

# Marist Fathers

## Australian Province

### Provincial Circular Oct 2017

Locked Bag 5002 Gladesville NSW 1675 (3 Mary St, Hunters Hill) Australia Tel: (61) 2 9844 2222 Fax: (61) 2 9816 1737  
vicarprovincial@maristfathers.org.au www.maristfathers.org.au

#### From the Provincial

Dear Confreres

It is good to be home. There is no place like it!

The XXIX General Chapter of the Society of Mary, held in the SVD Centro Ad Gentes in Nemi (Rome) from 17<sup>th</sup> Sept until 12th Oct, was a wonderful event and it was great to be part of it. Marked by a great spirit of cooperation, openness and hope, all those fortunate enough to be there will remember it for a long time. Confreres listened to one another, enjoyed each other's company, and then worked together very well to make the Chapter a success.

Many of those who had been to previous General Chapters remarked on the congenial and brotherly atmosphere they found at this Chapter.

Michael Whelan, Tony Kennedy, and I were honoured to be able to represent our province and we thank all the for the support you gave us through words of encouragement and prayer. Michael and Tony both made significant contributions to the Chapter.

A short document of four pages that gives a summary of the Chapter outcomes is available for anyone who asks for it. Hopefully, the official document giving all the decisions of the Chapter will be

available in the not too distant future.

There were 38 delegates at the General Chapter representing the 763 confreres in the seven provinces and three districts of the Society when the Chapter began.

The General Chapter has given us a very strong team to lead the Society through the next stage of our life. We saw, in the Chapter, that we are blessed in having a number of exceptional men in the Society who had the requisite strengths and skills to lead us well had they been chosen.

Following a very good discernment



process the Chapter came up with an experienced leader and a team who will now lead the Society through these uncertain times. John Larsen, sm, is our Superior General; John Harhager, sm, is the Vicar General, and completing the team are, Ben McKenna, sm, Juan-Carlos Piña, sm, and Paul Walsh. The team knows from the support they received at the Chapter they have a clear mandate with strong backing to lead us and make tough and decisive decisions around the Society's future.

From the outset of the Chapter there was a stated acknowledgement that the Society was in a critical state. All provinces and districts are experiencing difficulties in one form or another. When presenting his report as the out-going Superior General, John Hannan, posed the question 'whether or not we have a long-term future as a religious congregation'? John warned us that simply maintaining the status quo would not help us in the future. He presented a compelling case that was sobering but certainly not without hope.

Whether this call was fully heeded by all the delegates and whether it will be recognized and acted on by all units is an unknown. It will certainly be a great shame and very defining for the Society if this warning is not tackled fairly and squarely by us all.

Going on the reports that came from the various units of the Society, Australia is more realistic and honest about our situation and predicament than are some other units.

The Chapter has not handed down a number of big and startling decisions sending out shockwaves that will resound around the Society and bring drastic changes to our lives and mission. Rather it gave a few leads and opened up opportunities that will enable provinces and individuals to renew and refocus our Marist lives – if we want to take up the challenge.

Our Province, prior to the Chapter as well as now, is particularly interested in the question of governance and leadership for our future. This is a result of our aging and diminishment; because of our small and every shrinking pool of capable leaders; and because options for restructuring and amalgamation were not taken up over recent years.

We have scheduled an Extraordinary Provincial Chapter for next March, preceded by Regional meetings, where we will be addressing the issue of our leadership and governance from 2018.

Australia, through our last Council of the Province, submitted a postulata to the General Chapter requesting a change which allowed for a few options for electing our provincial other than the process we currently have. In acknowledging this postulata the Chapter passed a one word change in Constitution #205. If it is approved by the Holy See that number will in future say the provincial is 'selected' rather than 'elected' according to our legislation.

Although it is only one word this change will enable our Chapter next March to look at a number of options that, taking into account our limitations, will help us in getting our future provincial leaders. The options are: - election by membership, as we have now;

appointment by the Superior General, after a consultation; or, election by an electoral body, such as, a Provincial Chapter, a Council of the Province; or another body.

