

Marist Lay Matters

August 2011



Welcome to **Marist Lay Matters**

What's New?

- Two General Councilors from Rome are visiting the New Zealand Province. Brothers Michael de Waas (Sri Lanka) and John Klein (United States) are meeting Champagnat Marists to review how the Province is doing in the areas of: 1) renewal of consecrated life, 2) partnership, 3) engaging children and young people especially those in need, and 4) leadership.
- The last meeting of five for the Strategic Planning group will occur on Saturday 20 August at the Provincial House, Glen Innes. 20 brothers and 5 lay people have met to put this important document together. It will be a blueprint for the next few years.

What's Happened?

- A recent visit to Greymouth saw me work with the staff of both John Paul II High School and St Patrick's Primary School. Harold Leask the Principal of John Paul will retire at the end of Term 1, 2012. Caron Olivier has just begun as the Principal of St Pat's. The two schools share a Board of Trustees.
 - The staffs together considered the Champagnat pillar of Simplicity
 - The Board of Trustees reflected on the changing face of the Church and its implications for the founding charisms of McAuley and Champagnat.



- Following Greymouth I travelled to St Bernard's College, Lower Hutt, where a reflection day was held on Family Spirit, the school's chosen theme for 2011. Sixty staff attended at the picturesque Gear Homestead in Porirua. Each faculty crafted a statement on Family Spirit for itself.

What's On?

- The biannual *Champagnat in the Pacific Seminar* runs at Long Bay, Auckland, from Sunday 21 August until Wednesday 24th. Brother Terence Costello and I will be leading the facilitation of the seminar. Seventeen participants have registered.
- Campion College staff will spend some time deepening their appreciation of *Presence* on the 29 August while

- A week later Verdon College staff are addressing aspects of Champagnat's pillars.
- From the 10 – 15 September I will be working in Samoa with the brothers, the staff and the Champagnat Marist group advancing the charism.

What's Up?

1. **Oceania Partnership Commission Meeting** (Sydney, 27 June 2011)

(Excerpts from the meeting)

- **Oceania Shared Formation Experience** to take place at Mittagong in November – Seven Champagnat Marists to attend from the New Zealand Province
- **Oceania Regional Meeting of Coordinators of Lay Animation** will be held in Auckland on 20-24 February 2012 – Four participants from the New Zealand Province to attend - Its purpose is for regional leaders to come together to decide different formation and accompaniment requirements for Champagnat Marists

Future Directions of the Oceania Partnership Commission *(There is change in the wind)*

- The OPC is likely to continue in some form into the future. Whether it keeps the same name, membership and emphasis will be addressed. Whilst a regional issue, the leadership group will rely on a group such as this to carry on those initiatives and gatherings.
- The OPC will continue until it has at least finished its proposed tasks (in March at the Regional Meeting).
- One of the strengths of continuing a group like this is that it provides an opportunity for the lay voice and connection to be heard/made; and it supports the initiatives which are happening around the region.

2. **Kiribati Champagnat Marist group**

Material courtesy of Taatite Babetara

- The meeting reviewed the pillar of *Presence* - "How can we witness and live up to this *pillar* in our work place, our family and at our extended family meetings?"
- The group will liaise with Br Jone Seduadua on how best to get involved in the Vocation Promotion Programme again in 2011.
- The group prayed for Tioera's (the group's chairman) mother who recently passed away.

3. **Auckland Champagnat Marist Group**

Material courtesy of Br Kevin O'Malley

- A meeting of sharing and prayer was held on August 16 by the group of six lay Marists and two brothers who make up the group.
- Held in a member's home we began with a meal and Marist prayer. We had a fruitful sharing and discernment around articles 44 and 51 from *Water from the Rock* and a paragraph from page 102 of *Gathered around the Same Table*.
- We gather around the table again in October to reflect on *Water from the Rock* and the Spirituality of Simplicity.
- The group in its second meeting has made a promising start.

Endnote: I have attached to this Marist Lay Matters an article I have written which will be published in Melbourne's October issue of the *Champagnat Journal*. Your feedback is welcome.

In the Spirit of Marcellin
Alan Parker