

A Message

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PRAYER

**Mary, our Mother,
standing there at the foot of the Cross,
you suffered grievously with Jesus,
uniting your pain, your offering,
with that of your beloved Son,
as He, by His passion, death and resurrection,
transformed the meaning of suffering and death.**

**Mary, we see your life reflected
in the lives of all who suffer
but, in a special way, in the lives of grieving mothers
whose children are kidnapped, tortured,
or ravaged by hunger and deprivation.**

**Teach us to open our hearts
to the suffering and pain of others.
Give us the courage to stand
with them in their tragedy,
to respond with love to their desperate needs,
to enter with the into the mystery of the passion,
death and resurrection of Jesus.**

My dear Brothers,

I am writing these lines on Good Friday when we stand at the foot of the Cross with Mary, contemplating the sufferings of Jesus and his immense love of the Father and of all mankind. Jesus told us that "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me" and inexorably this brought him to Calvary.

Mary is there suffering cruelly with the outrage and humiliation of her son, this son that she had carried within her womb for 9 months, the baby that she had nursed, the young child that she had taught to pray and formed in so many ways, this flesh of her flesh that had learnt confidence in her loving arms. This son with whom she had lived for 30 joyous years, her son whose every gesture she knew and with whom she could communicate without words, this son whose life had been one of love, is now exposed to ridicule and mockery, his body mangled and torn, because this same love and truths that issue from it, are a threat to the people with power.

Last year Pope John Paul II called the Marian Year to help us reflect on Mary's pilgrimage of Faith. Little wonder that recently, speaking about Mary at the foot of the Cross, he calls this moment the high point of her pilgrimage of faith. The Annunciation had seen Mary's great FIAT and her whole life had been a litany of "Yes"'s and now at Calvary we see yet another FIAT, one coming from a heart torn by grief. And we stand there beside her, endeavouring to unite ourselves to her pain, to her attitudes of faith and confidence which she retains despite the immensity of the apparent triumph of evil on Calvary.

But I imagine that, for most of us, it is not always easy to identify with the terrible pain and anguish of Mary on that occasion. Recently I read some well-attested cases of torture including those of a father who had to witness the torture of his child and a husband forced to watch while his wife was being raped. They would have been able to identify very closely with the sufferings and the anguish of Mary. So too would those millions of mothers who suffer cruelly because they lack food and basic necessities for their children.

But for ourselves, how do we absorb this experience of the suffering of Jesus and Mary into our own lives? How do we respond to this love of Jesus? There are many aspects to this but the one that I would like to address here very briefly is the need we have to let the passion of Jesus express itself in our own lives by the way we suffer with those members of His Body who are still being crucified, tortured, mocked and derided in our world of today.

The monumental struggle against the powers of darkness continues today. In his most recent encyclical "Sollicitudo rei socialis" the Pope speaks of the various forms of oppression, exploitation and injustice, which continue to blight our world. There is no need for me to dwell on these. Every well-informed person is aware of them.

How can we help the situation? I know many of you anguish over this question and it is not an easy one. Let us listen to Pope John Paul II as he presents us with his hopes.

"Today more than in the past, the Church's social doctrine must be open to an international outlook, in line with the Second Vatican Council, the most recent Encyclicals and particularly in line with the Encyclical which we are commemorating. It will not be superfluous therefore to re-examine and further clarify in this light the characteristic themes and guidelines dealt with by the Magisterium in recent years.

Here I would like to indicate one of them the option or love of preference for the poor This is an option, or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness It affects the life of each Christian inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods.

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Today, furthermore, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care and, above all, those without hope of a better future. It is impossible not to take account of the existence of these realities. To ignore them would mean becoming like the "rich man" who pretended not to know the beggar Lazarus lying at his gate (cf. *Lk 16: 19-31*).

Or *daily life* as well as our decisions in the political and economic fields must be marked by these realities" (42).

That is what Australians call "straight talking". "It is impossible not to take account of the existence of these realities. To ignore them would mean becoming like the rich man..." "Our daily life (the Pope's emphasis)... must be marked by these realities." It is not easy to be more direct than that in an Encyclical.

