



MSA Newsletter

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



From Brother Michael Green

6 March 2012

Dear Members of the Marist Family

At a Remar recruitment meeting with students at one of our schools recently, a local teacher suggested to the visiting Remar Ministry Team that she doubted whether there would be many students signing up this year. She did not think that the “faith thing” would hold any great attraction for that particular group. As it turned out, she was happily and hugely wrong: the number of students wanting to come on the ‘embarkation camp’ exceeded everyone’s expectations.

Like some other youth ministry programmes, Remar uses peer ministry as its central *modus operandi* – the young evangelising the young. The technique is not rocket science; since the time we were in kindergarten, we have taken cues from our peers for what’s credible and cool. Remar has an additional power in a Marist setting because it draws on the inspirational people and imagery of our Marist story to bring alive the Gospel of Jesus and to help it connect, something with which our students seem readily to connect. It seems to work.

Finding evangelising strategies that seem to work is a perennial task of the Church; for us who work as Marist educators it is a primary responsibility. A favourite recollection I have of the short-tenured “smiling Pope”, John Paul I, was his quip to journalists once that if St Paul were around today, then he would probably try to get a job with Reuters. It was a comment on the effectiveness of the mass media for diffusing a message and shaping world views. Perhaps if John Paul I were commenting now, he may make a similar remark about social networking software such as Facebook or Twitter. He may also have something to say about youth ministry. If he were around at the time of the Reformation he may have suggested that St Paul would have bought a printing press, or in the Medieval period that he may have joined with the Franciscans to paint murals or do stained glass in churches. Or he may have organised great pilgrimages to holy places. Paul would have seen it as trying to be ‘all things to all people’ for the sake of the gospel (1 Cor 9:19).

This is not a matter of gimmicks. It is, rather, simply finding a language that effectively speaks to people – a language that finds them where they are, and a language that will make sense within their frames of meaning but will also call them beyond. When we find that language, we know we are just the medium of the message, not the message itself. Grace builds on nature, Thomas Aquinas teaches us. When we develop media that work with grace rather than against it then the Spirit takes over to do things well beyond our imaginings. There is nothing extraordinary in this. Indeed, there is nothing so profoundly ordinary, for we are all made for God.

Most of us could recall experiences, events, and strategies that have done just this with young people: wonderful liturgies, challenging social justice outreach, enthused youth groups, engaging senior retreats, even a brilliantly taught RE lesson. But we keep on searching for the best and the most effective methods. The last General Chapter of the Marist Brothers put this challenge to Marist educators around the world: if we Marists are to be known for anything in our local settings, it should be as experts in the evangelisation of youth. This should be our characteristic expertise.

At next week’s Marist Principals’ Conference, it is this imperative that will shape most of the agenda. This is core business for us, as one Marist Principal said the other day. It will be an important moment for us as leaders of Australian Marist education to share our wisdom, insights, experience and initiatives with one another.

Nisi Dominus

Brother Michael Green FMS
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

COMING UP...

4 - 7 Mar Footsteps, The Hermitage, Mittagong
 9 Mar In the Champagnat Way : New Staff Induction, Catholic College Bendigo
 9 Mar Eastern Region In the Champagnat Way : New Staff Induction, Marist College Kogarah
 9 Mar Staff Development Day, Marist College Eastwood
 13 Mar MSA Leadership Team Meeting, Mittagong
 14 Mar Staff Day, Marist College Ashgrove
 14 - 15 Mar Marist Principals' Conference 2012 The Hermitage, Mittagong
 16 Mar Retreat, Sydney
 18 - 21 Mar Footsteps 2, The Hermitage, Mittagong
 20 Mar In the Champagnat Way : New Staff Induction, Sacred Heart College Middle School

21 - 23 Mar Being Marist Conference, Bulleen
 22 - 25 Mar LA RE Congress
 23 Mar Inner West In the Champagnat Way : New Staff Induction, Drummoyne
 26 - 28 Mar Marist Patrimony II: Marcellin and his Marvellous Companions, Mittagong
 28 Mar Twilight Retreat, St Michael's Daceyville
 29 Mar Footsteps Review Meeting, Drummoyne
 31 Mar - 21 April Champagnat Pilgrimage 2012
 2 April Mary, Mature Disciple, Canberra
 2 April RE Staff Day, Canberra
 3 April Spirituality & Leadership III, St Gregory's College Campbelltown

Parramatta Marist High School has become a national and international leader in the delivery of an innovative approach to teaching and learning known as 'project based learning'. The outstanding success of PMH in this has attracted interest from all sectors of education, and from all over the world. Here are details of an upcoming seminar hosted by Parramatta Marist:



What are we learning about learning?

