



Society of Mary
Marist Fathers and Brothers



**MARIST FATHER'S
INTERNATIONAL NOVITIATE
"CERDON"**

"NEWSLETTER"

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EDITORIAL

Two months have passed since we started the Novitiate at Montauto, and many things have happened! They are not just new experiences. Each of the young novices has started their novitiate journey with expectations, with dreams, with longings... but also with fears and difficulties that little by little, clarifying them, begin to show the vocational path of each one.



Fr. David Sanchez SM
Novice Master

As it can be seen in each of the reflections presented in this newsletter, these young people are on the exciting path that is God's call. Everyone, searching,



finds more and more the living face of Christ in different ways. A face that they not only learn to "taste", but also to follow and serve, because they love it.

At this beginning of Lent we want to share with all of you this first newsletter as a sign of hope in this world. Lent, that although it is a time of conversion, it is above all, a time to prepare ourselves to resurrect with the Savior. With so many voices in the world today that seem to tell us that we have to doubt, the voice of these novices is a voice of hope,

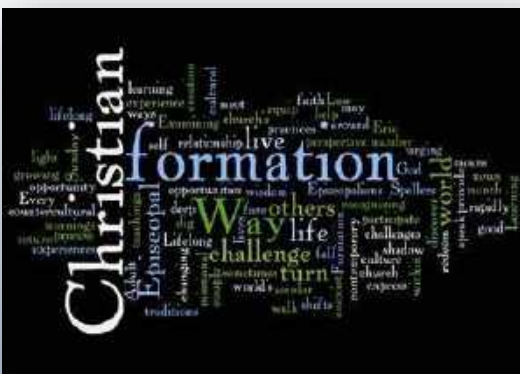
it is a sign that Christ is with us... we just have to tune in our hearts to hear His voice.

HUMAN FORMATION WORKSHOP EXPERIENCE

The one-week workshops that we joined was a very good experience for me as I try to live in a multicultural community. The workshops were run by the Thalil Center in India and were all about interpersonal relationships and they covered many areas that are essential for a community building and community life. So, the workshops



Hansford Mane



helped me to know and understand myself, what kind of a person I was, and also to start to know what kind of people I lived with and interact every day. By

knowing myself and realizing why I do things in that way and knowing the ways and attitudes of the other members of the community, it will create an understanding for me to see each person as a unique person. By understanding each other we can build a good community and a healthy community. But if we don't know ourselves and don't know the persons we are living with, it may create misunderstanding among the community. Also, I know that it is be very hard for everyone to relate to each other if there are misunderstandings between the members of the community.

EXPERIENCE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF MONTAUTO.

Montauto is located in the central province of Italy, Tuscany. The closest city is Arezzo and there are other towns which are close by, Sansepolcro and Anghiari. Montauto is surrounded by beautiful mountains, valleys and hills. There are some castles around the area. We had an experience in travelling from Rome to Montauto within three hours and it is a long travel! This place where we have the Novitiate belongs to the Congregation of Cenacle Sisters. The place is separated into two buildings. The main building is where the sisters lived together with the main chapel, kitchen, dining hall and beside is the building where young novices live now. Be-



Milio
Vakasirovoka



side the big building is the washing house and a small chapel. This place is located and built on the top of the mountain, surrounded by a big forest and small rivers. It is very interesting if you take a view from where it is located to have a sight-seeing of some other places that you can see from the house. Whereby during the time we arrived, it is winter and everybody experience the coldness of the place and not long after middle of January we experienced the snow and the way it falls down. Everyone enjoyed and

we were able to play and throw snow to each other. for us as a community. Every Friday we have an Italian language class for us, pacificans, and for the Mexican they have English. We had lots of experience around the place and everyone had their own stories and jokes living in this mountain of Montauto. Therefore, most of the community program was done inside the house and outside within the compound. For example, gardening, burning rubbish, pruning trees or sports. There are some days that we walk as community on the road up to the Castle of Montauto, which is about 1.5 hr walk. The experience of food is very different where we come from: different countries with different tastes and everybody is trying their very best to adapt to it. Weather is also



a contributing factor for us as a community. Every Friday we have an Italian language class for us, pacificans, and for the Mexican they have English. We had lots of experience around the place and everyone had their own stories and jokes living in this mountain of Montauto.

UNDERSTANDING MARIST LIFE.

