

## NEWS FROM THE GENERAL CHAPTER, ROME



Our General Chapter is about to enter into its third and final week. The 36 Marist delegates from around the world will soon start the process of electing our new superior general and counsellors. Please pray for us. During these weeks delegates have been receiving and discussing reports on

governance, formation, community life for mission, marist mission today, lay partners and legislation. Revised versions of these documents will no doubt form part of the final declarations of the Chapter. ***All this has taken place in a synodal atmosphere of prayer and listening. Mary in the Upper room with the disciples has been our guiding motif. An hour of communal adoration early each morning and a sharing on the Gospel of the day have been an integral part of the Chapter process.***

The SVD Centre here in Nemi has proved an excellent venue beautifully located in a secluded spot above lake Nemi. Throughout we have been tremendously assisted by the General Secretariat and translators - some of whom are our multilingual seminarians and who have also provided the music for the Eucharist each day. This week six Marist students from our international theologate at Casa di Maria will take their final vows at a mass here in Nemi in the presence of the Chapter delegates - another sign of hope for the future. Despite our different backgrounds, cultures and languages ***a truly open and fraternal atmosphere has reigned throughout.*** Let's hope the decisions of this Chapter will bear fruit in the years ahead as we continue to build a new Church with a Marian face.

*Declan Marmion, S.M.*

## FR DECLAN MARMION ELECTED AS THE 15TH SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY



Declan Marmion was born in 1961 in Ireland. He was a student at C.U.S. in Dublin and joined the Marists in 1981. He is currently the Vicar Provincial of Europe and is also the National Administrator of the Marists in Ireland. He has done his studies in several European countries and has been primarily engaged at third level theological education, research, and academic administration, most recently at the Pontifical University of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, where he served as Dean of the Faculty of Theology. Declan speaks English and German and has a working knowledge of French and Dutch. In his first

words to the gathered capitulants, he emphasised the importance of the Society's mission today as articulated in the approved Chapter documents as well as ***the need for fraternal collaboration, communion and the implementation of the orientations and decisions of the Chapter.***

## DEAR MARIST FRIENDS,

Rather unusually, I'm writing this brief introduction to this month's EuroInfo a couple of days after Declan wrote his contribution below! This is the evening of the first day of the three day "synodal" process to elect our new Superior General and his council. The rules of confidentiality mean that I can't share anything about the list of candidates for the second day, but, anyway, by the time you read these lines, you will already know the names of the confreres who will make up the new General Administration of the Society of Mary...One of the tasks the Chapter gives them is to promote collaboration with other branches of the Marist tree. It's encouraging to read below how our two sisters Sr Kura SMSM and Sr Aqela SMSM are settling in well at Notre Dame de France.

*Kevin Duffy, sm*

## PRAYER INTENTION

That the Holy Spirit will guide our new Superior General and his team as they begin their challenging work.

## SISTERS ON MISSION AT NOTRE DAME DE FRANCE



Kiribati is a very poor country and relies on aid from larger nations such as Australia and the United States. Growing up on the islands, life was simple and our livelihood depended on the sea and land. Today we rely more on money and see education as vital for our future. Climate change is a serious threat to my country, but our people still believe in God's plan.

***My mission experience has been beyond anything I could have imagined.*** Before arriving at Notre Dame de France, I served in the Solomon Islands, teaching at the Pre-Seminary and Catechist Centre at Nazareth Apostolic Centre (2018–2024). There we formed young people in faith and prepared them to be effective Christian leaders in their communities.

I joined Notre Dame de France in March this year. ***Arriving in London was another culture shock,*** very different from my previous mission. I now help at the Refugee Centre and the Sandwich Service. On Mondays I serve at the drop-in centre, meeting people from countries such as Ivory Coast, Congo, Algeria and Iran. On Thursdays I assist in English classes for refugees, and on Saturdays I help prepare and distribute sandwiches to the homeless and marginalised. I also assist in

church life and other activities at NDF.

In July I had the privilege of attending a French class in Paris, which was a wonderful experience, even if I did not master everything. ***Afterwards, I attended a retreat at La Neylière and was struck by the beauty and prayerful atmosphere of the place.*** I hope to return one day. God bless us all. Merci beaucoup.

***Sr Kurarenga (Kura) Tenaua, SMSM***

I am Sr Aqela Likulagi Vere, from Fiji, a Missionary Sister of the Society of Mary (SMSM) since 1987. ***I have served in Oceania, Africa and Europe, working in teaching, counselling and social work.***

The plane landed at Heathrow on a cold morning, 27 November 2024, in the country that will be my home for the next three years.

I now continue my mission at Notre Dame de France, London. On arrival, I received a warm, family-style welcome from our brother priests: Frs Hubert, Martin, Pascal and Christian. Although different from what I was used to, I quickly adapted to community life. I was the only SMSM here until March 2025.

I explored the many activities at Notre Dame and offered my help where needed: at the Refugee Centre, the Sandwich Service and in existing parish groups. At the chaplaincy I assist with catechism classes, which has also led me to visit other centres and meet catechists and students. I take part in chaplaincy activities such as retreats, workshops, "frat" sessions and "Maristes in Education" events.

I sincerely thank the community and chaplaincy team at Notre Dame de France for making all this possible.

***Sr Aqela Likulagi Vere, SMSM***



### ANNIVERSARIES OF PROFESSION IN OCTOBER IN EUROPE

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