



Provincial Circular No. 4 Aug 2015

From the provincial

Dear Confreres

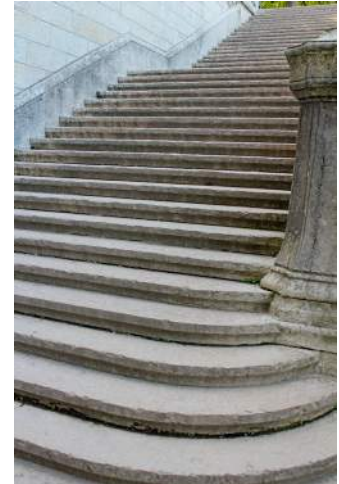
In the first weeks of July, when we were preparing to mark the Fourvière event with the other members of the Marist Family in Sydney, I found myself noting a number of similarities involving those who made the pledge to found the society of 'Mari-ists' in 1816 and Marists in our present day.

The twelve newly ordained and seminarians from the seminary of St Irenaeus who climbed the hill to the tiny Chapel of Our Lady were young men of courage and passion.

When we consider what they did, the obstacles to their plans they could imagine in 1816 and those they could never imagine but which came their way in the following years, to achieve what they did they had to be truly great men and they had to be committed to something that was really worthwhile.

Only a third of those who signed the pledge at Fourvière would eventually take vows with the first group of Marists, 20 years later, in 1837.

This demonstrates just how tough achieving their dream was going to be.



Those early Marists got others, men and women who became religious and some lay friends too, to share their "mad" dream.



Farewell to Bilgola

The Brothers, under Marcellin Champagnat, and the Sisters, under Jeanne-Marie Chavoïn, were both underway in the following twelve months.

While the Fourvière pledge was to do something quite remarkable and visionary we see from the pledge that the young priests and seminarians are very cautious, wanting to be very practical and mature in what they were doing.

They wanted to ensure this venture was not to be a foolhardy dream.

I believe that we are in a similar boat today. Our prospects do not look all that brilliant.

We can either have go and try to achieve things in our Marist mission or we can give up.

In the overall picture the Society of Mary in Australia today should not be ashamed or disappointed in what we have done, or what we have been to the Church in Australia over the last 170 years. Great things have been done by confreres in touching hundreds of thousands of lives.

For the vast majority of those times it has not been in grand moments but in simple (Marian-like) kindnesses shown in the confessional at St Pat's, in teaching that difficult 3B class, or in popping in on someone and having a cuppa over the kitchen table.

It is simple stuff, that isn't the prerogative of Marists alone but is something we have done well and should continue in the future.

Going on what they say some of our doomsday confreres seem to suggest because as a group we are not young, switched-on, brilliant, etc, we have little or nothing to offer.

We are not inventive, creative and don't think outside the box. With very little to offer they suggest we should close up shop, pull out of our few remaining corporate works and

retire to gentle life at Hunters Hill or Herston. Last man out to turn out the lights.

This is not the lesson we learn from the young men at the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin that overlooks Lyon almost two hundred years ago.

Just because our future doesn't look grand, big-time and expanding, when we are judged by the criteria of someone judging us in terms of a commercial business venture we do not have to shut up shop, we are not finished.

Before the years of expansion, the few pioneer Marists went on being who they were, believing in themselves, and left the rest to grace.

That is what we have to do today.

Unfortunately we have very little wiggle room as we try to fulfil our ministry obligations today.

Many times we struggle to find men for jobs that need to be done.

That is what makes our future bleak. But, because we have a few confreres who believe in our future, we are not ready to put up the "closed" notice just yet.

It was great to see in Sydney a few weeks after Fourvière two young men take first vows as Marist Brothers.

Brothers James and Jack were making the same commitment as did St Marcellin, Jean Claude, Etienne Declas and Etienne Terraillon in 1816.

Although the future may not look clear and "easy" for Jack and James they have to trust in their call to Marist life and in the future, warts and all.

In a couple of weeks we will have the New Zealand Provincial Council in Australia for a two day meeting with the Australian Provincial Council.

This is the second part of our pro-

gram for this year where we work together and see what can be presented to the members of both provinces proposing some ideas on uniting.

At this meeting Pat Devlin sm will also be attending because recently the District of Asia was added to the mix.

The Province Assembly is shaping up very well thanks to the work being done by the Preparatory Committee.

Let us hope and pray that these are going to be great and positive days for us at the end of October, giving us good direction towards the Provincial Chapter next year.