It is an honor and a good opportunity for myself to elaborate on this topic of understanding Marist Life. I will be explaining particularly from my experiences so far as a Marist seminarian and at this time as a Novice.

Marist lived and are called to imitate Mary in this way of life and their ministry. "To think like Mary, judge like Mary, feel like Mary and act like Mary". To start of my explanation on understanding Marist life, I can put it and summarized it all to just 3 simple words:



Manuele Botabua

- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Community
- ◆ Missions

These three words paint and carved the whole picture of how a Marist live and understand himself in accordance with the Society of Mary. This is the whole package needed for one in order to live his entire life in peace and harmony with the wish of the Society. Prayer life, community life and missions are totally connected with each other. If anyone lacks of this I think that he would not succeed or not totally commit to Marist life.



Prayer life is our personal relationship with God, our source of everything. Every Marist is required to be a man of prayer in order to achieve personal holiness and totally configure himself with Christ. Without prayer one is inviting temptation and sin to creep slowly into his life and corrupt his spiritual relationship with God.

Community life is about relationships with your brothers and the bond we shared with each other as religious in one community. This is important because one cannot strive and achieve for the best without the accompaniment and the enlightenment of the community. Also, community life is where one experience brotherhood love that would stay with them till the end.

Missions are wherever we are sent we invite others to share Mary's Mission of making Christ present in every age and culture by forming persons and communities of apostolic faith that advance justice and reconciliation. Committed to education, we minister with youth and in solidarity with the poor, we do things in the way of Mary. And also, one of its goals is to attain the salvation of neighbor and to defend the Catholic faith with all its strength and might.

From this simple explanation I can assure that we have somehow grasp and understand how to live Marist life.

LIFE WITH NOVICES.

Beauty each morning/sunrise over the valley/balm for the spirit”

When friends ask me what it’s like living with a community of young men in the novitiate, I tell them it’s like taking a refreshing shower to begin each day. I hadn’t time to think too much about it before arriving, nor had I ever imagined the possibility of being in this ministry at such a late stage of life. However, the Lord continues to surprise us, and so, here I am, living happily, in peace and serenity, up at five every morning for prayer with the community, followed



Fr. Paddy O’Hare SM



by Lauds and the Eucharist. All are good singers, and the liturgy is conducted with a vibrant accompaniment of guitar, flute, and drums. What, more than that, coupled with the beauty of the surrounding forest and breath-taking views of the valley below, could be more conducive to prayer? I have so far resisted the temptation to tog out for soccer and touch-rugby, but enjoy going on walks together, cooking once a month, giving a few classes each week, and helping with the washing up. All part of

on-going training for community life!

COMMUNITY GARDENING EXPERIENCES.

“And grew, and produced its crop a hundredfold!” [Lk 8, 8]

In our weekly timetable, every Wednesday we work with the soil, trying to produce our own vegetables. This is our final goal, but each activity has a specific process and for us this process had started with different experiences and perspectives. For some of us, this activity is completely new because preparing the soil is not an easy task; nevertheless, for others, this activity is easier.



Eduardo Limón
Gutiérrez

It is good that some of us knew this activity. The way to do it is easy. Through the process of teaching and learning we felt closer as a community. We’ve passed some very nice moments with joy, sweat, tiredness and pain. We had blisters and pain in the body too!



Even though this is part of the journey and we are enjoying.

To work with the soil is a way to build our relationship with Christ. We feel him in the natural environment. We are seeing our growth in our personal relationship with Him. When we have the soil ready to plant, whenever our little plants start to grow, this is a way to look how Jesus is with us in every moment and in every place. Today, our hearts are as these little plants, that are starting to grow and produce roots. Overall, we trust that step by step our hearts will be strong and give life when rooted in Jesus who gives us life.

MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCE.

In these months we have had the opportunity to show our cultures in many ways. I would like to highlight three of them. The first one is the Liturgy, where we sing hymns for the mass in different languages: English, Fijian, Pidgin, Maori, Spanish and Japanese, so, that is incredible how a part of our cultures helps us to praise the Lord. Another cultural experience is the food: on weekends we cook, so we



David Emmanuel
Romero Vences



have eaten dishes with the flavor of many countries that have allowed us to taste delicious recipe's. The last experience that I want to share is about the sports, because it is the first time that some novices have played Rugby, American football or Seaweed (sport from New Zealand). I think that all these experiences are very rich because we can show our background in order to share with others and grow as a community. In fact, we can

see the richness from other parts of the world and discover that everything can be done in different ways.

