

Marist Mission Newsletter

in the New Millennium

A publication of Marist Mission Centre, Australia

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Alive and well

Youngsters in eight Asia-Pacific countries are featured in this newsletter, alive and well, thanks to the support of friends of MMC.

Below: Boys orphaned by HIV/AIDS wash their socks at MMC-supported St Patrick's Hostel, Pai Si Tong, Thailand.



Top: Ethnic minority children from Daliandi village, Yunnan, China, are benefiting from better health care [see p. 6 'High level health care'].

Above: Landmine amputee, **Stephen Beun**, is assistant director of Youth with Disabilities Foundation for Education and Employment [YODIFEE] and participant in MMC's Asia-Pacific Youth Development Program [AYDP] [see pp. 3-5 'Learning to manage']. **Right:** Young leaders from five nations in a fun moment at MMC's AYDP in Thailand. [see pp. 3-5 'Learning to manage']

Up front

Fr John Glynn

On June 05 a former director of MMC was called to his eternal reward. I note with sadness the passing of Fr John Glynn SM, director of the newly-established Mission Centre from 1951 to 1965.

Fr John was well known to Australians involved with social justice and mission development. As editor of 'Harvest', Provincial



of Australian Marist Fathers, in Australian Catholic Relief and director of the Catholic Book Club he lived an active and fruitful ministry throughout fifty-seven years of priesthood. May he rest in well-earned peace.

November Masses

Regular MMC supporters will have received a November Mass envelope with this newsletter. We continue our tradition of combining prayer for our deceased family and friends with support for the missions.

These Masses are offered by Marist missionaries throughout November.

Tithing

Have you ever thought of tithing? Perhaps you already do.

Many Christian people — and others — pledge a definite amount of their regular income in support of their spiritual source.

It may be 10% or even 1%. But putting 'first things first' in how we use our material things is part of a wholesome way of living.

Prayer for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Lord, no-one is a stranger to you and no-one is ever far from your loving care.

In your kindness watch over refugees and asylum seekers, those separated from their loved ones, those who are lost, and those who have been exiled from their homes.

Bring them safely to the place where they long to be, and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and those in need.

Adapted from the Opening Prayer for the Mass for Refugees and Exiles.

and do the arithmetic of estimating how much of our income is spent on promoting God's Kingdom in mission areas and for the development of peoples less gifted in living with dignity.

Five times a year

Our newsletter is mailed quarterly and the annual 'Cycling for Seminarians' appeal is made early each year. That makes five times a year you are invited to make gifts through the Marist Mission Centre.

On behalf of the thousands who benefit from your generosity I thank you very sincerely for the commitment to 'keep on keeping on' with mission support.

May our heavenly Father carry you and yours gently through the

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

Betty Alexander, Roslyn Buckley, James Burnett, Anthony Cahill, Mary Clinton, Joan De Marylski, Vinna Findlay, Kathleen Fullagar, Shirley Girdler, Fr John Glynn SM, Maurice Griffin, Mina Hulshof-Goselink, Margaret Horan, Robert Kerr, Nancy Meek, Bernice Montgomery, Lucy O'Loughlin, William & Helen Palmer, Thelma Rankin, Betty Scoble, Carmel Sultana, Veronica Trigger, Joan

What people are saying...

'Many thanks for your help in having our ceilings repaired.' Sr Denise McMahon SMSM, Nazareth Prayer Centre, Lami, Fiji.

'A thousand thanks for assistance for the tank liner for Buma Centre. It will greatly help our support of larger groups in courses at the Centre.' Bishop Gerard Loft, SM, Auki, Solomon Islands.

'Our specialist medical clinics have been extremely successful. Thank you for your practical help.' Sr Maureen Gleeson RSM for the Mercy Family Health Clinic, Lima, Peru.

'Thank you for your donation to the earthquake relief fund for Papuans in Nabire, West Papua. We have bought a mobile saw to help in rebuilding houses destroyed there and in other projects.' Dr Greg Poulgrain, Hill End, QLD.

'Thank you for the generous financial support for Sr Susan and the helpers at the Anondo Neer program for the disabled in Dhaka city. May your work be blessed abundantly in helping the poor and marginalized in their striving for dignity and quality in their life.' Sr Janice Ruff SMSM [for Sr Susan Pescadera, Dhaka, Bangladesh].

'Many thanks for the Marist Mission Newsletter... particularly interested in your Big Ride with Ban. What an amazing person he is. Being disabled myself it gives me great encouragement.' D.H., Bradbury, NSW.

'It's always interesting to read of your work in the islands and countries north of Australia. Where would we be without the help of missionaries?' W. & Z. A., Katoomba, NSW.