The Chapter also passed a decision where some 'particular works' of the Society can be identified and the GA will work with the local unit to ensure their continuation. It is envisaged that these works will be few in number, no more than a half a dozen. When examples of these works were cited St Patrick's was always among those mentioned. For our province this is good news as it says that our first prioritized work is greatly valued by the Society and something the whole SM will work towards maintaining. At present this is not a guaranteed situation for St Pat's, but it looks promising.

Space in this Circular simply does not permit sharing with you on so many of the great things to come from the Chapter. I would, however, like to share a word on a few things.

'Safeguarding' is now the word universally used to cover the area we once referred to as 'professional standards'. The issue was very prominent in the Chapter, and thankfully, it seems that the whole of the Society is on-board about its importance and is willing to act to see there is proper compliance. Safeguarding was consciously acknowledged in every area discussed in the Chapter but will have its own section in the Chapter documents. Although, as it went through the stages of its development, the Safeguarding document was cut of specifics and drastically cut in length its standing in the Chapter could not be underestimated.

The Chapter made few changes to the basic direction of the 2009 Chapter, but it did add a few key areas. For example, in recognition of our aging membership around the Society the Chapter gave good recognition to the Elderly. These confreres are a treasure to our communities and add a unique

contribution to the life and ministry of our provinces. Again, hopefully we will make the valuing and loving of our senior confreres more important in our lives as a result of the Chapter.

Laudato si' and the call for greater awareness and care of creation came up everywhere in the Chapter. The Chapter leaves us with the goal of trying to live more ecologically sustainable lives and care for our world. The Chapter declares this is an intrinsic part of the gospel today, very much in line with values bequeathed to us by Colin and the early Marists, and so much a part of Pope Francis' message to us. Each of us, individually and as communities, must make ourselves aware of our obligations and take steps to improve in this area.

Trying to find ways of sharing with the province the fruits of the Chapter is something I am not sure how to do. Please give me a ring or tackle me as we pass if you have any questions you want to ask or issues you want to discuss. The Chapter had some great things to say on our mission, on our ministries, on our contemplative life, and Marist Laity, .... and so many other topics.

Retreat time is on us and the celebration of our Jubilarians. May all who are doing a retreat at this time be greatly blessed and congratulations to our jubilarians. I have to leave off here as I am well over my word limit.

Faternally

**Bob Barber sm**  
Provincial.



**Provincial's Diary**  
(see p 8)



Tony Kennedy and the community of 'Casa di Maria', Rome

## Appointments

**Extraordinary Chapter Preparatory Committee:** the following are appointed to the Preparatory Committee for the Extraordinary Chapter convoked for 13-15 March, 2017: **Paul Sullivan, Luke Holohan, Peter McMurrich**

**Tony Kennedy** has been appointed superior of the international formation community in Rome, replacing our new superior general, John Larsen.

## Personnel

**Andrew Murray** has just returned from a pilgrimage to Poi, the place of the martyrdom of St Peter Chanel. He was on Futuna for two weeks and spent a week with the confreres on Wallis.

On Futuna, he found a vibrant Third Order of Mary, who were very helpful in ensuring that he was able to visit the major sites of Peter Chanel's activities and become familiar with the island.

Andrew spent one week in a reflective mode at the chapel of St



Futuna

Peter Chanel, which is beautifully maintained by the local villages.

A highlight of the time was a mass for the Third Order attended by the King of Alo and recorded for Wallis and Futuna Television. The mass was celebrated in French, English and Futunan and followed by a banquet.

Andrew found the Futunans to be a joyful and generous people, whose identity is deeply entwined with that of their martyr.

During the visit he met a direct descendant of Musumusu; the exchange is understood to have been amicable, with no adverse consequences (for either party).

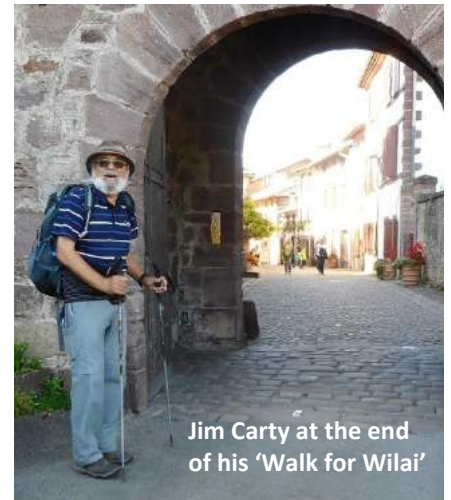
**Ray Chapman** completes his course in Spiritual Direction in Melbourne in late November.

