

Marist Lay Matters

October 2010



Welcome to **Marist Lay Matters**

What's New

New Zealand Marist Brothers Assembly

There is much to be said for symbol and ritual, strengths of the Catholic Church. Recently 21 Lay Marists gathered with 55 Brothers at the 2010 New Zealand Marist Brothers Assembly. The aim of the Assembly was to discern a response to the three calls of the XXI General Chapter held in Rome, 2009. There was a highly significant moment of symbol and ritual experienced on the second day.

All quoted remarks are from Janet Webster, a Lay Marist from Greymouth, who attended the Assembly.



"Kitty McKinley, the Facilitator was great fun... and with James, her off-sider, gently led us through a programme that acknowledged the history, the presence and the future of Champagnat Marists. Their energy and humour made what could have been confrontational a nourishing and positive experience."

the Brothers.

On the second day discussion led to the Lay and Brothers meeting separately to consider what is important to both of them. The Lay Marists focused on a concept of common lay identity which they could share with

"On arriving in the Admin block of Sacred Heart College we were greeted by two Brothers - Hilarian and Brian Wanden. They told us they were the oldest Brothers present and they were to lead us into the gathering. We thought – what a nice touch, but we had no idea that this was to be the most awesome moment of (New Zealand



'Partnership') history. As we got closer to the staffroom we could see that the chairs had been rearranged facing one direction. – a bit like a Marae. When we got in the door, all the brothers were standing at the other end. Hmm something was up – something big. There seemed to be a large expanse between us. The next piece is a blur – who spoke first and last I can't remember – I know Amy spoke for us thanking the Brothers for inviting us and being so hospitable. I know Alan read out what it was to us to be Marist. Carl thanked us for being there and contributing.



The thing that I suppose took the order and details away was the statement – every Brother present had stood and said a resounding Yes to Partnership, a yes to the future. To seal that Yes they stood again and 55 Brothers sang their yes – they sang Salve Regina. This was the most moving, heart warming, uplifting experience I have had in many a long day. I cried! Everyone present felt the depth of emotion that was evoked in that simple prayer of Our Lady. This was the past, the present and the future coming together blending us into Champagnat Marists – not Brothers or lay but US.”

The unanimous gesture of the brothers to be in ‘communion’ with Lay Marists was accepted with great joy by the Lay Marists and Brothers present and represents a significant leap forward in the partnership which has been quietly progressing since the call of the General Chapter in 2001 for the Brothers ‘to widen their tent’.



Kiribati Lay Marists Workshop

On the 9 – 10 October a two-day seminar was held at St Louis’ School, Tarawa, Kiribati, to support a group of Lay Marists strengthen their identity and sense of direction. It felt like a natural sequel to the Assembly held just the week before. The workshop began with 14 locals in attendance sharing expectations and questions. Time was given to reflecting on the definition of the Lay Marist vocation, practical application of the pillars in ministry, and the call to vocation. On the second day much time was given to naming an identity, a vision, a mission statement, a set of goals (based around mission, shared life, spirituality and partnership) and one or two objectives for each goal. With the appointment of a Lay Principal not far away at St Louis’ School the formation of a strong Lay Marist group to support the community inside and outside the school is most timely.



In the Spirit of Mary and Marcellin
Alan Parker

(DCP: Director of Champagnat Partnership)