Faternally

Bob Barber sm



Provincial Diary

8 September

Province Finance Committee Meeting
Assembly Preparatory Committee Meeting

9 September

Fourvière 2016 Planning Meeting, Hunters Hill

14-15 September

Combined Provincial Councils Meeting, Sydney

27 Sept – 13 Oct

Provincial at ARC 2015 Meeting, La Neylière

20 October

Provincial Council Meeting

27-28 October

Provincial Assembly, Hunters Hill

28 October

Jubilarians' Mass and Dinner, Hunters Hill

Appointments

Garry Reynolds has been elected to the Provincial Council for a 4 year term, commencing 1/11/2015.

He will replace Gerard Hall on the Council. Elections are continuing in order to fill a further two vacancies which occur in the near future.

Kevin Kerley, with his move to Horton retirement community in Hunters Hill, now comes under the general care of the Montbel/Maryvale community.

However, members of the Villa Maria community will maintain a roster to transport Kevin each Sunday to lunch at Montbel.

Personnel

Jim Carty led a successful campaign recently for asylum seekers in Sydney to be given travel concession cards enabling them to access services and support.

NSW Premier, Mike Baird, announced the travel concession move in early July.

Unable to work and receiving only A\$412 a fortnight in benefit income, most asylum seekers in Sydney are living below the poverty line.

Jim explained to a journalist why the travel concession cards are a necessity for the asylum seekers: "NGO services offering asylum seekers assistance, particularly with health and medical care, trauma rehabilitation, language classes and other vital services, are spread out across the city.

"But the cost of getting to each of these services and receiving the help they need made accessing these services extremely difficult and simply added to the stress of what are already traumatised people. It is also important for asylum seekers, especially those with families, to be able to access food banks such as Oz Harvest".



Andrew Murray has announced his retirement from his full-time academic work at Catholic Institute of Sydney.

This will come into effect on 31 January 2016. He will take a period of spiritual renewal next year before clarifying the direction of his future ministry.

Michael Jacques was back in Australia for a couple of weeks during the summer vacation in Japan.

Ron Nissen returned from overseas on August 7, the Founder's birthday, after several months in France and Italy working on projects associated with the Founder's cause.

Kevin Kerley was recently visited by an archivist from the Australian National University to inspect his holdings relating to recent Bougainville history.

There is every indication that the university will very happily provide a safe repository for the material so that it can be available for future generations of researchers.

Tony Kennedy was back in Australia in late July after his mother, Elaine, experienced a serious setback following back surgery.

The follow-up operation went according to plan and there is every expectation of a good recovery.

Deaths

Lillian Barber: Bob Barber's mother, Lillian, died on 17 July and was farewelled with a Mass at St Joseph's Church, Merewether, on 23 July.

Fifteen confreres concelebrated the Mass, and most were able to join Bob, family, and friends afterwards at the local Sports and Recreation

Club, where Lillian's name featured prominently on the honour boards of past club officials and players.

Fr Etienne Baubion sm
d.,3/7/2015, Vernaison, France.

Fr Michael Tondikop sm
d.4.7.2015, Hahela (Buka), PNG.

Fr Anthony Malone sm
d.15.7.2015, Dublin, Ireland.

Fr Roger Bourgea sm
d.23.7.2015, Boston, USA.

Fr John Sullivan sm
d.28.7.2015, Atlanta USA.

Sick

Ted Jago, brother of John, is seriously ill from lifelong asthma, heart and lung failure.

He spent 8 weeks in Wesley Hospital, Brisbane until late July. After a week at home he had to return to the Mater Hospital, Brisbane.

John Jago was due to have a left shoulder re-construction in the Mater Hospital on Tuesday, 25th August.

Harry Ryder, brother of Bill, had a fall in late July and broke his leg. He is in Good Shepherd Nursing home in Townsville.

Fred Kado was admitted to St Vincent's Public hospital in the third week of August with pneumonia and an infection.





News

Villa Maria Sesquicentenary: On the evening of Wednesday, 15 July, members of the Villa Maria community enjoyed a festive meal to mark the 150th anniversary of the main building.

The substantial sandstone house was built between 1863-65, with the relocation from the original Villa Maria site completed just before Christmas, 1865.

Tom Fulcher brought up some fine wines from the cellars, and Peter McMurrich spoke briefly on the history of the Villa Maria site and community. An outline of his address is enclosed with this Circular.

Villa Maria is the oldest continuous Marist community in the southern hemisphere, and the second oldest continuing community in the Society.

Provincial Retreats: 14 confreres booked in for the Mittagong retreat from 23-28 August, and 16 confreres for the Hunters Hill retreat the following week.

Frank Devoy from the Lismore diocese led both retreats.

