

La Sorgente

MARIST INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGATE BULLETIN, ISSUE #02, JULY 2020

Editorial

Who is my neighbour? A pastoral question on the care of migrants.

Casa di Maria: a community of prayer.

Online classes during quarantine: what expectations?

The Marist response to the question of racism today.

Installation of Lector and Acolytes.

Photo albums



EDITORIAL



At the beginning of Lent we were looking forward to the end of the academic year and the coming summer. The second semester had just begun. Larry Duffy was about to head off to La Neyliere to assist with the Spiritual Exercises for the Colnian renewal group.

So much has happened since then, not just at Casa di Maria, but in our whole world. Fortunately all are well here. We have seen the suffering of peoples in so many countries in these days. And the numbers keep increasing in many countries.

The time of the confinement / lockdown was strange. For over two months it was just us in the community. There were no visitors. The streets of Rome were empty. A few went out shopping for the community and we all took turns to cook. There was much cleaning done around the house and some new gardens were planted. Each morning the house was quiet as seminarians went into their rooms and sat in front of their screens as the academic work continued. We learnt a lot more about Zoom and Google Meet. We were so lucky to have the space in our building to walk around on the roof and to be able to use the chapel in the school below.

This year was the first time our community was able to celebrate Holy Week together. Normally we head off in different directions to other Marist communities in Italy for Easter and then for a retreat. But not this year. It was a good chance for more liturgical practice and formation for the deacons. For the Easter Vigil we had all the readings: all nine of them, in eight different languages.

Larry rejoined us on 20th May as we began to venture outside. We were delighted to welcome him back.

Our seven deacons are about to depart after four years here in Rome. But not yet. Flights have been cancelled and rearranged and there will be delays. We thank them for their enthusiasm and contribution to this community over the last four years. And for Samu it has been five years here. We wish them well as they take up appointments in different parts of the world.

As well two other seminarians will not return after summer. Timothy Hare is returning to the Solomon Islands and Gabriel Mukong is going back to Cameroon. We thank them for their contribution to the community and wish them well in the future.

Arnaldo da Silva and Sione Hamala are also leaving as they have now completed their licenses in formation and safeguarding.

Thank you for the prayers and the interest and the support you give to us and our other formation houses.

FR TONY KENNEDY SM



A screenshot from a Zoom discussion between some of our deacons and Michael Whelan sm and Paul Hachey sm from the St Patricks Church Hill Sydney community. The focus of the discussion was the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

A similar discussion was held with the Notre Dame de France community in London. We also had Zoom meetings with other Marist formation houses from around the world.





To base our reflection on biblical foundations of the pastoral care of migrants, we would start by asking the question: who is my neighbor (Lc 10, 25-37)? Conceived as a natural and human phenomenon, migration today has become a subject that inhabits all social, political, and religious debates.

However, the migratory question is not a new subject for the Magisterium of the Church and for theological and biblical reflection. Indeed, the Bible retraces physical migrations and spiritual migrations (Gen 35,5-15; Ruth 1,1-5) and thus, shows us that migration is a model of reference for the Christian life. Indeed, the Holy Family can be the paradigm of a refugee family fleeing the atrocity of political leaders (Mt 2: 13-15).

It should also be noted that the Bible gives instructions on behavior towards the stranger and the migrant. The book of Leviticus underlines for example: "The stranger who resides with you will be for you like a compatriot and you will love him like yourself because you were foreign to the country of Egypt" (Leviticus 19,34). Hospitality is justified by the fact of having been a foreigner. To this end, hospitality becomes like a command and it enters the context of love for the neighbor, the stranger, the marginal (Gal 5,13-15).

The proximity that we must therefore cultivate in welcoming migrants and foreigners requires the destruction of physical, ideological, socio-political barriers to get out of ourselves and avoid any act that would oppress the foreigner. So we can understand the invitation of the prophet Jeremiah: "If you do not oppress the immigrant, the orphan or the widow, if you do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place, if you do not follow, for your misfortune, other gods, then, I will make you remain in this place, in the country which I gave to your fathers, since always and forever" (Jr 7, 6-7).

Conscious of the current relevance of the question and of the Church's mission to defend the rights of the most underprivileged, we therefore accept the urgency of theological and biblical reflection in order to be able to encourage openness and a favorable reception (3Jn 1, 1-5) to these poor people. This consciousness is also the basis for pastoral migration. It appears that since the time of the Patriarchs, Israel has been called to be aware of those poor in the country specially the migrants. To be faithful to that call of Jesus of being closed to the neglected, we can affirm clearly that pastoral care for migrants is truly biblically founded.

