



MSA Newsletter

A newsletter for Member Schools of Marist Schools Australia published fortnightly during term time



From Brother Michael Green

Dear Brothers, Colleagues and Friends

Have you heard someone come back from a concert or other special event and, in response a question as to what it was like, can only offer a somewhat unhelpful “You really had to be there”?

The 180 participants in the biennial MSA Conference may have found themselves in that situation to some extent over recent days. It was a wonderful time together, a shared experience of grace and learning, and indeed difficult to capture readily in a few words. But it is likely that those who took part in the 2015 Conference last week will be looking hard to find ways to disseminate the substance of that experience among their fellow Marist educators, because the content and dynamics of the days took us to rich and compelling places. We strengthened who we were as “Marists”, our Marist identity.

It can be a dangerous idea, “identity”, especially when it slips into being understood in terms of difference from the other – everyone who is not one of us. Them. Such a defensive, insular and self-protective approach to identity-making is never healthy. Mostly its sources are fear, ignorance and insecurity. Look at the current saga around Adam Goodes, the shameful “Reclaim Australia” demonstrations, or the long-festering sore of everything associated with “border security”, through this lens. Not good. Self-evidently, not good at all.

A well-formed identity, whether it is personal or collective, will not go to wall-building as its default place. It will go to dialogue. At ease in its own skin, it will want to listen and to engage. It is of the nature of the human condition to have a fundamental desire to communicate. The word comes from the same root as communion, to be at one with the other. It is of our human nature, because it is God’s nature. Whether it is a person, a school, an ethnic group, a club, a country, a church – it doesn’t matter – if it is finding itself fearful or resistant to being drawn into communicating openly and respectfully, then its identity-formation has been skewed or foreclosed somewhere along the track.

At last week’s Conference in Melbourne, we had our minds and hearts stretched by what we learnt. We spent the days almost entirely in a study and contemplation of Gospel of John, and we discovered something of the Johannine roots of our deep Marist story. As with any genuine and enlightened study of the Word of God, it opened us rather than closed us. We deepened the way we understood ourselves as Marists, as we found ourselves and our ministry in the Gospel of John. I recall as a Novice being taught – at the time that we received the Brother’s habit – that a person’s identity-formation can be arrested in its development by that person’s too readily or uncritically slapping on a readymade label or uniform; the Novice Master suggested that it often happened to soldiers, police, teachers and priests! And, indeed newly-habited Brothers. I guess the same could be said for someone’s all-at-once becoming “Catholic”. Or indeed “Marist”. If we are just acting from a pre-written script, we will indeed be just acting. For a term to be descriptive of us, rather than prescriptive for us, time and depth are needed. And for “Marist” to be a whole lot more than a facile prescription means that we, like the Samaritan woman or the Beloved Disciple, become disciples and friends of Jesus.

Then, like Marcellin – so formed as he was by a lifetime’s encounter with Jesus with Scripture, and especially the Gospel and Letters of John – we will be able to come to our education of young people primarily as an act of loving them, and revealing to them with integrity the God who is love.

Nisi Dominus

Brother Michael Green FMS
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

COMING UP...

7 Aug	Red Helm Inservice, Melbourne	26 Aug	MSA Regional Council, Brisbane
8-9 Aug	Marist Educational Leadership Program, Melbourne (wk 1 of 2)	27 Aug	MSA Regional Council, Sydney
11 Aug	Directors' Forum, Melbourne	28 Aug	MSA Regional Council, Melbourne
14 Aug	justLOVE: Hearts Without Borders, Red Bend Catholic College	28 Aug	justLOVE: Hearts Without Borders, Catholic College Sale
16-19 Aug	Footsteps 1: Making Jesus Known and Loved, Mittagong	29-30 Aug	Marist Educational Leadership Program, Melbourne (wk 2 of 2)
20 Aug	justLOVE: Hearts Without Borders, Notre Dame College	2-5 Sept	Marist Contemplative Retreat, Mittagong
20-23 Aug	Mission Assembly, Mittagong	3-4 Sept	Spirituality Day, St Joseph's School Northam
25 Aug	justLOVE: Hearts Without Borders, Trinity College Beenleigh	11 Sept	CUT OFF DATE FOR LAVALLA & CHAMPAGNAT PUBLICATIONS

2015 MSA BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

They have no wine: John's gospel, Marist spirituality, abundant life



Marist MISSION AND LIFE FORMATION

justLOVE: HEARTS WITHOUT BORDERS ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE & ST THOMAS MORE

What a beautiful way to spend a twilight as the sun set on Noosa Heads. St Teresa's Catholic College and St Thomas More staff attended a justLOVE Program on 16 July. We are proud to say that we have probably had the youngest of all participants in our programs. Ann-Maree Pitot and Br Neville kept a careful eye on our new St Thomas More baby, Marley Pope - daughter of Tamara Pope.



