In considering the elements that make up the Marist world in Mozambique we looked at personnel (including those in formation), community residences, schools, farms and other properties. We then studied how to make the best use of these resources to serve the people. There are challenges to be faced by the Brothers in the country, and we hope that this encounter will ease some of the difficulties. It was a most worthwhile gathering. *(Br Joe Walton)*



Brothers Felizardo Maceia, António Pisco, Jamal António, Joe Walton, António Sanasana, Antonio Ramalho C.G., João Torcato, João Reis, Tomás Sawayenga

Br Martin Whiteford

[Adapted from the death notice]

Br Martin Whiteford (Ian Anthony Whiteford) passed away peacefully in Johannesburg, on Thursday 10 January 2013. Brother Martin, as he was known, had been suffering from cancer of the liver for about six months, the last month of which he spent at Nazareth House.

Brother Martin was born on 12 October 1936 in Johannesburg. During the Second World War, the family moved to Cape Town, where he attended St Joseph's Marist College in Rondebosch. He finished his secondary schooling at the Marist Juniorate in Hibberdene, Natal, before going to the Postulancy and Novitiate at Mittagong in Australia in 1955. After his first profession as a Marist Brother on 15 August 1956, he returned to South Africa. At the Marist Brothers study house in Pietermaritzburg, he obtained a Bachelor's degree and later secured an Honours degree in history.

He was a great reader, having an on-going passion for history as well as the scriptures. Over the years, he used his spare time to work on his impressive stamp collection and to learn both German and French.

A man of faith and prayer, his manner of speaking and writing revealed a strong sense of belonging to his Marist family. With his gentle manner he had a positive influence on many young people as teacher, boarder master, sports coach, librarian and religious educator in various South African Marist schools. Those who lived with him will testify to his sense of gratefulness: the words "*thank you*" came unflinching to his lips for even the smallest of services rendered to him.

For over 20 years, he worked on the Marist archives, leaving for posterity a set of very fine biographies of virtually every Brother appointed to South Africa since 1867. During his final years at St Henry's Marist College in Durban, He undertook to share his time with the staff at the school. That initially involved joining them for morning tea, but quickly evolved into a far more significant time where he led a number of the staff in prayer and scripture study. From time to time, he would be invited to attend religion classes for the younger ones, gleefully acting the part of an apostle or other important figure to bring home the lesson to be learned. His presence among the school community was much appreciated, and a number of deeper friendships developed in time.



When informed of his serious condition, he asked his confreres for prayer and expressed his gratitude for the gift of life, indicating that he wished no extraordinary forms of treatment. At the farewell Mass for Br Martin at St Henry's, the chaplain, Father Chris Lockyer OMI, gave him a special blessing, saying "I do not know what the future holds for you, but I know who holds your future."

Happy birthday to ...

02/02/1984 Majala Mphatso

06/02/1986 Moffat Mbamera

07/02/1987 Peter Justen

09/02/1979 Euclides Nangolo

15/02/1970 Frank Mwambucha

16/02/1974 Felizardo Maceia

18/02/1987 Ignatius Matemba

19/02/1982 Richard Chidothi

21/02/1935 Angel Mansoa

22/02/1932 Claude Audy



Provincial's Calendar

1 Feb – 3 Feb Lilongwe

4 Feb – 7 Feb Zomba

8 Feb Travel to Nairobi

9 Feb – 10 Feb Provincials meeting at MIC

11 Feb – 12 Feb Workshop

13 Feb – 15 Feb AGM of Superiors of Africa

17 Feb – 24 Feb See our brothers at MIC

25 Feb Travel to Lilongwe

Marist Superiors and School Management Teams meet in Zimbabwe 10 to 12 December

Eight Brothers and eight laypersons assembled at Marist Nyanga in the shadow of Mount Mouz for the meeting. It's been quite a number of years since the previous such encounter for the purpose of networking and updating as well as shared planning among the three institutions i.e. Marist Kutama, Dete



Marist Schools & Superiors Meeting Nyanga 2012

and Nyanga.

