

DISCONNECT & RECONNECT

Disconnected! Quite often we experienced it with our social networks, can't connect, weak signal... Companies are working hard to improve networks, high speed Wi-Fi, unlimited GBs, fast downloads, interactive apps, online videos, games, music, and so much more. Great inventions, "fast systems" (5G), all being part of our lives.

While reading some articles about the topic, it made me reflect on God's "communication system and speed". Is it out-of-date, too slow? Should He have an "updated system"?



God knows us! He has His ways to connect directly to our hearts! We can see the signs, learn and hear His "voice" in the school of life.

We all want good things to happen, but too often we want it immediately. When it doesn't happen that way, we are tempted to ask, if not now "when, God, when?" I spent time in my life being impatient, frustrated and disappointed because there were things I didn't know. God had to teach me to grow in the area of trusting Him instead of focusing on the "when" question.

Trusting God often requires not knowing how God is going to accomplish what needs to be done and not knowing when He will do it. We often say God is never late, but generally He isn't early either. Why? Because He uses times of waiting to stretch our faith in Him and to bring about change and growth in our lives.

Going through the waiting process takes practice, but as we let God help us in each situation, we develop patience, which is one of the most important Christian virtues. Patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). By seeing God's faithfulness over and over, we let go of trusting ourselves, and gradually we place our trust in Him. It is easy to see how timing plays an important part in learning to trust God. If He would do everything immediately, we would never grow. Timing and trust work side by side.

The book of Genesis tells the story of Joseph, who waited many years for the fulfilment of the dream God had given him. There had to be time for their training, and they had to go through some very trying situations. They wasted a lot of time wondering about God's timing, but God never failed to take care of them and show them what He wanted them to do.

The pandemic is a life lesson! Aren't we just surviving in a fast-paced world, generating more impatience and stress, and missing out joy and peace in living our life in community for the mission?

Even with all that we are experiencing, lock down, quarantine, stay at home, show down, we might still have some sparks of immediacy in our minds: *I need this ASAP (As Soon As Possible), otherwise I'm going to miss an opportunity...* Yes of course, humanitarian needs can't wait, we need quick decisions and actions. God did it when the people was hungry in their journey through the desert, providing them food and shelter. Sensitivity and discernment on what the urgences are, can help us to connect with what God is telling us.

It is an issue that we can observe in the Bible, and for sure there must be reasons of why so many passages in the Bible talk about God's ways and timing.

Below are few of them:

"... With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you..." (2 Pt 3:8-9)

"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps." (Prov 16:9)

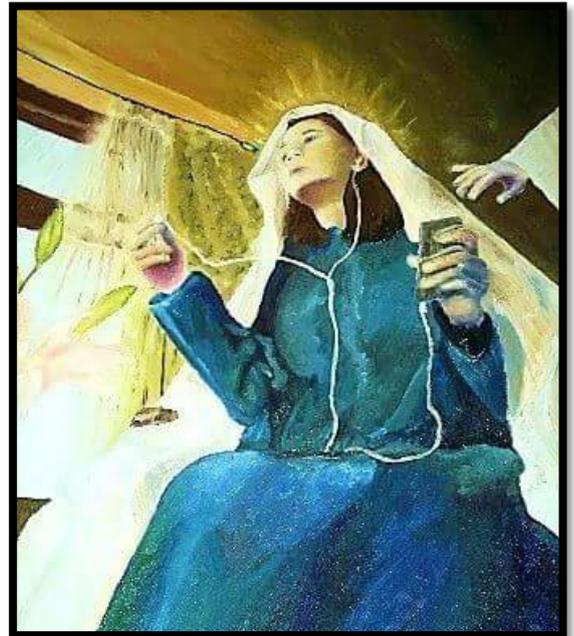
"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens" (Eccl 3:1). This lets us know that we all don't live in the same season at the same time. You should never be jealous of someone who is enjoying harvest while you're still in the planting season.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you." (Jer 29:11-12)

"The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord." (Lam 3: 25-26)

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Prov 3:5-6

"What is impossible for human beings is possible for God." (Lk 18:27)



Dear friends, let's RECONNECT with God, with ourselves, with others and with nature! Like Mary we are attentive to God's signs, listening, understanding and trusting that God is doing the very best for us in the present time. After all, trusting God generates life, *"for your Father knows what you need"* (Mt 6,8), and "when" you need it.

