



MSA Newsletter

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



From Dr Frank Malloy

Dear Colleagues,

In the next few weeks, our schools will conclude for the year and a well earned holiday waits. School leaver results will fill the airwaves and pages of the country's major newspapers. In some States and Territories, schools will be ranked in ways so superficial that it defies logic for anyone who has had the privilege to teach. However, what this analysis does represent is a healthy interest from society in the quality of our nation's schools and the future of our young people. And this is cause for comfort and hope.

In the last edition of Lavalla the importance of the measure of learning gain as presented on the My School website, to assist schools in evaluating their effectiveness was discussed. Data describing the performance of our school leavers is also vitally important. Interestingly also on the My School website, there is a statistic identifying the percentage of students completing secondary education who have achieved the highest exit credential for their State or Territory. Overall this statistic is consistently positive for Marist schools when compared with schools in other sectors. The Universities Admission Centre also releases data to schools in March each year identifying the courses in which the previous year 12 school leavers have enrolled, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) carefully tracks school leaver data each year.

On 6 November 2017, the ABS released a report titled Education and Work in Australia 2017. The report indicated there were 311,600 people aged 15 to 20 years who were enrolled in secondary school in 2016 but not in May 2017. Of these school leavers, 82% had completed Year 12 or equivalent and 59% were currently enrolled in study at a non-school institution. The proportion of school leavers who were not studying was 40% and of these, the majority were employed, either full-time (25%) or part-time (36%), while 39% were not employed. As Marist educators, these statistics are not wholly consistent with our experience. Factors such as the educational advantage many of our school communities enjoy, as well as the quality of teaching in our schools, contribute to the vast majority of Marist students completing Year 12 and proceeding to undertake further education at university or vocational institutions.

As Catholic educators, we pride ourselves on the education of the whole person. It is a fundamental principle that underscores the importance of every single student, and is repeated in every Church document on Catholic education since Vatican II. Many Catholic Dioceses and schools in Australia have invested considerable time and resources to carefully track the destination of their students post school. It is a practice to be encouraged for the sake of the students leaving school, for their parents, and for current and prospective parents and students. Such information is also essential in demonstrating to government the highly successful outcomes for students graduating from our schools. The old adage, "we measure what matters" is pertinent. Rich information in regard to student post school destinations for school communities firmly counters the notion that after 13 years of schooling, the end result is simply a race to the top of narrow measured rankings for the ongoing good name of a school.

In this final newsletter for 2017, I take the opportunity to draw your attention to a Christmas reflection from our Holy Father who you may choose to share with your own school communities.

May you experience the peace and joy Jesus brings this Christmas time with friends, family, and others new in your life.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Frank Malloy
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

From Pope Francis' Homily at Midnight Mass St Peter's 2016

The shepherds discover simply that "a child has been born to us" (Is 9:5). They realize that all this glory, all this joy, all this light, converges to a single point, the sign that the angel indicated to them: "You will find a child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger" (Lk 2:12). This is the enduring sign for all who would find Jesus. Not just then, but also today. If we want to celebrate Christmas authentically, we need to contemplate this sign: the frail simplicity of a tiny newborn child, the meekness with which he is placed in a manger, the tender affection with which he is wrapped in his swaddling clothes. That is where God is.

With this sign, the Gospel reveals a paradox. It speaks of the emperor, the governor, the high and mighty of those times, yet God does not make himself present there. He appears not in the splendour of a royal palace, but in the poverty of a stable; not in pomp and show, but in simplicity of life; not in power, but in astonishing smallness. In order to meet him, we need to go where he is. We need to bow down, to humble ourselves, to make ourselves small. The newborn Child challenges us. He calls us to leave behind fleeting illusions and to turn to what is essential, to renounce our insatiable cravings, to abandon our endless yearning for things we will never have. We do well to leave such things behind, in order to discover, in the simplicity of the divine Child, peace, joy and the luminous meaning of life.