So all of us, dear Brothers, have to ask ourselves if our daily lives are marked by these realities. And in what way? Do we tend to ignore the hungry, the needy, the homeless? It is so easy for us to be not only like the rich man but also like the innkeeper.

Later in the Encyclical the Pope says that the present moment calls for exceptional measures and the participation of all men and women.

"I wish to appeal with simplicity and humility to everyone, to all men and women without exception. I wish to ask them to be convinced of the seriousness of the present moment and of each one's individual responsibility, and to implement —by the way they live as individuals and as families, by the use of their resources, by their civic activity, by contributing to economic and political decisions and by personal commitment to national and international undertakings— the measures inspired by solidarity and love of preference for the poor. This is what is demanded by the present moment and above all by the very dignity of the human person, the indestructible image of God the Creator, which is identical in each one of us.

*In this commitment, the sons and daughters of the Church must serve as examples and guides, for they are called upon, in conformity with the programme announced by Jesus himself in the synagogue at Nazareth, to "preach good news to the poor... to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (*Lk 4: 18-19*).*

Early I referred to the father watching his son being tortured and the husband forced to watch his wife being brutally raped. They would understand something of the sufferings to Mary on Calvary and would be able to identify with her.

And Mary identifies with them. She has gone before us on this pilgrimage of faith, she accompanies us now and she intercedes for us before her son. She is with those people, she is with us, understanding our sufferings, our anguish, our devastation. It seems to me that the poor of our societies often have a special sense of this - of Mary's understanding and love... On my arrival in Mexico City for the first time the Brothers took me immediately to visit the magnificent Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was crowded and the great majority were obviously the poor. Sometimes people say that there is some superstition mixed in with this popular religiosity. Maybe. But I suspect that there is also a lot of wisdom and the conviction that Mary, mother of Jesus, Mary who was there at Calvary, understands their suffering and their pain. And, of course, they are right. She understands, she identifies with them and she intercedes for them. So the Pope has entrusted to her and to her intercession "this difficult moment of the modern world, and the efforts that are being made and will be made, often with great suffering, in order to contribute to the true development of peoples proposed and proclaimed by my predecessor Paul VI. In keeping with Christian piety through the ages, we present to the Blessed Virgin difficult individual situations... but we also present to her social situations and the international crisis itself..." (No. 49)

One last reflection. Would the Mary of the Visitation, the Mary of Cana, would she have been content with prayers and no action? And ourselves, do we content ourselves with our prayers or are we prepared, as the Pope has urged us, to be involved in action also?

To celebrate the Marian Year without taking this call of the Pope to heart would seem to me to fall seriously short of what our Marial traditions, the example of Champagnat and the call of the Pope are saying to us.

Brothers, I know that sometimes it is not easy to respond to this type of call because we have been battered by so much ideology, both from the right and the left. But I am convinced that Marist Brothers, with their simplicity, their family spirit and their ability to bridge social classes, can and must respond generously to this call of the Pope that he has associated with the Marian Year.

B. Charles Howard

Brother Charles Howard
Superior general

**(171) Our life becomes an invitation
to live the Gospel
in the manner of Mary.**



To be an invitation

It is not a matter of our sending out a notice,
issuing a summons,
raising a levy,
prescribing an enrolment.

- (21) Mary is the living sign of the Father's tenderness. She inspires us to have constant concern, to respond with selfless love.
- (84) Patiently she awaits God's hour, being prepared to take the initiative that results in the first "sign".

In the invitation we discern discretion. It is made as a request, with the humility of the one who invites, the expression of a token of sympathy, of esteem, which recoils from being "obliging", even in its insistence, for it presents itself as a joy which overwhelms the one who gives the invitation, wealth which he would love to share.

The invitation conveys also a sort of need, a need for welcoming, a kind of hospitality. It is the occasion for celebrating, for sharing, an interruption in the daily routine.

It is a request for the presence of the other, for his sake and ours. In its unselfishness it aspires to mutual exchange, without bargaining, without counting the cost. It would shrink from falling into the artificial, the mundane, the stiff and unnatural, the conventional, into constraint or conformity.

But in our case...

What is our joy?