On the first day, the Chair, Bro Fortune Chakasara, welcomed everyone and congratulated the heads and administration of the different institutions for the development and successes that have been

celebrated for the Marist schools in the nation. With regard to the word "successes" he stressed the need to move "**from success to significance**". "What identifies us as Marist Schools? How Marist are our schools? With these stimulating questions the floor was opened for comment

Bro Aaron Mazhambe presented *A report on the Survey of various Catholic Schools in Zimbabwe* which he took part in as an initiative of Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference) in 2012. The informative report sampling Catholic schools in the eight dioceses of Zimbabwe, revealed problems ranging from poor management and administration to indiscipline of teachers and students leading to poor performance.

Then Bro Mazhambe elucidated what a Catholic School should be, making use of a line from the Vatican II document on education: "Catholic schools should act as a leaven of the community". How can this be done? Only through a Catholic ethos in our schools, and for us a school run on Marist

educational principles. Groups were asked to discuss how these principles are actually implemented. The feedbacks were impressive and common grounds of improvement were noted.

On the second day, Bro Emmanuel Mwanalirenji presented the essence of Marist pedagogy. With a psychological perspective he underlined the complexity of teaching the modern generation. Who are our clients? Why do Marist schools exist in this so called technological age? As we deal with adolescents, our leadership should be distinct and firm yet empathetic and congruent with Marist principles. The pupils are active agents in their education and as such they take the central position. Success should not so much be judged in terms of results but rather we have loved them all equally and led them to discover their holistic potential. We need to seek negative evidence - evidence that shows we are *not* succeeding. The administration and staff should be on their toes to ensure that students are really being cared for.



Later, heads presented their schools: population statistics including percentage of Catholics; religious programs, activities; solidarity projects, discipline, projects and maintenance, finances, academic results and major challenges. These sessions were both informative and inspiring. Marist schools are benefitting students, staff and surrounding communities. The pass rates are outstanding and each school is ranked high in its region and also nationally. However, challenged Br Fortune, "It's time to move from success to significance." Though all the schools are full,

in every case the percentage of Catholics (both students and staff) is declining. A significant Catholic presence among students and staff fosters our mission: to make Jesus known and loved!

Income-generating projects were dealt with, those at Marist Kutama, are flourishing: poultry, cattle ranching, gardening, green house farming, piggery, uniform tailoring and tuck-shop. Administrations need to reflect and act on developing self-reliance.

All the schools' finances are audited twice a year, leading to successful budgeting and transparent accounting. The fees charged in the three schools are fair and the payment terms and conditions friendly to the needy are in place.

The religious programs in the three schools have a number of common elements: the celebration of the Holy Mass; catechism programs; common prayers; and religious clubs led by Brothers and dedicated lay people. These clubs are noted for their solidarity projects with the surrounding poor communities.

The most pressing problem is student indiscipline, including graffiti, going out of bounds, bullying, vandalism and clandestine use of digital devices. Solutions were discussed: e.g. having dedicated boarding masters in the hostels, increased supervision during study sessions, stress on vigilance and consistent presence of staff, and developing counselling in the schools.

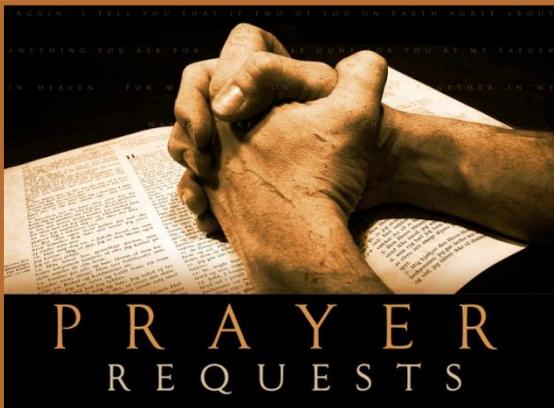
The final session included evaluation and suggestions for successive meetings. Sincere thanks and praise were given to the Brothers' initiative in arranging the meeting. Marist Nyanga was duly thanked as the host centre: it will be Kutama's turn next year.

“The Marist vision for education is very rich” expressed some of the lay participants. “There is need to help other schools participate in such an inspiration and vision.”

After Brother Fortune’s closing remarks laying an emphasis on solidarity projects, delegates were treated to a game drive and barbeque in the Nyanga National Park. Champagnat’s dream lives on.