He will then head north, and will be using his newly-acquired skills in the archdiocese of Brisbane during 2018.

An appointment to a community, and other arrangements, will be finalised shortly.

**Jim Carty:** on October 8 Jim marched into St Jean Pied de Port to end a 700km Camino-like walk, raising funds for stateless children.

The walk commenced from Le Puy in the early days of September. Jim was due to spend some time recovering at La Neyliere before wending his way home.



Jim Carty at the end of his 'Walk for Wilai'

**Ben McKenna** was in Sydney in the last week of October, organizing a residency visa for his time in Italy.

He was hoping to beat Tony Kennedy's record of obtaining his visa in less than 5 days.

Tony showed admirable calmness throughout the process and was quite unperturbed by a mock email purporting to be from the Italian Consulate, advising him that a cup of coffee had been spilt over his application papers, and that he would need to submit a fresh application.

## Deaths

- **Fr Lothar Wierth sm**, d.10.9.2017, Meppen, Germany
- **Fr Denis Jacquin sm**, d.28.9.2017, Noumea, New Caledonia.
- **Fr Jean Michel Kaikilekofe sm**, d.21.10.2017, Sia, Wallis.
- **Fr Armand (Pitt) Robichaud sm**, d.23.10.2017, Boston, USA

**Bruce Busby**, a former member of the Province, died in Perth on 4 September. He had been unwell for some time leading up to his death.

In the days before Provincial travel became an art form, Bruce once deftly organized a surreptitious trip to Soviet Russia without anyone being the wiser.

## Sick

**Jack Soulsby** was in hospital in Brisbane at the beginning of October with heart and circulation issues, and had to return again to hospital in late October. He is currently undergoing further tests.

**Willy Melteras** has had a couple of loss of balance episodes recently, due to low blood pressure. Hopefully the issue can be addressed with suitable medication.

**Bill Ryder** was in Royal North Shore hospital on a couple of occasions; firstly in late September for a pacemaker, and then early in October with balance issues.

**Chris Austin** was likewise in Royal North Shore hospital from early in October with a blood infection, and expects to be there for another week or so.

**John Jago** spent some time in Ryde hospital early in October for tests for an ongoing condition.

**Allan Connors** was in Royal North Shore hospital in October, initially for urinary tract issues. He then transitioned to Bayswater Gardens, 65 St Albans Street, Abbotsford, for respite care.

**Brian Conaghan** went to Royal North Shore hospital on 9 October after being discovered in his room in a comatose condition. He recovered quickly, and was discharged the next day.

**J V Walsh** had a fall October 22 and was admitted at Hornsby hospital, where he had surgery for a broken hip. He returned to a new room at

Waitara on 1 November (See [Provincial Directory](#) section for details).

**Robert Hollow** was recently diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. He is hoping to continue at Longreach until the end of the year. He has been following up the original diagnosis with a second neurologist, and has adopted a programme of exercise and therapy.

## News

**Hunters Hill Parish** celebrated the feast of the Holy Name of Mary on Sunday, September 10, with an open-air Mass in the Villa Maria grounds.

The Mass was preceded by the placing and blessing of a memorial stone, at the front of Holy Name of Mary church, marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the laying of the original foundation stone and the commencement of construction.

The church was completed in 1871, though a substantial addition was made to the nave of the church in 1903-4. No trace survives of the original foundation stone. The new memorial stone is pictured below, (complete with Holy Water splash marks).



**Election for Extraordinary Chapter, 13-15 March, 2017:** voting papers for the first stage of the election of delegates to the Extraordinary Chapter were due to go out by November 1.

The Chapter will have a specific focus on Governance and Leadership issues, and will run for a couple of days only. It is not envisaged that it will produce any aspirational

documents, or formally receive and analyse reports from the Provincial and Business Manager.

In short, it will be a lean and focused meeting, shorn of most of the bells and whistles associated with regular Chapters.

**Choosing the Provincial:** the recent General Chapter voted in favour of a small but significant change to Constitution 205, regarding the Provincial Superior, changing the word "elect" to "select".

