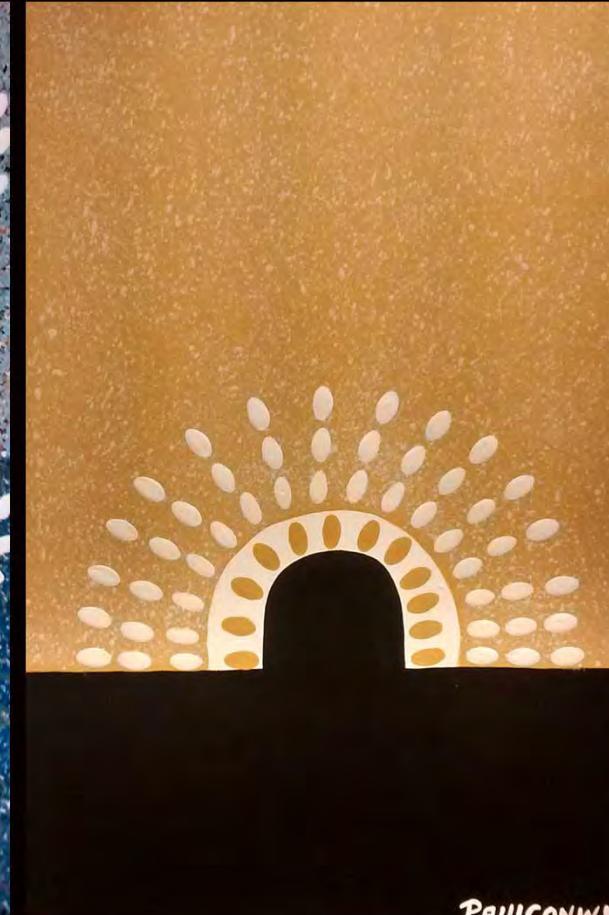


new lands

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN MARIST COMMUNITY

WEBPORTAL: australianmaristcommunity.com.au

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Happy
Australia
Day
wherever
you may be
celebrating.

artwork:
photos of paintings
by Paul Conwy
displayed at
Josephite Spirituality Centre
Baulkham Hills

PAUL CONWY

Special greetings for the New Year 2015.

2015 is a big year for us Marists in Australia. My hope and prayer is that it will also be a rich year personally for each of us, that the Spirit of Jesus will grace us beyond our dreams.

As communities and ministries get underway for another year, we are conscious of the opportunities that await us: a fresh start, some of us in new circumstances; deepened and new relationships; the bright faces of students and young adults; the hopes of struggling young people; the enthusiasm and competence of colleagues; the commitment and support that comes from belonging to a faith community. "How much good you can do, dear friends." (St Marcellin Champagnat)

We have already had a big event this year - the Marist Youth Festival in Sydney. This

brought together 180 young adults from across the country in the presence of the Superior General, Br Emili Turú. What a great group of young people. How well organised by our MYM people. Thanks to all the volunteers as well. I have included my words of welcome below.

Before Easter, we will present our Petition to the Holy See to have the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat approved. Members will start to be acknowledged in local gatherings from early in the year. There has been unanimous support from the Bishops of Australia! At Easter, the Brothers will gather at Hunters Hill to consider revision of our Constitutions and to reflect together on key directions for the Brothers in the coming three years. In August, we will have a Mission Assembly, the first official gathering of representative

members of the new Association. This Assembly and the lead-up will discern key directions for the Association, its mission and life, as well as propose members of its governing council. In late August, we will have the first profession of our two novices if that is what they finally choose. In late September, there will be the installation of the new Provincial and the Provincial Chapter of the Brothers.

