

Marist Fathers Australia District Circular

August 2025

From the District Superior

According to our Constitutions (n.163), the general chapter represents the entire Society gathered:

- *to evaluate its fidelity to its spirit and mission,*
- *to resolve important questions concerning the Society as a whole,*
- *to decide on directions to be followed for the future, and to elect the superior general and his council.*

It has a special duty to safeguard the common heritage and to foster growth and development.

The 30th General Chapter of the Society of Mary will take place at Ad Gentes Centre Nemi near Rome.

Kevin Redmond, Gerard Hall and myself are attending along with Marists from each of our 10 provinces and districts around the world and the current general administration. Some lay people who work closely with us in Fiji, Mexico and Europe will be present as well.

We gather at Nemi on 13th September and finish on 5th October.

During the chapter we will have an audience with Pope Leo during the first week and also attend the perpetual profession of six of our seminarians on 30th September.

In recent months our delegates attended regional gatherings around the district as part of the preparations for the General Chapter. Many comments were made about the upcoming chapter and the future of the Society of Mary. Similar gatherings have been held around the Society.

I heard hope expressed that we older blokes and units not hold back those younger growing units. There were concerns expressed about those parts of the Society like us, that are aging and fragile. As well as comments about those parts that are growing and yet also fragile.

There are issues of leadership and governance throughout the Society that need further reflection. People were wary of too much centralisation.

I heard positive comments and some questions about the Omnes Gentes communities and how they fit in the wider society. I heard people express the view that our Marist charism and spirit is still very relevant and needed in our world today.

When the chapter begins the delegates change to be capitulants. We need to consider not just the concerns of Australia but those of the whole Society. I am not present

as a delegate or representative of the District of Australia. I am present as a Marist concerned with the wellbeing and the future of the Society of Mary. It is about issues affecting the whole society.

Please keep this important Marist gathering in your prayers.



CRA Conference

Recently I attended the Catholic Religious Australia National Assembly at Parramatta. It was good to gather with leaders from many different congregations from around Australia.

A number of people commented about our departure from St Pat's. Some people mentioned how it had been our men who had met their congregation when they first arrived and Sydney and helped them to settle. They were grateful for that and for our ministry over so many years. I even met some of the Brigidine Sisters who I knew well from my time in West Sunshine many years ago. It was good to catch up.

Tony Kennedy sm

District Superior's Diary

6 Sep – 12 Oct

At Rome and Nemi for General Chapter

13 Sep – 5 Oct

General Chapter

22-26 Sep

District Retreat

26 Sep

Jubilarians' Mass and Luncheon

21 Oct

District Council

15 Nov

Sesquicentenary of the death of Fr Colin sm

District Council

At its July and August meetings the Council considered the following:

- Professional Standards matters
- Report on visitation of Perth and Maryvale/Montbel
- Preparation for the 2025 General Chapter
- Aged Care Review for Maryvale / Montbel

Appointments

Peter McMurrich: District Vicar.

Happenings

These reports from the District website:

Fourvière celebration

Members of the Marist Family gathered at Hunters Hill on Jul 27 to mark the anniversary of the Fourvière pledge.

The day's events began with the celebration of the 10 am parish Eucharist in Holy Name of Mary church led by Marist Fathers' District Superior, **Fr Tony Kennedy SM**.

A walking tour of the Villa Maria monastery precinct, luncheon in the parish hall and a tour of nearby St Joseph's College completed the day's activities. *For more go to* <https://maristfathers.org.au/news/news-2025/jul-2025#jul-19>



Marist Charism and Culture Immersion

In a tradition extending over a decade members of Marist school staffs spent a week at Villa Maria monastery, Hunters Hill, exploring the charism and culture of the Marist Family. The immersion experience concluded on Aug 07, anniversary of the birth in 1790 of the Founder of the Society of Mary, Ven Jean-Claude Colin. *For more go to:* <https://maristfathers.org.au/news/news-2025/august-2025#aug-06>



An 'Early Farewell' from St Patrick's

Anticipating the Marist Fathers' leaving the city shrine of St Patrick's, Church Hill, at the end of 2025 a farewell event was held on Aug 10. A packed assembly attended the midday Mass concelebrated by parish priest, **Fr Michael Whelan SM**, other priests of St Patrick's and fellow Marists before a gathering in the crypt beneath the historic church.

