

Marist Fathers Australian Province Provincial Circular

No 2 - Apr 2020



From the Provincial

Brothers

The peace of the Risen Lord be with you all.

In every one of his appearances to the disciples, the risen Lord gives them a commission. In John's gospel, to those locked up in the house for fear, Jesus says "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn 20:21).

The mission given to each one of us, in whatever state we may find ourselves, arises out of our being caught up, through the gift of the Spirit, in the very life of God - our divinization. In his prayer to the Father during the last supper, Jesus reveals the source of our Christian mission: "As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us" (Jn 17:21).

Caught up in the dynamic of the life of the Trinity - as the Father gifts the Son to the world, we in the Son too continue to receive the mission to reveal to the world the compassionate love of God.

Our common life as religious has its foundation in that mission, our life and work together supporting and strengthening that witness.

We have been given opportunities, which we may not have been available to us otherwise, to give witness through our unity "so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (Jn 17:23).

Let's seize the day, even if we are still locked in the house.

Tony

In late February the General Administration held a meeting of bursars and finance managers in Rome. Andrew Biddle, our business manager, represented the province. Andrew was invited to give presentations on financial statements and on investments.

I have invited Andrew to share with us his experience...

From Andrew Biddle

I returned recently from Rome where I participated in the 2020 Financial Leadership Workshop.

I would like to share my reflection with you.

Hospitality: In typical Marian style the General House community made you feel welcome and part of their community. A genuine care and concern and an interest in your challenges and celebrations made you feel part of the journey our journey as Marists.

As you may be aware, I had a chest infection near the end of the trip and returned to General House to be seen by a Doctor. Once again, the

hospitality and care by Fr Pat Devlin and the General House community was what I would have received by my immediate family. They certainly looked after us.

Presence: Members of the GA finance office Paolo Mancinelli and Aline Gamberale are members of the Sant'Egidio Community who, in their ministry to the marginalised of society, among other things weekly provide meals and a friendly presence to the homeless of Rome in a bid to bridge their gap of isolation by reconnecting them with ties of affection and solidarity.

Fr Ben McKenna assists them. Good people making a difference!

Worldwide: Mass and prayer in another language - Spanish, Maori, Italian, French was an amazing experience. It made you realise that the Society of Mary is worldwide and so too our Mission.

Mass amongst the Papal tombs beneath St Peter's Basilica, was incredibly special.

Leadership and challenges: Each Province and unit face their own challenge! Yes, in Australia the



Ben McKenna (far left) and Andrew Biddle (far right) at the Rome meeting.

assembly and Chapter will help address some of our challenges, but we are not alone.

The General House Leadership team desire to provide the direction required for worldwide Society to meet our needs and those of the communities we serve.

Future: We went to have a meal with Fr Tony Kennedy sm and the seminarians from Africa, Asia, Mexico, New Zealand and Oceania. Young people with vision and hope. You get a sense when talking to them of their passion and desire for the Marist Mission.

Mission: In the General House community they have two Syrian refugees who participate in the life of their community. A hand up not a hand out!

Reflection: Fr John Larsen gave us an insight into the important document that was published by The Congregation for the Institutes of consecrated life: "Economy in the service of charism and mission".

The fundamental criteria that has to be respected in each form of economical and management activities are:

- Fidelity to God and to the Gospel
- Fidelity to the charism
- Poverty
- Respect for the ecclesiastical nature of goods
- The sustainability of the works
- The need for reporting

Action: Fr John Harhager guided our Society policies and practice review and overview. Common threads were explored and conversations were held in a spirit of searching for the best policy and practice.

Finally, I would like to thank the Provincial Leadership team for inviting me to attend. It was an amazing experience and one that has helped me grow as a person and understand the journey of the worldwide Society of Mary.

Andrew Biddle

Provincial Council

Among items treated at the provincial council in March were the following:

- Reports from the RPD and the Internet and Publications office.
- Healthcare coordinators for the Sydney area.
- Preparations for the assembly and chapter.
- Community meetings on the restructuring proposal.
- CPSL audit.
- Professional standards matters.
- Draft statutes for our future.

News

Coping with COVID-19

The confreres in our aged care facilities continue to experience lockdown. They appreciate the contacts made.

The rest of us seem to be surviving well. However, let us take care not to let our guard down – keep washing our hands, using sanitizer when entering the common areas of our houses, monitoring coughs and colds and not ignoring feeling off-colour.

Confreres at St Pat's and Hunters Hill have had a busy Easter providing liturgies online, which have been very well received. On Holy Thursday, the St Pat's Mass of the Lord's Supper received 9792 hits!

Provincial Diary

May 16

Provincial Council Meeting

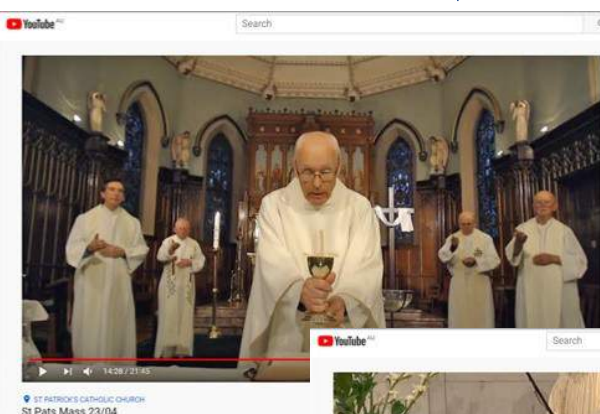
Jun 16

Provincial Council Meeting

The financial effects of the pandemic.

