



From the provincial

Dear confreres

We have come to the end of another year. Many wonderful things happened during this year and for these we give thanks.

S&L

The recently concluded S&L program at Villa Maria for ten young confreres from Oceania and the Philippines is one of these.

The S&L ongoing formation program that has run for the last four years has been an excellent MAP initiative. It now moves into a new phase where those who experienced one of the programmes at Villa will be asked to help see that its principles are continued in the everyday situation men find themselves in, working in Oceania or the Philippines.

A great deal of the success of this program has been due to Paul Sullivan sm and Susitino Sionepoe sm this year and those who directed earlier programs.

A great spirit

I am very conscious of how much we as a group have aged over the last few years.

Each year the confreres at Maryvale / Montbel, and to a lesser extent Villa Maria, get a little less mobile, depend on a few more aids to cope, visit more medical professionals, and so on, but by and large continue to have a great spirit.

The courteous way in which they deal with one another and their carers is a testament to the good Marists and men they are.

Selected ministries—and support

Also, during the past twelve months we had excellent work done by three study committees that will be very important for us in the future.

These committees studied and prepared reports on the three ministries that we selected at the last Chapter as the most important works and the ones to which we would commit our greatest support in the future.

They were St Patrick's, the Hunters Hill Precinct, and the Mission Centre. All members of the Province have received a copy of the St Pat's and Hunters Hill report, produced by the

committees, and the Mission Centre one is on the way.

Assembly preparation

Details of what we do with these reports and how we take our next steps with them is up to our Assembly Committee.

The proposal being put to the Assembly Preparatory committee by the Provincial Council is that we hold a regional meeting in February 2015 where we will discuss these three reports and other things in preparation for the Assembly to be held in October.



S&L group at their final Mass, Dec 10

The reports from these regional meetings will be circulated to all members of the Province.

Specific questions

From their reading of the three committee reports and the regional meeting reports the Provincial Council then proposes that all members of the Province will be asked to fill in a questionnaire /survey with specific questions to do with our three prioritized ministries and on working more closely with the members of MAP leading to a restructuring of the Society in this part of the world.

Vital

This survey is vital. Our meetings are vital. We must all be involved in this process that will give us very important information to be used in planning the Assembly and being responsible for our future as a Province.

Take St Pat's, for example: unless it is clear from the survey that this, our first prioritized work, has the wholehearted support of the Province we cannot make any long-term commitment to a new and bold vision.

Without sufficient men willing to take appointment (part or full-time) and declare that they support the work of St Pat's and unless we have the financial means to support the work over the next few years, we will have to move out of St Pats.

It is not possible to give more information or be any clearer about what we will be doing next year because what happens is completely up to the Assembly committee.

They may not like the Provincial Council's recommendation and decide on a different approach.

Year of Consecrated Life

Next year one thing we will have to occupy us is the **Year of Consecrated Life**.

Pope Francis has declared this special year to run from 30th Nov '14 – 2nd Feb'16, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the issuing of *Perfec-*

tae Caritatis, the Decree on Religious Life, by the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council.

John Hannan recently addressed a short letter encouraging us to enter wholeheartedly into this jubilee celebrating religious life, 'gratefully remembering the recent past' and 'embracing the future with hope'.

Perfectae Caritatis called for the renewal of religious life just as Vatican II was calling for the renewal of the whole Church.

Appreciating the inspiration

Most certainly we can look back in gratitude for 50 years of deeper understanding given us in appreciating the inspiration that led to the foundation of the Marist enterprise.

Marists have done this part of our renewal well and we are deeply indebted to the likes of Coste, Lessard, Larkin, and a few others, who helped us understand our Marist life better and given us tools to live better our religious life.

A strong argument can be made for suggesting that the last 50 years of "adaptation and renewal" has not been good for all religious.

For some congregations and individual religious the 50 years has been a disaster, their religious life is on the ropes close to annihilation.

Where this is the case it is because the call to renewal and change was misinterpreted and there has been a dismantling of what is essential to religious life.

'Lost the plot?'

A priest friend, not looking at Marists only but at many groups of male and female religious, believes we have lost the plot.

He observes that so many religious live on their own, yet religious claim the 'common life' is not only important but essential to life.

The same priest friend cannot understand how religious say they are

living the evangelical counsels of poverty and obedience (he hasn't mentioned the other one!), when they do what they like, when they like, have access to plenty of money, and couldn't give a tosser about any sort of accountability.

Sometimes when my friend is helping me be 'critically aware' of how things are in my life and in religious life generally I cannot answer his probing questions.

Living in a fair dinkum way

I believe that we will never attract vocations until young people see that the mass of us are actually living the religious life we profess.

Unless we are living in a fair dinkum way the evangelical counsels and we are living community life and sharing common ministry, we have Buckley's of getting any idealistic, discerning young person who knows the truth when they see it, and "fake" when they see it, to join us.

And if they do come they will only stay as long as we religious are true to ourselves and living genuine religious life.