2015 will also see two new communities. In West Heidelberg, Melbourne, Doug Walsh will join Harry Prout and Barry Lamb in a rented residence. Their mission is to be at the service of the Exodus community in this socially disadvantaged area. The ministry is not new but having a resident Marist community is. Michael Callinan, Justin Golding and Lawrie McCane will establish a new community, probably

in the outer suburbs of Sydney, after a period of discernment of possibilities. This community will involve the Brothers working on a common project, inspired by the Lavalla ideals to give us Brothers a fresh start in Australia - Contemplation, Fraternity and Mission. We want to witness to a 'new' way of living as Brothers in community.

Please keep these two new ventures and all these coming events in your prayers.

Blessings on us all,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff".



A number of Brothers returned from sabbatical periods overseas in the past month or so: **Barry Lamb and Wayne Threlfo** (via Ethiopia); **Michael Herry** (a newly accredited "Camino" pilgrim); **Pat Thompson and Brian Etherington** (via Cambodia and elsewhere!); **Justin Golding** (newly minted formator); **Bill Sullivan** (who prepared for Mittagong by acclimatising himself in the north of Scotland); **Tony Glassick** (who prepared for Cairns by acclimatising himself in the north of Scotland); **Robert Aitken** (after Scripture and Theology studies at Leuven); **Paul Gilchrist** (now on first name basis with many high-ranking Church officials after travelling with **Mark O'Connor**); **Anthony Robinson** (fully recovered from his cancer alarm and very happy with his time at Hawkestone Hall); **Ken McDonald** (still in re-entry space after finishing as District Leaders after nine years). Welcome back to all of you.

Brothers taking home leave in Australia have included **Dennis Cooper, Chris Wills and Tony Leon** from Rome; **Tony Clark** from Timor Leste.

Three others are coming home in the next few months after extended time working overseas.

Fons van Rooij will return from Baucau, Timor Leste, at the end of January. He will join the community at Fitzroy at least for a time to have a break and catch up with family. Fons is looking to do some sabbatical study in Scripture and Theology in 2015. He has also been asked to look at another role off-shore. The timing of things is not yet clear. Thank you and congratulations Fons for your leadership of the Teachers' College over the past nine years. I was privileged to be present for Fons' farewell in the presence of the Bishop and a large number of the staff and other well-wishers. Their admiration, gratitude and affection was very clear.

Frank Hough is to return to Australia from the District of Melanesia in February. He will join the Westmead community and work in the Professional Standards office at Drummoyne. Frank has been in similar work in PNG recently that the Bishops and Religious Leaders value very highly. Well done, Frank. With Frank moving back to Australia, this will be the first time since 1946 that there have not been any Australian Brothers in Melanesia. It is an historic moment, a moment of thanksgiving and hope.

Bryan Davis will complete six and a half years at MAPAC, our post-novitiate centre in Manila, in March. His counselling skills have been much in demand. We are still talking about his future in Australia. So, more later! Ray Arthur will join the MAPAC community in late May, also as a counsellor. Ray has been the counsellor at the Auburn campus of Trinity Catholic College since 2002. Formerly he was the District Leader in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands and the Visitor for India.

Others joining new communities include **Bernard McGrath** (from Forbes to Campbelltown as Co-ordinator of our aged care facility); **Michael Jones** (from Westmead / John Berne school to Forbes); **Dan McEwen** (from Campbelltown to Ashgrove, assisting in the care of our senior men); **Gerry Steele** (from Lismore to Campbelltown); **Brian Kinsella and Al Sherry** will move into a residence on Moola Rd at Ashgrove while remaining part of the Rosalie community.

Br Dave Hall has been appointed to the Faith Formation and Religious Education Standing Committee of the National Catholic Education Commission. He will be given a book of acronyms at the first

meeting! Well done, Dave. We wish **Peter Corr and Michael McManus** all the best as they begin at the Teachers' College Baucau – Peter as Director and Michael as Tutor for lecturers doing their Masters.

New Formation House in Timor Leste

The Council has approved the plans for a purpose-built compound in Bacau for Marist candidates. This facility will give us the capacity to provide a residential postulancy program, quite independent from the Teachers' College. Building is due to commence in March and be finished in 2016. Our best wishes to **Tony Clark and Lecio Heckler** for this project.



