

Marist Fathers

Australian Province

Provincial Circular

No 1. 2018
March

From the Provincial

The season of Lent is with us, a blessing and holy time like no other. This is not primarily a time for us to be weighed down with thoughts of sinfulness, failure, and the negatives that are part and parcel of life.

This is rather a time for joy, optimism and some serious work.

Pilgrimage

The whole of one's life is a pilgrimage in which we move away from our self-centeredness to God-centeredness. It is a pilgrimage of growth and our maturing in the image of God. Lent is a time when our life journey, our pilgrimage to God, is intensified.

Simply because we cannot keep up the effort to always be our best selves, giving honour to our Father and living as His son every moment of our lives, we have to take advantage of special times that are given to us when we deepen our efforts and concentrate on our life pilgrimage.

Three pillars

Traditionally in our Lenten period we look to the three pillars of charity, prayer and penance, beautifully cited by Jesus in Mt 6:1 – 16, as a means to make our Lenten pilgrimage.

If you have not already decided on an area of charitable work to adopt in this Lent period, and even if you have decided, could you not add some practical support for our confreres in Tonga, recently plundered by Cyclone Gita, causing tremendous destruction.

Following up on the invitation recently made throughout the province, could you find \$10, \$20 (or \$?) a week that you have in your pocket for personal use and send that through to the Mission Centre to be used for repairs and restoring of 'Apia Fo'ou College that was badly damaged by Gita?

Fr Ekuasi Manu, sm, will be taking up leadership of the College when he leaves Brisbane in the middle of this year. Let us keep the 'Apia Fo'ou College community and Ekuasi in our prayers and let us help them by giving any little change that we can spare as they do their rebuilding.

Two Chapter threads

In reading our General Chapter decisions you will have noticed two matters which occur frequently and appear to be something like a thread that ran through the Chapter.

They are references to 'Laudato si' and a call to contemplation. The Chapter called Marists to other directions of renewal as well, but these two are vitally important in reviving our Marist lives and we should concentrate on them in a special way.

In our communities, or if we live on our own, as 2018 gets seriously underway what specific decisions have we/I taken to respond to the Chapter's direction?

Some communities and individuals are reading the General Chapter document and trying to 'green up' and focus on becoming more contemplative in our life. Let us all get

on board with this.

Four moments

This is a huge year for the Province with many very important events to occur.

Four moments that stand out are: the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter (March); the Assembly (September); Aged Care Review (March – December); and, St Patrick's Celebrations (May and Sept).

Extraordinary Chapter

The decision to hold an Extraordinary Provincial Chapter was taken in a Council of the Province in June 2017.

Its sole purpose is to address our governance crisis due to our aging and diminishment, to decide if we will remain a province or what structure will best suit us going forward, and to



decide on how we go about getting our new provincial leader from Jan 2019. We waited until after the General Chapter to get a clearer view of the waters in front of us; we have had a series of organized meetings and we have done a lot of informal discussion.

The time has now come and we hope our Extraordinary Chapter, at which the Superior General will honour us with his presence, will do its best to set us on a good path. It will be a tough job but it is vitally important that we give it our best shot.

Assembly

Our three-day Assembly in September (25th – 27th) is a must for all confreres who can make it. Please put it in your diary and attend if you can.

We have waited for a long time throughout the days of the Royal Commission and since to discern, as a province, how we must respond to, and to genuinely own, the crimes and sexual damage to children and vulnerable adults committed by Marists in the colleges and parishes that we had responsibility for. What do we owe to victims? How can we ensure these bad things never happen again? How must we change?

Aged care review

Care of our Aged was identified as a priority of the Province at our last Chapter, specifically the re-establishing of our Provincial Aged Care Committee. Also, good aged care of our confreres has been spoken of by many in recent months as the key concern of the province in the future.

How to address our aged care situation was a headache. We are doing some things well, but we have been disorganized and too piecemeal in our efforts.

A number offered good advice on what needed doing and others, not being aware of the big picture, offered advice that was not always so good. It was hard to know where to start.

The Provincial Council has now entered into an agreement with Andrew Murray to undertake a thorough review of aged care in the province over the next six months. After that we will start putting into place the direction the review gives us.

Andy, who is experienced in doing these professionally credited reviews, will provide us with a number of recommendations that will enable us to plan for appropriate aged care in the province and to clarify the role of the Provincial Aged Care Committee.