Bro. Canisio J Willrich, FMS



From Saigon Community – Viet Nam

The Student Brothers' House



From the end of last August, Bros. Thuan (elected as the house coordinator for the time being), Bao and Hung began living in a new house, Go Vap district, Saigon, with Br. Pietro for their university classes.

Formation House:

The postulants (Cuong, Y, Ky) and Mr. Phap (aspirant) take English class from Monday to Friday at the temporary postulancy house, district 8, Saigon. The Teacher is Mrs. Weng, the wife of Mr. Hao. Both are our best Lay Marist in Vietnam.



All our formandees in Vietnam (2 Novices, 3 postulants and 1 Aspirant) took three Enneagram module classes, one of the Psycho-Spiritual Integration programs conducted by the ACI sisters, last September.

They also had a recollection in the Foyer De Charite retreat house from October 3 to 4, led by bros. Salvador and Kim.

Bro. Kim Anselmo



Ta Do Project – Viet Nam

Stateless Persons Project – Bro. Bao

We have three main activities at the Ta Do project. These are education, food programs and recreation. In Education, we teach basic words, how to learn with another people and how to connect and share.



Moreover, we make some games and play with them at the same time as we do food programs. They very happy, energetic and more united. We try to make a good childhood for them.



From all the empty beer cans, we were able to make hundreds of beautiful lanterns with paper cutters and tin openers. We also received many gifts from generous people in order to prepare gifts for the children who celebrated their very first mid-autumn celebration.



Last Saturday we had a nice mid- autumn festival in a little village, which has many charming children and their parents living there. We were in total six people who joined together and organized that celebration at 5 o'clock. At the festival we had many games to play with the children there such as plastic ball games, dancing, and flour games. After the games were finished, we gave many lanterns with candles inside to the children. One long line of little boys and girls with fire candles lanterns in their hands joined together so we were ready for the parade. Some songs were turned on in the light of lanterns. After that, we gave them milk, candy and special moon cakes and they were really happy and grateful, because that was the first time, they have had a mid-autumn festival. Honestly, we also felt successful and proud of ourselves due to our having given happiness and smiles to poor children. Finally, we said goodbye to them and return to our home.





Postulancy House – Davao, Philippines

Retreat Discernment:

August 4th to 6th we had our Discernment Retreat. It was the first time we could have a Retreat outside our House because it is not allowed to remain out of their house during Corona virus period.



Proclamation of Postulancy:

August 8th, the Postulants Proclaimed their decision to search for God's will in their lives following the directions of their Formators.



Assumption of Mary:

This year we celebrate the Assumption of Mary in a very discreet way. It was not possible to invite neighbours or members of other congregations. On that day, we celebrated also the 73rd Independence Day of India... among ourselves.



FRI classes:

The classes at the Formation Institute for Religious were able to start on August 24th with the Module about Stages of Development. After this, we continue with modules about Journal Writing and Cyber Ethics. The two of them gave new insights and help each one of us too deep in the self-knowledge.



Community Dynamics:

Br. Kokos from the Sacred Heart Brothers gave us a Module about Community dynamics. we had different activities that make us to recognize that maybe alone we are not able to do it but ingroup we are able to do it. The possibility to work in group lead us to discover of to build a faith community

MBTI:

During three days the postulants try to discover their personality using the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) test as an introspective self-report questionnaire indicating differing psychological preferences in how they perceive the world and make decisions. In four categories: introversion or extraversion, sensing or intuition, thinking or feeling, judging or perceiving. The results have been shared and we try to understand one another in a better way.



Birthdays:

Month of August, we had three Birthday celebrations. We thank all who made that day's celebration so meaningful. Congratulations Agustin, Joel and Hoan... Happy Long life.



Helping other Congregation: Br. Tri with a group of postulants have been giving helping hand in a kinder-garden at the peripheries of Davao... they painted the tools of the garden.

Brother Paco left to Manila:

Brother Paco and the novice Joseph Ly left the Postulancy house to start the travel to Sri Lanka. The first stage of the trip will be Manila, from there, they will have to find the opportunity to follow the next stage of their journey. We wish them all the best and sincerely thank for their presence among us.



