



MSA Newsletter

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



From Brother Michael Green

27 November 2012

Dear Members of the Marist Family

We're on the home straight. Speech nights and prize-givings are mostly wrapped up, reports written for the annual magazine, annual plans reviewed and ticked-off. As early as this week, some of our schools will be farewelling students for the long summer break. The 2012 academic year draws to its close.

How have we done? There's probably been no time when measures of effectiveness have been more rigorously exercised in schools than today. From NAPLAN, to MySchool, to diocesan and school-level strategic planning, to forensic analyses of Year 12 results – the scrutiny can be burdensome. Much of it is shallow, one-dimensional and trite; we know that, and it annoys us. Just leave us alone, we protest, we know what we're doing.

But it is always important to ponder and to evaluate, to stop and to take stock. Essential, really. That sage injunction of Socrates – that the unexamined life is not worth living – has lost none of its ancient wisdom. So which criteria could we best use to reflect on the year that's been? Let me suggest one criterion that each of us might address, one among others.

At the start of this year, we proposed a theme for Marist schools across Australia: "Encounter. Eyes opened, hearts burning." The Scriptural sources for the theme came from each end of Luke's gospel: Mary's visitation to Elizabeth, and the post-resurrection meeting of two disciples with Jesus on the road to Emmaus. We reminded ourselves that our Marist way of Christian education called us to a twofold encounter: we with Jesus, and our students with us. We described it as our "Visitation spirituality", one that led to a fervour to go into the "hill country" of the lives of young people, carrying the Good News of the faithfulness, love and justice of God, causing "Christ-life" to stir in them, giving them hope and joy, opening their eyes and prompting their hearts to burn. To quote from the introduction to this year's MSA brochure:

Marcellin charges us in 2012 to change everything for the young people whom we teach: to change everything by breaking open for them the faith that is deep in each of them, and so to give them reason to hope and impulsion to love.

Our young people need that of us. So how have we served them? I'm sure that, by and large, we have done so magnificently. We've done it generously and selflessly. Teaching calls for that: for people who are big of heart, and who, before all else, love their students; people who can live out all those qualities of love that St Paul lists in 1 Corinthians 13. At a time when the credibility of Catholic and other social institutions once again risks being compromised by all the coverage of the abhorrent crimes that have led to the proposed Royal Commission, our young people need us to be credible men and women of the Gospel. People of hope. They need us, like Mary, to rise above any doubts we may have about God's capacity to transform us, and to continue to be faithful.

May the approaching Advent and Christmas seasons be a time for all of us to renew that Christ-life within us, to celebrate it, and to radiate it.

Nisi Dominus

Brother Michael Green FMS
NATIONAL DIRECTOR



1 Dec	Mass and Dinner to mark the closing of the Province of Melbourne
3 Dec	MSA Leadership Meeting - Drummoyne
8 Dec	Inauguration of Province of Australia
8-12 Dec	Australian Province Chapter



CONGRATULATIONS TO DAIRMUID O'RIORDAN

Diarmuid, the Principal of St Peter Claver College, Riverview QLD, will be an Acting Area Supervisor for Brisbane Catholic Education Office in Term 1 next year, taking the place of a person on leave. In his absence, Graham Meertens will again step into the Acting Principal role and Geraldine Swindells to the role of Acting Deputy Principal.

INAUGURATION OF THE PROVINCE OF AUSTRALIA

If you are unable to be present at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, for the Mass in which the Superior General will inaugurate the new Province and commission the first Provincial, then you can watch the livestream on the internet:

<http://www.livestream.com/maristaustralia>

Prayers please...

The community of St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, has lost three of its long-serving members in as many weeks. In the last newsletter, we mentioned the passing of Brother John Mullins. In the last fortnight, they have also lost **Brother Wilfred Quail** (at SJC for the last 31 years) and **Tony Lantry** (recently retired after more than 50 years on staff).

All of Australia was saddened by the tragic death of a young school leaver, **Isabelle Colman**, at the Gold Coast last week. Isabelle's younger brother is at Marist College Ashgrove. Let us remember the Colman family, and the school communities of Marist and Mount St Michael's Colleges at this difficult time.

MARIST SCHOOLS CONFERENCE: 28-31 JULY 2013

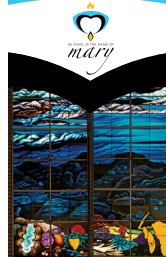


CONFERENCE PRESENTER: DR. MICHELE CONNOLLY RSJ

Dr Michele Connolly is a Sister of St Joseph from Lochinvar, in the Hunter Valley, NSW. She taught in secondary schools of the Maitland diocese for many years so understands the challenge of inspiring faith in our young people. After completing her PhD at the Graduate Theological Union, in

Berkeley, California, she now teaches New Testament Studies at the Catholic Institute of Sydney.

Michele is a very engaging and animated presenter who is looking forward to help us gain insight into Mary through the scriptures, as we consider how our 21st Century students might relate to the Marian face of Church that we present.