(21) To become living signs of the Father's tenderness.

What wealth are we wanting to share?

All the wealth of Mary, at the Visitation, at Cana, in the Cenacle.

What kind of hosts can we be?

Hosts who act in the name of the supreme Host. Hosts who also "serve", knowing that "Whatever he tells you, do it".

A host who lets himself be inspired by unselfish responses, by a constant concern.

What is the menu for the feast? "TO LIVE THE GOSPEL".

Just these few words to describe it?

To live, so as to remain true: concern for authenticity, for simplicity, for daring, in my body, in my use of time, in my spirit, in my occupations, in my studies.

To live, on the edge of the well, in the full heat of the midday sun.

To live: "I bless you for having hidden these things from the wise and prudent..."

To live: "Everyone must be born again of water and the Spirit."

To live: "I name you Peter..."

To live: "Many of the people scolded him and told him to be quiet..." Jesus said: "Call him..." (Mark 10,46).

To live: "Master, we saw a man who was driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he doesn't belong to our group." (Mark 9,38).

The Gospel: the Good News!

Which we announce

- With the clinking of the bunch of keys which opens the gates of the prisons,
- with the cry of the paralytic pulling himself to his feet,
- with the excitement of the orphan who finds his mother again and hugs her,
- with the noise of the stone rolling back to make way for the dead restored to life,
- with the groans of the straining fishermen and the creaking of the boat when the net is pulled in filled to overflowing after a night of disappointment,
- with Jesus, to recite once more his "Beatitudes".

To do it "in the manner of MARY"

- (30) The heart of Mary is revealed to us in her Magnificat, where, true to the tradition of the "poor of Israel", she puts her trust in the Lord's faithfulness.

Together with Joseph the carpenter, she lives as one of the insignificant people of Nazareth.

From the Annunciation to Calvary, she gives her active consent to every kind of detachment asked of her by God.

- (84) With simplicity, enthusiasm, and love...

As educators, we have EVERYTHING to learn from Mary.

We share in her spiritual motherhood.

She inspires us with constant concern.

In the manner of Mary,

- because we seek to act as she did. We imitate her way of being, of seeing, of responding. We learn from her the way to act. She becomes our reference model.
- because she shows us a face, her face, which we contemplate, in which we discover confidence and encouragement; to which we direct our questions in the hope of finding there an answer to our doubts, a generous impulse to our bouts of weariness; where we find (as to be expected) a place of tenderness, the joy of giving, the humble force of forgetfulness of self.
- because she is our mother. This word which is truly expressed only in company with the "our", and which is pronounced really well only with the heart of a child.

This word which makes of one woman among others, a unique, irreplaceable being. A singular title, not comparable to any other. A word through which we recognise her to whom we owe everything, from whom we have received everything. She to whom we belong and who belongs to us. She who is always anxious for the one who calls on her, who thinks of everything he needs better and more fully than he himself does: "Our Ordinary Resource".

She who has understood him through his very first words, the words that others had not yet grasped, of whose body he tastes the whole sweetness to experience there joy and security. She who is so utterly proud of him.

Incomparable riches in a single word, riches of Creation.

*Virgin attentive since the day of this appeal
which moved your heart, welcome in your tenderness
all the children of God who wander in the night.*

(49) **“Fr Champagnat formed the community of the first Brothers into a real family...**

Living with him close to our Good Mother, they grew steadily in the sense of brotherliness, of devotedness, and of self-renunciation in the service of one another. Faithful to this heritage, we live our community life in a great family spirit, thus fulfilling the wish of the Founder.”

But, in our language, does this word “family” evoke all the overtones which it carries? In the jigsaw puzzle of our community life, which we are always having to start and restart, is there not a central piece missing, a piece for which we cannot find a place? Naturally, we fill the gap with a statue, which adorns the house, which is part of the furniture. But in a real family, is the mother relegated to a niche in the wall? Is her place not rather the first living presence, the heart, the warmth, of the family?

This expression “close to our Good Mother”, how precious it is, how indispensable for us to remind us of the intimacy, the tenderness, of Mary’s place in our family!