'Thank you for sending the Marist Mission Newsletter regularly. I love to read of the great work done for those on the margin, those easily forgotten.' Sr Joan Gormley, Pattaya, Thailand.

'Your work spurs our conscience... enclosed a small sum for the causes closest to your heart.' F.& P.F., N Curl Curl, NSW. 10

Learning to manage

Twenty young adults from eight nations and cultures come together for leadership and management training in Thailand.

Fr Ron Nissen SM describes two weeks of MMC's Asia-Pacific Youth Development Program...

May 23, Sun: We're off! The five AYDP-ers from PNG and I are winging our way to Bangkok.

Clare, Glenda, Bridget, Jeffson and Desmond have been in and around MMC for the past week as part of their management experience. They are the 'Pacific' part of AYDP.

They are about to have their first taste of Asia.

May 26, Tue: Today we visit the slums of Klong Toey and Din Daeng. MMC was one of the first supporters of Fr Joe Maier many years ago. He is gracious in welcoming our little group to the Mercy Centre.

Witnessing the tragedy of AIDS at close quarters is a sobering moment for us all.

At Din Daeng Sr Louise Horgan is



Above: The many colours of AYDP: young people from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Karen State, Karenni State, Thailand, mainland PNG and Bougainville. A total of twenty participated at Maesot, Thailand.

as enthusiastic as ever in showing us the work of the Good Shepherd Sisters with the underprivileged women, girls and children of Thailand.

May 27, Thu: And now we are on the Mekong. The AYDP has not fully started yet but these days of exploring 'The Other Half' are rich with new experiences.

MMC has supported the work of Fr Mike Shea for quite a few years. 'We've had to become doctors overnight', he told me. HIV/AIDS has hit this part of Thailand heavily.

It is good for our visiting young people to mix with the tiny tots of Sarnelli and ponder the future of these little ones afflicted as they are with this most modern of scourges.

May 29, Sat: We are back in Bangkok and greeting the AYDP-ers from Bangladesh and Cambodia. Anne Warren arrives from Australia. She will be an important part of AYDP's sessions.

Tomorrow we make the short flight to Maesot on the Thai-Burma border. That's where the action will be.

Jun 01, Tue: We're beginning with two days of Karen 'Student of the Year' discernment. All 20 AYDP-ers have assembled, our complement



Above: Bridget Selan [Taiof, Bougainville] with Fr Mike Shea CSSR and 'E.T.' at Sarnelli House, Don Vai.

Right: PNG AYDP-ers and Fr Ron with the Good Shepherd Sisters and some of their young charges at Din





Above: 2003 Karen 'Student of the Year' award winners, **Saw Albert** and **Naw Hser Eh K'Lu Htoo**, assist Fr Ron in the first days of sessions.



Above and below: AYDP's adult learning process include quiet, personal reflection with sharings in small groups and with all twenty participants.



Above and upper right: Presentations from each national group of AYDP-ers give insights into culture and differences and lay a base for formation of an international network of young leaders and managers.

being completed as we join the eight refugee youngsters from Karen and Karenni States.

We are ensconced at Fr Gregory's 'True Life in God Mission' on the outskirts of Maesot.

Last year's 'SOTY' winners, Albert and Hser, co-lead this event with me. Part of the winning deal is to assist me in some L&M work later on. Today is their big moment.

Jun 03, Thu: We're having a break day before the main sessions of AYDP. Our hired truck takes us to a waterfall an hour outside of Maesot.

It's all good fun except for the Thai check point and some anxious moments about passports. All is well.

Jun 04, Fri: Anne and I are sharing the best things about management at MMC. It's all practical stuff and we

are both enjoying the enthusiasm of the AYDP-ers in learning and practising some down to earth skills.

After lunch I focus on light-hearted but nevertheless important activities in communication, including the vital area of the non-verbal.

From Bangkok I brought a comb binder and I am now armed with a small swag of office bits and pieces thanks to Maesot's excellent stationery store.

It is time to announce the 'planner competition'.

Jun 05, Sat: Fr Gregory has set up





Left: AYDP-ers relax between days of leadership and management sessions. **Lower left:** ‘Coping with distractions’, an after-lunch session. **Above:** AYDP-ers from six nations arrive at Maesot on the Thai-Burma border. **Right:** PNG youth entertain at Maesot’s famous ‘Crocodile Tear’ restaurant.



international entertainment.

Jun 06, Sun: [see next column, ‘Stephen takes the step’]

Jun 09, Wed: Another break day. We visit some hot springs then wander the nearby Moie River markets. This evening our group descends on Maesot’s ‘Crocodile Tear’ restaurant. The PNG AYDP-ers are a big hit at the microphone.

