

# Marist Mission Newsletter

in the New Millennium

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## Asia-Pacific Youth

Marists have a long tradition of caring for the young. MMC support extends to many projects for children and young adults.

*Left:* Newly-professed Marists and novices celebrate at Tutu, Taveuni, Fiji. An important MMC priority is the training of Marists throughout the missionary world. A new Marist mission will soon begin in the oppressed country of Myanmar [Burma].



*Right:* These students at MMC Hostel, Maera Moo Refugee Camp, Thai-Burma border, are supported throughout school years by MMC.

*Below:* Maera Moo hostel students cooking a pork stew. MMC's Asia-Pacific Youth Development Program offers outstanding students support for further education.

*Below, right:* Arriving at Na'ana, Makira, Solomon Islands, are students of Stuyvenberg Training Centre. MMC is part of Australia's renewed support of this nation.



# MMC: Up front and out the back

*Behind the scenes at the Marist Mission Centre  
with Executive Director, Fr Ron Nissen SM.*



## Closer look

Regular supporters know that I use these columns [of page 2] to discuss MMC policy, donor and staff matters and other items of a more or less administrative nature.

In this issue I'm inviting you to have an even closer look at the workings of the Mission Centre, especially the people who make things happen from day to day in our office at 3 Mary St.

## Addresses!

Last issue I advised you of our new postal address [Locked Bag 5002, Gladesville NSW 1675]. We've had our mail delivered there for many years but the P.O. asked us to legitimise this.

MMC's little office still stands peacefully at 3 Mary St, Hunters Hill.

## Anne & Roza

On MMC's fulltime staff I am joined by administrative supervisor, **Anne Warren**, and donor services assistant, **Roza Vukovich**.

Both these young women have experienced the 'TOH' journey to S.E. Asia in recent years. Anne as well made a field trip to



Bougainville last year. In 2002 Roza was a Marist International Care volunteer to Fr Mike Shea's mission for HIV/AIDS children in Thailand.

It is great that both share keenly in the Marist missionary spirit.

## Variety of gifts

Roza handles a number of different kinds of donations from MMC friends.

Many donors ask for a tax-deductible receipt which means that Roza will bank their gift in our 'AMCOA'

*Above: 'MMC office... standing peacefully at 3 Mary Street.'*

account [Australian Marist Centre Overseas Aid]. This money needs to be spent on recognised overseas development aid, assisting many worthwhile projects for the world's most needy in health care, education and community development.

When a tax receipt is not required Roza will deposit funds in our 'MFIM' account [Marist Fathers International Mission]. We can use these gifts more widely including for missionary support, seminary training and other church purposes.

## Designated gifts

Other donors have their favourite missionaries or projects and ask MMC to forward funds on their behalf. We do this on a quarterly basis.

Increasingly we are expected by government authorities to have



*Left: Anne Warren, MMC's administrative supervisor. Above: In charge of donor services, Roza*

documentation about these projects verifying the legitimate use of tax-deductible donations. Throughout 2004 we will be asking donors and donees for these written assurances.

### Pledges and online giving

An increasing number of MMC supporters choose to give by periodic credit card 'pledges'. This year Roza will be sending receipts less frequently [eg for monthly or quarterly donations] but well in time for financial year tax returns.

We're moving towards online gifts when our website is launched into cyberspace soon.

### Missing donations

Fortunately mailed gifts to MMC rarely go astray. 'Someone up there' is looking after us! However Roza showed me recently [Dec 2003] an envelope, postmarked 'Dandenong Vic'



*Above:* 'Handling the important work of mailing our quarterly newsletter', volunteers **John and Val Burton** have expert knowledge of Australia Post's pre-sorting requirements. *Right, top:* **Pat Flynn and Val Burton**. *Lower:* **Frank Donovan, Dorothy Thomas and Valerie Grant**. Dorothy was for many



years personal assistant to the late **Fr Michael O'Halloran SM**, longest-serving Director of MMC. *Left:* MMC Tuesday volunteers, L to R, **Joan Hine, Peggie Boyd, Catherine Collingridge and Margaret Demee** at work on the quarterly newsletter mailing. *Below:* **John and Val Burton** [left] with TOH Saturday volunteers. A fish and chip lunch is a popular part of the youngsters' working bee. Most have experienced "The Other Half" exposure journey with MMC to a number of Asian countries. Their enthusiasm to help the work of MMC is high.



which had been opened and emptied before arrival at MMC. Maybe a reader of this newsletter is still waiting for our response letter.

### 'Thank you'

I see it as one of my most important responsibilities to express to MMC donors the gratitude of those who benefit from their generosity.

Roza helps me prepare our response letters as promptly as possible.

### Volunteers

One of our longest and fondest traditions is the assistance of



voluntary help at MMC.