The effect of this is to allow Provinces to have their Provincial chosen by the Superior General, after consultation with members of the Province, instead of direct election of the Provincial, which has hitherto been the practice.

This is one of the matters for discussion at the regional meetings on "Governance and Leadership" scheduled for November.

**Fake News:** Many confreres would be familiar with a story concerning Fr Peter Piquet, who ministered at St Patrick's for 56 continuous years: he is supposed to have been accosted by a beggar, and when he put his hand in his pocket he was amazed to find a sovereign there, which he gave to the beggar.

Later that day at the meal table, Piquet recounted the incident, expressing the belief that the beggar had been the beneficiary of a miracle. "Miracle be damned", said his confrere, Peter Le Rennetel: "I've been searching for my trousers all morning, and you're still wearing them".

A different version has turned up, this time with Peter Le Rennetel as the main character. The story was printed in *Smith's Weekly* in 1919, in an article written by J F Archibald, previously editor and owner of the famous *Bulletin*, and donor of the Archibald Fountain in Hyde Park, and the Archibald Prize.

Next time you're off to Lowe's to buy a pair of trousers, you might

consider the following extract from Archibald's article, and keep your confreres in mind:

*"The Marists are good socialists, even communists; all their worldly goods are held in common, even their clothes being interchangeable when they happen to fit – and sometimes when they do not fit, as witness the quaint public appearances made by the Fathers, in coats that are too long and hats that are too big, and trousers too wide and short...."*

The sceptics at the Provincial Office think both versions are dodgy, and deserve to be ranked with the hoary St Patrick's story about the sacristan who gift wrapped a dead cat, and put it on a back pew, returning shortly afterwards to find that a thief had ran off with the parcel.

Variations on this story are over 100 years old, with the first recorded version appearing in the *New York Times* in 1905.

**Provincial Council Roadshow:** the Provincial Council will be hitting the road in November, paying a visit to Gladstone in the fourth week of November, and holding its monthly meeting there in addition to catching up with confreres in Central Queensland.

**St Peter Chanel, Woolwich:** the Province has now submitted a development application to the local Council for a subdivision of the church grounds at Woolwich, to create two house blocks on the sloping land overlooking the Lane Cove river.

When the property was purchased by the Society in 1889, the Marist Superior, Claude Joly (who looks anything but in his photographs), noted that the amount of land purchased was in excess of what was needed for the church building, and that some of the land might be later sold if and when that became necessary.

Once the development is approved, the two house blocks will be put on

the market.

**Japanese Pilgrims:** a group of 8 Japanese pilgrims were in Sydney in early September, hosted by Paul Glynn at Villa Maria. Their particular focus was Mary MacKillop, and a highlight of their trip was a visit to the saint's tomb at North Sydney.

## Publications

In anticipation of next year's double celebration at St Patrick's – bicentenary of the leaving of the Blessed Sacrament by Fr Jeremiah O'Flynn (1818), and the sesquicentenary of Marist presence at St Patrick's (1868) – Michael Whelan has commissioned a reprint of the parish history, *The Harmonising Influence of Religion: St Patrick's, Church Hill, 1840 to the Present*, which was published in 2011 and quickly sold out.

The reprint has provided an opportunity to fix a few typographical errors which appeared in the first edition, but otherwise contains no new material; a banner on the front, which reads "2018

Anniversary Edition" distinguishes the reprint from the original edition. A steal at \$20 a copy from St Patrick's parish office or courtyard coffee shop.

**Tom Ryan** has recently had an article accepted for publication: 'Wisdom as Loving Knowledge in Dag Hammarskjöld's *Markings*', *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, 17:2 (Fall), 2017, pp. 228-245.

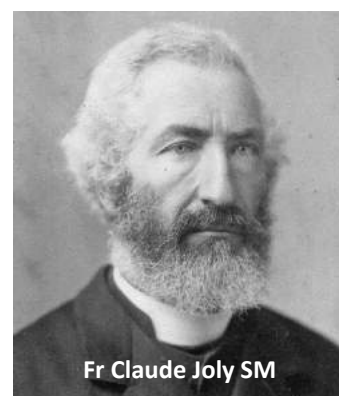
### Colin biography

News just in from **Justin Taylor**: 'I am pleased to be able to tell you that I have just signed the contract for the Colin biography.'

