

MARIST MISSION OF 32 YEARS IN THE PHILIPPINES



What an exciting place, ministering with Marists from many different places, Australia, Philippines, New Zealand, Tonga, Fiji, UK, the United States. The Marist Brothers welcomed and sponsored us as we began life in Mindanao. ***There was a great sense of Mission and excitement in the group.*** My first assignment was in the gold mining area of Diwalwal, Davao Del Norte. I arrived there for the beginning of Misa de Gallo, the 10-day Novena that Filipinos flock to in their thousands every December 16. At three in the morning I went with the sacristan, climbing the rough terrain with a flashlight in hand. It

seemed so strange, I remember thinking what am I doing here. However, as we approached the Chapel, we could hear the choir practising Christmas carols and with that all fear/anxiety seem to disappear and I never looked back.

Marists went across the mountain slopes to minister to the mining community in 5 chapels. We tended to work in areas the local Bishop found difficult to fill. They were usually in the mountains among farmers, tribal people and in the political charged Cotabato region. In Davao, we lived in a squatter's area for 3 years and shared in the life of the poor. It was an area well known in Davao where bodies were salvaged during the Marcos era and thrown into the sea. People lived in cramped conditions; our house was built on stilts in the sea where the tides came in and out under us. We reached out to the people and ministered to their needs.

On another occasion, I'll share about some of our other ministries from my 32 years. ***In conclusion there are 10 million Filipinos working throughout the world. The Bishops Conference of the Philippines sees them as New Asian Missionaries and many of them wish to play such a role.*** What a gift we have...I believe Michael Ryan has been ministering with them in Paris. Lucky man.

Paddy Muckian, sm



DEAR MARIST FRIENDS,

No doubt you are being bombarded with messages and documents in this paschal season. I'll be brief. This month EuroInfo has a missionary flavour. Two testimonies from African confreres starting new assignments in Europe, an Irish confrere remembering his first assignment in the Philippines, and a Mexican confrere who returned to Mexico a year ago from France shares some of the fruits of his "apostolate of the pen". A blessed Easter season to all our readers.

Kevin Duffy, sm

PRAYER INTENTION

that the Holy Spirit will inspire new Marist missionary

vocations in answer to our prayers during the Novena coming up to the feast of St Peter Chanel (28 April)

To download the Novena click here: [St Peter Chanel Novena](#) from 20 to 28 April



FIRST STEPS IN LYON: A RICH AND FRATERNAL EXPERIENCE



My arrival in Lyon in September 2025 was marked by a warm welcome: Fr. Roger Lordong had come to meet me at Lyon Perrache train station, a simple yet deeply fraternal gesture that set the tone for this new stage in my life as a Marist missionary. Community life at Rue Sala is gradually taking shape. Little by little, bonds have been forged through shared meals, conversations and moments of prayer. The community also knows how to celebrate life's simple joys: several birthdays, including mine in September and Roger's in February, convivial moments that strengthen our brotherhood; several significant community events: a gathering at Rue Sala and two others with the wider Neylière community, the last of which was hosted by the SMSM Sisters. *These meetings have been valuable opportunities to discuss our mission and to better understand our place within our commitment.*

Furthermore, I am continuing my studies in educational sciences with the aim of becoming a primary school teacher. Currently on a supervised teaching placement in Bellecombe, I am gaining practical experience of the profession. *I am happy to be living in this intergenerational and international community, which is home to four different nationalities.* Everyone contributes, and I am learning a great deal from the older members. It is a deeply enriching experience.

Christian Ngoura, sm

A NEW BEGINNING FILLED WITH JOY AND CONFIDENCE

I give thanks to God for allowing me to join the community of Notre Dame de France in London on 28 February, after a long wait to obtain my visa. I received a very warm welcome there, which *filled my heart with joy and immediately helped me feel at home.* For over a month now, I have been gradually discovering this parish, which I regard as a true school of Christian life and apostolic service. Every day, I learn to love more deeply and to serve with simplicity and openness. I am settling in little by little, through the various ministries and encounters that nourish my faith and help me grow as a person—humanly, spiritually, culturally and pastorally. I am touched by the dynamism, openness and depth of faith of this community, which is a precious place for me. I also hold dear in my heart the memory of Father Hubert, who was called to God before my arrival. His witness remains alive amongst us.

The spring that has begun reflects what I am experiencing inwardly: *a renewal, a growing hope and a heart that opens and remains optimistic.* I continue on this path with confidence and joy, moving forward with the whole team, guided by Mary, our Mother, to discover and fulfil God's plan together. Together we are learning to recognise God's presence in our daily lives, to grow in charity and to bear witness to the Gospel with simplicity and hope.



Clovis Gwencho, mariste

“CELEBRATE EVERY MASS AS IF IT WERE YOUR FIRST MASS, YOUR LAST MASS, YOUR ONLY MASS.”



These words stayed with me (almost) every time I celebrate Mass. They have helped me become aware of the immense privilege and responsibility that comes with celebrating the Eucharist. Many times I have been deeply moved by the grace of the moment, by the people present, by the children shouting or the babies crying, for *everything is the presence of Christ—those men and women, that church, those fields, those mountains, the falling rain, every heart, every tear, every joy, and every sorrow—all form the Body of Christ.*

42 years of celebrating the Eucharist—unforgettable, wonderful, tragic moments! Moments when I was happy to be a priest and moments when I wanted to do more for those sick people, for those disabled children, for those orphans, or for that widow; moments when I did not understand that God was asking me for THIS and nothing else. Moments when I felt I was the luckiest of men, blessed a thousand times over by friends, by family, even by strangers. Wonderful moments in which I tried to bring Christ closer to others. *I want to share with you those Masses, those moments when Christ truly made*

Himself present among us. I share them with a grateful and humbled heart. I know that you will be able to look beyond the priest to see Jesus, the Christ, the Lord, the one who loved me and gave himself up for me.

You can download the book: 40 masses and others moments in life in [English](#), [French](#) or [Spanish](#)

François Chauvet, sm