We have been careful to preserve this expression, charged as it is with emotion and affection. We have avoided a generalized phrase which could mean “under the eyes of...”, “in presence of....” etc., which might fit in all cases and the meaning of which runs the gamut from the careful watch of the collector of donations to the suspicious look of the policeman watching a pickpocket who has found a good mark! The phrase “close to our Good Mother” gives Mary her double role as head of the household. In her position as Mother, she is at the same time Mary and Martha. I am sure that she reconciles these two aspects which certain critics find irreconcilable opposites. Ever alert and listening, she “ponders all in her heart”, and is attentive to all our needs. One important aspect of our devotion to Mary should be to aim, close to her, at also being Mary and Martha, to learn from her to reconcile this double community role in our own lives.

The joy of family life comprises so many “useless” gestures, useless in their efficacy, which make up for the unending thoughtlessness of one, which replace the absence of a smile in another; it is like a fresh-cut flower in a vase, it is waiting in friendship and love for someone who is expected. Each one of us should let his imagination and his memory wander freely in search of these little gestures which he could have made and did not. For this type of exercise, we are advised to encircle our heads, so to speak, with a cylindrical mirror,



so that we can see no one but ourselves. If we must look at others, we should do so through a good metaphorical kaleidoscope, which brings out symmetry and harmony. This is not being two-faced, it is coming close to a mother's look. I do not know if a mother's look is true, but I do know that it is unique and necessary to form a child, to form a man, to create something which, without it would not exist.

It is not unlike the look of God on each day of Creation: "and God saw that it was good..."

This in spite of the endless repetition, the enormous total, of the sins of man, which would bring about the death of his Son. Because of this total, immeasurable as it is, there is also the constant renewed wave of the act of love of these men... yes, it is good.

There will always be tares, there will always be good grain, and this will never be overpowered by the other. Since the days of Noah, God has given the guarantee. His Son, and the Mother of his Son, will be there, to make our actions perfect, to translate this guarantee into human language and gestures. An infinite care and attention for their backward and inattentive pupils!

A true family... perhaps only a dream, but a sacred place of sharing... of birth, growth, and death. It is a place where everything is possible, a universe open to every expression of free giving, a fruitful garden capable of nourishing every growth, every opening up.

We are given three elements, three attitudes which we must deepen (which stops them from being a light-sprinkle on the surface, a veneer of good manners, a following a rule, a timetable, a marching in step). We must forge a relationship which demands the feeling of brotherhood, which implies, like a sixth sense, an interior vision, a desire for internal transformation, a devotedness which makes for sharing one's time, one's capabilities, one's interests, pains and joys, and which becomes more perfect until it leads to our entire giving of ourselves in the service of others.

And yet, this is no dream... it is down in black and white. This whole chapter, is it not a dream which has been written down? It is up to us to realize this dream a little, now and again, perhaps every day, so that the awakening does not destroy the dream, but helps us to discover a new reality.

*Good day, Mary,
Good day, little daughter of the world
and mother for ever of all men, of all ages.
You are a virgin and you are fruitful,
you are childhood bearing the world.*

(87) ... This project insists on the values of forgetfulness of self and openness to others. It presents culture as a means of fellowship among men and knowledge as a work of service...

Two values,

- a feeling for culture,
- a feeling for knowledge.

The word "insist" is not to be mistaken for a mere detail; it is to be given its full meaning.

That fits in with what we say of Mary:

- (84) Our attitudes towards young people find their inspiration in Mary, bringing up Jesus at Nazareth.

... Our apostolic work is a sharing in her spiritual motherhood.

... We contemplate her, hidden and unknown in the world, faithful to her mission of bringing God to us.

- (4) To make Mary's spirit our own, we contemplate the life of our Mother and Model. Our ways of

being and acting draw their inspiration and guidance from the attitudes that made her the perfect disciple of Christ.

FORGETFULNESS OF SELF

Without projectors, stage, curtains or sets... It is real life where there is no shining, no acting, no pretence; a truth which cannot be disguised, a mask which would not be able to hide a vacant interior. The eyes of a mask are black and lifeless holes if there is not a face behind it. To dare to speak of it is to condemn oneself or to be willing to live it. Love has two faces, it is harder to grasp, it can deceive you, it is possible to speak of possessive love and self-sacrificing love. You can make a little mixture of it with two components.