So as not to depress you further and prevent you from reading the rest of this circular I will lighten things up to be more "Christmassy". Did you hear about the two baked beans who were touring around Australia? They ended up in Cairns.

Ho, Ho, Ho. 'Appy Christmas to all.

Bob Barber sm



Provincial Diary

16 December	Provincial
Council Meeting	
20 Dec – 4 Jan	Provincial
Office closed	
5 January	Provincial
Office reopens	
20 January	Provincial
Council meeting	
21 January	Committee for
Ageing	
22 January	Towards Heal-
ing Panel Meeting	
16 February	Province Fi-
nance Committee	
17 February	Provincial
Council Meeting	
25 February	Committee for
Ageing	

Appointments

Terry Garrett: Appointed to St Patrick's parish and community as from 1 January, 2015

Charles Randle: Appointed to Marist community at Herston as from 1 January, 2015 (however Charlie may remain in Sydney for several months into 2015 for knee surgery).

Personnel

Tony Corcoran was back in Australia on annual leave in November. He is about to commence his third 4 year period as secretary general on 1 January, 2015, which will take him through until the end of 2018.

Tony Kennedy will be back in Australia for annual leave from 19 December. He will be spending some time with his parents at Gunnedah and will also take the time to pat a few koalas, since Gunnedah has recently begun promoting itself as the Koala Capital.

Lote Raiwalui, assistant general for Australia, was with us briefly from 7-12 December, and took the opportunity to catch up with the participants in the S&L programme prior to their return to Oceania.

Deaths

Meta Truscott died in hospital in Brisbane on 27 November, and was buried on 1 December from Mater Dei church, Ashgrove West.

John Flagg, brother in law of Patrick Kervin, died on 25 November in Wagga Wagga; his funeral took place at Ganmain (NSW) on 1 December.

Sr Claire O'Brien smsm died on 7 December, at Gilroy Village, Merrylands. Her Mass of Christian Burial was held at St Margaret Mary's, Merrylands, on 11 December.

Below: **Meta Truscott**, Diarist extraordinaire | **Cornelius Giris** receiving his S&L certificate in 2013 | Former assistant-general **Rafaele Qalovi**.



Fr Philip Brennan sm, d.3.11.14, Taradale NZ
Fr Fortune Frenoy, d.21.11.14, Wheeling, USA
Fr Louis-De-France Gagnon sm, d.1.12.14, Canada
Fr Cornelius Giris sm, d 3.12.14, Kanosia, PNG
Fr Rafaele Qalovi sm, d.5.12.2014, Nadi, Fiji

Sick

Keith Shepherd was admitted to Ryde Hospital on 24 November with pneumonia and breathing difficulties; he transferred to Longueville Private hospital on 5 December for some respite care.

Tom Fulcher: Tom's surgery and recovery from a hip replacement have gone exceptionally well. As we go to press Tom has been spending time with the Maryvale/Montbel community, and hopes to return to Villa Maria prior to Christmas.

News

"What about us?...Give us a break", chant the elves in the Provincial Office. "We want a slice of the festive action too". Just so little friends, and your pleas have been heard. Therefore, we announce the **Closure of the Provincial Office from 4pm on Friday 19 December until 4 January, 2015 inclusive**; the elves will be back refreshed to reopen the office on Monday 5 January. If need arises: **Provincial: 0418 260 686; Vicar Provincial: 0419 271 831**. If phones are not switched on, they will nevertheless be checked regularly for messages.

Fathers & children's camp in Villa Maria grounds; on the night of 29/30 November the Villa Maria grounds were dotted with tents as family groups from Villa Maria primary school enjoyed a night under the stars.

Popular parish priest, Kevin Bates, celebrated a Vigil Mass for the group at 5pm. By 10am the following morning the tents were gone and the grounds were back to normal.



Beware: wild beasts



A large campfire on the asphalt surface of the former tennis court kept the wild beasts at bay, and provided a focus for some communal activities.

The 4th and final Villa Maria-based S&L programme concluded on 10 December and shortly afterwards the 10 participants began flying back to resume their apostolic labours in the Pacific. **Paul Sullivan** will be having a well-earned sabbatical year in 2015.

Association of Marist Schools Cricket Carnival: Woodlawn hosted the annual Marist schools cricket carnival in the first week of December. One of the participating schools was the former St Paul's at Traralgon, now rebadged as La Valla High school.

Holy Name of Mary church has been encased in scaffolding for much of November and into December, so that fragile pieces of decorative sandstone can be assessed and replaced. This project followed on from work earlier in the year to address rising damp issues at the base of the church. It was while work was being done to address the rising damp that a large piece of stonework fell from high up on the roof, narrowly missing the foreman.