Let us allow the Child in the manger to challenge us, but let us also be challenged by all those children in today's world who are lying not in a crib, caressed with affection by their mothers and fathers, but in squalid "mangers that devour dignity". Children who hide underground to escape bombardment, on the pavements of large cities, in the hold of a boat overlaid with immigrants... Let us allow ourselves to be challenged by those children who are not allowed to be born, by those who cry because no one relieves their hunger, by those who hold in their hands not toys, but weapons.

The mystery of Christmas, which is light and joy, challenges and unsettles us, because it is at once a mystery of hope and of sadness. It has a taste of sadness, inasmuch as love is not accepted, and life discarded. Such was the case with Joseph and Mary, who met with closed doors, and placed Jesus in a manger, "because there was no place for them in the inn" (v. 7). Jesus was born rejected by some and regarded by many others with indifference. Today too, that same indifference can exist, whenever Christmas becomes a holiday with ourselves at the centre rather than Jesus; when the lights of shop windows push the light of God into the shadows; when we are enthused about gifts but indifferent to our neighbours in need. This worldliness has kidnapped Christmas; we need to liberate it!

Yet Christmas has above all a taste of hope because, for all the darkness in our lives, God's light shines forth. His gentle light does not frighten us. God, who is in love with us, draws us to himself with his tenderness, by being born poor and frail in our midst, as one of us. He is born in Bethlehem, which means "house of bread". In this way, he seems to tell us that he is born as bread for us; he enters our life to give us his life; he comes into our world to give us his love. He does not come to devour or to lord it over us, but instead to feed and serve us. There is a straight line between the manger and the cross where Jesus will become bread that is broken. It is the straight line of love that gives and saves, the love that brings light to our lives and peace to our hearts.

That night, the shepherds understood this. They were among the marginalized of those times. Yet no one is marginalized in the sight of God, and that Christmas, they themselves were the guests. People who felt sure of themselves, self-sufficient, were at home with their possessions. It was the shepherds who "set out with haste" (cf. Lk 2:16). Tonight, may we too be challenged and called by Jesus. Let us approach him with trust, starting from all those things that make us feel marginalized, from our limitations and our sins. Let us be touched by the tenderness that saves. Let us draw close to God who draws close to us. Let us pause to gaze upon the crib, and relive in our imagination the birth of Jesus: light and peace, dire poverty and rejection. With the shepherds, let us enter into the real Christmas, bringing to Jesus all that we are, our alienation, our unhealed wounds, our sins. Then, in Jesus, we will enjoy the taste of the true spirit of Christmas: the beauty of being loved by God. With Mary and Joseph, let us pause before the manger, before Jesus who is born as bread for my life. Contemplating his humble and infinite love, let us simply tell him: Thank you. Thank you because you have done all this for me.

COMING UP...

2 Dec MSA Mass and Dinner - Melbourne From 5 Dec Marist Cricket Carnival

2018 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS REGISTRATION NOW OPEN



*Registration for the
2018 Program and Events
is now open and filling quickly.*

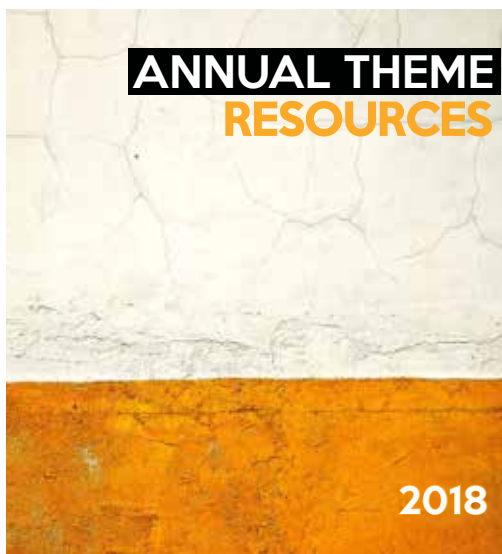
To register follow the link -

<https://maristschools.ismartsoftware.net/iRegister/Courses>

If you require any assistance, please contact Nicole Keehan register@marists.org.au or 02 9218 4007.