In an attachment to this circular you will find a copy of the Terms of Reference for Andy's review. Please give to Andy every assistance that you can in helping him do this crucial work for the province.

Two milestones at St Patrick's

St Pat's celebrates two great milestones this year. In May, the celebration of the bicentenary of the leaving of the Blessed Sacrament in the parish, and on the 16th September, the second milestone, the entrusting of St Patrick's to the Society of Mary, 150 year ago. This second celebration will have a very Marist feel.

Finance

At the beginning of the year it is important for us to be conscious of, and to keep in mind for the whole year, the issue of our financial situation as a province.

Last year the response of confreres to a general appeal to be aware of our financial problems and adopting a few policies that tightened up our money management was very positive. Thanks very much to all for this help.

Again this year we will have similar big costs, especially in aged care and professional standards. The volatility in recent global financial markets is a concern for us because it has a negative impact on our interest and dividends from investments, a major source of our income.

Having mentioned the gloom, we are managing well but we do need to keep our eyes on our budgets.

There are some practical points on financial matters in the latter part of this circular

English translation

Finally, we received a reply from Archbishop Hart, Chair of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, in reply to our appeal for the ACBC to review the English translation currently used in our missal.

The Archbishop's reply was that the ACBC would take the same line as the English and Welsh Bishops Conference because he believed the Pope's *motu proprio* for local Bishops conferences to determine the translation of the approved Latin text is not retrospective and we will have to wait for a new Latin rite to be issued before the local Bishops could be involved.

However, replies from four other bishops that they looked forward to the matter being discussed at the annual Bishops' conference can give us hope that perhaps the matter has not been declared dead and buried. Let us keep up our prayers that this matter is not dead.

More...

In everything we do this year the provincial administration wants to continue our commitment to be: more focused; more overly Marist in spirituality and community life, in our identity and mission; more international; more collegial; more open to working in collaboration with the laity; and more courageous. [CS 13 and 2016 Provincial Chapter]

Faternally

R. Barber, sm



Provincial Diary

Mar 4-9

Marist Charism Immersion, Villa Maria

Mar 6

Province Finance Committee

Mar 13-15

Extraordinary Chapter, Hunters Hill

Mar 21

Farewell Function for Michael Salmon, NSW Prof Standards Office

Mar 22

Informal Male Religious Leaders' Meeting, Melbourne

Apr 17

Provincial Council

Official

Extraordinary Chapter: The Chapter will commence at 9.30am on Tuesday 13 March with a Mass of the Holy Spirit in the Montbel chapel, with the Provincial as celebrant.

Sessions of the Chapter will be held in the Hunters Hill parish hall.

The Province looks forward to welcoming our new Superior General, Fr John Larsen, to Australia for the Chapter.

John will be the presider at the Mass which brings the Chapter to a close, sometime on Thursday 15 March.



Above: **Ekuasi Manu** | Damage at Apifo'ou College from Cyclone Gita.

Below: **Denis Revi** arriving at Villa Maria in January.



Personnel

Ekuasi Manu: Congratulations to Ekuasi who has passed his courses at ACU Brisbane with flying colours and mostly with distinctions.

He heard from his mother recently that an announcement has been made in Tonga that he will be the new principal of Apifo'ou College as from July this year.

A big job became even bigger when Cyclone "Gita" ripped through the Pacific in mid-February, causing considerable damage to Apifo'ou College.

Paul Pidcock: Paul will represent the Province at the episcopal ordination of Paul Martin in Christchurch on 3-4 March.

Gerry Arbuckle: Orbis Books, N.Y., has accepted Gerry's latest book for publication: *Loneliness: Insights for Healing in a Fragmenting World*.

The book explains the nature of loneliness, now considered to be a global pandemic. It analyses the cultural causes of loneliness, e.g. Trumpism, nationalism, that impact vulnerable people such as refugees, asylum-seekers, immigrants, minority groups.

The book, due for publication in the northern Spring, is pastorally praxis-oriented. Every chapter ends with Gospel reflections and discussion questions.

John Worthington has now made the move from Brisbane to Sydney, and has joined the Maryvale/Montbel community.

Denis Revi: Denis is spending several months at Villa Maria on sabbatical, having come to us from the international novitiate, outside Davao, in the Philippines.

The international novitiate is currently in suspension until 2019. He is a welcome and appreciated addition to the Villa Maria community.