Combined Council Meeting: a combined meeting of the Provincial Councils of Australia and New Zealand will be held in Sydney September 14-15. The main focus will be to

consider a time frame and process prepared by a subcommittee, for combining the Provinces of Australia and New Zealand, should this idea receive support from members of the two Provinces.

Following on from this meeting, the matter will be discussed at the Province Assembly in October, and if it goes forward, will need to be formally ratified by the Provincial Chapter next year.

Bilgola: Our estate agent attended the Provincial Council meeting on 18 August for the opening of the "Expressions of Interest" from interested buyers in regard to Bilgola.

Before the property was advertised, some estimates suggested a possible sale price in excess of \$4 million, but the Expressions of Interest, when opened, offered a reality check.

However, the agent was subsequently able to negotiate a sale for only about 15% lower than the \$4 million estimate, which is a very satisfactory result.

Anyone who wants to develop the property, as opposed to building a single dwelling on it, would need to overcome a number of obstacles, including zoning issues, access, and



the omni-presence of the cabbage tree palms (which are protected).

Our agent told us that while showing potential buyers around, he soon formed the view that the successful buyer would be someone who wanted to build a residence on the site, rather than a developer.

City Centre Churches International Meeting: Michael Whelan and Sr Fidelis McTeigue sm attended a Marist international meeting in San Francisco in the third week of August to network and brainstorm on issues related to Marist City Centre churches.

There are around 8 of these throughout the Society including Notre Dame de France (London), Notre Dame des Victoires (San Francisco), St Mary of the Angels (Wellington), and our own St Patrick's.

The last General Chapter drew attention to the Society's involvement in City Centre churches, and the San Francisco meeting was a follow-up to encouragement from the Chapter to look at possibilities for co-ordination and cooperation.

Archdiocese of Sydney Forward Planning: Kevin Bates represented the Provincial at a meeting in the last week of August, convened by the Sydney archdiocese, for representatives of religious orders who have parishes in the archdiocese.

The aim of the gathering was to give the archdiocese an indication of how long each order could maintain its current pastoral commitments .

In common with other groups, our reality is that the sun may be starting to set on our parish involvement in Sydney, and 5-10 years may be as much as we can guarantee by way of future Marist involvement at St Patrick's and Hunters Hill.

Sydney Fourvière Celebration: Sydney confreres gathered at Hunters Hill on Sunday 19 July with members from other branches of the Marist family to mark the 199th anniversary



Michael Whelan and Sr Fidelis (centre) at San Francisco City Centre Churches gathering



Fourvière event

of the Fourvière pledge.

Gavin Foster was the presider and preacher at a Mass in Holy Name of Mary church, commencing 1.30pm, followed by an audio video presentation and afternoon tea in the parish hall.

Catering was by the well-known firm of Bobby B Catering, aided by his thrifty mates at Aldi. A Marist family planning committee is already at work preparing for next year's 200 year anniversary.

Great Euro Circus

The Lane Cove community were recently approached by a representative of the Great Euro Circus for permission to place a three metre high inflatable clown in their front yard for a period of 3 weeks.

We're not sure what they decided in the end, although one community member suggested that there were already three clowns onsite and that maybe a fourth clown was an exercise in overkill.



Exercise in overkill

Advertising

Web site 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).

Jubilarians' Mass & Dinner: will be held on the evening of Wednesday, 28 October, in conjunction with the Provincial Assembly.

The Assembly will run 27-28 October – just 2 days. Invitations to the Assembly and to the Jubilarians' Din-

ner are on the way.

Calvary Retirement Community, Ryde: we recently received an enquiry from the LCM Calvary Retirement Community on Victoria Road at Ryde as to whether there was a Marist Father available to take on live-in chaplaincy work in the complex.

We have written back, indicating that to the best of our knowledge we have no one available.

If anyone is interested in this position, please contact the Vicar Provincial for details.

2016 Stipend Rates: a sheet with recommended stipend rates for 2015-16 is included with this Provincial Circular.

Changes re “Trustees of the Marist Fathers”: included with this Provincial Circular is an outline from Andrew Biddle detailing changes to our Australian Business Number (ABN) and registered business name.

Basically, as a result of a clarification from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) our old legal entity as “Trustees of the Marist Fathers for the Province of Australia” can only be used in future for certain property transactions. We now have a new legal entity and a new Australian Business Number (ABN) - “Society of Mary for the Province of Australia” - which will be used for all financial transactions and financial reporting.

It is anticipated that the change will have zilch implications for members of the Province, and will impact only on the way we do things within the Provincial Office.

Older Drivers: In NSW and Queensland there are special legislative requirements affecting drivers aged 75 years and over.