From International Novitiate – Sri Lanka



ACEP (Apostolic Community Experience Program), by Tran Ngoc Gioan (2nd year Novice)

I am Gioan, an MDA novice. I came to Kalpitiya community for my apostolic experience. It is already one month since I came here. I stay in this community but I go to Saint Sebastian's school for my ministry, from Monday to Friday. Here I observe the activities in the school and help English teachers in different classes from grade one to grade six. Every day, I talk and play with the students in the school and I also join in the

conversation with teachers. Those conversations help me to understand the situation of the school. Also I learn teaching skills and study more about customs and traditions and how Sri Lankans educate

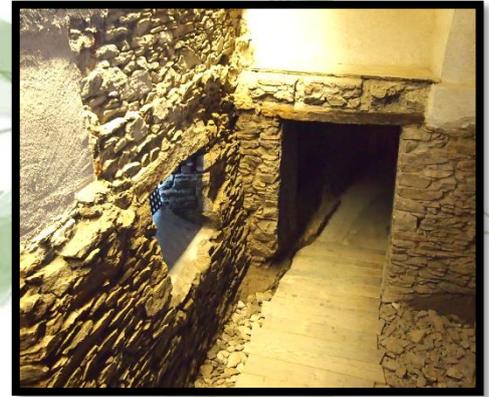
their pupils. I am very happy to be with young people who are not only in school but also with the children and young people in this village of Kalpitiya. I have learned many things through this experience. It also helps me to live better the Marist charism, that is to work with young people wherever I will live and go.



Personal Reflection on Circular HOMES OF LIGHT

It has been a while since the Novices left for their ACEP, in some cases, we have a different structure of community life. At this time, we experience the quietness due to different personal time table that we set for our aim. Only dead fish go with the flow and Br. Ernesto in his circular asks us to adapt with time, changes that it could be a new way of reaching out to our mission as a bridge builder.

I would love to take a picture of L'HERMITAGE house which has three level and each of them present a chapter in Br. Ernesto's circular. The basement which is home of life where our life is based on prayer where we rest in Thy. This is where we spend our time to our loved one. Man does not live as an island there for community life is where we show our love to one another.



In John's Gospel if anyone says, "I love God, but hates his brother, he is a liar". For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. Community is the first place for us to share our love, concern, respecting one another, creating trust and listen to each other. It's place where we accept one another as we are and help each other particularly in their weakness.

Yet, it is a place where we take care of the light but it is also a place where we generate the light to set it out. It is the place where we enhance the light that we have set. Each of us is a piece of wood that by putting ourselves into the fire then we can keep the fire burning.

Young brother.

Teaching experience – Bro. Duy Le

We are, as young brothers still in the Novitiate because of this pandemic holds us here. In order to keep us busy here, we were suggested to study a training course (focus on primary teacher training) so last few weeks we did our teaching practice in order to fulfil our certificate. We are 6 young brothers were in three schools in Sri Lanka; we had many beautiful experiences. There were also some challenges for us too. But we were all happy to experience something new for us as the time to take courage to teach in the schools.



From Br. Paco



Ly (Pre-Novice) and Br. Paco arrived in MAPAC (Marikina-Manila) on Sep 10. We are living in "Francois Fraternity". We are participating in some activities with all MAPAC members such as: daily mass, lunch and dinner, some recreations, sports and community work... While Ly is following the pre-novitiate online formation, I am following in contact with the Novices and Pre-novices and trying to coordinate the work with the Formators of the Novitiate. We are waiting here, for the time when we can fly to our destination.



From MAPAC - Philippines

Great Greetings from Brothers in Mapac, I'm Nguyen Hoang Anh, now I'm living in the Chanel fraternity at Mapac. I'm so happy with my life here, living together with many young Brothers who come from 12 different countries. We share our lives and experiences. We also help each other in our weakness and support one another particularly at difficult moments. At this time, we together with the Philippine brothers and people are facing the virus but it seems we are luckier than other people outside. We have a big area, so that we can have manual work, sports, and social time; running following the schedule. We still have at least one activity per month which share what we have with those who are hungry, by cooking and delivering the food for them; mostly they are children. We have some brothers struggling with the flight to go back to their



country, luckily this Sunday some of us may take the chance to flight back to Bangladesh and East Timor. Myself in this semester, I really love to work on my duties and study too. So busy and meaningful. I spend a lot of time reading, writing and doing many assignments, I believe others also the same. I hope and wish that all of us may find the way to live out our strength and faith as a little Brother of Mary. Wish you all the best.

