

NEWSLETTER

Novitiate newsletter. August to November 2017

Classes Continue

Our timetable in the mornings consisted of five subjects for First Years (including the Founder's Life, Constitutions, English, Old Testament, and Gospels / Christology), and three for Second Years (including Religious Life, Constitutions, and study / reflection time), as well as weekly Choir Practice and Music lessons for all.



First Years hard at work in Br Rod's scripture class.

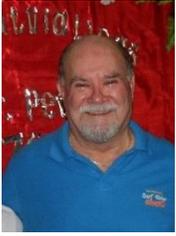


Br Nicholas' Conference class with First Years



Galle trip

On September 18th 2017 we took a trip to Galle, leaving at 6.30 in the morning. This trip was a very nice experience, especially for us first year novices to know about some places around Sri Lanka. So we enjoyed the turtle hatchery and a boat trip around the lagoons. This experience was the first time for me; imagine 17 people getting on to the boat and we travelled through the waterways very nicely. Our lunch was a nice meal in a Chinese restaurant, and we enjoyed the drinks and beer. For me the most interesting thing about the beautiful place that is Galle Fort is the ancient history of the Sinhala army fighting with the Dutch and a lot of people died in that place, so this story is very interesting. In Galle also we met a lot of tourists from other countries. So it was a very interesting trip.
By Br Jacinto Anacleto Fuli Falo



70th Br. Peter



60th Br. Sales



44th Br. Pradeep



27th Br. Hoang Anh



22th Br. Sasmika

Birthday Celebrations

The month of October has been a significant month for our Novitiate community, for we have celebrated four Brothers' Birthdays - Br. Peter his 70th Birthday, Br. Sales his 60th, Br. Hoang Anh his 29th and Br. Sasmika his 22nd. The pictures follow the age order.

Energy used Energy left

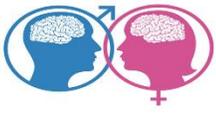
Each party was different and all were celebrated joyfully and meaningfully. Our Morning Prayer and Mass celebrated each Brother with a sense of thanksgiving for the gift of life. Afterwards, we sing Happy Birthday in the dining room, with each of us giving him a birthday embrace, a real act of brotherhood, love and friendship.

However, our celebrations continue, with a nice PowerPoint for Evening Prayer, and the opportunity for us to share and speak of the person's goodness, uniqueness, and importance in the community. Sometimes it becomes like sharing their life story. After the prayer there are soft drinks for all and a wonderful PowerPoint video presentation of the Brother's life. Then a special dinner is served, after which the Brother blows out the candles and cuts the cake. Thanks to all those who contribute to our parties, particularly those who help decorate our dining room for each occasion. We really enjoy our parties, a great opportunity to show each Brother our love and respect through prayer and song.

A joyful Birthday, by Br Sasmika

Hello, I am Sasmika Fernando from Tudella Novitiate. I celebrated my 22nd birthday with my community members on 2nd of October. This is the second time I celebrated my birthday with this community, and for this I was extremely happy. The sad moment was I knew that I was one year older! Anyway, I would like to give thanks to all the novices and brothers for all the decorations, birthday cake, special food, prayers for me, and the video presentation ... all the things that helped me to celebrate my birthday here. Finally I pray for all the novices and brothers and I invite you to all pray for our community and our vocations.





Human Sexuality Seminar (Br Benja)

It was a wonderful moment for us to know more about our human sexual feelings in our Seminar in August, conducted by Br Michael de Waas. Besides the Marist Brothers, there were present four Holy Family Sisters' novices with us. Br Michael helped us to understand that sexuality is not a negative thing. But it is essential to express our feelings with our relationships with each other. Finally, the seminar helped us a lot to know more about ourselves fully and sexually as a human being.



