

# SMbulletin

Friday, 20 March 2026

## DISPLAY OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI'S BONES



As part of the commemoration of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Saint Francis of Assisi's death, the mortal remains of Saint Francis were made visible to all. For the first time in these 800 years, on 22 February, his body was moved from its tomb in the crypt and placed at the foot of the Papal altar in the lower church of the basilica. The event was described by the *Sacro Convento* as *"a remarkable gift, a profound invitation to prayer, and an opportunity to witness the Gospel of Christ fully lived in the life of a person like us. It invites us to reflect on the life of the Saint, who continues to bear fruit 800 years later and inspires humanity on the path of peace, fraternity, service to the marginalised, joy, and care for creation"*.

The display, which is during 1 month, is bringing hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to the Assisi, and among them was also our Italian confrere, Fr Renato Frappi. He writes: *"As I gazed for a few moments at those poor bones that everyone can now venerate, I felt a strong attraction within me to this small but great man who renewed the Church and gave confidence and hope to the poorest and most unfortunate. I rediscovered how urgent it is to put Jesus and the Gospel back at the centre, to cultivate a relationship with Him for a life of faith. It was an important and profound experience for me, what grace there is in Assisi!"*

## GENERAL BURSAR VISITS CAMEROON

The General Bursar, Fr Pat Brophy, accompanied by Mr Giovanni Manozzi of the General Finance Office, visited Cameroon this week, where they received a warm welcome. A financial formation meeting was held with local bursars, joined by the bursar from Burundi. Pat and Giovanni were also guided around the parish and the under-construction Marist church in Obili, a populous part of Yaoundé. Also in Yaoundé, they visited the Marist *Laudato Si'* project and the St Peter Chanel formation house.

Frs Martin Simna and Guy Assogoma travelled with them to Bambili to visit the school being built by the local Marist community (see picture). Due to insecurity in the zone, the trip had to be brief, returning the next day. Another visit took them to Voundou, the remote rural village where our Marist confreres have been working for years under difficult conditions, serving both a parish and a school.



## YOUTH, VOCATIONS AND LAITY



The New Zealand Province is putting a strong emphasis on ministry to young people and Marist laity. The recently refurbished *Whānau Maria* building in Auckland is now shared by four groups: **Logos**, the youth ministry outreach in the Auckland diocese, the **Young Marists**, serving the nationwide network of Marist schools, the **national vocations ministry** and the **Marist Laity mission**. There is great demand for the services of Logos, especially for theme-setting retreats for the new school year. The Young Marists recently celebrated 25 years of the *Marist Youth Leader* programme and are now immersed in school ministry and in the *Young Marist Neighbours* programme (see picture), a week-long social justice retreat repeated 6 times a year for school groups.