COVID-19 means the equity markets around the world have entered a period of significant volatility. The virus has effectively brought the global economy to an immediate stop.

From a Marist Fathers perspective, COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on our portfolio as we saw equity markets decline by 18.5%. Dividends are expected to be low as many companies keep money in their business to ensure it survives.



Many owners of property are being asked for rent assistance. The housing market has also seen a decline as a result of the Government restrictions.

From an expenses point of view, we have made significant adjustments to contracts and other items to ensure we can continue to meet our civil and redress claim obligations.

COVID-19 has certainly made everyone review the way they live. It is a good time for individuals and communities to question what we spend our money on, and ensure it is prudent, as we experience a moment in history which could in the worst case scenario lead to another Great Depression.

Calendar

A number of significant events scheduled for the next few months have been cancelled:

- the annual MAP (Marist Asia Pacific) meeting of major superiors and their vicars from Asia (Philippines), New Zealand, Oceania (Fiji), scheduled for late May
- the CRA (Catholic Religious of Australia) annual conference of major superiors planned for June

Our own **Assembly** has been postponed until September 29 – October 1 and the **Provincial Chapter** until November 10 – 13, pandemic restrictions permitting.

At present, the time of the **Provincial Retreat** remains October 11-16.

Personnel

Paul Mahony has emerged from quarantine and has taken up residence at Villa Maria.

Michael Jacques remains at La Neylière, where the Colinian Renewal continues with participants, **Ray Chapman** and presenters in isolation.

Sadly, **Father Paul Loubaresse**, of the

*Right: **Paul Loubaresse**, a member of the La Neylière community, who died of COVID-19 on Apr 20.*

Below: An open-air session at La Neylière after the recent resumption of the Colinian Renewal program.



La Neylière community, after a long period in an induced coma, has succumbed to the virus. May he rest in peace.

Kevin Redmond is in Ranong together with **Larry Sabud** and **Frank Bird**.

Frank is reported in the NZ Friday Flash of March 9 (in response to the pandemic):

‘The Government closed all education institutions and so the Marist Centre is closed and we’ve all been working from home. Schools’ summer holiday is from March 11 - May 11.

‘There are still no confirmed COVID-19 cases in Ranong but the borders have closed and strict monitoring is taking place along with a curfew from 10pm to 4am.’

Pio Fong Waqavotuware, in coming to the end of his assignment at St. Pat’s, applied for a working visa from the NZ government in order to work in the Auckland Diocese, it was denied on medical grounds.

Pio is now residing at Villa Maria as he works out his future ministry.

Deaths

Patrick McCann sm, New Zealand died on 28 February 2020

Fr Crescente Manso (Europe-Spain) died on 6 April 2020 *from COVID-19*

Fr Giuseppe Maccarini (Europe-Italy) died on 7 April 2020

Fr Falani "Frank" Terry (Oceania, Samoa) died on 11 April 2020.

Fr Paul Loubaresse (Europe-France) died on 20 April 2020 *from COVID-19*

Fr Patrick J. Byrne (Europe-Ireland) died on 21 April 2020 *from COVID-19*

Many in the province have fond memories of **Paddy "Jerusalem" Byrne** served for a number of years in both New Zealand and Australia, lecturing in Sacred Scripture in our seminaries.

He was always pleasant company, notorious (?) for his jokes and limericks. He enjoyed opera and was a cricket enthusiast – while working in NZ he would be brought over to supply at St Pat’s by Neville Byrne so that he could attend significant tests at the SCG in between masses and confessions (or vice versa). May he rest in peace.

Currumbin Bookings



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

Assuming current restrictions on domestic travel have been lifted, the current bookings are:

July 4 – 18 Gavin Foster
July 19 – 25 Kevin Stewart
Nov 2 – 30 Bob Barber (Family)

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.

The upstairs section of Currumbin is for the exclusive use of professed Marists. The exception is for approved group use, e.g. Marist Charism Group planning meeting, where the usage is notified to confreres well in advance.

JPICC Corner

Provincial Committee
for Justice, Peace
and
Integrity of Creation

Above: **Andrew Dumas** (Marist Laity Australia) and **Sr Ruth Davis SM** were welcomed at the Marist Family JPIC Committee on Mar 07 at Villa Maria.

Right: Two graduates of the Bridge Program and ACU's Diploma course, are **James Brangnu** and **Dingo Keidar**, studying at Bangkok's University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce. They report weekly to their BP friends in Australia through video sessions. Uni classes continue online during lockdown.



And also...



1: **Tony Kennedy** 'zooming' with the Villa Maria community. 2: **Michael Whelan** and **Casa di Maria** students on Zoom. 3: Socially distant line-up for flu shots at Montbel. 4: **Aliko Langi** and **Paul Glynn** (before COVID-19 spacing!). 5: **Paul Bullen** and restructuring conversations at Maryvale. 6: **Gerard Hall** and **John Begg** with **John and Jan Rynn**, celebrating John's 80th birthday.



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7: **Pio Fong** and helper, **Gavin Foster**, preparing Villa Maria Easter luncheon. 8 & 9: **Villa Maria community** at prayer in St Joseph's chapel... and on Holy Thursday. 10: Bird life at Montbel. 11: **Casa di Maria community**, Easter Mass.



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