

2nd

NEWSLETTER



Marist International Tudella Novitiate



Two day workshop on our intercultural living

Br. Réal Sauvageau

“Intercultural living is the future of international religious life. If not, Religious Orders will not survive. This requires a revolution in Religious Life: it’s both NEW and OBLIGATORY”.

(Father Anthony Gittins).

“We believe that the Spirit is calling us to embrace a new way of sharing life in community: INTERNATIONALLY, INTERCULTURALLY, with lay and brothers, with men and women, single and married, intergenerationally. Our relationships are core to our mission and central to a new beginning for Marists”.

With these convictions strongly within us, we have lived these two days of reflection and sharing on intercultural issues. The community of the Novitiate of Tudella is very international. Coming from Vietnam, China, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Australia and Canada, we already experience the challenges to live community well, and to be a school and house of communion.

Nevertheless, we don’t stop sharing our dreams on this issue, trying to clarify day after day our relationships, forgiving each other when it is necessary, seeing ourselves with new eyes each morning and always looking for new ways to make our living more real and more concrete.



Br Peter’s trip to Australia

In January/February Br. Peter returned to Melbourne for some doctors’ appointments and to catch up with family and friends. He received the all clear regarding his eyes and was able to refill his prescriptions for his chronic cough and sundry other complaints.

As well as catching up with family and confreres he was able to have two meals with the postulants from Timor Leste who are studying English in Melbourne.

For ten days he visited Sydney for a private retreat at Cronulla and caught up with the Provincial, Br Peter Carrol.



Pictured is Br Peter with the postulants from Timor Leste who we hope will join Tudella Novitiate

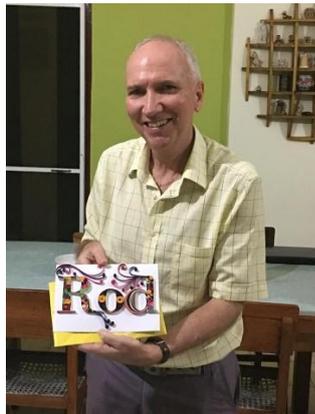
Chapter Preparation Meetings

Br. Rod Thomson

Our community has participated in two meetings so far, to help prepare for the 22nd General Chapter. The first was here in Tudella on January 20, and the second at Maris Stella in Negombo on February 17. The third will be at St Joseph's in Negegoda on March 24.

The process so far has been around "creating new conversations in contemplative dialogue" between Lay Marists and Brothers, exploring the meaning of living the La Valla experience for us today, and becoming more aware of the world around us. We believe that it is through the concrete details of our shared experience that the Spirit is speaking to us.

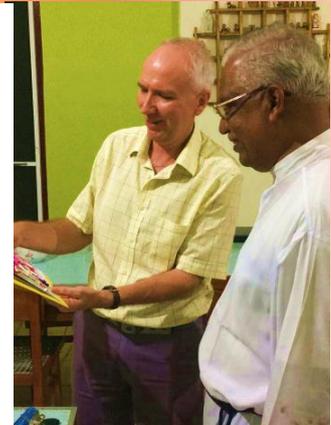
Around twenty-five people attended both meetings. We listened to some input, shared in small groups, and prayed together with our outcomes. Through this process we are becoming aware of what is going on in the world, and are beginning to imagine new ways to reach out and encounter those new realities experienced by the 'Montagnes' of today, that we Marists might be able to better respond, both in our prayer and ministries together.



Br Rod's Birthday

Br. Hung

On January 31 we joyfully celebrated Br. Rod's birthday. The celebration was profoundly happy and richly blessed with the presence of our brothers from the Hermitage Community and Bro. Mervyn, Provincial of the South Asia Province. A big thanks to Br Tri for the loving and delightful card.



Desert Day

Br. Thuong

On 10th of February, we had our desert day at the Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka, with some reflection materials on inner silence organized by Br. Rod. It was a wonderful day, although, being a Poya Day, it was a little too crowded with pilgrims and holiday makers in the afternoon.

