



Provincial Circular No. 5 Oct 2015

From the provincial

Dear Confreres

The **Provincial Assembly** that is coming up for us next week is a very important event in the life of our Province. I believe that it has been very well prepared for us by the Pre-Capitular committee and I sincerely hope that it lives up to the high expectations that we have for it.

Because only about 60% of our confreres will be attending the Assembly I will write in this Circular on a couple of matters that will certainly come up at our gathering.

- First, an update on the recent (second) **joint meeting of the NZ and Aust Provincial Councils** where “reconfiguration” has been high on the agenda
- Second, a word about the recent **ARC (Annual Review Consultation)** meeting of the General Administration with the major superiors of the Society.

Aust-NZ

The second of our joint meetings with the New Zealand Provincial Council for this year took place in Sydney in September. This time Pat Devlin was attending from the District of Asia following a request to the Superior General, that was approved, that Asia be part of plans Australia and New Zealand’s may have for their future.

As one confrere noted, the presence of the District of Asia in our mix dramatically alters the picture. Without counting on any vocations coming along, Aust and NZ go from being two rapidly aging and therefore di-

minishing groups, who will be almost extinct in ten years, to a small group who could still carry out a few key mission activities in small Marist teams across Australasia. A simple table illustrates how Asia’s presence influences the future.

Under 65	2015	2020	2025
Aust	18	9	3
NZ	36	17	3
Asia	12	12	12

Does the presence of Asia reverse a trend towards dying out that confronts the provinces of New Zealand and Australia? Certainly not. Asia’s inclusion simply gives us a chance to keep some key Marist works going for a little longer.

In Australia’s case, because of our prioritization of ministries exercise, St Patrick’s is the ministry that we

greatly value and would like to see continuing.

Marists have done a wonderful ministry at St Pat’s for nearly 150 years. It is a place where so much has and can still be done in providing reconciliation and the sacraments for the people of Sydney. Also, St Pat’s can and should become a focus point of evangelisation ministries in our post-modern secularized world.

St Patrick’s future over the next six years, and hopefully a little longer, cannot be guaranteed by Marist Australian priests. A much bigger Marist pool is required. The presence of Fred Kado (O) on the team, Willy Melteras (O), who helps out from Hunters Hill, and our great visiting confreres John Allardyce (NZ) and Paul Hachey (US) who worked at St Pat’s recently for short stints indicate how reliant this ministry is on it’s extra-province helpers. Without



Aussies at ARC, La Neylière

doubt it is from “outside” where we have to look for Marist personnel in future in St Pat’s.

Recently a confrere, putting forward some arguments against amalgamating of Provinces, said he could not believe there has been no evaluation done on the experience of the Provinces of Europe and the United States over their mergers, but that is the case. Because this sort of study would help us, at the ARC meeting the Aust / NZ delegates began to make enquiries to get data from confreres in the US and Europe. Limited feedback has so far been received but already some helpful clear advice is emerging, especially from Europe.

We are learning that the amalgamations undertaken were essential and have enabled some valuable ministries to continue that would otherwise have failed. It has allowed the prospect of vocations to continue. The fear that many confreres had of their lives being turned inside out and men finding themselves in unknown, strange situations simply has not eventuated.

A weakness acknowledge by some confreres is that nowadays they do not now have the close contact with their Provincial they were used to. For some the Provincial doesn’t know their background and maybe doesn’t speak their language. If, for the sake of our future mission Aust / NZ /Asia go ahead after the Chapters next year and join together, some problem areas identified in Europe and the US will have to be addressed.

I support an amalgamation of our Australasian provinces and acknowledge some don’t. I believe it is something we must do and I will be continuing to try and persuade others to see things the same way. As for genuine problems and obstacles that will come because of merging we have to identify them and see how we will deal with them leading into our decision being taken at the Provincial Chapter in 2016.

ARC

Since the last General Chapter the

event we know by the acronym ARC has occurred annually except in the year of the Council of the Society. Through regular meetings at ARC the Provincials and the leaders of the Districts with the GA have been developing a good understanding of each other and are learning to work well together.

This year, from 1st – 9th Oct, the meeting was held in La Neylière, the recently renovated house where Fr Colin retired and lived his final years. The refurbishment done on the La Neylière buildings by the Province of Europe is excellent. There are very good business plans in place to make use of the centre which certainly justifies its selection as a priority work of the Province of Europe.

The hospitality extended to ARC participants together with the general atmosphere around the meeting made it a most pleasant occasion and as a consequence some very productive work for the Society was done in our ten days together.

Others might choose differently but, for me, some key things that stand out coming from ARC are:-

- A greater internationalization of the Society is occurring and, if we desire to see our Marist ministry continue, this needs to be the case more and more with the GA able to select men from all-over for roles they need to fill;
- Re-structuring, an on-going process, of the whole Society, even when uncomfortable, and it must continue to ensure our Marist ministries and vocation continues;
- A lot more attention and effort is needed in the Society everywhere and by everyone in encouraging vocations;
- Many Provinces are like our own and have a huge section of the group who have moved to the outer edges or even outside the group, damaging our corporate viability. “Have they given up on the SM and has the SM given up on them?”
- Although in its early days the adjusting of our financial structures Society-wide over the last couple of years is bearing fruit.

