June 25, 2017

News and Announcements

Dear Brothers,

Sri Lanka

A residential seminar organized by Lay Marists

A residential seminar was organized by Marist Laity, Negombo, for the 30 School Principals of North and South of Sri Lanka on “Transformational Leadership.”

Venue : Thulana Research Centre, Kalaniya, Sri Lanka
Dates : April 29, 30, May 1
Facilitator : Dr. Sunil Wijesiriwardena
Resource Persons : Fr. Aloy Peiris SJ
Ven. Galkande Dammananda

After the Seminar, Br. Sunanda met the Principals from the South at their own schools for two weeks and followed up the practical ways of being “A Transformational Leader” in their own places.

A Three Day Workshop on 'Dialogue for Social Healing' was organized by the Walpola Rahula Institute & Sarvodaya Movement, held at Sarvodaya Higher Training Center, Bandaragama on June 16, 17 & 18. Three members from the Marist Lay Group, Negombo, participated in it.

Bro. Sunanda Alwis

Welcome our twelve new Novices

It was with much joy that we have finally been able to welcome our twelve new Novices! There were many problems with visas this year, hence they arrived over a period of five weeks, rather on the date we anticipated. In any case, we held a special welcoming party on Sunday 11th June, and have now just completed our two week Orientation Program, which finished with a three day Retreat and our official Induction Ceremony to begin the Novitiate Year, held
They are a fine group of young men, ranging in age from 21 to 30 years of age, and they possess a variety of practical and academic skills. For example, among our group we have a trained chef, carpenter, and electrician! Please pray for our Novices as they continue their formation journey.

Bro. Rod Thomson

Recollection in Sri Lanka

Our recollection began on May 19th evening at Bolawalana retreat house it ended on May 21st after lunch. It was conducted by Bro. Tony Leon. In this retreat the Brothers, lay partners and Novices were present.

Bro. Tony started with the annunciation event. During his talks he focused on our faithful living of community life.

Bro. Sandalal Alwis

The College feast of Maris Stella, Negombo

The formal celebration of the College Feast was held on Tuesday the 6th June 2017 at the Gymnasium, with the participation of Bro. Mervyn Perera, the Provincial, Bro. Chinthana Nonis, the Principal, Students and Teachers.

The Holy Mass was celebrated under the patronage of Fr. Anthony Cyril.

Taking into consideration the adverse weather conditions that prevailed in most parts of the country during the period scheduled for the feast, the administration of the College decided to withhold formal celebrations, and the estimated expenditures of the feast were donated for the flood relief areas.

Maris Stella College Thibirigaskatuwa

The college feast of Maris Stella College Thibirigaskatuwa was held on 6th June2017. This was well organized by our prefect association. The Holy Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Jude Samantha. The Principal of Maris Stella College Thibirigaskatuwa, Bro. Roshan Silva, and all staff members, were gathered for this special occasion. After the end of holy Mass all staff members and students in all the classes got together to celebrate their class parties, followed by an enthusiastic DJ ceremony.
Arrivals

Brothers Remigius and Sunil arrived in Sri Lanka for their summer holidays. We wish them a relaxed and fruitful time with their families and friends.

Bro. Shanthi Liyanage will return to our midst here in Sri Lanka on the 1st of July 2017 after completing his diploma from the Gregorian Pontifical University in Rome. Congratulations! and welcome back home.

Pakistan

Champagnat Day June 06, 2017 @ SCS

On 6th June, the feast of St. Marcellin Champagnat was celebrated at Sargodha Catholic High School with lots of love and joy. All the Brothers, Teaching and auxiliary staff, and Lay Marists were present to share the joy. The celebration began with the Holy Mass organized by the liturgy committee and it was presided over by Rev Fr. Mukhtar Alam.

The Eucharistic celebration was a great blessing for all the Marists present there, and was followed by a wonderful entertainment program, which was the result of hard work done by the social committee. The whole staff was divided into four groups and each group presented items based on the Marist Charism and Spirituality. All the teachers participated and presented their items very skillfully. Marists of Champagnat prepared the Skit based on the “Relevance of the Marist Charism Today”.