Jun 13, Sun: We had another fine dinner last night to conclude MMC’s first-ever AYDP seminar.

Key memories are shared and decisions announced, especially to continue the important links forged between this great mix of gifted young people.

I am confident that the ripples of these past days will spread wide and strong in the coming years as the AYDP-ers take their new skills home.

MMC’s young leaders and managers are alive and well and prepared to make a difference in Asia-Pacific. 10



Stephen takes the step

Twenty-two year old Cambodian AYDP-er, **Beun Sothea**, has been pondering Baptism for some years. During the AYDP Sothea took the final step and in a ceremony at ‘True Life in God Mission’, Maesot, on Trinity Sunday he received the Sacraments of Christian Initiation from MMC’s Fr Ron Nissen.

Sothea chose the Christian name **Stephen**. During the Aug-Oct period he is assisting with MMC’s promotion and community education program in Australia.



the TLIG conference area very professionally. We have a good computer, overhead projector and whiteboard. A great facility.

Tonight we are having a formal dinner to thank our TLIG hosts and to announce 2004’s Karen Students of the Year.

We AYDP-ers help with the setting up, serving and aftermath of a fine feast. There is a feast, too, of

High level health care

In the mountainous north west of China's Yunnan province an AusAID/MMC project has brought new health care to nine communities of ethnic minority villagers.

Right: The Irrawaddy River begins its journey through several countries in the Lushui region of Yunnan. High in the mountains are the village hamlets of Daliandi and Zike.

Below: Daliandi's doctor at last has a clinic and dispensary as a base for health care to five village hamlets.



Below: Daliandi's community of Christian believers are amongst the beneficiaries of the health care project.



Above left: MMC's Fr Ron Nissen presents the Australian flag to a local government official at the Daliandi clinic. At the people's request a Marist monogram adorns each of the project's eleven buildings. **Above right:** Ethnic dancers of Zike village. **Below:** One of the project's toilets services this kindergarten and village square at Zike.



Your donor dollar

Marist Mission Centre Australia continues to support projects throughout the world where the needs are greatest. Below are examples of how your donor dollar has been spent in recent times...



Left: Thai teenagers practice hairdressing skills at the Good Shepherd centre in Bangkok's Din Daeng slums. Vocational training provides young women with an alternative to prostitution. *Below:* Mothers and their children waiting to see the pediatrician at Mercy Family Health Service, Lima, Peru. *Further below:* Sr Susan Pescadera SMSM [centre] and Sr Jenny Clarke SMSM [right] with handicapped children in Dhaka city, Bangladesh. Sr Jenny has since become the provincial of the Marist Missionary



Above: Wirat Sae-Kuai ['Ood'] is office manager at the Sarnelli Mission, Viengkhuuk, N. E. Thailand. He is assisted by physically disabled staff in the administration of services for children with HIV/AIDS and youngsters orphaned by AIDS. Ood has benefited from management skills training at MMC's office, Hunters Hill, as well as participating in the Asia-Pacific Youth Development Program. Through this program MMC offers selected young people opportunities for practical training in a range of management and leadership skills.



Your Donor Dollar...

Right, nearer: Disabled Cambodian youth, **Piseth**, belongs to MMC-supported 'Youth with Disabilities Foundation for Education and Employment' [YODIFEE] in Phnom Penh. He is training to be a motorbike mechanic.

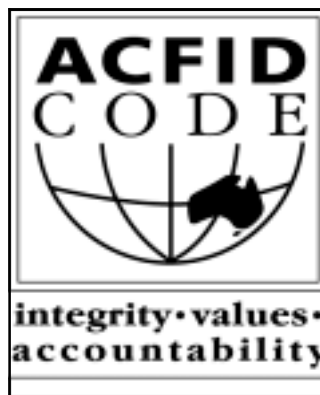
Further right: Nazareth Prayer Centre, Lami, Fiji, has new roofing thanks to MMC assistance.



The faces of MMC



Clockwise from above: 1. Newsletter mailing volunteers include members of MMC's 'Other Half Journey' and Asia-Pacific Youth Development Program. 2. MMC Development Committee members welcome **Fr Pius Jones SM** [centre]. 3. With MMC's **Roza Vukovich** is 'YODIFEE' member, **Mark Chhan**, in Australia to learn computer maintenance skills. 4. Project consultant, **Ty Morrissey**, accountant, **Veronica Warton**, and **Fr Ron Nissen**. 5. Marist Pacific pilgrims at MMC, from left, **Fr Michael O'Donnell** [NZ], **Br Peter Chanel Sekeme** [Wallis-Futuna], **Fr Justin Ratsi** [Bougainville], **Fr John Craddock** [NZ].



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