Nativity Scene: Thanks to the enterprise and initiative of Syd Nugent, there is now a larger-than-life cut-out Christmas crib on parish land on the corner of Gladesville Road and Mary Street, Hunters Hill, adjacent to the roundabout. The word on the



Gerard Hall at an S&L session





streets is that Syd downloaded a pattern from the internet, and then arranged for woodwork classes at St Josephs to transfer the images from the patterns onto lightweight wood. Add a couple of spotlights, and bingo...you've got a stable, Holy Family, shepherds, kings, and assorted beasts on display. There wasn't time to individually paint the figures, so this year they're wearing the all-white colours of the club, but next year they'll be decked out in individual livery.

Publications

Andrew Murray, "How Might the Church Change in Response to the Sexual Abuse Crisis?", paper delivered at the Tenth Biennial Conference in Philosophy, Religion and Culture, *Faith and the Political*, Catholic Institute of Sydney, 3 – 5 October 2014.

Tom Ryan: Commentaries for Holy Week in *Pastoral Liturgy* 44.2, March – June 2014, 20-29.

Commentaries for Sundays 28-30 & All Souls to Christ the King, in *Pastoral Liturgy* 44.3, June-November 2014, 65-69, 74-81.

Reflection on 'If I were God for a Day, What Would I Do?' *Compass: A Review of Topical Theology* 48:2, Winter 2014. 43-4.

'Our Pathway to God: Drawn by De-

sire', *Compass: A Review of Topical Theology* 48:3, Spring, 2014, 3-9.

Advertising

Passwords. One particularly insidious aspect of modern life is the need to remember passwords and pin numbers. So, wishing to be ever helpful, from time to time we publish the user names/passwords for access to the members-only sections of the General Administration and Australian Province websites:

General Admin: sm & colin; **Australian Province:** newsletter & colin or circular & colin (either combination works).

(See below)

Other Provinces

On 13 December Phil Bennenbroek from the New Zealand Province was ordained at St Patrick's, Pukekoe, NZ. Just to save you rushing for an

atlas, we can tell you that it's described on Google as a small hamlet 50 kilometres from Auckland.

Bilgola & Currumbin Bookings

Currumbin

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

2014

Dec 14-31 Jim Hargrave

2015

Jan 1-14 Michael Carroll

Jan 15-Feb 15 Tom Ryan

April 8-12 Jim Hargrave

April 23-28 Tom Ryan

May 1-9 Tom Ryan

May 10-13 Provincial Council: All Currumbin

July 3-31 Bob Barber

Oct 1-31 Ray Chapman

Nov 17-30 Peter McMurrich



3 rooms upstairs 17-19 January, 2015, by Kevin Bates, Michael Whelan, and John Worthington for 50th anniversary reunion.

2 rooms upstairs 26-30 January, 2015, by Stephen Truscott and Ben McKenna for reunion.

2 rooms upstairs 1-9 May, 2015, O'Connor & P. Carde

All Currumbin (flat & upstairs) 10-13 May, 2015, for Provincial Council evaluation and planning meeting.

Bilgola

The self-contained flat is available for Marists to book for an extended

holiday, a retreat, or an extended period of study. Bookings are made through the provincial office. Currently:

2014

- Dec 10-21 Gavin Foster
- Dec 25-28 Ray Chapman
- Dec 29-31 Kevin Stewart

2015

- Jan 1-31 Ray Chapman

A decision has been made to sell Bilgola and we are currently doing some preliminary work as to the best way to do this and establishing the most opportune selling window. We will continue to take bookings for



the flat, but on the understanding that at some point during 2015 the property will be on the market.

Enclosures: Kalendarium

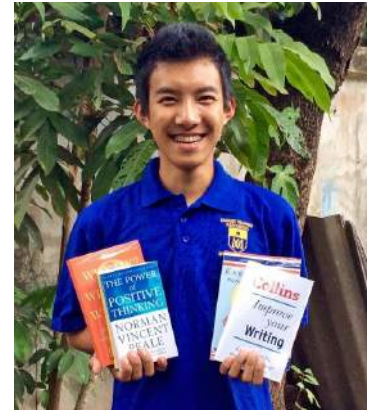


2015 symposium

Jim Carty (convenor of the Province JPICC) reports on an aspect of the planned combined Marist JPIC symposium in 2015:

As I mentioned at our recent meeting like so many things in life, the initial idea after reading Henry Reynolds' latest book "Forgotten War" was to invite him as our annual Marist Family keynote speaker.

Our the hope is to inform whoever may attend of the contrast between the extraordinary attention Australia will give to the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli and the part it has developed as our Nation's narrative, our National myth, with little or no acknowledgement or memorials of the frontier wars during which the First People of this land fought to protect their "sovereign borders."



Bridge Program

Top: Members of the BP14 group with interview shirts and bonus award books, thanks to 'BP friends' in Australia. Above, left: ACU Thai-Burma online program coordinator, **Maya Cranitch** (seated) with **Dr Michelle Haron**, at Villa Maria with **Gil Casio & Lionel Mechavez**. Above, right: Newly-selected participants in BP14-15. Both groups will apply to ACU for their Thai-Burma border tertiary online studies program 2015 intake.