



MSA Newsletter

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



From Brother Michael Green

5 June 2012

Dear Members of the Marist Family

In writing in early 1837 to a young Brother who was finding life a little tough and was also doubting the worth of his work, Saint Marcellin sought first to encourage him, to give him heart¹. Then he impressed upon him just how critically important was his teaching ministry with his young students:

“It is up to you to open or to close heaven for them.”

Pause on those words for a moment. They are strong. Disarmingly strong.

Marcellin went on to say that if the Brother was indeed going to open rather than close heaven for his students then he needed to do three things: he had to inspire them by his own life, he had to pray for them, and he had to “imprint strongly the love of God on their young hearts.”

In another place, Marcellin proposed to the Brothers that they were to be “living gospels” for their students. To emphasise just how significant that was, he went on to say that they may be the only gospel that their students ever get to read.²

In this week when we honour the memory of our Founder and his living heritage in our school families, let us recall this particular insight of Marcellin: the lasting impact that our lives are likely to have on our students, for good or for ill. We all know people who have rejected the Church due to their experience of Catholic schooling or, more specifically, their experience of a teacher or teachers in a Catholic school. What an indictment that is! We also know people, of course, who have been inspired by men and women who have taught them, people who have lived and radiated the Good News. People, like Mary and Marcellin, who have been full of joy and hope and compassionate justice.

In the Gospel reading that the Church allocates for the Mass liturgy on the Solemnity of St Marcellin (the same one, incidentally, that was read at his Beatification Mass in 1955 and his Canonisation in 1999)³, we hear Jesus’ instruction to his disciples that it was their duty to bring children to Jesus, and his attendant warning to them that they deserved a millstone around their neck if they were to lead the young astray. The theme that we have taken for this year – *ENCOUNTER: Eyes Opened, Hearts Burning* – is sourced in the critical role that inter-personal relationships play in bringing the gospel to life, and recognising Jesus. Or not.

Let us not for a moment understate the weight of responsibility that sits with us as Christian educators. But let us rejoice that so many men and women continue to devote their lives to just this task: to bring young people to Jesus.

To open heaven to them.

Happy feast day!

Nisi Dominus,

Brother Michael Green FMS
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

1 Father Champagnat to Brother Euthyme, 19 March 1837 (Letter 102), just two years after his novitiate. Brother Euthyme remained a Brother and was later elected as an Assistant General of the Institute.

2 *Avis, Leçons, Sentences*, Ch.1

3 Mark 18:1-7,10

COMING UP...

5 June	Noosa Marists Core Group Meeting and Evening Prayer Meeting	•	22 – 25 July	Footsteps #02, The Hermitage Mittagong
8 June	Marist Collections Uncovered / Workshop, St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill	•	25 July	Montagne Centre Staff Formation Day, Brunswick
12 June	Spirituality & Leadership III, Berne	•	29 – 30 July	Studies Coordinators' Retreat Day, St Francis Xavier College
15 June	MSA Leadership Team Meeting, Montagne Centre, Brunswick	•	30 July	Marist Pedagogy (1), MARist College Kogarah
17 – 18 June	Student Coordinators' Retreat Day, St Francis Xavier College	•	30 July	MSA/MLF Regional Melbourne Meeting
19 – 24 June	Shared Joint Formation Experience	•	30 July –	National Formation Network Meeting, Adelaide
28 June	Staff Retreat, Sacred Heart College	•	1 Aug	
18 July	Twilight Retreat, St Michael's Daceyville	•	4 – 5 Aug	Berne Staff Family Retreat, Mittagong
		•	6 Aug	Marist Pedagogy (2)
		•	7 Aug	Mary, the Mature Disciple, St Francis Xavier College

HUNTER'S HILL ULTRA MARATHON LEGEND



Ultra-marathon runner and multiple record holder, Pat Farmer, thrilled students and guests at St Joseph's College recently with the inspiring tale of his recent 21,000 kilometre run from the North Pole to the South Pole.

In his book about the epic run, *Pole to Pole: One Man, 20 Million Steps*, Farmer chronicles the highs and lows of his journey and reveals how he kept going through some of the most inhospitable places on earth. At the *Books and Blokes* breakfast, Farmer said he faced many obstacles when writing the book. He had been determined to record his thoughts at the end of each day of running, however some days he was so exhausted he would fall asleep while writing. He said although he was being filmed along the way, the filming could not access his thoughts or the desperation he often felt and he continued to write every day so others could intimately share his journey.

Farmer encouraged the boys to seek out new and different books that would teach them about the world and its people, and provide answers to many questions. "If you are feeling lonely or insecure, you can take comfort in a book and often find out how other people have dealt with similar situations".