JANUARY
12-15

KEY SPEAKERS

FR GREG BOYLE
FR ROB GALEA
BR EMILI TURU
LAURA JOHN

www.maristyouthfestival.com



Welcome to the Youth Festival

Welcome Young Marists to our festival "JustLOVE".

Focus:

- What are you looking for?
- What passions are driving you to be here at this Festival today?

A festival like this is an event, not just an experience. It is a significant moment, a key moment of inspiration, affirmation and change

The previous festival in 2008 was such an event. The theme then was: "Ignite the Heart. Embrace the Vision. Transform the World". Lives were touched ... seriously.

My hope is that here too you will enjoy one another's company, be captivated by new insights into life "in all its fullness", celebrate your faith, and be challenged in your turn to Just Love.

In September this year, I was in Nairobi Africa where 120 Marists from around the world had gathered. Among them were a dozen Young Marists like yourselves. At one point, these young people were asked to speak about someone who is a



'hero' for them. There were names like Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Oscar Romero, and even a couple of Marist Brothers! The thread running through the remarks was that the young were inspired by people who stand up for others, for ideals, people with a strong sense of vocation.

- Who would you name?
- What do you stand for?

• What are your ideals? What moves you? People, especially young people, less fortunate than yourself?

- 2.2 million live below the poverty line in Australia
- 600,000 children under 15 live in households where no-one has a job.

We can be sheltered, blinkered, ignorant, indifferent to other people. If you were this way, you would not want to be at this festival!

My guess is that each of you here has a big heart. You are socially aware. You are compassionate.

How much wealth is held by the poorest 20% of Australia's population?



Along the way of life, you will learn that Justice and Love are two sides of the same coin.

I can remember a time when I was full of protest at the state of the world, the dominance of rich transnationals, conscription of my age group into the Vietnam War. There was a socialist group called SDS that was encouraging revolution - in Australia! But I just could not imagine myself becoming a guerrilla fighter in the Blue Mountains - besides I loved my family and friends! If the media is to be believed a Jihadist in Sydney had similar thoughts recently - amazing!

So, if not revolution, then what? I had to learn for myself that life is about being more than a zealot for just causes. I had to learn about the type of humanity shown by Jesus and expressed in Ch 25 of Matthew's

Gospel: "in as much as you did this to one of my little ones, you did it to me."

I decided to pursue my life as a Marist Brother. This is a journey that has meant Christian ministry and service in Australia, the islands to the north, Africa, and Asia. What have I learnt about working with disadvantaged young people? I expressed it in a text on a vision of Marist Education for today that I edited for the Marist world 17 years ago.

65. When we open our eyes and hearts to the deep suffering of young people, we begin to share God's compassion for the world. In faith we see the face of Jesus in those who are suffering. We take some personal action to help. We experience that something is very wrong, that poverty does not just

happen. We feel angry. We begin to focus on causes rather than immediate needs.

66. The poor never give up and are skilled in helping themselves. They are resilient. This makes us feel humble. We hear the voice of God and see the hands of God and God's power in their struggles. As we get more deeply involved we can become discouraged by the fact that we too are needy and by the human weakness of the poor. This experience can teach us real solidarity. Together, no longer "us" and "them", we recognise that God is acting for and in the poor and needy like us even before we try to help. There are some parts of all of us and our situations that only the consoling and reconciling Spirit of God can heal.

We learn slowly about Just Love, how God is just and loving. We do not have to be charismatic personalities, but simply respond the Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, to be humble instruments of God's love, God's peace and God's justice in our world.



In the days ahead, these calls will be unpacked in song, image and story by some wonderful people. It's over to you.

May your journey here and through life be full and life-giving.



Love is luring us forward, because love is what we already are at our core, and we are naturally drawn to the fullness of our own being.

Richard Rohr

photo at bottom of page 2:

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photo of Lotus on page 5:

SRCHEN