Forgetfulness of self is strictly simple.

We must try hard to experience this simplicity, for in our habits of thinking, our way of seeing things, we are not accustomed to it.

Let us take a sheet of paper. What could be more simple? Well, not exactly. A sheet is a surface and as such has two faces: we can speak of the front and the back or reverse, just as we can for a coin, with its head and tail. If you are on the front it is absolutely impossible to write on the back unless you commit yourself to leaving the front, turn the sheet over and position yourself on the second face. Topology has tried to decipher this aspect of things. What it finds is often baffling to say the least. Mobius has invented a concrete model of a surface which possesses only a single face: no front, no reverse. As for a volume, we still have the same dilemma: the double presence of an interior and an exterior. We are either outside or inside and we must partly demolish the volume in order to pass from one situation to the other. When I say that forgetfulness of self is simple, I am trying to say that these frontiers do not exist, that there are not two faces to show, that there is not the refuge of an interior corresponding to an exterior. But we also know that these frontiers which separate the interior from the exterior are not universal. A long time ago men invented "transparent" frontiers which are not frontiers as far as light is concerned. When, inside our well closed up house or apartment, we turn on our transistor, we acknowledge implicitly that for waves exterior and interior do not exist, that the frontiers are inoperative.

Merely a mental picture of course, but one which is aimed at giving us a flea in the ear: to help us avoid attaching too much importance to a word, even an ordinary looking one. We must realise that we are dealing with a domain that is fundamental, the domain of our relations with God, and that from God's point of view our "I", our personal space, ought to become perfect transparency, that is to say, absence of frontiers. We have two perfect models of it: Jesus who does the will of the Father; Mary, in her "Yes" at the Annunciation: "Handmaid of the Lord" — He who loses his life finds it — which is not to be understood as a subtle calculation, a greedy duplicity, but which is simplicity to God. "May your will be done and not my own." We must not reward ourselves with illusory luxury, with an atomic shelter by adding to it our little anti-God blockhouse. Let us hope that the flea has tickled you a little.

We must not confuse "forgetfulness of self" with "self denial". Others have already made that mistake. If God created us it was not in order to deny us: "Your Lord is a God without repentance." In order to create in his image and likeness, we have to live his likeness, and not be content simply with being an image.

"You are blessed among all women because, willingly, you have contained within you Him whom nothing can contain, because you have welcomed Him who fills all things."



I feel life in my body and I bless you.
I am bursting with joy.
Your presence is everywhere, behind and in front,
on one side, on the other, above, below,
and even within us, O Lord.

(Review: Prier)

OPENNESS TO OTHERS

In the wisdom of the Constitutions, this first value is joined to a second: openness to others. In this union a marvellous richness is to be found. Simplicity, the transparency of forgetfulness of self is there as a real possibility from openness to others. It excludes all duplicity in relations, all politics... It does away with the possibilities of strategic complexity.

Transparency does not provide light; it is not the source, it is simply the pathway. And the pathway lights up and makes the whole room bright. It gives life to the least details, it lends warmth and light. Returning to our model Mary, the "let it be done to me according to your word" accomplishes this miracle of transparency. God who surrounds her whole being from outside, grows within her as her son. She is total gift.

All her human being, in all her movements, goes to nourish with her blood this son, son of God and her own, to be given to men.

Could we offer ourselves, our students a reason for living that is more necessary and more complete?

CULTURE - KNOWLEDGE

The two values just described will be lived within a context which can be very diversified and very changeable. The Constitutions present them to us as "middle of the road". Permeating, moulding human beings, as these grow in knowledge, they evolve in the interior of a sphere more or less closed, which is called "culture". This atmosphere is not considered neutral. Through our two values of reference we can define culture and knowledge with a definite object in mind.

Knowledge is not considered an end in itself, it must become a *duty of service*. We are not there to form people capable of enriching themselves, but men capable of serving. The project is to be seen as a school of "ministers" in the primary sense of the term.