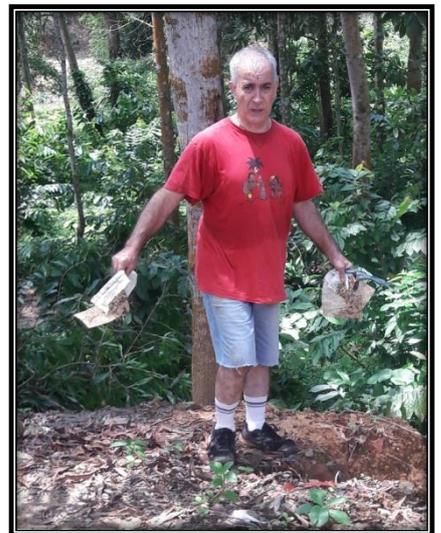
Bro. Nguyen Hoang Anh

Giasnogor Community in Bangladesh



The year 2020 is a blessing in disguise; Marceline's enduring presence in doing manual work has resurfaced in most of our Brothers. As the educational and transport/aviation sectors got shut worldwide, we found ourselves stranded in the community doing most of the works that workers and students do; continuously cleaning the surroundings, planting and watering grass and flowers, digging trenches, clearing footpaths etc. The pictures below offer some evidence to the resurfacing of Marceline's enduring presence in manual work for our community members of Giasnogor:

I find this experience of Marceline's presence through doing manual work satisfying and with much edification. It is the same experience I had during my visit to the Hermitage in 2016 in France. I was shown Marceline's bed on which I sat in contemplation, but I didn't feel his presence there; I was also shown the golden box presumed to contain his remains and before which we had some prayers, yet I didn't feel his presence there; I was later taken to his birthplace, but he was not there either; they even took me to the place where he was lost in the snow, but nothing happened inside me. When on a Saturday morning they asked me to go and clear outgrowing bushes along the banks of the stream, that's where I felt something inside me, his presence. I sighed peacefully and whispered to myself, as if talking to him, "So, you want us to do this too...to dirty our hands".





Meanwhile, **Brother Eugenio** re-joined our Community after having spent the longest home leave holiday so far in MDA; starting on the 29th of March and ending on the 19th of August. On his arrival, we gave him a covid-19 reception; no shaking of hands, no participation in the community activities and masking up all the time when outside the room for 14 days. And on his birthday (1st of September), the deserving gifts were masks and disinfectants. We were and are very grateful to God and to our Good mother Mary that in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, our Brother came back home safely and sound.

On the same note, two novices, **Topu** and **Sumon**, also joined our community officially on the 26th of September to start their pre-novitiate formation. They are fully involved in our community prayers, house chores, manual work and feeding program. Now we await the arrival of another community member, **Br. Rubel Nokrek** from the Philippines, probably on the 12th of this month.



Br. Vigilio BWALYA

From Mymensingh Formation House, Bangladesh



It's a long break from our usual work, traveling and visiting young men who are in our contact during this pandemic situation. No clear idea what's going on around us and how serious the virus effectiveness is. People are moving here and there very freely and not much serious about the situation. It's a dilemma to see most of them moving without any mask or any precautions, except the church forcing us to wash our hands and legs before entering the church particularly on Sundays. Because the week days very few turns to the church (all of us religious except one or two lay) but Sunday's good number of people try to attend the Mass.

In this Formation community, two brothers (**Bros. George & Alex**) live with two candidates **Subho** - in coming Aspirant and **Lolat** who has started his class 11. we go to the church for our daily mass apart from that we help two candidates teaching English. Living a simple life by praying together, preparing our meals, sharing our house chores which are our daily routines. Sometimes I was asked to give a talk and week retreat to the Salesians and Charity Sisters who are living in walkable distance and also giving some English class for their Aspirants who are staying in the house only not going anywhere else. So, I am safe from getting the virus. In September, we celebrated our **Lady's Birthday** and **Holy Name of Mary** feast days meaningfully. There are some more young men waiting for our call to come and join our formation program. but due to this COVID situation, we are not able to accept them. We will take some more time at least until the Government reopens the schools. Safe survival is become our priority these days.



Bro. Alex, fms

From Thailand Community

At the beginning of August 2020 Brs Ismael & Jose, invited by Fr. Sunai Suhachai (assistant parish priest & and weekly celebrant at Assumption College of Commerce) went to visit the churches and



historical monuments at Ayutthaya. We stayed overnight at the parish. Coming back to Bangkok we stopped at Assumption English Medium School, near Samut Sakhon. I stayed at Samut Sakhon to help with the teaching at the Marist Centre and at the St. Anne's Centre. Both look after migrant children and youth. I met the Sacred Heart of Jesus community of Sisters, where my white cassock was made and, in the context of the vocational promotion, called on different parishes in Bangkok to meet the priests, the

youth and to Introduce Marist Brothers Congregation. Saint Louis, Rosa Mistica, Fatima, Saint Thomas Apostle and Our Lady of Mercy Parish and its projects, in Nonthaburi, run by the PIME Fathers., with the same purpose also travelled to Sakon Nakhon, Korat and to Ratchaburi to meet the clergy, Religious Sisters and youth.