PROJECT - BASED LEARNING SEMINAR

Presenters include three directors from the New Tech Network, USA

When: Wednesday 21 March 2012
 Venue: Morley Centre, Parramatta Marist High School
 2 Darcy Road Westmead NSW 2145
 Time: 5.15pm - 6.30pm



'This seminar will be a wonderful professional learning opportunity for teachers and leaders to find out more about project-based learning from leading international experts in the field.'

Greg Whitby
 Executive Director of Schools



RED BEND EVACUATED

The news from Brother John Hilet is that the staff and students of Red Bend Catholic College in Forbes have now been all safely evacuated. The community of three Brothers is holding the fort. Boarders who haven't been able to get home and staying with friends and family. It is expected that the waters will peak on Thursday. While the College buildings themselves should be okay, the College will be isolated. It is likely that it will be closed until at least next week.

APPOINTMENT OF CATHERINE HANNON TO MAPS



Catherine Hannon will be joining the MAPS team in a few weeks as the new Volunteering and Advocacy Officer.

In this role she will be establishing a new Marist volunteering service for Marist projects both overseas and within Australia, and will take initiatives in advocacy for the rights of children and

young people, something that was a call from the last General Chapter.

Catherine has a long commitment as a Marist, both in her current role at Trinity Catholic College and also in a range of other Marist associations and involvements over the last twenty years.

We congratulate her on her new role for the rest of 2012, and look forward to the expanded horizon she may open up for staff and students in Marist schools across Australia.

Marist MISSION AND LIFE FORMATION

IN THE CHAMPAGNAT WAY: NEW STAFF INDUCTIONS 2012 ...

Beginning with Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Alice Springs on January 30, the Ministry and Life Formation team has been leading our program specially designed for those staff new to things Marist. By the end of March we will have welcomed over 300 new staff into our Marist project. Some of these inductions are captured in the accompanying photographs.



La Valla Centre Rosalie, where we presented to new staff from Marist College Ashgrove; Mt Maria College Enoggera/Mitchelton; Trinity College Beenleigh; St Thomas More Primary School, Sunshine Beach; St Joseph's School, Murgon, Mount Marist College, Petrie.



Some of the 18 new staff inducted at Red Bend Catholic College, Forbes.



New staff at Marist College Canberra



Local student Jayden Mifsud from Assumption College in Kilmore is one of 10 Victorian high school students who will be spending their Term 1 school holidays on an overseas study tour visiting significant military sites at Gallipoli in Turkey, and in Malaysia and Singapore where Australians have served in war.

Jayden submitted an essay on how World War I has provided both Australia and New Zealand with an everlasting legacy. He compares the values of the original ANZAC's with the same spirit that has helped both nations through tough times, including the Christchurch earthquakes in New Zealand and the 2009 bushfires in Victoria, Australia.



The Macarthur Induction which included staff from John Therry Catholic School, Rosemeadow; Mt Carmel High School, Varrouville and St Gregory's College, Campbelltown



MARISTS' WORK IN EAST TIMOR CONTINUE TO GROW

Br Allen Sherry (MAPS Director) and Michael Coleman (MAPS Admin Officer) have recently returned from a five-day monitoring visit to East Timor, where Australian Marist Solidarity is supporting a number of community development and educational projects.

Joining Australian Marist Brother Tony Clark, who acts as the in-country manager for our projects, the team conducted meetings and inspections at a number of key sites including: *ICFP*, the Marist Teachers Training College and *Oasis* which is a youth centre supporting over 300 children in the English language, sporting programs, and basic computer skills. They were also formally welcomed with traditional dance and a program at another MSA-supported youth centre, *Ponte Leste*; and at the *Catholic Primary School* at Caicidu, which needs to expand its buildings because of growing demand for local children to access formal education, which is a significant project underway. The team also took the opportunity to visit *Katilosa*, which is a local Timorese NGO and MAPS partner working with over 150 children and young people with disabilities each year.

A new development for 2012 being supported by Australian Marist Solidarity is the construction of new community centre which is to be named *Sentru Halibur*. This space will provide a chance for young Timorese to gather and further promote the local Marist mission in surrounding areas.

The MAPS team is very excited about the growth taking place in East Timor and we recognise that this would not be possible without MSA schools' continuing support. For more info about our Timorese projects and how you can get further involved, please contact Br Allen on 0448 762 702 or email mso@maristmelb.org.au.



REMAR WELCOMES TWO NEW SCHOOLS



The Remar Ministry Team recently spent a life giving day at both Lavalla Catholic College Traralgon VIC and St Peter Claver College Riverview QLD introducing their Year

10 students to the Remar program. The team presented an interesting mix of information and activities designed to assist students in making a decision about attending the Red Embarkation Camp. Over 50 students at each College expressed an interest in attending the camp, which is a testament to the groundwork put in place by school staff, and to the movement of the Spirit. We are most grateful to Brett Van Berkel and Mike Hansen at Lavalla Catholic College, and David Campbell and Emma Galea from St Peter Claver College for their willingness to say 'yes' to establishing the program and to making Jesus known and loved.