For instructions on how to use the online registration system, click on the link below:

[Quick Instructions for Booking Officers](#)



The 2018 Theme Resource Booklet and Theme images are now available from the Marist Schools Australia website - msa.edu.au. The Theme Resource Booklet can be found on the link below:

[2018 Theme Resource Booklet](#)

MARIST MISSION AND LIFE FORMATION



Marist Learning Zone

Partnering between the LaValla200 community at Mt Druitt in Western Sydney and Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP), the Marist Learning Zone (MLZ) is one of our newest Marist ministries. MLZ offers a temporary relocation of young people enrolled at a CEDP school who have disengaged from their education. The team spent a few days on retreat together at the Hermitage in Mittagong in preparation for commencing this new and vital work.

Pete's Place

The staff of Pete's Place (Marist180's school) made an inaugural visit to the Hermitage at Mittagong for a formation and retreat day. Connecting the dreams and motivation of St Marcellin with their own dreams and motivation for the students they work with, was a key focus for the day. Exploring Marist spirituality and some of the signs, symbols and language that are the genetics of a Marist school was also a focus in the beautiful surroundings of the Hermitage.



AUSTRALIAN MARIST SOLIDARITY - SOLIDARITY MATTERS FOURTH EDITION OUT NOW



Dear friends and colleagues,

Season's greetings to you and your community from the Marist Solidarity team in Brisbane and thank you for a year of very generous support!

We are pleased to present this special Christmas edition of *Solidarity Matters* to our valued community. This Christmas we turn our attention to the people of the Bangladesh tea gardens and in particular what St Marcellin School, Moulovibazar is doing to support the tea garden children. Please click on the link below to view our interactive publication.

[\[SOLIDARITY MATTERS 2017 FOURTH QUARTER \]](#)

Wishing you joy and peace at the holidays and throughout the New Year.

Yours gratefully,

Br Allen Sherry
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Marist Solidarity

Tony Skinner
AMS Communications Coordinator, Australian Marist Solidarity



NSW MARIST STUDENTS LEADERS GATHERING AT MITTAGONG

The first of three Marist Student Leaders Gatherings (SLG's) across Australia took place with 80 Student leaders and staff from sixteen MSA schools attending the NSW SLG at the Hermitage, Mittagong from 12-14 November.

Using the 2018 Marist theme: "Hope and a Future" (Jeremiah 29.11), the SLG invites participants to adopt a transformative style of leadership witnessed by Jesus in the Gospel and to become 'enablers' among their peers and wider school community, as witnessed by Mary in scripture and the tradition of the early Church. The Marist characteristics were embedded in all our presentation sessions.

We were delighted with the energetic way in which the student leaders took to the reformatted program and the passion they have for making a difference in their school communities in 2018.

MYM would like to sincerely thank the school principals for their endorsement of this program and for attending the Eucharist and formal dinner, along with the dedicated supporting school staff. Grateful thanks to Mr John Robinson, Regional Director of MSA for his support and encouragement of this significant event.



COME AND VISIT OUR MYM BOOTH AT ACYF!

Our Marist Youth Ministry national team will be hosting a booth at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival Expo in Sydney as well as running a Taize Prayer service on Friday afternoon 8 November. Come and support MYM and take part in our Marist spin-the-wheel contest. Prizes to be won!



Jeni Miller
Sydney Regional Coordinator - Marist Youth Ministry



Marist Tertiary Programs Newsletter

Together we Learn and Grow

Newsletter 4 | November 2017

'Let what you have said be done to me'. Luke 1:38



A message from Br John McMahon...