LAST NEXUS

Read the final issue of Nexus – the bulletin that has accompanied the journey to the new Province of Australia. See the two links below, one is an online version and the other is a printable version:

http://gallery.mailchimp.com/0f1a46d014c78d3e7f6c24fca/files/Nexus_Newsletter_Vol._9_for_email_.pdf

http://gallery.mailchimp.com/0f1a46d014c78d3e7f6c24fca/files/Nexus_Newsletter_Vol._9_A3_print_.pdf



FAREWELL TO DAVID HUTTON (14 YEARS OF SERVICE) AND PETER MCNAMARA (2 YEARS OF SERVICE) AS MEMBERS OF THE QCEC



Caption from left, Peter McNamara, David Hutton and Mike Byrne



Marist MISSION AND LIFE FORMATION

TERM 4 SCHOOL VISIT TO ST JOSEPH'S

Last week Paul Herrick, Tony Clarke and Br Michael Akers visited St Joseph's School, Northam, Western Australia, as part of the annual Term 4 school visits. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet with Principal Kevin Sheehy and to see the school in full swing from the little ones on the Years K-6 Campus to the seniors on the Years 7-10 campus. The purpose of the visit was to reflect on the schools participation and involvement in formation programmes and identify priorities in the area of staff spirituality and formation for 2013. It was hard not to be captured by the pride, energy and creative initiatives transforming this vibrant Marist community.



Caption from left: Paul Herrick (MSA Regional Director – Melbourne), Kevin Sheehy (Principal – St Joseph's School, Northam), Br Michael Akers (MLF team), Tony Clarke (Director – MLF team)

TRINITY CATHOLIC COLLEGE SYDNEY

20 Marists from both campuses at the community of mission at Trinity Catholic College in Sydney gathered yesterday to review how their year together had contributed to their Marist life and identity locally and to hear about developments around the Australian Marist Community in the new Province of Australia. There is plenty of energy and life around the new edges heading into 2013.



Caption from left: Br Ray Arthur, Donna McLaughlin, Ray Holmes and Br Tony Vaughan.

Last Newsletter for 2012

With the chalk-dust settling and students in some schools beginning holidays from later this week, this will be the last MSA Newsletter for the 2012 academic year.

MSA Offices will close on Friday 14 December, and re-open on Monday 14 January. During the break, Regional Directors and Brother Michael are contactable by email or mobile if an urgent matter arises.

We wish all our readers, both here in Australia and around the Marist world, a holy Advent, joyful Christmas, and blessed New Year.



MARIST VOLUNTEERS ARE MOBILISING IN THE NEW YEAR

Immediately after Christmas, two teachers from Marist–Sion College in Warragul, Victoria will leave Australia bound for South Sudan for three months. They will work alongside ‘permanent’ tutors from Solidarity with South Sudan in order to deliver in-service teacher training programmes simultaneously at seven different locations across South Sudan.

In February 2013, a staff member from Notre Dame College in Shepparton will be one of two volunteers to travel to Vietnam in order to join the continuing work of the New Horizons Project, which is aimed at teaching English to young Vietnamese students.

Throughout 2012, Year 12 students in Marist schools were invited to consider the prospect of living and working in a Marist community overseas for a two-month placement in 2013. Currently there are eight students from a variety of Marist schools who have applied to undertake this experience next year.

THANKS FROM THE MARIST SOLIDARITY TEAM

As we come to the end of our second year as a national office, the team in Brisbane would like to express its thanks to all of our supporters across the Marist Schools Australia network – principals, staff, students, families and friends. In a particular way, we would like to thank those who have contributed to the support of the Marist Blues team in Aleppo, Syria as they respond to the crisis unfolding there.

Your generosity and continued interest in our work ensures that we are well positioned to respond to the needs of young people experiencing life on the margins throughout Asia and the Pacific. Until next year, Christmas & New Year blessings to you and your families.



REMAR



The Remar Ministry Team is in the last month of what for each member has been a wonderfully blessed year. These last weeks will be quite full for them, with back-to-back student leaders gatherings,

solidarity camps, and embarkation events, before their own final team retreat in mid-December. On behalf of all the schools, we offer a huge vote of appreciation and thanks to each of them for the gift they have made of themselves this year.

Below, each one offers two or three sentences of reflection:

There are many experiences from this year that will stay with me for a long time. One I should mention is my sense of a Marist family – particularly at the Montagne Centre for the support and love there throughout the year. My year on the Remar Ministry Team has been an inspiring journey and I will finish the year feeling very empowered. - Gabi

My experience on the Remar Ministry Team has been very challenging but extremely rewarding. It has allowed for personal growth and faith development for which I am truly grateful. I thank everyone who has been part of my experience and the memories I will cherish. - Chris

Who would have thought that four years ago in Year 9 when I started Remar that I would be on a gap year in 2012 working for the program, travelling Australia, mentoring, befriending and working with young people. What an awesome year it has been! I would like to thank the awesome team of Chris, Alyce and Gabi, our mentors Harry and Catherine, and everyone who has supported me through the year. May God be with you all through the festive season and the years to come. - Jack

This has been one of the best experiences of my life, filled with challenges and so many new things. I would like to thank everyone who has made the Remar ministry team an experience that I will never forget. I have been truly blessed to spend this year with some amazing people. - Alyce

Any enquiries about Remar planning and events for next year are best now directed to Nicki Pitt as the 2013 Remar Coordinator. Nicki's new email address will be:
nicki.pitt@marists.org.au