Yoga Course (Br Rubel)

Over a weekend, on the 23rd and 24th of September, we had an opportunity to join a Yoga session at the Claretian Seminary, Negombo. Two second year Novices, Thưởng and myself, took up the opportunity. The session was conducted by Mr. Jegan, a professional yogi, from Jaffna. The term 'yoga' comes from the Sanskrit 'Yug' which means to join, to yoke together, to unify, and to unite as one. So yoga means union. The seminar was significant to me for two reasons; first, I was introduced to a new life style and contemplation method. And I enjoyed very much the company of other congregations' religious members.



Some happy moments in the novitiate while Br Rod's brother and sister-in-law were visiting us and having a family tour in Sri Lanka.



Retreat for 2nd Years, to Evaluation our Apostolic Community Experience (Br Rubel)



After three months community experience, the second year novices had a three day Retreat at Bolawalana, Negombo. The retreat was run by Br Nick and Br Rod. We started with a balancing game which was led by Br Rod. The game taught us that “Everything has to have balance in life”. In addition, we had a deeper group sharing about our ministry, where we talked and shared openly about our difficulties, joys, prayer, community life etc. As well, we had our personal accompaniment with Br Nick and Br Rod, where they helped us to express more deeply some of our joys and struggles with the whole experience. Furthermore, we prepared ourselves for the coming months, *forgetting our mistakes, remembering our good qualities, and updating our Personal Life Plan (PLP)*. In conclusion, *one of the things we realised was that our coming Marist life will not be like Novitiate, with some communities being supportive and joyful places, but others will be struggling to live community life well.*



NOVITIATE THREE DAY RETREAT

Last week, on 23rd to 26th October we had a three day retreat near the National Basilica. I am really happy about those days as they helped me a lot and opened my thinking to another way of living in community. In particular, the session with Father Patrick helped us to know ourselves first, before we can really know and love another or God. Another way of saying this, is that before we want to help others we should improve ourselves to know who we are. Now I know, that as a human being we have so many problems in our inner-selves, and it is important that I should know how to find where the root problem is, and after that, try to treat it or to deal with it in my journey. I give thanks to the Brothers who ran the retreat for us and helped us go deeper into ourselves. I also liked the prayer on the final night, when we took the time to bless each other, to say ‘thank you’ or ‘sorry’ to those we wanted to reach out to. Hopefully we will have this kind of retreat again in the next program. It was a special experience.



On the Friday

Most Friday nights for recreation we have been having some different activities, apart from our usual card games. Some photos of some fun games run by Br Rod.



HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY



On September 1st



On September 16th



On October 1st



What a joy to celebrate Vietnamese Independence Day here in Tudella novitiate, together as an international community! The celebration was conducted by our Vietnamese Brothers, the first and second year novices together. It was a significant celebration because the Maris Stella Marist community also joined us.



On September 16th we, the International Novitiate Community here in Sri Lanka, celebrated the PNG Independence day with our two PNG Brothers, Calvin and Cyril. We started the celebration with an opening prayer and we proceeded with the PNG National anthem. Cyril led us with a slide presentation giving some background history and other information regarding Papua New Guinea. The decorations in the dining room were wonderful; the food preparation was also good, with everyone enjoying the taste of some local style PNG cooking. Finally, the celebration ended up with a cultural dance performed by Calvin. Thanks to the Brothers and the novices who contributed in any way, making our celebration successful.



Last month we celebrated the independence of China here in novitiate, where our second year Chinese novices shared their country's culture, food, and tradition through their expression and presence. It was a great privilege for us to know a little bit more about Chinese history. We enjoyed a lot with having different Chinese food (delicious!), drinks, and singing. We wished our Chinese brothers a prosperous and blessed future in their nation and vocation.



Christ King College:

Our Pastoral Experience is at Christ King College, with Br. Wang Peng, Br. Cyril, Br. Calvin, Br. Robert, Br. Jacinto and me. Six of us have just started this experience, visiting the classrooms for the first time today. Last Thursday afternoon, we met with our Novice Master Br. Nicholas, who organised another place for some further pastoral experience, with the Prithipura communities, who run homes for disabled people or people with mental problems, and also some abandoned children.

When we arrived there I was surprised, because I saw a lot of disabled people and some abandoned children, living together. For me it was the first time that I saw something like that.