In NSW only, once a person reaches the age of 85 they must either sit a road test when renewing their licence, or accept negotiated restrictions on their driving behavior.



There is a sheet included with this Provincial Circular which summarizes the legislative requirements operating in both States.

MyGov: this is a Federal Government online service. Once you are registered and you establish your unique online profile, you can log in and access all sorts of information: your Medicare records, health records, Centrelink records; and you can engage online with the various government departments.

As a simple example, if you lose your Medicare or Pension card you can order a new one online through MyGov. Anyone who uses the internet and has an email address should seriously consider registering on MyGov. Apart from the services and access MyGov provides, the reality is that it will get harder and harder to do business with government departments if you are not on MyGov.

Already it is extremely time-consuming and frustrating if you try and make contact by phone or attend in person – you invariably end up in a long queue.

To Create a MyGov account follow these steps:

- Go to the MyGov website
- Select the Create a MyGov account button on the sign in page
- Enter your email address on the Create a MyGov account page
- Read and accept the terms of use, select Next. A confirmation code will be sent to your email account
- Enter your confirmation code
- Enter your mobile phone number if you would like to use one with MyGov
- Enter and confirm a password to

- use with your MyGov account
- Choose three secret questions and answers. MyGov will generate a username for your account and send it to you in an email

A video on how to create a MyGov account is available on the MyGov YouTube channel.

NB: when creating your account you will need to have at your disposal: Medicare card, pension card, passport, drivers licence.



Provincial Directory

Further change to John Hopkinson's email address. Mail to: johnhopkinson@yahoo.com.mx



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

Current bookings are:

2015

Sep 20-26

Seamus McMahon

Oct 1-31

Ray Chapman

Nov 2-16

Tom Fulcher

Nov 17-30

Peter McMurrich

Dec 6-20

Jim Hargrave

2016

Jan 1-31

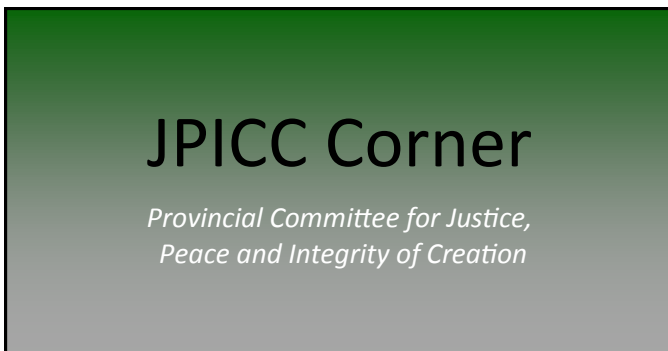
Ray Chapman

BILGOLA

The sale of Bilgola seems imminent, and the likelihood is that contracts will be exchanged for Bilgola by mid-October, after which it will no longer be available for use by members of the Province.

Enclosures

- 2015-16 NSW Religious Stipends
- Villa Maria Sesquicentenary
- New Legal Entity and ABN
- Legislation Affecting Older Drivers
- Ron Nissen: recent work on Fr Colin's Cause



'Both Ends of the Gun'

On Aug 29 over one hundred people attended the seminar on Australian Aboriginals at War sponsored by the combined Marist Family Justice & Peace group. The event, at Santa Sabina, Strathfield, featured keynote addresses from Prof Henry Reynolds and Uncle Dave Williams and was hosted by writer-journalist, Jeff McMullen. See the report on the Province web site.

Muriel's Hong Kong Scholarship

Former member of the Bridge Program recent graduate from ACU's online diploma program in Thailand, **Muriel Valles**, has begun a four-year scholarship Bachelor of Arts (Honours) program in Liberal Studies Education with the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Muriel, a Burmese refugee youth, is pictured (right) preparing to leave Yangon for Hong Kong recently.



And also...



Clockwise from left:

1. Memorial ceremony at Kempsey for **Fr Bern Ryan**

2. In Rome, Aussies **Paul Cooney**, **Grace Ellul SM** (new superior-general), **Jane-Frances O'Carroll SM** (Kiwi, retiring superior-general), **Tony Corcoran** and **Vivienne Goldstein SM**.

3. Oceanians visiting Montbel: **Fr Willy Melteras** (Villa Maria parish staff), **Paul Molbwet** (Vanuatu), **Frs Michael O'Connor** (Fiji) and **Chris Ketsore** (Brisbane) and **Xavier Sariman** (PNG)

4. Aussies in Madrid for Laity Convention: **Margaret Wood** (2nd from left) and **Maria Baden** (3rd from right) with other Asia-Pacific Laity.

5. 'Greek Islands' theme at Villa Maria, with Cater-Care **Chef Effie**.