It remains to examine this biosphere in the interior of which all human and social life develops, which influences it in the most profound part of itself, which fashions in part its habits of thought and existence, on which it is at times very unconsciously dependent. That remains a means, a subordinate thing, indispensable, which one cannot neglect and which we would like to use as a *communion* among men. It is not only communication that we are speaking about but rather communion. This brings in a lot more.

The history of mankind is crammed with events which tell us in blood, misery, violence but also in love, goodness, devotion, that the project is not utopian, that it is not an impossible, a chimerical dream. That prophets have hoped for it before us, that the Kingdom is already there, that Christ died to give it birth. That we are not there to separate out the cockle but to sow the seed widely. That the sowers go off weeping (Ps. 126), which doesn't stop them sowing. That it is necessary to sow abundantly, if we are to hope for an abundant harvest. That Monsieur Vincent, if he could not set free the convicts on the galleys, at least brought into the darkness of their lives of misery, into their cup of hatred, brutality and callousness, a ray of sunshine, a particle of love. That when ambition makes galleys, at the same time and by the same action, it makes galley slaves. And God, working against the current, raises up an apostle of the galley-slaves, not in order to bless the galleys, but to be God also of the galley-slaves.

If in school culture is to be considered as a means of achieving communion between men, to be faithful to it we must be willing to establish this communion at all levels, be on the lookout for any cracks in the structure. A first level exists in the kernel of the religious community, the group of Brothers. If a true communion is not established at this level, how can we imagine being able to extend it beyond this level?

The "See how they love one another" (Spiritual Testament) remains fundamental. Communion is not a collage, a welding together, it is life, a constant exchange between freedoms; it requires reconciliation and forgiveness in order to be able to express itself. From that point the kernel and the elements of the kernel can spread "leaven in the dough" in the larger sphere of all those who work among youth. The phrase that is in fashion today is what is called the "EDUCATIVE COMMUNITY".

When a new word finds its way into the current vocabulary, it sometimes has a "triumphal" career. In general, it provokes two somewhat opposite reactions: there is the reaction of the enthusiast, the reaction of the 'T' shirt. It is used and abused like a revolution, like a stroke of genius, a kind of equation of special relativity from Einstein. It is bandied everywhere possible as though a word was going to be able to change a structure and create a new life span; poor little abstract sign, a simple reminder of a reality or of a need for reality. On the other hand there is the reaction of those who, by rejecting the word, risk rejecting at the same time the truth that it contains and thereby "throwing out the baby with the bath water". Community implies communion and the word has its value, if we follow the Constitutions. No doubt we would find ourselves divided if we were to ask what makes up this "Educative Community".

In principal, in the most global sense, it represents the whole milieu of life. Everything that touches each one of us is "educative" or, from our perspective, "anti-educative", though this is also "educative" in so much as it influences the formation of the person.

But to attempt too much is to risk doing nothing well. Nevertheless our Constitutions offer us an opening on to this whole scene:

- (88.4) Our schools are to be places which welcome cultural meetings, friendly gatherings, and discussion groups.
- (87.3) We educate our pupils in the use of the mass media, giving particular attention to developing their sense of critical judgement.
- (85) Adaptation of our ministry to the needs of the Church and of society calls for discernment and evaluation at regular intervals.
- (86) Because of the strong bonds that link evangelisation and human development, we help those who are in need and co-operate with those who work for justice and peace.
- (87.2) We teach the Church's social doctrine and awaken people's consciences to the problems that affect society. We involve our pupils in charitable works...

Since the influence, be it superficial or profound, of this global milieu is far from negligible, it is essential that we become very well aware of it in order to be able to take on the more direct tasks which fall to us.

In a more restricted sense, we arrive then at the school milieu properly so called, our traditional field of apostolate.. and our present day one as well.

At the centre we still place, as the germ and source of spiritual energy, the community of the Brothers... The centre of cohesion, the kernel of attraction for the whole teaching body.

- (82) Ours is a community apostolate. It begins with the witness of the consecrated life that we live together.
- (88) We show our pupils that we are not only their teachers but also their brothers. By trying to establish in the school a spirit of friendliness and collaboration, we help young people to become responsible for their own formation.

