

SMbulletin

Friday, 30 January 2026

FROM THE GENERAL HOUSE

The Superior General and Council have begun their first plenary session in the General House this week. They have started planning for visitations and consultations. Guided by the 2025 General Chapter Statements and Decisions they are prioritizing fields of the Society's life and mission needing major attention.



A new Superior for Monteverde

On 1 February Fr Aisake Vaisima is taking over the role of Superior of the General House from Fr Setefano Mataele. Fr Sete has been the Superior of the house for the past months and besides looking wonderfully after the General House Community, he has given an extraordinary warm welcome to many confreres and other Marist friends while visiting. Both Setefano and Aisake are originally from the island of Tonga, and all are confident that this will bring a continuity in the long tradition of hospitality of the General House at Monteverde in Rome.

ORDINATION OF BISHOP JACOB ABA

On 24 January the Catholic Diocese of Auki welcomed its fourth Bishop, Bishop Jacob Aba s.m. during his Episcopal Ordination and Installation at St. Augustine Cathedral, Fasitoro, Auki, Malaita Province. The solemn celebration was attended by clergy, religious, and faithful from across the Diocese and beyond as well as by a significant delegation of key government officials. Thousands of faithful gathered to witness Bishop Jacob Aba's entrance into the church, in traditional cultural attire, accompanied by his family who formally hand him over to the Church. Archbishop Cardone reminded the congregation that Bishop Jacob Aba SM is the fourth Bishop of Auki, and he paid tribute to his predecessors. He recalled with gratitude the late Bishop Gerald Loft s.m. of New Zealand, the first Bishop of Auki, who served Malaita for 46 years and led the Diocese from 1984 to 2004, laying strong foundations for Catholic family life and vocations. [Read more](#)



NEW APPOINTMENTS



Fr Pat Breeze (New Zealand) arrived at **Casa di Maria** last week. He was warmly welcomed by the students and by the formation team. He has worked closely with outgoing Superior Fr Albert Kabala who has been taking care of the Theologate while also being a member of the General Administration. Pat will be the Superior of Casa di Maria and will be assisted by Frs Larry Duffy and Denis Levi. There are currently 20 students living in the house, 6 of whom are deacons.

Also in the units there are some "changing of the guards":

In **New Zealand**, Fr Merv Duffy is taking over the role of Major Superior from Fr Tim Duckworth. Tim has been well-known over the years for his presence, first at the provincial council, and then during his two mandates as Provincial. We wish Tim a well deserved rest while looking to new horizons, and we welcome Merv as Provincial. In **Australia** Gavin Foster is taking up his role as District Superior. With Tony Kennedy being elected to the General Council, Gavin was appointed by the Superior General in November. Peter McMurrich, as the vicar for the district, generously took care of the district until Gavin was ready to take up his new role. Welcome Gavin!