- The ‘Review of Marist International Formation’, an excellent work undertaken by Andrew Murray SM and Noel Connelly ssc, has given a big tick to what the Society has done through establishing the Rome scholasticate and Davao novitiate and suggests some important recommendations to improve what we are doing.

In a later section of this Newsletter I hope you see a good report on the recent “Both Ends of the Gun” Seminar organized by the Marist Family Peace and Justice Committee. I would like to record a congratulations and thank you to the group on a wonderful initiative. I hope it doesn’t end with our day at Santa Sabina in September.

Finally, at the recent ARC meeting the General on a couple of occasions, and others, paid tribute to the Province for making Tony Corcoran, Paul Cooney, and Tony Kennedy available to serve the international Society. All our men are greatly appreciated for their contributions and Fr Hannan acknowledged the big sacrifice our Province is making for the Society. I thought you should hear that.

Faternally

Bob Barber sm



Provincial Diary

1-29 November

Vicar Provincial on Annual Leave

9-14 November

Visitation, St Patrick’s

13 November

FMS Regional Council

17 November

Provincial Council Meeting

22 November

Holy Spirit, Bellambi Mass

December 1

Finance Committee Meeting

December 3

Professional Standards Panel

December 9

Aged Care Committee

December 15

Provincial Council Meeting

Appointments

Michael Whelan is appointed superior of the St Patrick's Parish Community for a period of 3 years from 1/1/2016, in addition to being parish priest.

Neville Byrne is appointed a member of the Maryvale/Montbel community as from 1/1/2016

Kevin Stewart is appointed a member of the Province Aged Care Committee for a period of two years as from 1/1/2015

Mr Michael Monaghan is reappointed to the Province Finance Committee for a further period of two years as from 1/1/2016

Paul Sullivan has been elected to the Provincial Council, and will commence a 4 year term on 1/1/2016.

Personnel

Tom Ryan was across the ditch in late September presenting 3 short seminars on prayer in St Mary of the Angels parish in Wellington.

Each session lasted an hour, and the three areas covered were: Basics; Images of God; What to Do When We Hit the Wall.

Paul Sullivan departed Australia on Sept 26 and returned Oct 15 for a pilgrimage In the Footsteps of St Paul, with a bonus visit to the Apocalypse cave on Patmos.

As companions on the journey he was able to team up with Michael Mullins and Alexis Turton fms.

Andrew Murray is currently leading two retreats for the New Zealand Province.

The first took place in Auckland, 27 September – 2 October; the second retreat will be in Wellington, 15 – 20 November.

Bob Barber touched down in Sydney early on the morning of 13 October after a fortnight at the ARC meeting



at La Neylière.

The trip didn't get off to a brilliant start when the pilot of the outgoing plane from Sydney came over with an unusual announcement.

They would be diverting to Singapore, as the computer was showing that there was insufficient fuel on board.

The captain indicated that in fact they had a full load of fuel out of Sydney and that the problem was clearly a computer malfunction, but the computer must be obeyed.

So on arrival in Singapore some running repairs were made to the computer, and three hours later the flight resumed.

Fortunately Bob had been originally facing a 5 hour stopover in Dubai, and did not miss the connecting flight.

Deaths

Tony Neylan died on 30 August after a period of illness and was buried on 4 September from St Kevin's at Eastwood.

In recent years Tony had a strong involvement in Young Adult ministry at St Patrick's, Church Hill, and before that had fruitful periods of collaboration with both Ben McKenna and John Thornhill in the context of Marist laity.

Kevin Bates, Ray Chapman, Pat Kervin, Tony King, and Peter McMurrich were Marist representatives at the Funeral Mass.

Fr Jim Reilly, a priest of the diocese of Lismore, and known to many

Marists, died on 4 September and was buried from Mary Immaculate church, Bellingen on September 10.

Bob Barber, Terry Garrett, and Paul Pidcock attended.

Tom Kelly of Toongabbie fame and known to generations of seminarians died on 5 September, aged 95.

Fr Doug Akehurst cm a Vincentian priest who studied at our seminary at Toongabbie for a period along with other Vincentian students died on 4 September.

The funeral was in Bathurst on September 14, and Paul Mahony attended. Doug's death followed a period of illness.

Peter Pidcock, brother of Paul, died in Sydney on 18 September and was buried from St Mary's church, Grafton on 23 September.

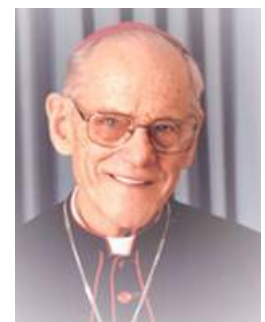
Peter McMurrich was able to travel to Grafton to join Paul on the sanctuary and represent the Province.