Dear Friends, Colleagues and Brothers,

Thank you for helping us build our Marist Tertiary offerings this year. Your feedback is important so that we can expedite what you need in order to find resources and write essays.

We are now endeavouring to include as many resources as possible on our Marist Tertiary Education website at www.mte.org.au. Grace Johnstone and I, in our Marist Tertiary Office, are happy to assist where we can. We enjoy what we do and we want you to find fulfilment from studying in the Marist Tertiary space.

May you, your families, communities and friends be blessed at this wonderful time of Christmas.

With best wishes

Br John McMahon

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

News

Developments in 2017

The Marist Tertiary and Online Committee, which meets twice a year, has worked hard to link our Marist Tertiary Programs with the overall goals of our Marist Association.

Achievements by participants

Over 50 Marists from around Australia are currently working on their essays and minor theses resulting from their undertaking Marist programs. Some of these essays and excerpts from minor theses are being prepared for Marist publications.

Australian Catholic University Accreditation Renewal Dates for Marist Tertiary Programs

1. Marist Pilgrimage and Study Tour - 31st December 2017
2. Marist Educational Leadership - 31st December 2017
3. Footsteps 1 - 31st December 2018
4. Footsteps 2 - 31st December 2018
5. Leadership from a Marian Perspective - 31st December 2020

New Course on Mary

As Marists, Mary has a special place in our hearts. We continue to learn more about her and to understand the significance of her role in the life of Jesus. Across the centuries numerous devotions to Mary have emerged.

Today, there is an increasing focus on the contemplative Mary and on Mary as archetype.



A link to the new course on Mary is

<http://www.mte.org.au/leadership-from-a-marian-perspective/>

Further information can be obtained from

Br John McMahon at john.mcmahon@marists.org.au

Together we Learn and Grow

Marist Tertiary Programs

We are pleased to inform you that Professor Geraldine Castleton from Australian Catholic University has confirmed that our new Marist Tertiary Unit titled 'Leadership from a Marian Perspective' has been accredited with the University. Our Marist Tertiary and Online Committee worked hard to design this Unit. I thank them for their insights, creativity and hard work.

The Unit contains the following four modules:

1. Mary in the Gospels and Christian Tradition
2. Mary and Vatican II: A Paradigm Shift
3. Marian Perspectives of Leading in a Contemporary Catholic School
4. Contemplative Leadership

This new program, which will be taught across four days during the first and last weekends of May 2018, will be held at our Marist Centre, Brunswick in Melbourne. The program costs \$630.

[The Unit outline, which includes the two assessment tasks, can be accessed here.](#)

[You will be able to register here](#)

We look forward to this Unit providing us with the opportunity to develop new understandings of leadership for the twenty first century. The Unit includes a study of research carried out by scholars and practitioners across the centuries, with particular emphasis on the impact of the Second Vatican Council on renewing our understanding of Mary in the Church.

Finally, we would like to thank you for your support of those staff in our schools who are undertaking studies in Marist Tertiary Education. May God bless you and Jesus' birth inspire you in 2018.

Upcoming Programs

Courses being offered in 2018

- * Footsteps 1
- * Footsteps 2
- * Marist Pilgrimage and Study Tour
- * Marist Educational Leadership
- * Leadership from a Marian Perspective
- * Marist Methodology

For more information please visit
www.mte.org.au



ARE YOU STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY?

Why not use one of our programs for accreditation..

Universities offering Accreditation

- Australian Catholic University
- University of Notre Dame
- University of South Australia
- BBI—The Australian Institute of Theological Education

Marist Programs with University Accreditation

- ◆ Footsteps 1
- ◆ Footsteps 2
- ◆ Marist Pilgrimage & Study Tour
- ◆ Marist Educational Leadership
- ◆ Marist Methodology for Catholic Education Program

For further information visit our website
www.mte.org.au

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www.msa.edu.au/registration-for-programmes

Together we Learn and Grow