In prayerful memory

Brother
Peter Francis Somers
Society of Mary

Born: 1.1.1940
Professed: 1.1.1962
Died: 15.1.2018



'Blessed are the gentle...'
(Matthew 5:4)



Deaths

Br Peter Somers sm: Peter died at Royal North Shore hospital on 15 January. His Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Holy Name of Mary church, Hunters Hill, on 19 January, where the Provincial was both presider and homilist.

The burial took place immediately afterwards in the Villa Maria cemetery.

Fr Francis Springer sm,
d.24.12.2017, San Francisco, CA, USA

Fr Roger Wilhelm sm, d.5.1.2018, Chartres, France.

Fr William F Seli sm, d.11.1.2018, Wheeling, WV, USA

Fr Donald Hamilton sm,
d.24.1.2018, Taradale, NZ

Fr Robert Graham sm, d.20.1.2018, Framingham, MA, USA

David Kado: Fred Kado returned to Fiji towards the end of January for the funeral of his uncle, David Kado, which took place on January 23.

Kesaia Langi, sister in law of Aliki, died in Auckland on 22 January. Aliki travelled to Auckland to preside at the funeral.

Br Benet Bourke fms: died over the Australia Day weekend, and was buried on 6 February following a Mass of Christian Burial at St Joseph's college, Hunters Hill.

Br Benet had been associated with the college in different capacities

over many years prior to retiring to the brothers' retirement community in Mary Street, Hunters Hill.

Br John Venard Smith fms: died in Brisbane on 31 January.

Tony McKenna: Ben's father, Tony, died in Launceston on 28 December following a long illness.

Ben was able to return to Australia for the funeral on 2 January, where the Province was represented by the Provincial, Andrew Murray, Michael Whelan, and Garry Reynolds.

Sick

Paul Cooney: Paul has recently experienced a setback in the treatment of his metastatic melanoma. The lesions in his bowel were not responding to his normal treatment regime, and he has commenced trialing two new immune-therapy medications.

On February 14 he had some surgery at the LifeHouse Centre in Camperdown to remove lesions in the bowel.

Tom Fulcher: Tom was admitted in the early hours of January 1 at Concord hospital in Sydney with severe abdominal pains and returned to Villa Maria on January 4.

The episode left Tom in a very weakened condition, coming as it did after prostate surgery in December, and he is only now returning to something approaching normalcy and is back caring for Villa Maria's 'Naked Ladies' (see photo).

Robert Hollow: Rob completed his commitments in Longreach at the end of the year and is living privately on the Sunshine Coast.

He has recently been put on a new medication which seems to be effective in modifying some of his symptoms. He is following a regular exercise and therapy regime.

Syd Nugent: Syd was in hospital at Royal North Shore for several days from 7 January for treatment for a dislocated hip.

John Worthington: John commenced radiation treatment in Brisbane early in January to treat lesions in his neck area. The treatment was a flow-on from surgery and treatment John had in 2016.

John had a farewell from the confreres in Brisbane on February 5, and has now taken up residence at Maryvale/Montbel.





News

Dominican Education Australia: In January, Dominican Education Australia (DEA) began using the downstairs offices in the Provincial Administration building. (the former Mission Centre offices, which have now relocated upstairs).

DEA is a Private Juridic Person (PJP) created to oversee seven education entities across NSW, Victoria and SA. In 2017, DEA was located with the Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia and the Solomon Islands at Rosary Lodge in Strathfield.

As the PJP is made up of two other Congregations of Dominican Sisters, both from South Australia, they sought office accommodation that was independent of any of the participating Congregations.

Banjo Blues: the following letter to the editor appeared in the 9 January, 1897, edition of the *Catholic Press*, a fore-runner to the *Catholic Weekly*. The 'Press' was published in Sydney between 1895-1942:

Sir – Unlike the number of young men who spend New Year's Eve in acts of hoodlumism and larrikinism, seven young men, residents of Hunters Hill, decided to serenade the residents of that borough, as at an appropriate season they anticipated that both hearts

and pockets would the more readily respond to an appeal for help on behalf of the local poor.

Armed with banjos and excellent voices they went from house to house, singing their songs, and then in the name of charity soliciting donations. Many were the rebuffs they received, more especially at the hands of the richer class.

One city merchant not only refused his aid, but loosened his dogs after them, and they then appealed to one of his servant girls, who gave one shilling. As a result of the little venture the young men handed to the Villa Maria conference of the St Vincent de Paul 25s – I am, etc, BANJO.