Bishop Danny Meagher traced the history of the Marist Fathers' association with St Patrick's and offered words of

Deaths

Fr Walter Gaudreau (USA) 29 Jun

Fr Antonia Sanz (Europe - Spain) 30 Aug

Br Kevin Jackson (Australia) 29 Aug

From the District website:



Fellow Marists, family and friends gathered on Sep 03 at Holy Name of Mary church, Hunters Hill, to farewell **Br Kevin Jackson SM**. Vigil prayers were held the evening before in the chapel of Br Kevin's community of Montbel.

The Requiem liturgy was led by District Superior, **Fr Tony Kennedy**, assisted by parish

priest, **Fr Michael Carroll**, and Maryvale/Montbel superior, **Fr Ray Chapman**. Br Kevin's SM Brothers, **Brs Terry Garrett** and **Charles Randle**, were present on the sanctuary with the Mass attended by other members of the Marist Family. Interment at Macquarie Park cemetery followed the Mass.

appreciation for their 157 years of service at 'everyone's parish church'. The Marist priests who serve or had served at the church were presented with gifts which included a framed image of the shrine and the names of those who have ministered over the years.

The event included a lavish buffet, organised and funded by parishioners and attendees of St Patrick's. *For more go to:* <https://maristfathers.org.au/news/news-2025/august-2025#aug-11>



JPICC Corner

District Committee for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

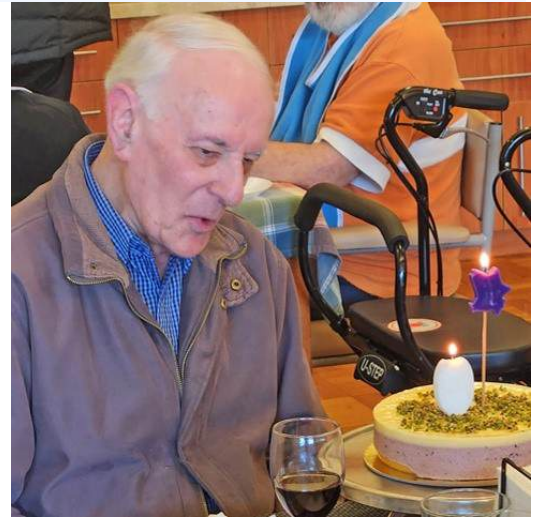
At its Aug 2 meeting at Hunters Hill the **Marist Family JPIC** committee discussion included:

- progress report on the development of the JPIC website, www.maristjustice.org
- draft statement on Domestic Violence
- further planning for the *Season of Creation* gathering, Sep 14
- Bishops' Social Justice statement discussion, Nov 08

The **Marist Fathers JPIC** Committee met with the District Superior on Aug 25 to review its mandate and discuss future directions.



Above, Brisbane celebrations: **Gerard Hall** and 75th birthday cake. | At Herston confreres gather for Harry Moore's 60th jubilee. Below: **Michael Moore** and **Steve Truscott** in Perth. | **Tom Ryan** celebrating his 60th jubilee at Montbel.



Right: Marist Family JPIC committee in session.
Below: Stonework repairs, Villa Maria.





Above: Fourvière day tour of Villa Maria. | **Pius Jones** with Deer Park school staff in St Peter Chanel chapel. Right: **Michael Carroll** opening *Ageing Well* program in Chapter Hall, Villa Maria. | **Gavin Foster** leaving for Marist Brothers General Chapter in the Philippines. | ... and with **Phil Cody** at Villa Maria.



Above, 'Early Farewell' at St Patricks: **Michael Whelan** with **Peter McMurrich's** book on St Pat's. | Concelebrants at the midday Mass. Below: One of the PowerPoint slides of Marists who've worked at St Pat's. | Farewell to **Kevin Jackson**.



International



Above: New leadership team for District of South America. **Lauro Da Silva Ferreira**, **Renivaldo De Souza Rodrigues** (District Superior), **Jose Maria Da Silva** and **Paddy O'Neil**. | Episcopal ordination of **Miguel Contreras** as auxiliary bishop of Callao, Peru. Below: **Christopher Ganzon** hands over to **Roque Rebibo** as superior of St Peter Chanel's formation community, Davao. | Asia District priests with formation group, Davao.



Above: Newly-ordained, **Godlove Ngwese Ndema**, **Clovis Gwencho Nformenteng** and **Joel Sebastien Eyango Ebonto** offer their first blessing to Apostolic Nuncio, **Most Rev José Bettencourt**, in Yaoundé. | After ordination in Togo, **Joseph Koffi Adjokpa** with Bishop **Isaac Gaglio** and Africa District Superior, **Martin Simna**.

Right: **Ben McKenna** with Marist Family group at Manziana. | **John Hopkinson** and lay leader, **Marcia**, at Yukumbia, Bolivia.