It was a very strong experience for us and also touched our hearts. We're happy to be doing some of our pastoral experience there.



Eucharistic Mission by Br Thuong



Every Sunday, Baoxuan and I go to deliver Holy Communion to Mr. Tissaka, a paralyzed man. What can I say about this special man? He is full of faith and trust in God. He is accepting and hopeful. Why am I saying this? Let's take a look back at his life.

Five years ago, there was a young and strong man, who had a good job and a good family, with his wife and two sons. He was planning for his family a better life in a foreign country. Suddenly, there was a car-accident. It completely changed his life. He became paralyzed.

Without being discouraged, he is now living full of faith and acceptance. When I came to know him, I could not believe it. Where did he get the courage to face this situation? So I asked him what made him feel happy about his life. He said, "I feel happy about God's love and the love of all my family members and all my friends".

He is really a man of faith. Whenever I come to him, I find that it is a gift and a precious moment that God has given to me. It also makes me aware of myself and my vocation. More importantly, it enlightens my faith in God. Often I find myself praying for Mr. Tissaka, entrusting him into the care and protection of God.



Apostolic Works, by Binh

In the middle of October, all of the Novices started their apostolic work and the Brother Master gave us a chance to choose our placement. Having this choice was a very good chance for those of us who wanted to practice teaching in the school and develop our skills to become a good teacher in the future. So, my apostolic work this year is in Mary Immaculate School for girls, run by a group of Sisters. I was very happy going there, helping the children in the school. This is a first time for me to teach children in a school, and most of the children come from poor families. So, they are very shy, but they are interested to enjoy the class and all of them are studying English for the first time. Therefore, the first day of our apostolic work was very happy, and we took time to introduce ourselves to them, and they introduced themselves to us. Finally, I feel very happy to help the children, and it is a good occasion for me to know and understand the children more and more. So I thank you Lord for giving me a good occasion to practice becoming a good teacher in the future, and also to bring the love of Jesus closer to the children.

Some Brothers like playing with snakes! (by Luan)



On Saturday mornings our community has manual work. Our Dean decided for us to hoe in the banana garden area. During working time one of novices saw a snake. Then he called me, to come and see. Because I am excited by all kind of animals, I came and thought that it was a baby Python. So I held it on my hands.

However! The snake bit me through the gloves! I wondered, why does a Python have long teeth? So I opened his mouth to check and I recognized that it's not a Python. Some of novices suggested to me that I must go to the hospital for checking so I went. Thanks be to God, as it was a dangerous snake in Sri-Lanka. It was a viper snake!!! I stayed in hospital almost three days and two nights to check the venom.

Since I was born until now it's the first time for me to stay in hospital overnight. Thanks be to God for new experiences that I have seen in hospital. It's really deep in my heart. Thank you to all the brothers and novices for praying and taking care of me during the time I stayed in hospital. Finally, I humbly thank God for this happening and protection from the danger and I pray to God so that I can learn many things in my life and see my vocation more clearly.

Our farewell (A-Dios) to our brother Thanh

Br. Réal Sauvageau, 2.02.2017

For some personal reasons and after a serious discernment, our brother Thanh decided to continue his life's journey in a different way. We want to thank him for his significant and friendly presence among us during these last years. Thanh, you have really been a « good companion, breaking bread and sharing life », fully committed to create a strong sense of brotherhood among us. We wish you the best in all these new challenges that life will offer to you, sure that you will continue to live the Marist Charism and be a meaningful presence of Marcellin where you are, living the will of God and taking care of the most needy. You know there are many dwellings in our Charismatic Family and there is one always for you. You will be welcome, « around the same table ». At the end, I want to say to you my friend :



*May God bless and keep you always
May your wishes all come true
May you always do for others
And let others do for you
May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.*

(Bob Dylan)



Next month's program:

- Prayer for All Souls Day
- Seminar on Non-Violent Communication
- Meeting of the Novitiate Council
- Christmas carol singing in different religious houses
- Break for Christmas celebrations
- New Year Celebration
- The 2018 Semester begins

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