Br Neville and Anne-Maree Pitot, Marley Pope
- daughter of Tamara Pope, St Thomas More



Cathy Kiernan, St Thomas More



Sarah Gellie & Sharon Lucht,
St Teresa's Catholic College



Aaron Heffernan, St Teresa's Catholic College

justLOVE: HEARTS WITHOUT BORDERS ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE

Whilst those in the southern states warmed themselves by fires and wore big woolly bed socks, we all enjoyed a balmy and sunny time for the justLOVE Program at St Augustine's College in Cairns.



Silvia DiMarco, Kerry McKenzie, Kastle Gane



Simon Martino and Luke Parsons

justLOVE: HEARTS WITHOUT BORDERS JOHN TERRY CATHOLIC COLLEGE

On a wintery first day for the third term, 80 teaching and support staff of John Terry Catholic High School gathered at the Hermitage, Mittagong to participate in the JustLOVE program. As one teacher wrote; "The programme was a great start to the term. It is always good to have some time to reflect on our goals, values and mission as teachers."



Back row. Damian Hatton, Dermot Holmes,
Ben Harsas, Brad Gavin, Larry Margerison,
Dominique Meredith, Ann Conte
Front row. Haylee Williams, Cath Waud



Wendy Rowan and Erin Doyle



Shane Chapman, Lea Walker,
Siobhan Moore and Natalie Waggstaff



Joyce Rufus, Mariam Abdel-malek and
Phillip Kenyon

justLOVE: HEARTS WITHOUT BORDERS NEWMAN COLLEGE

On Tuesday 21st July, 145 staff members from across the three campuses of Newman College gathered together for a day of spiritual enrichment by participating in the justLOVE programme. It was a day for all school members to come together to celebrate and affirm the good work that is already being done and to spend time reflecting upon our Marial nature.



Beth Legg and Margaret Goldsmith



Bernie Roberts and Dean Robinett

APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2016 MARIST PILGRIMAGE
CLOSE FRIDAY 7 AUGUST

Contact Br Michael Akers michael.akers@marists.org.au, or
Mr Anthony Clarke anthony.clarke@marists.org.au to register your interest

justLOVE
hearts without borders

TALKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION



Over the past two weeks, more than 100 hundred people have turned out for Marist Solidarity's annual winter conversations. The conversations are about sharing stories about the experiences of volunteer returnees, and their work to support Marist projects in Asia and the Pacific.

On July 19, guests in Melbourne braved freezing night-time temperatures to hear from volunteer returnees Liam Highmore, Kath Richter, and Marist Solidarity volunteer coordinator Ashley Bulgarelli.

20-year-old Liam—a former student of Marist College Canberra—reflected on two months working at the LaValla School in Cambodia, which caters for children with disabilities. Retired teacher Kath Richter spoke about her two years at the Marists teacher training college in Baucau in Timor-Leste.

Ashley—a former Marist College Ashgrove student—shared his experiences working as a volunteer in Ghana and at Marist Champagnat Institute in Fiji.

And last Monday night, guests gathered at Marist Solidarity headquarters in Brisbane to hear from three volunteer returnees (pictured above), including former Marist College Ashgrove student Tom Milliken, who has worked at Vanga Point in the Solomon Islands. Other panellists included St Peter Claver College teacher Kim Byrnes, who spent two months at the Marist Centre for Migrants in Thailand, and St Teresa's Catholic College graduate Abbey Fuetrill, who volunteered at the LaValla School in Cambodia. Visit the website to find out more.

Australian Marist Solidarity
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www.australianmaristsolidarity.net.au



From the 24th-26th of July, 118 Year 12 rowers from 12 schools gathered together for their last combined Remar retreat – their **GOLD Retreat**. Held at Phillip Island's Adventure Resort, the retreat was, for lack of a better word, a '**GOLDen success**'! The retreat was a true celebration of their Remar journey – in all its challenges, joys, personal and spiritual growth. The theme for the weekend focused on the Gold Crossings motto of '*Being a witness in our community*' through living out the values of *Presence, Perseverance and Simplicity*.

Rowers were asked to consider what their vocation might be – their calling, mission and to explore Jesus' call for us to be '*the light of the world*' Matthew 5:14. As one teacher reflected, the focus was not on what rowers *would 'do'* post-school but on what kind of people they *could be and want to be*. Br Greg McDonald and Br Rod Thomson talked about the three keys to help understand your vocation – Does it give you joy? *Does it tap into your gifts and talents? Is it a genuine service to the people around you?*

Through energizing games, whole group inputs, dramas/skits, prayer sessions, singing and workshops rowers reflected on where they have come from in their Remar journey and how they can still stay connected post-school to the wider Marist family.



The Remar Ministry Team was supported by a number of **Young Marists** (past students and Remar Rowers) who made up our energetic Volunteer Team (V-Team). Music Ministry was brilliant, lead by MYM Assistant **Gilbert Mein**, supported by Br Michael Herry and other talented V-Team. A huge thank you to the Helms and support staff that attended and participated with energy and enthusiasm. *We especially recognise the commitment of the Helms over the last three years and wish them every blessing in their final months with their caravels.* There was a real sense of Family Spirit on the retreat and we thank everyone involved.

Remar Ministry Team 2015