Br Frederick McMahon fms died on 30 September and was buried from St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, on October 6.

One of the brothers' "Giants", Br Frederick was a prolific author and a gifted and dedicated historian.



Left: Br Frederick McMahon FMS.
Below: Archbishop George Pearce SM



Hugh Laracy died on 6 October. Hugh was a former seminarian and professor of Pacific History at Auckland University.

He made significant contributions to the understanding of Marist missionary work in the Pacific.

His funeral was at St Joseph's Takapuna, on October 10.

Fr Jean Bouche sm, d.29.8.2015, Ste Foy-les-Lyon, France

Archbishop George Pearce sm, d.30.8.2015, North Smithfield, USA.

Fr Denis Green sm, d.6.10.2015, Elm Park, Ireland.

Fr John Mulligan sm, d.17.10.2015, Ardee, Ireland.

Sick

Tom Fulcher had surgery for bowel cancer on 21 September at Strathfield Private Hospital.

Several days after the surgery a hole in the bowel was detected, unconnected with the surgery Tom had just had.

The remedial surgery was successful, but not surprisingly Tom took the best part of a week to make significant improvement after two lots of major surgery within 5 days.

He was discharged from hospital on October 15.

John Thornhill had surgery for a hernia on 28 September at Macquarie University Private hospital.

News

Provincial Assembly: The Assembly is due to commence on Tuesday 27 October, in the Hunters Hill parish hall, and conclude with the annual Jubilarians' Mass and Dinner the following evening.

At last count, 46 were attending the Assembly, and 49 were lining up for the dinner.

Gavin Foster will be MC for the Dinner; Kevin Bates will propose the

toast to the Jubilarians, and Michael Mullins will respond on behalf of the Jubilarians.

This year's jubilarians are:

40 years Ordination

Peter McMurrich 17 May 1975

50 years Ordination

Harry Moore 29 Jun 1965

Thomas Ryan 29 Jun 1965

Neville Byrne 3 Jul 1965

Michael Mullins 10 Jul 1965

60 years Ordination

John Thornhill 30 Oct 1955

50 years Religious Profession

Charles Randle 24 Jan 1964

Bilgola

The sale of the Bilgola property has now been completed.

Andrew Biddle's plea for the return of keys evoked a massive response, and the new owners were apparently quite overwhelmed when the estate agent presented them more than 100 keys to various doors.

Aquinas Academy History: Julie Thorpe, who has been commissioned by the Academy to chronicle its history made a final visit to the Provincial archives in mid-October to select photographs for the book.

It will be published by ATP of Adelaide.





Historic Photo: recently Jim Carty celebrated a wedding at Woolwich, and one of the families produced this historic photograph (*above*) featuring some luminaries of the Province.

Who do you recognise?

A prize for anyone who can convincingly identify the occasion and location, and for anyone who can identify the two clerically attired gents on either side of Tony Glynn.

Prize in each case will be a bottle of wine of a superior quality such that a genuine Marist would never even aspire to drink it, or a Mars Bar, according to the winners' preferences.



Provincial Directory

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

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).

Marist Family

The Marist Brothers have a new administrative team following their recent Provincial Chapter.

Br Peter Carroll is the new Provincial, and his Councilors are: Brs Jeff Barrington, Darren Burge, Michael Callinan, Paul Kane, Greg McDonald, and Ken McDonald.





Currumbin

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

Upstairs 28 – 30 November, 2015

incl.: For Fr Mark Walls sm and team conducting the Marist Youth Leaders camp at Woodlawn in early Decem-

ber. All upstairs area is required – not the flat.

Tom Fulcher has had to cancel his Nov 2-16 booking because of surgery

Nov 17-30 Peter McMurrich
6-20 December Jim Hargrave

2016

1-31 January Ray Chapman
1-29 February Andrew Murray
1-6 March Andrew Murray
7-22 March Tom Fulcher
23-29 March Gavin Foster

Enclosures

- Speech by Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Truth, Justice and Healing Council: “The Royal Commission and the unique challenges for the Catholic Church”.

JPICC Corner

Provincial Committee for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

In brief....

Follow-up to ‘Both ends of the gun’

Members of the combined Marist Family JPICC met on Oct 14 to review the recent seminar at Santa Sabina, Strathfield. The event was considered eminently successful by committee members and from the participant survey.

Good quality videos of the two main addresses and the panel session are available on YouTube. Check the Province web site (JPICC page) for the links. *Pictured top right:* panel session at Santa Sabina.

Social Justice & Marist diary

An initiative of the province JPICC has been the inclusion of this monthly resource on the province web site each, with some Marist anniversaries as well as significant J&P dates.

Right: images from the November diary.



And also...



Combined Oz & NZ Councils... and with confrères at Villa Maria



Montbel rose



Q&A session at St Patrick's



Rosalie



Holy Name of Mary celebrations: Herston and Bolivia