Mission Centre Appeal: The recent Marist Mission Centre newsletter announced that **Br. Charlie Randle sm** (now aged 77) and **Fr. Chris Ketsore sm** will don the lycra and again ride their bikes to support the annual Cycling for Children Appeal.

This year the appeal will fund the building of two kindergarten classrooms in primary schools conducted by the Marist Fathers on the beautiful island of Santos in Vanuatu; one kindergarten in the community of Imaru and the other in Lautapunga.

Provincial Assembly: an Assembly of the Province has been called for September 25-27 at Hunters Hill.

The Preparatory Committee will be Kevin Bates, Michael Whelan, Michael Mullins, and Peter McMurrich. The Assembly will focus on the issue of child sexual abuse and the Royal Commission.

The committee had its first meeting on February 21.

St Patrick's Church Hill 2018

Anniversary Year: this year St Pat's celebrates two significant anniversaries; the bi-centenary of the leaving of the consecrated hosts with the Catholic laity by Fr Jeremiah O'Flynn in 1818; and the sesquicentenary of the Marist Fathers being given care of the parish in 1868.

Michael Whelan and his team have been working hard to celebrate the anniversaries in a fitting manner.

The principal celebration of the bi-centenary will occur on Sunday May 6, when all of Australia's bishops will concelebrate an anniversary Mass; the celebration of the Marist sesquicentenary will take place on September 16.

The parish history, *The Harmonising Influence of Religion*, (first published in 2011 and long sold-out) has been reprinted to coincide with the anniversary year, and is available from the parish office or the Courtyard Coffee Shop.

Tony McCosker has been CEO of St Mary's House of Welcome at Fitzroy in Melbourne for the last 13 years; he will retire in July this year.

St Mary's is a support centre for disadvantaged people experiencing homelessness, poverty, and mental health issues.

We wish Tony a blessed retirement.



Charles O'Neill Bust: the St Vincent de Paul Society recently presented St Patrick's with a bronze bust of Charles O'Neill, who founded the Society in NSW in 1881, with an inaugural meeting at St Patrick's.

The bust will occupy a prominent position in the courtyard.

O'Neill came to Australia from New Zealand, where he worked as an architect and civil engineer, and was elected to parliament.

His later years in Australia saw him experience financial ruin, and he was buried as a pauper.

Publications

Tom Ryan has had the following article published recently: 'Pope Francis and *Amoris Laetitia*': a) A Reflection: The Scandal of Mercy; b) Discernment Process: 'Finding God in my marriage or committed relationship when we haven't ticked all the church's right boxes', in *Pastoral Liturgy* 48:2 (2018), 14-17.

Advertising

Province Retreats 2018: This year, once again, there will be a retreat based at Maryvale/Montbel, running from 19-24 August.

The other retreat will be held this year in Brisbane, at Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre at Ormiston. It is now confirmed for 4-9 November. **Tom Ryan** has kindly agreed to lead the retreats, which will have as their theme: ***Abba Father: our Hope and Guide in Uncertainty and Darkness.***

Booking forms will be sent out later in the year, but potential attendees might like to mark their diaries. Numbers on the Brisbane retreat will be capped at 20.

Travel: If you are going overseas you need to give details to Andrew Biddle. This ensures you are covered for travel insurance.

The Marist Fathers Australian Province policy covers those of us



under 101 years of age! Depending on the distance you are going to travel and your general health you may be required to get a letter from your GP giving you clearance to travel.

Communities and Individuals: At the 2016 June Provincial Chapter one of the financial declarations and decisions was to "remind communities and individuals to submit annual financial reports" by April each year.

In order for Andrew Biddle to complete the Consolidated Accounts for the 2017 Financial year, communities and individuals are asked to submit their financials by the end of March.

For those men in a ministry who also live in a community, a reminder that you are also required to report annually on your ministry.

Your ministry needs to be self-supportive and cover its running costs, which in some cases will involve a car, computers and other equipment.

If you need to discuss your financials or require assistance in completing the task than please don't hesitate to contact Andrew.

GST: The Marist Fathers Australian Province is GST exempt. If you purchase or intend to purchase items over \$100.00, please contact Andrew. Claiming the GST back makes the item cheaper.

Pensions and Rental Assistance:

Soon, you will be given the new rental assistance agreement to sign. This will enable your community to gain the extra Government assistance.