LAVALLA

The next edition is being prepared for the printer. Any further contributions should be in to Br Tony Paterson by the end of June tony.paterson@marists.org.au

SOMETHING FOR THE SCIENCE TEACHERS

A couple of our Marist schools in the USA (Marist High School in Chicago and Christopher Columbus HS in Miami) are part of an international science project in which schools and universities monitor and share cosmic ray activity. Called the "ERGO Telescope Project", it is run by a Marist ex-student. More information can be found on this website:

www.ergotelescope.org

Read the message of the Superior General, Brother Emili Turú, for the Feast of St Marcellin:
<http://www.champagnat.org/400.php?a=6&n=2400>

**Happy Feast Day
to all
Australian Marists!**

**Solemnity of Saint
Marcellin
6th June, 2012**

Marist MISSION AND LIFE FORMATION

The Mission and Life Team has been busy as usual working with our schools in the vital task of Staff Formation. Some highlights have been:

The third afternoon of staff spirituality formation for the staff of St Michael's, Daceyville in Sydney's Eastern suburbs. On the 9th of May staff reflected on the Sources of Marcellin's love of Mary and his deep Marist spirituality. Congratulations to the staff of St Michael's for this ongoing and very worthwhile, though demanding, commitment to their own spiritual formation and the fostering of Harmony within their school community.

On the 6th of May St Joseph's Murgon celebrated 75 years since the Presentation Sisters began the school there. Since then many religious and lay have worked in this exceptional little school including many Marist Brothers. Congratulations to Br Daniel Hollamby, Principal, for the memorable and sensitive way this community was brought together for this significant occasion.

The second Footsteps 2 programme for the year was held at Mittagong from the 20th to the 24th May. Twenty six participants and six team members braved the cold nights and savored the beautiful days as we explored in more depth the Marist story and its relevance in today's schools. A very worthwhile experience for all.

In Melbourne on the 18th of May sixteen participants gathered at Brunswick for the Next Gen 1 programme. The day was co-ordinated by Paul Herrick, Regional Director MSA, and the focus was on leadership development for those considered possible future leaders in Marist schools.



Presentation Sisters at the 75th Jubilee celebrations at Murgon



Teachers and past teachers at Murgon celebrations: Carol Dennis, Bernadette Baxter, Morag Muckett, Anthony Lucy





AN INTERN'S EXPERIENCE WITH MAPS



In recent years, the MAPS Office in Brisbane has hosted a number of internship positions in partnership with local universities to further develop important insights and understandings in areas such as volunteer management and human rights education in Australia. Since late November last year, Hamish McLoughlin, has been completing

an internship programme with MAPS as part of his undergraduate studies in international relations through Griffith University.

In the short-time he has been with us, Hamish has had the opportunity to see and experience first-hand the workings of the MAPS and AMS offices as the international solidarity agencies of the Australian Marist Brothers. Hamish played an important role within the team in helping design and organise a new file management system and database for all the projects that MAPS and AMS are currently engaged with. This has significantly improved the capacity of MAPS to attract new sources of funding, monitor progress as well as identify new possibilities across our projects. His principal undertaking, however, was to act as a liaison between MAPS and the Marist Ad Gentes program in Thailand. This role saw Hamish foster new relationships with key Marist partners in the region, which has opened up new horizons for Marist solidarity into the future.

"Overall, my internship with MAPS was an invaluable learning experience. The work experience I've gained has only hardened my desire to work within the non-profit sector, and the chance to interact and network with people at this level was an unparalleled opportunity."

We congratulate Hamish for the hard work he's put into this semester and look forward to his return as a volunteer with MAPS later in the year.



BLUE RETREAT NUMBER 2 – NEARLY A WASH OUT!



Students from Year 11 at Marist-Sion College, Marcellin College, St Francis Xavier College and Catholic College Wodonga came together for the second Blue Retreat at Phillip Island,

Victoria (May 25-27). The heavens opened and 'The Island' quickly became flooded, but this did little to dampen the enthusiasm of the students and staff. What is always truly amazing is the way in which over 100 young people can connect on a level of faith within such a brief period of time, truly embracing the motto of 'Living as Christ's Disciples'.



Below are just a few comments from students who participated in the camp:

"My faith has been strengthened because when I look at my everyday life, I realise that God has given me his unconditional love in a way I could not see before."

"I have always had the mindset that I want to help those disadvantaged in Africa...but I've learnt that I don't need to do the biggest things, but rather the small things, with love."

"I feel like I am new person and that I am going to do everything in my power to challenge myself for Jesus. My faith and confidence has strengthened a lot!"

"I don't pray all that often but think I will more now. I want to be closer to God."