In the years 'B.C.' [before computers!] an efficient card system was managed daily by volunteer teams. Now we have a weekly working bee [Tuesdays] when our

retiree volunteers prepare used stamps for sale and handle the important work of mailing our quarterly newsletter.

With the advent of 'The Other Half' journeys for young Australians a Saturday working

## Financial systems

At MMC we are committed to having good systems of accounting and transparency. In today's climate of corporate scrutiny I am confident that MMC can pass any test.

Key to this is our accountant, Veronica Warton, herself an expert in examining and assisting Australian NGDOs [Non-Government Development Organisations] in establishing best practice in accounting and financial systems.

## Audits

MMC's two sets of accounts are audited annually by the firm of V.J. Ryan. Additionally we require our overseas partner agencies to have an independent audit of all project

funds.

Recently we completed an audit of our BID project [Bougainville Integrated Development] accounting for \$900,000 of AusAID funds.

## The Director's office

I am blessed to have a comfortable and well-appointed office from which to direct the affairs of MMC and that is good, because I have recently received word of my re-appointment as Executive Director for a further three years.

## Masses for MMC family

Usually Mass intentions sent to MMC are discharged by Marist priests in missionary areas. The Mass offerings sent in with them

are part of our tradition of giving for the support of our pastors and find their way to those missionary priests.

In my own daily celebration of the Eucharist I, too, am especially aware of our MMC family. On the 'prayer board' in the office are the names of donors and friends in need of prayers.

Whenever I learn of the passing of an MMC supporter I offer Mass for the repose of that person's soul within a day or two [see next page].

## Being away

The international nature of MMC's work means travelling from time to time in the Asia-Pacific region.

This means I am privileged to experience first-hand the situations of our missionaries and project partners. In turn this enables me to make better

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*Left:* Auditors **Paul Barratt** [left] and **Jamie Ryan** [right] of V. J. Ryan meet with MMC's accountant, **Veronica Warton**, and administrative supervisor, **Anne**



*Above:* MMC's Development Committee at its February meeting, L to R, standing: Fr Paul Cooney SM, Michael Kneipp [chairman], Kevin McGrory, John Burton, Fr Ron Nissen SM; seated: Veronica Warton, Alan Viney QC, Trish McGrory, Val Burton, Anne Warren. A quiet 'back office,' at MMC doubles as project office and board room.

# Young Marists at Sarnelli

A 'mini-TOH' experience brings new insights to two youthful missionaries.



*Above:* 'I am blessed to have a well-appointed office'

decisions as to how best MMC funds might be used. Government-funded projects usually cover travel costs, leaving MMC donations available for direct mission help.

When abroad I am also able to share some of the management and leadership skills I have developed over the years and in this way add value to our projects and partners in faraway places.

## The first shall be last

I've left the first thing we do in an MMC day to mention last in these columns: our morning prayer for benefactors and missionaries, the

### Masses offered by Fr Ron in recent months for deceased Marists and MMC benefactors

Linda Alcontin, Michael Angel, Marie Clare Beckmann, Fr Paul Bergin SM, Jerome Bowen, John Boyd, Doris Breen, Agnes Bugden, Lady Mollie Callaghan, Fr John Cecil SM, Fr Lionel Dean SM, Roma de Braun, Frank Diamond, Kevin Dobson, Robert Dunford, Gordon Elmer, Sr Emmanuel Fay, Isobel Funnell, Jerome Ganzon, Elizabeth Halpin, Betty Hammerton, Josefina Hancock, Tom Hannan, Kevin Imlach, Mrs T Ingram, Gordon Jira, Phyllis Keats, Eileen Mapstone, Mary Markwell, Janice McCabe, Monica McCaughan, Mary Eileen McDonnell, John McDonough, Antoinette Micallef, Miss M Mount, Jack O'Donohue, Mary Veronica O'Donovan, Walter O'Hehir, Alice Patterson, Anne Powell, Mr & Mrs Rigby, Mrs M Riley, Sr Miriam RSJ, Con Ryan, Elizabeth Scully, Larry Spencer, Bob

An opportunity to experience different cultures and ways of living was taken up by two young Marists in December-January. **Fr Darwin Alcontin SM**, ordained in the Philippines in 2000, and Tongan seminarian, **Br Soane Pulotu**



**SM**, in his fifth year of priestly studies at Marist College, Bomana, PNG, accompanied MMC's Fr Ron Nissen for three weeks' discovery of how 'The Other Half' lives in Thailand and Cambodia.

Part of their journey was to

Redemptorist Fr Mike Shea's mission to HIV/AIDS children at 'Sarnelli House' near Nongkhai, N. E. Thailand.



