



MARIST MISSION NEWSLETTER  
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# MARIST MISSION CENTRE (MMC)

Managing both:

**The Marist Fathers International Mission (MFIM)**

ABN 91 030 510 250

**The Australian Marist Centre for Overseas Aid (AMCOA)**

ABN 87 382 823 140

## CELEBRATING 75 YEARS - HUMAN DIGNITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Marist Mission Centre is celebrating 75 years since our foundation in 1949. The story of MMC has its inspiration during WW II on the notorious Thai-Burma Railway where Fr. Lionel Marsden sm was a serving as an Army Chaplain.

Fr. Lionel witnessed the inhumane treatment of his fellow prisoners of war and in the midst of this suffering and hardship he made a promise that should he survive he would go to Japan as a missionary to bring 'reconciliation and faith'.

MMC continues to share in this story by responding to the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our world today especially women and children. In our time, we share in the inspiration of Fr. Marsden and respond to the call of Pope Francis for a fairer and freer world, a world free of violence and injustice.

Pope Francis is passionate about the preservation and advancement of human dignity and social justice. As a witness of God's love for humanity and creation, he calls for action to heal the earth and to liberate the poor. These are the foundation stones of the Gospel and our mission. We are all called to share in this journey with faith and hope.

Our Marist Mission in the Philippines supports two special ministries to the poor, namely 'Boys in Need of Special Protection' at Davao City and the 'Person Deprived of Liberty Program' at Digos City. Both of these programs offer education, social and life skills and reconnection with family.

Marist Asia Foundation Ranong, is planning for the future viability of the program with local staff by supporting two trainee teachers, undertaking a Bachelor of Education in Bangkok. These trainee teachers are being part funded by MMC.

MMC, with the active support of the local community, is a main funder of the building of a church at St. Mary's Tanagai, Solomon Islands. This vibrant parish serves a community of over 10,000 people on the outer suburbs of Honiara.

MMC is planning a 75 Year Celebration later in the year and will have details available in our Winter Newsletter. MMC is most grateful for you on-going and generous support.

With our kind regards and prayers.

Right: Pope Francis "Peace be with you"



Fr Paul Sullivan sm  
MMC Executive Officer

To Donate visit MMC Website:  
[www.maristmissions.com](http://www.maristmissions.com)



# PHILIPPINES - LOVE IS NEVER WASTED

## BALAY PASILUNGAN - CELEBRATING 34 YEARS

AMCOA PROJECT

Balay Pasilungun is a Centre for 'Boys in Need of Special Protection' conducted by the Marist Fathers with the support of wonderful staff and volunteers. These young boys are in need of special protection due to issues such as family poverty, violence, alcohol and drugs or mental health problems. Living on the streets creates another level of risk and abuse. The Centre provides a safe place to live and learn.

In 2023, the Centre celebrated 34 years since its foundation. Over that time, the Centre has developed a model program of care, support, learning and reconnecting with families. The program is now being used by other support programs for children in the District. One of the highlights of their Anniversary Celebrations was the "Love is Never Wasted: A Dinner for a Cause". The event was a great success.



Left: Celebrating 34 Years

## DIGOS CITY - PRISON MINISTRY - INSTRUMENTS OF MERCY

MFIM PROJECT

The Marists have been 'Instruments of Mercy' for the past 13 years at the prison in the Diocese of Digos. Prison is a dehumanizing and painful experience for these men. During that time many Marists and Marist laity have been involved in the prison Rehabilitation Program called: 'Persons Deprived of Liberty'.

Each Sunday a Marist celebrates Mass in the Chapel funded by the Marist Mission Centre. Faith plays a vital role in the rehabilitation of the prisoners. These men support and walk together in faith and courage to build a new chapter in their lives and with their families.

Below: Faith—Caring— Healing



Below: 'I was in prison—and you visited me'.



# EDUCATION IS OUR FUTURE

## THAILAND—MARIST ASIA FOUNDATION

The Marist Asia Foundation is a Centre that provides education and health programs for refugees and their families from Myanmar living in Ranong Thailand. These refugees have escaped the violence of Myanmar only to experience disadvantage and discrimination in Thailand.

Two young women who have completed the education program at the Centre in Ranong are now attending a Bachelor of Education Program at the Asia Pacific International University in Bangkok. MMC is a part funder of their Education degree.

These two trainee teachers who both speak three languages have just completed the second year of their three year program. They have returned to Ranong share their experiences and learnings with the staff at MAF and to visit their families.



**Above: Sharing their new skills**

One Trainee Teacher writes: "I'm working to the best of myself and at the same time never stop enjoying life while studying here at Asia Pacific International University. I have enjoyed my placement at the International School in Bangkok and learning teaching strategies, lesson planning, classroom management, positive discipline".

**Right: Reward for excellent learning**



The other Trainee Teacher writes: 'Returning to MAF this time made me know what I should hand on more next time to develop young Burmese teachers. In addition to my academics, I have had the pleasure of leading dances for the Education Department, Myanmar Club for the welcome back party, and the Culture Night Market. Sharing the costumes and dances from the different regions of Myanmar shows the unity of Burmese students in this university'.

**Left: Enjoying Learning**

## SOLOMON ISLANDS - ST MARY'S PARISH TANAGAI

St Mary's Parish is one of the few Catholic parishes in the busy city of Honiara, Solomon Islands. The Parish is blessed with an active parish community including several outlining village communities. When I visited the Solomon Islands in September last year, about eighty people attended morning Mass at 6:30 am and the old church building was over crowded on Sunday.

The Church is being built by a local builder with the support of workers from the Parish community and villages. The various villages take turns in providing workers for each day of the week. Every day there would be up to seven men giving their time and skills in building the church. The oversight of the building is by the Architect from the Archdiocesan Offices in Honiara.

Fr. Jacob Abu sm, Parish Priest, together with the Parish Council, parishioners and village communities are all involved in the building of their new church. The parish is alive with many people actively involved in various ministries and support programs in the parish. The existing Church will become a parish Hall.



**Above: Church under construction**



**Above: Community at work**



**Above: Parish Priest - Fr Jacob Abu**



**'Gift in your Will'  
Supporting the Marist  
Mission Centre**

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