The Basilica is half an hour south of our Novitiate, and located in the middle of a large area of trees and garden, and is home to the venerated statue of Our Lady of Lanka.

Celebration on Independent day of Sri Lanka

Br. Sales Fernando

Sri Lanka celebrated its 69th Independence day on the 4th February. Our novitiate community also celebrated the event on the same day.

In the evening all the Brothers and novices of the novitiate community and the aspirants of Hermitage community got together for the evening prayer based on Independence. After the prayer service all of us moved to the open area upstairs in the novitiate building for the rest of the celebration.

Brothers Nicholas, Sales and Pradeep dressed in the customary Sinhala and Tamil way. Brother Sales and Pradeep presented the history of Sri Lanka and how their mother land became a colony of Portuguese, Dutch and British, and how the country became Independent non-violently.

Brother Nicholas presented some songs in Sinhala and Tamil. All the Brothers enjoyed Sri Lanka traditional dances followed by fellowship and dinner of Sri Lankan dishes prepared by our cook Stella and her family.



Experience of second year novices retreat

Br. Sinh



On March 1st 2017 we six second year novices headed to the Jesuit Retreat House in Kandy, about three hours' drive from our novitiate, for our eight day Profession Retreat. Our director was Father Baylon, a local Jesuit Father. Everyone was excited for the retreat except for some, because this was the first experience of an eight day retreat ... and one of those was me! During the retreat very little input was given. We only met Father for input after supper for fifteen minutes and had an interview with him for half an hour every day, but the outcome was very much visible in everyone's face. For me, surprisingly, this was the most significant retreat I have ever made. Aside from preparing myself for first profession, this was an opportunity for me to reaffirm and strengthen my faith, my vocation and my relationship with Jesus. At first I had some difficulty getting into the retreat, but after Father made some changes I was able to really enter into the spirit of the retreat on the third day. I was advised to read the gospel of Luke only, and I was so touched that every single word written in the Gospel would make my tears roll down from my eyes. For the rest of the retreat I spent time in front of the Blessed Sacrament in deep meditation, and I couldn't ever have imagined how blessed I am knowing that God loves me so much.

Mariology Seminar

Br. Fereole

A three day seminar on Mariology was held at the novitiate on February, 13th, 14th and 17th, taught by Br. Devasiri. The seminar was about Mary in the scriptures. Bro Deva's presentation was interesting and outstanding which built up our knowledge on Mary, the Mother of Jesus. After the seminar, we were thrilled and able to understand how the four gospels portrayed Mary, and why we have recourse to her.



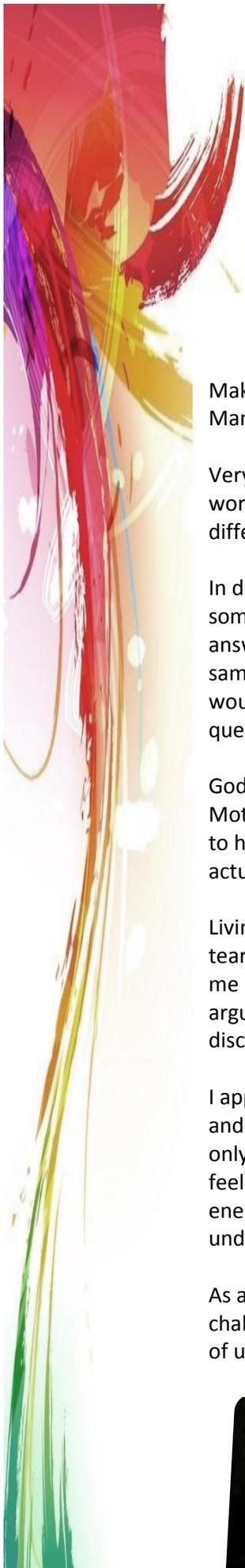
Celebration of the Bicentenary of the Institute with Maris Stella College

Br. Nicholas Fernando

On 6th March the students of two sections of Maris Stella College Negombo and Thimbirigaskatuwa along with the staff gathered together in the school quadrangle in Negombo to celebrate the bicentenary of the institute. Our novitiate community, too, was invited to take part in this celebration. The festive mass was organized with appropriate liturgy to suit this celebration. Before ending the mass there was a simple ceremony to present each class with a statue of Fr. Champagnat and 4 of our formators were invited to present these statues to monitors of each class. At the end of the mass the Jubilee year proclamation was done by Bros. Roshan Silva and Chinthana Nonis the principals of both sections of Maris Stella College.