REV. YOUM STEV, SM.





Adorazione e vepres—domenica sera

D'altronde, a noi religiosi ci ha toccato affrontare la pandemia in un altro modo, ribadendo ancora di più la vocazione a cui siamo stati chiamati. Talvolta pensiamo alle opere di carità fisiche e ci dimentichiamo che pure la nostra intercessione dinanzi Dio può raggiungere ai più vulnerabili. Infatti, non abbiamo smesso di pregare ogni giorno e di celebrare l'Eucaristia in comunità nella nostra piccola cappella e pregare per il mondo nonostante le distanze.



Visitazione eucaristica ordina e preghiera per i confratelli decevuti



La comunità reunita per la preghiera del Lodi mattutine

Il confinamento rigido in Italia ha finito per il momento. Siamo ancora in tempi incerti e sfidanti, ma siamo invitati ad affidarci nel Signore, a rimanere fedeli e a continuare a pregare per coloro che ancora sono colpiti dalla pandemia. La crisi che sperimentiamo ancora può essere una opportunità per riflettere come gestiamo le nostre vite e che cosa ne sia priorità. Senza la vita di preghiera agiamo meccanicamente, ma con essa le nostre prospettive cambiano e possiamo fare di più.

Credo che avendo questa sorta di esperienze quando siamo ancora in formazione ci aiuterà nel futuro ad affrontare con fede e coraggio la missione a noi affidata.



La preghiera della sera - Vespri



REV. RICARDO NAVARRETE GUTIÉRREZ, SM



Este último semestre acadêmico proporcionou a todos nós estudantes Maristas habilidades e horizontes novos. Nos fez reconhecer a eficiência do ensino à distância e a imprescindibilidade das novas tecnologias para a vida acadêmica atual. No início do semestre acadêmico, apesar do sentimento de pequenez diante do problema da pandemia do covid-19, esperávamos voltar a ter aulas presenciais. Esperança esta que foi aos poucos se tornando apenas um sonho. Gradativamente, nos convencíamos que não havia outra possibilidade de continuar as aulas a não ser à distância.

Em base na minha própria experiência devo confessar que a primeira semana de aula parecia um tempo muito maior, visto que tudo ocorreu inesperadamente. As primeiras aulas foram

cansativas, às vezes me sentia inseguro diante da *webcam* e me via como alguém anormal que, durante as discussões nas aulas, dialogava consigo mesmo e com o próprio computador como se este fosse um outro ser humano. Tal perspectiva se tornou menor pesadelo na medida em que comecei a perceber que a sala de aula não era o único local de aprendizado ou de transmissão do conhecimento considerando que, naquela ocasião da pandemia, o espaço virtual o podia substituir. O próprio computador se tornou não somente um instrumento de trabalho, mas também um meio de comunicação e um “espaço” particular de discussão tal como uma sala de aula.

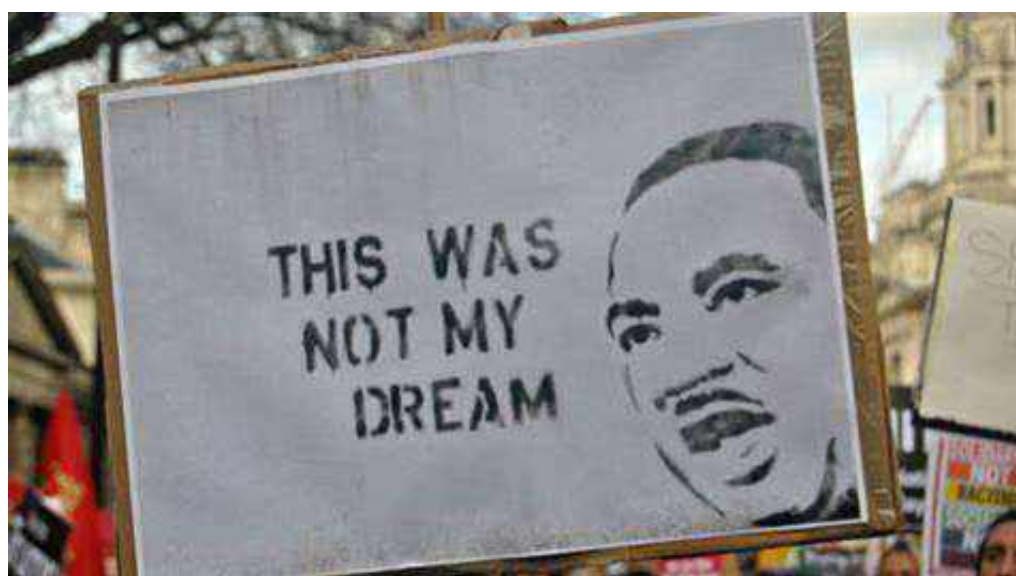
Essa mudança de uma perspectiva negativa a uma positiva e otimista foi não somente confortante e energizante, mas também me fez acreditar na eficiência da educação à distância. Graças aos esforços dos docentes e a colaboração dos colegas estudantes, desde à pontualidade nas aulas e o compromisso ao aprendizado, as aulas online ganharam uma nova tonalidade, aquela de aprendizado online. Como bem afirma o Jesuíta e teólogo italiano Antonio Spadaro no seu livro *Ciberteologia: pensar o cristianismo nos tempos de rede*, as redes digitais hoje nos coloca em um novo espaço – *cyberspace*, em uma nova cultura – *cyberculture*, em uma nova relação comunitária, aquela virtual, e em uma nova modalidade de comunicação que se exprime em *online* e *offline*. Isso define uma nova forma de viver e de se relacionar virtual que não se opõe ao real, pelo contrário, o virtual se torna real. Tal fato corresponde à realidade atual. Nesse sentido, Spadaro pensa a *Internet* como lugar de saber teológico. As redes digitais se tornaram o lugar – não contextual – que torna possível a relacionalidade e o aprendizado. Além disso, define um novo modo de pensar, de conhecer, de comunicar, e de viver.