EXPERIENCE OF NOVITIATE CLASSES.

Seated at the feet of Father Founder.

In order to become a religious, a novice is immersed in a variety of subjects: human formation, spiritual and prayer formation, scriptural and church formation, as well as the history and spirituality of the chosen religious congregation. Each class helps us with formation, both as human persons and for living



Thomas Manihera



out a religious vocation. Fr. Sione has helped to broaden the awareness of our own humanity. Fr Paddy provides a deep understanding on the scriptural and ecclesiastical elements of religious life, whilst always taking us back to our own constitutions. And Fr David has provided much of the rich history and spirituality of our Society.

For the first project from Fr. David each novice had to take several chapters of Father Justin Taylor's book: Reluctant Founder, and write a synthesis and reflection, as well as presenting the chapters to the community. For me personally this has had a deep impact. In my culture, family, and heart, history and genealogy are very important. They link the past to our present time; they also guide us forward into the future. In a special way the ancestors are made present through our lives, they live on through us. Listening to and reflecting on the life of Father Jean-Claude Colin (and other early Marists) and the beginnings of our Society, I receive a deep longing to take these Marist "ancestors" and history as my own. I desire to belong to this family of Mary, this family founded in France in the 1800's, and spread throughout the world by the grace of God and the labor of our reluctant founder.

COMMUNITY SPORTS EXPERIENCE.

In the community, we share time to do sports. The sports that we usually play are: rugby, football soccer, and American football.



In the days that the weather is not good, cloudy, or raining, we try to do other activities: we walk around the house, this experience makes us to know better the place where we are living and to share experiences between us. Also, we do some exercises like mountain climbers, push ups, sit ups, squats, and/or jumping yacks.



Bani Nahum Rol-dan Arriaga

In the community we try to do other types of games like kick ball, it is like baseball, but we kick the ball instead of hitting it. We also play a game using the ball to play volleyball: in this game we pass the ball to each one and the ball doesn't have to fall down, and other types of games.

Each moment is a moment to know the community in other ways.

PRAYER LIFE EXPERIENCE.

“The Wilderness and the Novitiate”

A novice's prayer life can be paralleled to the journey of the Israelites in the wilderness. (Ex 15-17) Firstly, after crossing our own Red Seas, arriving to Rome was an incredible experience. There was a desire to rejoice like the Israelites singing the 'Song of the Sea' after fleeing Pharaoh's army. However, even though crossing



Joseph Majires



the Red Sea brought new life, it also brought new challenges. This vast wilderness, which we can call 'Montauto,' was very different than our first formation houses. Longer meditations, praying in another language, the silence, etc., are all different tastes to what some of us were used to. The water here was different like how it was "bitter" at Marah. Perhaps, the wood that we need to use to purify this water is recognizing the wood of our own cross and having the courage to carry it. Next,

the temptation to compare what we had before can lead us to reject the reality in front of us.

There were things that we miss greatly like how the Israelites missed their meat in Egypt. However, if we are truly open to the 'manna' of our daily lives, maybe we might start to recognize God's presence in the present. Other temptations are inevitable, although if we stay on guard and keep our hands raised like Moses against the Amalekites, they can



be overcome. Overall, the wilderness is a difficult place but at the same time, enlightening our darkest shadows to strengthen our soul.

...a long procedure because we lodged in the first documents last year in December from where we got the appointments to the Questura di Roma, where we lodged in some more documents and got our fingerprints. Further two appointments were given respectively to watch a video on Italian Civil Training and to finally collect the Permesso di Soggiorno.

The first appointment at the Questura however was very frustrating for some of the brothers because they had their appointments postponed to further dates but we can't do much because that's just how it is. We just have to be patient and do it the "Italian way". Otherwise, all is well and everything is going well.

NOVITIATE COMMUNITY PROFILE



FR. Sione Hamala SM
Socius
Tonga



FR. David Sanchez SM
Novice Master
Mexico



FR. Paddy O'Hare SM
Assistant
Ireland



Eduardo Limón Gutiérrez
Mexico



Joseph Majires
New Zealand



Thomas Manihera
New Zealand



Bani Nahum Roldan Arriaga



Zulu Serop
Bougainville



David Emmanuel Romero Vences
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