**Fr Darwin**, left, and **Br Soane**, above, make new friends at Sarnelli House, Don Vai village, Thailand.

Fr Darwin and Br Soane learned new skills of relating with tiny tots of another culture and language who are afflicted with HIV/AIDS.

Marists in their early years are encouraged to have a variety of pastoral experiences to better equip them in their missionary life and as pastors for the young, the poor and the marginalized. 2003-04's mini-



*Left:* The two Marists visit St Patrick's boys' hospice at nearby Pai Si Tong, home to boys orphaned by AIDS along the Mekong River. *Below:* **Fr Mike Shea CSsR** [back at left] with the children and staff of Sarnelli House. MMC assists Fr Mike and the families and children of this poor



# Your donor dollar



Supporters of MMC know that their gifts go safely and quickly to needy persons in many parts of the world...



*Above:* A Solomonese lad learns trade skills at Stuyvenberg Training Centre, Makira. MMC assists with teacher salaries in a number of Training Centres. *Above, left:* Chaplain **Fr Chris Ganzon SM** with inmates at Davao City gaol, Philippines, and MMC's gift of a new sound system for musical broadcasts from the prison chapel. *Left:* An MMC-funded motor tricycle will help **Fr John Kanyinda** [at right, back] in pastoral visits in St Vincent's parish, Maddela, Philippines. *Below:* In remote Siwai district of Bougainville, PNG, MMC help has enabled vanilla production to support local community needs.



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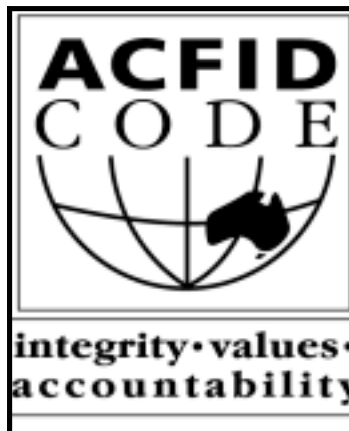
Postal: Locked Bag 5002, Gladesville NSW 1675 Australia.

Office: 3 Mary St, Hunters Hill NSW 2110 Australia.

Tel 02 9816 3187 Fax: 9879 7126

Email: maristmissions@ozemail.com.au

MMC is proudly a member of the Australian Council for International Development\* and signatory to its Code of Conduct.





MMC supports the training of young Marists throughout the missionary world. *Above:* Pictured with their ordaining bishop and concelebrants in Davao City, Mindanao, Philippines, are **Fr Kevin Medilo SM** and **Deacon Michael Ty SM**. *Left:* Five young Oceanians take religious vows as Marists at Tutu, Taveuni, Fiji. *Left, below:* Karenni refugee youngsters, victorious in inter-camp football, are students in an MMC-funded leadership & management course near Mae Hong Son, Thailand. MMC has recently established an 'Asia-Pacific Youth Development Program' to assist outstanding students in their future education. *Below:* In its early years the Marist mission in Japan relied on MMC support. Reconciling friendships forged between Australian and Japan were remembered recently in Northern NSW by mayors of sister cities, Yamata-Takada and Lismore, opening this memorial in honour of



# Missionary faces at MMC



**Left:** From Fiji, L to R: **Frs Ben McKenna SM** [Tutu, Taveuni], **John Bonato SM** [Suva] & **Mike McVerry SM** [Tutu, Taveuni]. **Above:** Sydney-based International Marist novitiate community, **Fr Alois Dreyer SM** [visiting from Germany], **Jeremy Gray**, **Fr David Kennerley SM**, **Christopher Kochman**, **Matthew Crawford**, **Fr Phillip**

**Right, L to R: Fr Cor Hooymayers SM** [Honiara, Solomon Islands], **Bishop Gerard Loft SM** [Auki diocese, Malaita, Solomon Islands], **Fr Roger McCarrick SM** [Secretary, Pacific Bishops Conference, Suva, Fiji].



**Above left: David and Sue Riethmuller**, SIMAID, Penshurst, NSW. **Above right:** After the ceremony of final profession at Villa Maria church, Hunters Hill, Marist seminarian, **Kevin Redmond SM** [2nd from right] with his family from Burnie, Tas. **Below, L to R: Trish McEwan** [ACFID, Canberra], **Fr John Walsh SM** [Japan], **Fr John Larsen SM** and **Sr Analulu SM** [Davao, Philippines], Marist seminarian, **Simon O'Connor SM** [NZ], **Pio Manoa** [Catholic Education Office, Suva, Fiji].



**Left:** From Bougainville, PNG, L to R: **Moses Havini** [resident in Sydney], **Augustine Taria** [Family Life Team, Hahela, Buka], **Sr Noreen Dunne SMSG** [Mabiri] and **Br Visesio Teugasiale SM** [Marist Community, Hahela, Buka].