At the beginning of October, I travelled to Ratchaburi and Tareth to meet the families of the two candidates. I also met the De la Salle Brothers Superior in Thailand at their school in Bangkok and joined two Dominican Sisters to see a former formation house on sale belonging to them situated in Sampran, 30 kms from Bangkok. September 1st and 8th, the community held a “come & see” program for two Thai candidates, aged 21 and 27 years. Another young British man from Indian origin, teaching in Thailand, joined the group one afternoon and left the following morning. Sister Kanlaya, from the Sacred Heart Sisters community in Bangkok, helped for two days to present the “history & mission of the Catholic Church in Thailand” and Mrs Angeline, who has helped me with the English – Thai translations of vocational material, joined the morning sessions of one day doing oral translation



I took part in the district council meetings by video conference. Br. Jose, representing the Living Water Foundation, attended a funeral mass at the Holy Redeemer Church, Bangkok, in memory of one of the pioneers of the Foundation, the American Redemptorist Fr. Martin Robert, who died in Bangkok at 95 years of age after more than 60 years of ministry in Thailand. A few weeks later Br. Jose accompanied a member of the

Foundation of Samut Sakhon District to distribute sanitary masks to Myanmar migrant families working in the fishing sector. Br. Jose and I also attended the video conference via Zoom with Brs Canisio, Soteras and Sylvain from Rome plus the community leaders of the MDA District. Br. Jose also participated in two video conferences chaired by Br. Libardo Garzon, General Econome, about the

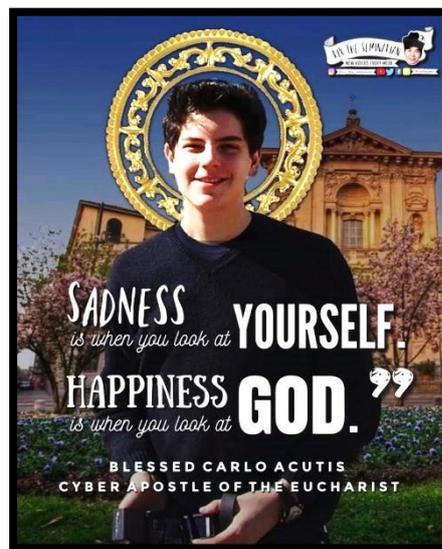
“sustainability in the Marist administrative units of Asia, Africa & Madagascar and in the MDA”. At the beginning of October Br. Jose went to the Camillian Centre at Latkrabang for a 5 days retreat.

Bros. Isma Valls & Jose Grande

**Young Blessed Carlo Acutis
Beatified on 10th October, 2020**

His Faithful words and experience God, Eucharist and Mary,

- “The Virgin Mary is the only woman in my life.”
- “The more Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on earth we will have a foretaste of heaven.”
- “By standing before the Eucharistic Christ, we become holy.”
- “There are people who suffer much more than me.”
- “Continuously ask your guardian angel for help. Your guardian angel has to become your best friend.”
- “Do not be afraid because with the Incarnation of Jesus, death becomes life, and there’s no need to escape: in eternal life, something extraordinary awaits us.”
- “Jerusalem is right on our doorstep.”
- All people are born as originals but many die as photocopies”
- To always be close to Jesus, that’s my life plan”.
- “Sadness is looking at ourselves, happiness is looking towards God.”
- “Not me, but God.”
- “The more Eucharist we receive, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven”.
- “The only thing we have to ask God for, in prayer, is the desire to be holy.”
- “Our soul is like a hot air balloon. If by chance there is a mortal sin, the soul falls to the ground. Confession is like the fire underneath the balloon enabling the soul to rise again. . . It is important to go to confession often.”
- “I am happy to die because I have lived my life without wasting a minute on those things which do not please God.”
- “Our goal must be infinite, not the finite. The infinite is our homeland. Heaven has been waiting for us forever.”
- “The Eucharist is the highway to heaven.”



BIRTHDAYS

October 2020

05th Bui Van Duc

07th Paco Garcia Ruiz

11th Pham Thuan

12th Anselmo Kim

25th Nguyen Hoang Anh

**Good wishes and
Prayers Brothers**

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