Após um semestre de aulas online reconheço que em tempos de pandemia o aprendizado online impactou o modo de se fazer teologia, provocou mudanças na nossa forma de pensar a ponto de nos motivar a buscar novas alternativas de adquirir conhecimento e de fazer experiência de fé. Enfim, nos mostra que aquela esperança de retornar às aulas presenciais de que gozávamos no início da crise atual se converteu em consciência de responsabilidade de que através das aulas online estamos colaborando coletivamente à redução do impacto do covid-19.

REV LEANDRO MARTINS, SM.





The current racial tensions in the USA, have prompted me to reflect on the issue of race and skin colour and what it means for me as a Marist of colour. I did not realize I was black until I left Fiji for International Formation. The historical burdens associated with skin colour is much more noticeable in places where we are outsiders, in our case, here in Europe.

I am from Oceania and race ideologies shaped our early history of contact with the West. Though not commonly known, the mapping of Oceania itself in the 1800's was an expression of the racial ideologies common to Europe in that period. The division of Oceania into Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia has heavy racial undertones and it is incredulous to read explicitly racist sociological and anthropological writings from that period. The

racialist mapping of Oceania was influenced by long held ideas about race and social evolution, pseudo evolutionary ideas about cultures and social political organisation.

Though the social distinction between 'us' and 'them' has been around since time immemorial, racism in the modern sense of the term, was developed and solidified during the Colonial period, and was backed by the science of that era to justify the Colonial domination of the 'others.' The distinction between 'us' and 'them' had to be constructed on a scientific foundation, and the best way was through physical differences built around the concept of race. Unfortunately, the colonial notion of dark skin as inferior was internalized by the colonized people themselves. Even today it is common in Oceania and I suppose in other former colonized people, for aesthetics standards to be judged on the basis of skin complexion. Moreover, the colonial racial distinction between Polynesia and Melanesia still affects relations between the two regions today, even within Oceanian Marists.

The formation house here at Casa di Maria is predominantly brothers from non-western countries. During pastoral sharings we sometimes share the difficulties of living here in Europe as men of colour. Personal experiences of racism and racial profiling is not uncommon. We are black people from the 'colonized' world, here in Europe we are the 'others,' and carry the burden of history with us.

The biggest question for us is how to approach this issue as Marists, as followers of Christ. Pope Francis in his address to the Ecclesial movements said that, "We must create a culture of encounter, a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can also speak with those who think differently... we must become courageous Christians and go in search of the people who are the very flesh of Christ!" Thus, it is not simply a question of race and skin colour, but of the bigger notions of living with differences, of the gradual journey of unlearning culturally biased notions about the different 'others,' it is the constant struggle to live the Gospel challenge of seeing all people as children of God, son and daughter of the same Father, created and redeemed through the Son and sanctified through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.