Beautiful bouquets and gifts were given to all Marist Brothers (Bros. Anthony, Farancis, Remigius and Rohail) as a token of love for their life, mission and untiring efforts at SCS. The evening came to its close with a delicious dinner shared by the Marist Family at SCS. Thanks to the liturgy and social committees and to all the other staff for making this evening memorable and successful.
Celebration of St. Marcellin’s Birthday

On 7th May, Marists of Champagnat celebrated the Birthday and Baptism of St. Marcellin Champagnat with great love and reverence. The purpose of coming together was to thank God for the life, vocation and services of our dear founder and to interiorize the Marist Charism.

The opening prayer was prepared by Bro. Anthony. The early life of Fr. Champagnat was showed on power point and Bro. Farancis asked the group related questions in order to renew our knowledge about the person of Champagnat.

Finally, we marked the Birthday of our dear founder by cutting the cake and sharing high tea.

India

Appointments

Provincial Delegate in India

The Provincial Council meeting held at Bandarawela, Sri Lanka on 7th to 10th June, appointed Brother Chinnappan Devadoss to act on my behalf as a Provincial delegate in India with immediate effect. The leadership committee appointed in May will continue to function as a support for Bro. Chinnappan.

Community Leader – Trichy

While thanking Brother Maria Anthony Jeyaraj for the services he rendered as the superior at the Trichy community for the past three years, Provincial Council appointed Brother Jeyaraj to be the community animator for another three year period with immediate effect.

‘Climbing NEW Heights’

‘Climbing NEW Heights’ was the theme of the Rainbow Summer Camp 2017 this year. The five day camp became a milestone for our children as we walked side by side, sharing our stories, caring for and playing with one another, learning and growing together as one family into a new awareness of
positive thinking, human and spiritual values and our rights as human persons.

Each day was dedicated for various topics and was facilitated by well experienced resource people who felt at home with our children and contributed generously towards the successful encounters among the children from both Operation Rainbow and La Valla Evening Study Centres.

About 90 children actively participated in the 5-day camp and benefited a lot. Each day began with a prayer and was followed by presentations and various activities. In the afternoons children enjoyed playing various games and sports. Lunch was prepared by our Rainbow people daily and was served for all the participants.

One day tour was organised to Thiruvannamalai Temple (Temple of Siva, a Hindu god), Chenji Kottai (Chenji Fort was built in the 9th Century and was called as ‘Troy of the East’ by the British), Villianoor Gratia Plena Church (Pilgrimage place of the Christians) and Pondicherry Beach. About 75 families, both parents and children, boarded two buses and started their journey from Trichy around 11:30pm, and after having spent a day visiting the above places, returned to Trichy by midnight next day.

In April we had the privilege of honouring Rev. Br. Ray Arthur from Sydney, Australia who was a Visitor to India Sector when the Marist Brothers, India Sector was part of the Provinces of Sydney and Melbourne, Australia. After 13 years he visited us on his way to Sri Lanka.

On 3rd June we organised a programme to distribute some educational aids to children from the La Valla Tuition Centre and to Marcellin Club members. During the programme our Rainbow Children joined with them and entertained the entire group with beautiful dance and singing. What fun it was!

As the new academic year has just begun we are looking forward to having many more activities and programmes. We now sincerely thank Australia Marist Solidarity (AMS) for living and sharing your solidarity with us and for transforming the lives of our children with new hope and dreams for better future.

We highly value your partnership with us and are committed to walk with you an extra mile each day, climbing NEW heights!

The La Valla Project...

With immense joy and gratitude, we submit the interim report on ‘La Valla Evening Study Centre’ project, established for the educational development of rural children by Marcellin Trust, in partnership with SCIAF for the year 2017. This report is for the period of 6 months from January to June 2017.

The aim of the project is to facilitate the learning of children in a peaceful and safe environment and improve their academic performance and develop
positive attitudes to life.

Currently there are now 12 centres in Trichy and Karur districts which serve about 335 students after school. The centre is open from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. daily except Sunday. Each centre is equipped with a qualified staff member to assist the children in their studies, and is provided with necessary teaching materials. The students have been provided with study materials such as school bags, notebooks and stationery as education support by the project.

Br. Johnson and Br. Saul supervise and co-ordinate the activities in these centres. A WhatsApp group namely ‘La Valla Companions’ has been created for communication purpose between the staff.