'**Paul Martin** countersigned on behalf of the Society. Target publication date April 2018.'

## Marist Family

The Marist Brothers have elected a new superior general at their General Chapter, **Br Ernesto Barba** (no relation to Bob). See next page.





Br Ernesto FMS



### Provincial Directory

Br Colin Campbell has moved from his room in Maryvale, to Room 6 in Montbel. His phone number is (02) 9844 2266

Mission Centre fax: please note that the Mission Centre fax number from now on will be the same as that for the Provincial Office - (02) 9816 1737



### Currumbin Bookings

Kevin Redmond has advised us that he has a new mobile number: 0434 857 482

J V Walsh is now in a new room at McQuoin Village:  
Room 102, McGovern  
28 McAuley Place  
Waitara NSW 2077  
Tel: 02 8998 9266

Thu 7 Dec – Mon 11 Dec incl  
The house at Currumbin upstairs will be in use by Mark Walls and the Marist Youth Ministry Team during this period. There will be no accommodation available in the main house for those days. The Team will be conducting a programme at Woodlawn in the first week of December.

The self-contained flat at Currumbin is available for bookings for Marists and their families. Bookings are

made through the provincial office. Current bookings:

**2017**  
**December 1-25**  
Ray Chapman  
**December 26-31**  
Michael Carroll

**2018**  
**January 1-14**  
Michael Carroll  
**January 15-22**  
Tom Ryan  
**February 25-March 10**  
Jim Hargrave  
**March 30-April 1-20**  
John Begg  
**June 1-30**  
Ray Chapman  
**Sept 23-Oct 13**  
Peter McMurrich  
**Oct 15-Nov 4**  
Bob Barber

## JPICC Corner

Provincial Committee for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation



Left: Bridge Program and Australian Catholic University graduate, Muriel Valles, was one of the guests of honour attending an Endeavour Australia ceremony at Sydney's Government House on Oct 23.

Hosted by His Excellency, General David Hurley, and Mrs Hurley, Muriel and fellow exchange students from Japan, China, Australia and Myanmar were encouraged in their studies and immersion in different cultures and making friends from different parts of the world.



Above: Gratefully trudging into St Jean Pied de Port on Oct 08, Jim Carty has ended his 'Walk for Wilai' after a 700 km adventure raising funds for the welfare of stateless children in S-E Asia.

After the trek, he took a well-earned break at La Neylière. Well done, Jim! In 2014, Jim walked the more popular (and easier!) camino from St Jean to Santiago.

And also...



Clockwise from top: **Hayden Kennedy** and lads, somewhere in NZ | **Kevin Bates** blessing Villa Maria's 150th commemorative stone | Refurbished sanctuary, St Joseph's College, Hunter's Hill | Statue at Digos, Philippines (*left*) modelled on that of Villa Maria (*right*) | **Lou Molloy** in his Ballina unit.



## Provincial's Diary

### **Nov 3**

Marist Schools Association, Annual Mass & Dinner

### **Nov 5-10**

Provincial Retreat, Maryvale/  
Montbel

### **Nov 10**

Jubilarians' Mass & Dinner

### **Nov 12-17**

Provincial Retreat, Kincumber

### **Nov 15**

Marist Leaders Meeting, Merrylands

### **Nov 17**

FMS Regional Council

### **Nov 20-21**

Provincial Council Meeting,  
Gladstone

### **Nov 24**

St Patrick's Parish Dinner

### **Nov 24**

Hunters Hill Parish Dinner

### **Nov 25**

Farewell Dinner for Ross Tarlinton,  
St Joseph's College

### **Nov 26**

Holy Spirit College, Bellambi, Mass  
for Deceased

### **Nov 29**

ACMRO Workshop, Melbourne

### **Dec 1-7**

Marist Youth Leadership  
Programme, Woodlawn

### **Dec 7**

Professional Standards Panel

### **Dec 12**

Province Finance Committee  
Meeting

### **Dec 19**

Provincial Council Meeting

### **Dec 23-Jan 2**

Provincial Office closed