The model for our encounter is of course the Trinity. The three divine persons are pure relatedness and their communion is sustained through the total gift of self each makes to the others, hence revealing that the essence of God is Love. Love by nature is diffusive, and through the acts of creation and incarnation, God offers human beings created in his image and likeness (and thus capable of loving), a share in the divine culture of encounter. This is the most profound and radical gift God continuously offers to us. The heart of Christianity is this offer to participate in this communion of Love of the Trinity that incorporates all creation.

Through his incarnation, his words and deeds, his death and resurrection, Christ exemplifies for us the quality and measure of the love upon which every relationship must be built. We are called to imitate his kenosis type of encounter, a full giving of ourselves to our brothers and sisters.

As Marists who live in community, the witness value of our fraternal life is inestimable in a world torn by divisions. The superior general Fr John Larsen in his latest newsletter says exactly this when he writes, "Our own fraternity can be a sign of hope, a sacrament for a divided world." He also notes that in our last general chapter, we are called to be "bridge builders, instruments of reconciliation, (and) bearers of the Good News."

As our Society becomes smaller and multicultural communities become the norm, we are given the opportunity to be examples of the culture of encounter, to be witnesses to the truth that it is possible for people of different cultures to live together when Christ is at the center. In this light, we are fortunate to be part of the international formation, for the struggle of multicultural living is our daily reality. It is to be hoped that our international novitiate and theologate experiences, have taught us the necessary relational skills essential to living holistic Marist vocations in multicultural communities.

These relational skills would involve honest reflections and evaluations, a willingness to change, humility and an openness to uncomfortable truths. However, the fraternal bonds of charity in community life are not so much the fruit of relational skills, as they are the fruits of personal and communal prayer most especially the daily Eucharist.

Christ then is not only the model but the very center of community life. The fraternal bonds of charity build up in our communities then overflows into our mission, and thus we participate in building a culture of encounter in which divisions are crossed, and our differences enrich our encounters.

To conclude, the best Marist response to the issues of race and division, is deep personal prayer, which leads to authentic Marist community life, which then flows into our mission encounters with the people we are sent to. Our participation in the divine culture of encounter consists of prayer, community life and mission, in which we are gradually purified of the cultural biases and prejudices we were raised in, and Christ more and more becomes the center of our lives, leading us to recognize his presence in all people, no matter their culture or nationality.



Rev Samu Tukidia s.m.



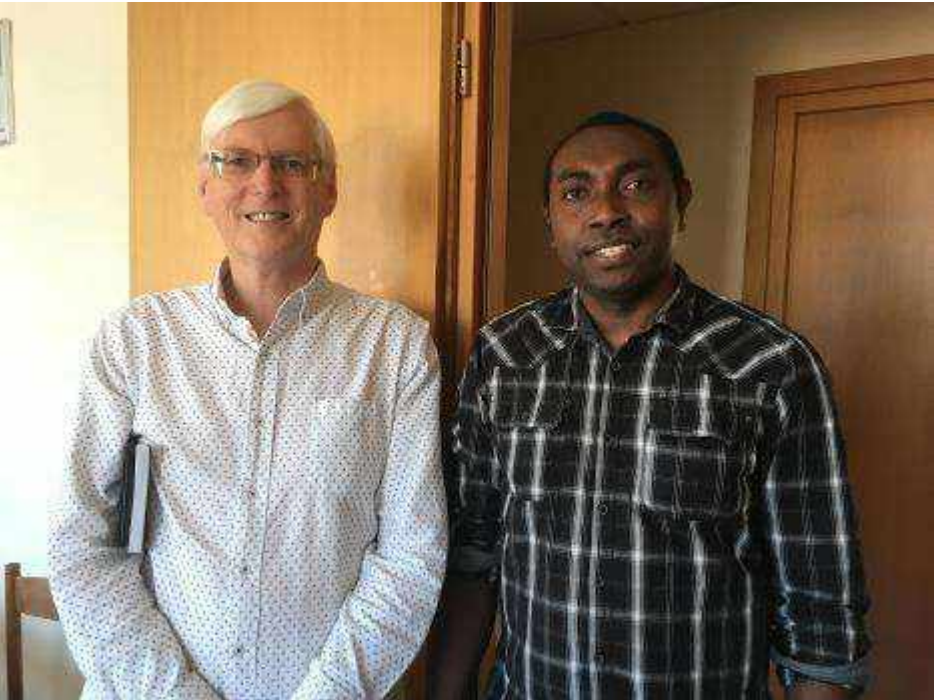
Our gardens have produced flowers, tomatoes, potatoes, capsicum, chilis and zucchini. Thanks to the hardworking gardeners!



Piazza Navone



Empty streets of Rome



Larry and Floyd