The daily attendance shows that the students are very enthusiastic about the project and have become serious about their studies. They receive all the necessary help towards their studies and their free time after school is meaningfully spent. The parents are very happy with their children’s performance in the recently held final exams and other extracurricular activities in the centres.

Among many activities in the project, an educational trip to Anna Science Centre-Planetarium, Trichy International Airport and Mukkombu Park in the month of May became an incredible and entertaining experience.

Also, participating in the 5-day ‘Summer Camp 2017’ from 17th to 21st May (organised by Operation Rainbow in Trichy) helped the children to grow in their interpersonal relationships, by interacting with other children from different parts of the district and by learning to appreciate the gift of one another.

Monthly meetings are regularly held for the staff to evaluate the progress and challenges in achieving the objectives of the project. Such encounters help the staff to be more creative and productive in their work.

It is sad to say that we were not able to open new centres in Dindigul district this year due to unavailability of staff and proper shelter. However we continue to support the students through our school where they have the opportunity to do their homework after school hours.

Two new places were identified, one in the Sri Lankan Refugee Camp in the outskirts of Trichy city and another in Worriyur, a slum area. The centres are currently run in these places.

The challenge is to gather the children from different centres in a common place for workshops and other activities as they come from different and faraway places and
Finally, the approved fund for the project was well received in December 2016 and is being effectively utilized for the project activities as per the agreement signed with SCIAF. We are very grateful to SCIAF for funding this project along with the Marist Brothers and Marcellin Trust.

Thank you once again for your solidarity and partnership with us in transforming and empowering the lives of rural and the marginalized children through these programs.

Reminders for Sri Lankan Sector:

**Annual Retreat, Sustainability meeting and Recollection 2017**

Dear Brothers please make arrangements to have the following days free for the Province Retreat, Sustainability meeting and Recollection. The retreat will be animated by Br. Teofilo Minga.

- **Workshop on joint Formation of Lay and Brothers:** August 6th to 9th in Kandy, Sri Lanka.
- **Retreat:** 13th to 19th of August 2017 at Monte Fano, Ampitiya, Kandy, Sri Lanka.
- **Sustainability meeting:** 21st to 25th August 2017 at Monte Fano, Ampitiya, Kandy, Sri Lanka.
- **Recollection:** 10th to 12th November 2017 at Serene Pastures Retreat house, Bolawalana, Negombo

Diploma from the Gregorian Pontifical University in Rome.

The Center of the Protection of Minors of the Gregorian Pontifical University in Rome awarded a Diploma for the participants who successfully completed their course of studies on the 14th of June 2017. Brother Shanthi Liyanage from the Province of South Asia, along with 24 other students coming from 19 countries received the Diploma issued by the Gregorian University. Bro. Shanthi wrote his Final Paper on “Guidelines for the protection of children from sexual abuse in Marist Institutions in South Asia.”

Bro. Shanthi in his paper remarks that “Child sexual abuse is a global phenomenon with serious and life-long outcomes. The Marist educators in South Asia must make a serious commitment to ensure the safety and well-being of children who come under their care. The guidelines presented in the paper encourage some basic level of performance required for Marist Institutions to establish a safe
environment for children and minimize the risk of being victimized by child sexual abuse and exploitation.”

We congratulate Bro. Shanthi for completing the course successfully. We are also very grateful to Bro. Superior General and his Council for sponsoring him to be an advocate for creating a safe environment for children in Asia.

**BIRTHDAYS IN JUNE AND JULY: “Happy Birthday!”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16th Sunil Liyanage (92) 33397777340</td>
<td>11th, Paulraj Anthonysamy (91) 9597143525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th Shanthi Liyanage (94) 777347702</td>
<td>15th, Gerard Peiris (94) 724533659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th Savarimuthu (91) 9994951301</td>
<td>18th, Johnson Gnanasekara (91) 9994559937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th Mervyn Perera (94) 718404443</td>
<td>27th, Godfrey Perera (94) 723649691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th Sudarshana Mohotti (94) 718064440</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd Jiji Dhasan (<a href="mailto:jijidhasan@gmail.com">jijidhasan@gmail.com</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24th Eric Perera (94) 723383136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRAYER REQUESTED FOR**

- Late Brother Victor Fernando
- Our Senior Brothers.

Blessings and Best wishes,

Brother Mervyn Perera,  
(Provincial)