After holy Mass our community animated a one hour programme for the students of Thimbirigaskatuwa section. We gave them a fair idea of Fr. Champagnat and our Institute. A special feature of this programme was the vivid display of our internationality. We took turns in presenting briefly the Marist life of our home countries: namely Bangladesh, China, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Canada and Australia.





Tears

Br. Hung

Making Jesus Christ known and loved in our Marist way sometimes brings me to tears. Many times there have been happy tears, but also there have been some sad tears.

Very few young men and women choose their vocation to move to the other side of the world to enter religious life. And yet, I am one of those who strive and want to make a difference, and I see the best way for me to do this is by becoming a Marist brother.

In doing so I made a choice, took a chance and changed my way of life. Certainly, sometimes it hasn't been easy. But after the tough times, I go on with life. And my answering 'yes' to God's call to be a religious brother has been strengthened. But at the same time, my 'yes' has led me to experience a certain amount of pain and loss. Often I would sit in a solitary place and think about my vocational journey, and that brings up the question: Why? Why Marist Brothers? Why??? This brings me to tears.

God never abandons his children. He has led me into the mysterious life of Mary, our Good Mother. Here I have found my joy and consolation. The happy tears when she paid a visit to her cousin Elizabeth, as well as the painful tears when she gave birth to Jesus, are the actual life I am experiencing in an intercultural and international community.

Living in the novitiate, usually others see the tears well up in my eyes. Recently, crying tears of joy happened when I listened to an emotional sharing of a brother, as he inspired me by his story. Crying tears of frustration has also occurred when I have seen conflicts or arguments happening among the brothers. All these emotional tears challenge me a lot in discerning my vocation and in living in a fraternal brotherhood.

I appreciate the times I can sit in a quiet place and reflect on how I can overcome my fears and offer myself for others, particularly when those around me are struggling. There is only so much I can do, and perhaps the best I can do is to rely on God alone. With great feeling, marvelling at all that God has done, I hear myself say 'take a risk'. Taking risks energizes me to live with my brothers in community, even though it is not always easy and understood.

As a young man, I believe that being a religious is an experience of 'tears', tears of challenge and tears of joy. Beyond all else, these very human tears generate in me, and all of us, love and compassion. Let our tears, now and in the future, shower us with blessings!



Jaffna Trip, March 2 to 4

Br. Joseph Baouxuan

Brothers Nicholas, Rod and the first year novices had a three-day exhilarating trip to the northern part of Sri Lanka— to Jaffna.

We started the trip in the early morning, and about lunch time we arrived at one of the most famous sanctuaries of our Lady in Sri Lanka—Madhu Sanctuary. Pope Francis paid a visit to this sanctuary in 2014 and delivered a wonderful homily about reconciliation between Tamil and Sinhalese people. We had lunch in the restaurant beside the sanctuary, then continued our trip. About 4:30 in the afternoon we arrived at the community in Jaffna and the Brothers there gave us a warm-welcome.

The second day, along with our guide Br. Francis, we proceeded to one of the islands in order to visit the famous shrines of Buddhism and Hinduism. We really enjoyed our time there, due to the fact that these shrines were new for us. We also visited a huge Hindu temple in Jaffna after lunch. It was a tiring day but we were very happy.

The third day, on the way back, we first went to a village where Br. Nick used to have his ministry, before taking his current position as Novice Master. After that, we visited another big and picturesque Buddhist Shrine, where we also saw a tree grown from a sapling of the original tree under which the Buddha received his enlightenment. We really enjoyed our time there.

We give thanks to God for this wonderful opportunity to travel in this beautiful country.