(Br. Tererai. Gijima FMS. Abridged – Ed.)



- **Br Martin Whiteford, d. 10 January 2013**
- **Those suffering in conflicts in Mali, Nigeria, eastern Congo, Syria, Egypt, etc.,**
- **The victims of the tragic fire in Santa Maria, Brazil. A lady Marist educator is numbered among the dead, as well as relatives and friends of our Marist family there.**
- **Our Brothers with health issues: Vincent Chunga, Paul Nkhoma....**

“The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, *The children are now working as if I did not exist.*” – Maria Montessori



SPECIAL PATRONS OF THE BROTHERHOOD

Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice (1762 – 1844)

A Roman Catholic missionary and educationalist, Edmund Rice was the founder of two orders of religious brothers: the Congregation of Christian Brothers (CFC) and the Presentation Brothers. Rice was born in Ireland at a time when Catholics faced oppression under Penal Laws enforced by the



British authorities. He forged a successful career in business and, after a tragic accident which killed his wife and left his daughter disabled, devoted his life to the education and service of the poor. Christian Brothers schools around the world continue to follow the system of education and traditions established by Blessed Edmund. In recent decades, they have broadened their ministries to bring Jesus' good news to those on the margins through education and care of youth in the areas of justice, welfare and spirituality. Edmund Rice was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1996. His Feast Day is on 5 May.

St Paul's, Marist Brothers, Mulungushi-Kabwe, Zambia – Satellite View



EDITOR

- Please **display a hard copy of the Newsletter** for others to read.
- **Thank you to this months' contributors:** Daniel Jariosse, Joseph, Tererai Gijima, and Luiz da Rosa via Marist News, and of course, Br Joe!
- **Your reports on recent events are welcome.** Please don't make them too long. About **one page of text (400 to 600 words)** plus two or three photos would be ideal.
- Thanks again to **Euclides Nangolo** for his help with the Portuguese edition.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

“The rattlesnake”



Long ago, Native American youths would go away in solitude on what was called a “vision quest,” to prepare for manhood. One such youth hiked into a beautiful valley green with trees, bright with spring flowers. There he fasted and prayed. But on the third day, as he looked up at the surrounding mountains he

noticed one tall rugged peak, capped with dazzling snow.

“I will test myself against that mountain,” he thought, He put on his buckskin shirt, threw his blanket over his shoulders, and set off to climb the peak. When he reached the summit, he gazed out from the rim of the world. He could see forever, and his heart swelled with pride.

Then he heard a rustle in the leaves at his feet, and looking down, he saw a rattlesnake.

“I’m about to die,” croaked the snake. “It’s too cold for me up here and I’m freezing. There’s no food; I’m starving. Put me under your shirt where I’ll be warm and take me down to the valley.”

“No,” said the youth, “I am forewarned. I know your kind. You are a rattlesnake. If I pick you up, you’ll bite and your bite will kill me.”

“Not so,” whispered the snake. “I will treat you differently. If you do this for me, you will be special to me and I will not harm you.”

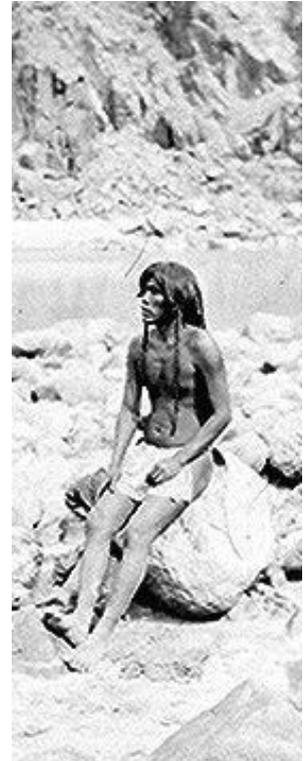


The youth resisted a while, but this was a very persuasive snake with beautiful markings. At last the youth tucked the snake under his shirt and carried it down to the valley. There he placed it gently on the grass – when, suddenly, the snake coiled, rattled and, biting the youth on the leg.

“But you promised,” cried the youth.

“Hah! You knew what I was when you picked me up.” said the snake as it slithered away.

(I use this when dealing with the dangers of drugs and alcohol with young people. alcohol.)



Joe