A reminder that pensions need to be paid into your Community account where you are living. If you are not doing this, please contact Andrew immediately, as it places you, the Marist Fathers and other Religious Congregations in jeopardy of losing the benefits associated with the Government payments.

Provincial Charges: The Provincial Charges for 2018 which cover each person's Catholic Church Insurance, BUPA Health Insurance and the General House tax are being sent to individuals and communities in February.

NSW Working with Children Check – Important Information for Confreres Working in NSW:

The Working With Children requirement commenced in 2013 and the clearance was good for 5 years.

Commencing early July, 2018, the Working With Children clearances of most NSW based confreres will gradually fall due for renewal.

The process is that the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) will email and text the individuals three months before the expiry date. However, this assumes that the individuals' contact details are still current.

Confreres will need to update their details on the OCG's website if there has been a change in the last five years.

The renewal process is online however the individual will need to attend to Service NSW again to go through the identification process, noting it is a renewal, not a new application. The organisation must remember to verify the number after the application has been renewed by the individual.

Province Website 'Members' access

The access code to the Province web site 'Members' page has been changed to:

Username: **sm**
Password: **colin**

This is the same as the International Marist web site. The change follows the recent and continuing upgrading of the web site.



Provincial Directory

Allan Connors: A phone number for Allan Connors doesn't appear in the new Province Directory. It is **8752 5959**

Pat Kervin: Pat is the victim of two bloopers in the latest Directory. His landline should be **9844 2210**, and not 9844 2209 as erroneously given. Similarly his mobile is **0418 383 987** and not 0418 283 987.

The mistake is repeated in the new SM Index, but a patch has been prepared and has been inserted to correct the error there.

John Worthington: John is in Room 2 at Maryvale, and his phone number is **02 9844 2249**.

Enclosures

- Provincial's homily for Peter Somers sm
- Aged Care Study Terms of Reference.



Currumbin Bookings

The self-contained flat at Currumbin is available for bookings for Marists and their families. Bookings are made through the provincial office.

Current bookings:

Feb 25-Mar 10
Jim Hargrave
Mar 30-Apr 20
John Begg
May 13-17
Provincial Council, *all Currumbin*
Jun 1-30
Ray Chapman
Jul 15-21
Kevin Stewart
Aug 31- Sep 15
Peter McMurrich
Oct 15-Nov 4
Bob Barber
Nov 9-17
Tom Ryan

NB: The whole of Currumbin is booked for use by the Provincial Council for its annual planning meeting from 13-17 May inclusive.

Neat and tidy

Please ensure if you stay at Currumbin you leave the place neat and tidy. It is the responsibility of those that use the facility to take care of it.

On a number of occasions, the property has had to be cleaned by the people entering rather than those that have enjoyed the facilities.

This is particularly the case with the flat – if you use it, before you go you should vacuum it, clean the bathrooms, clean benches, mop down tiled areas, and dispose of garbage and perishables.

JPICC Corner

Provincial Committee for Justice,
Peace and Integrity of Creation

Province & Marist Family

Our province JPICC has met several times in recent months with local Committee members, as usual.

Members are **Jim Carty** (convenor), **Kevin Bates**, **Paul Mahony**, **Ron Nissen** and **Kevin Stewart**.

Several times a year, the meeting expands to embrace the wider Marist Family.

Regular attendees have been

Noelene Simmons SM, **Margaret Tisch SMSM** and until recently **Paul Hough FMS**.

The expanded committee will meet on Mar 20 to plan fine-tune focus points for 2018.

Bridge Program

Muriel Valles (BP & ACU graduate, currently studying in Hong Kong) is now the coordinator of the newly-established Bridge Program Coordinating Team.

Muriel is assisted by fellow BP-ers, **Min Min Soe** and **Kyaw Zin**.

Student self-assessment will be a feature of the 2018 program beginning shortly.

And also...



Clockwise from top: Marist Brothers and Fathers socialising at Montbel | Iconic Aussie experience for **Denis Revi** at the Robertson pie shop | **John Hopkinson** with the *Misioneros Maristas* team at Christmas | Canadian visitors/relatives at the grave of **Fr Nicolas**, Villa Maria | **Paul Glynn** with Japanese Consul-General and Deputy Foreign Minister near Villa Maria's Gingko tree.





Clockwise from top left:

Tony Kennedy and Roman snow | **Gerard Hall** and **John Larsen** in Brisbane | Revamped Province web site banner | Bunya cone peril near Villa Maria clothes line | Medical emergency team chopper near Montbel