To be the soul of a body is not to be in one part or another of that body but to induce in the body a unity, a cohesion, a togetherness. The soul is interested in the big toe as well as in the brain cells. A big toe with an ingrowing nail or with corns makes the whole body uncomfortable. To insert frontiers in a body is to mutilate it.

With occupiers or the dais and chalk artists already taken into account, it is necessary to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and include in our community the first workers in education: the parents. They come to us to unload their products on to us for part of the time, to submit their most precious treasure to the chain of transformations. The two efforts can complement each other very happily and harmoniously, each making its own irreplaceable contribution. Then, how could we not include in the educative community the young people themselves, who fill the double role of being formed and of doing the forming?

The harmonious communion of so varied a complex can be further complicated in our times by the existence of structures peculiar to it and imposed from outside: political and socio-political ones. There can be local elections, associations, boards of governors. The law can impose joint administrative bodies. These must be integrated into the life of the school community.

On that account peaceful coexistence was a stage which was formerly considered "sufficient" and "satisfactory". But it seems clear that the mixing of present day ideas and growing aspirations for the sharing of responsibilities no longer allow us to remain at this level.

How could we be "leaven in this dough" (82) while at the same time preserving, more or less implicitly, an ownership mentality controlling an enterprise considered as "family property" — a private family company.

Must we not pass through an inevitable conversion if we are to be the vine-dressers whom the King appoints **for the time when he is away**, zealous and devoted managers, conscientious and untiring, anxious to see that this small part of the kingdom bears fruit? The Gospel parable has an unfortunate ending... The story of the Son, put to death on Calvary, has highlighted our constant temptation. Mary's humility ought to preserve us from it.

- (30) From the Annunciation to Calvary, Mary gives her active consent to every kind of detachment asked of her by God.
- (84) We contemplate her... faithful to her mission of bringing God to us.

... This Jesus, who is her own, whom she has fashioned, with all the love of a mother, in the privacy of her own body and in the course of the years lived at Nazareth. But her motherhood consists also in her role of giving him to men.

- (84) With simplicity, enthusiasm and love, she carries Christ to the Precursor, and presents Him to the shepherds and the Wise Men.

Finally, how can our role be defined in this educative community?

- (88) We share our spirituality and our educational approach with parents, lay teachers, and other members of the educational community...
- (89) ... we do our best to bring dialogue to such a stage that people can be attentive to the voice of God.
- (80) Each of our communities, sent by the Institute, carries on its apostolate in union with the pastors of the local Church, and in collaboration with other religious and lay people dedicted to the same task.
- (85) Engaged in schools or in other forms of education, we *put our heart and soul into serving* the human person for the sake of the kingdom.
- (89) Whatever be our role there, we are Gospel witnesses in the school situation. We contribute to the building up of society and of the kingdom of God by working to provide a human development illuminated by faith.

***Mary I greet you
hidden dwelling of Him whom no place can contain.***

(5) The authenticity and goodwill of our relationships with our Brothers and, indeed, with all those we meet, are marked by the three marial virtues of humility, simplicity, and modesty.



We give a few reference points about these virtues, taken from our Constitutions:

- Art. 84. ... With simplicity, enthusiasm, and love, she carries Christ to the Precursor, and presents Him to the shepherds and the Wise Men.
- Art. 48. ... Our life, like hers at Nazareth, is to be simple and hardworking.
- Art. 7. In whatever we do, we act as she did, with her discretion, her sensitivity, and her respect for each person.
- Art. 91. ... The style of life they lead helps their integration into the (mission) country to which they have been sent. Like Mary, they withdraw as soon as their presence is no longer needed.
- Art. 23. Our love for our Brothers should be simple and whole-hearted. We should be sympathetic enough to sense their difficulties, humble enough to share their joys and generous enough to give ourselves to each one of them.

The adjective "marial" is not there just for effect, not just because it sounds good, because we are used to it,

but because it is the "mot juste", because there is no other word which correctly describes what follows. We have no better word. no more solid foundation.

Simplicity is the most fundamental characteristic of Mary. In her, everything is simple, everything is sublime in its simplicity.

(Circ. XXVI, 315)

We do not look upon these three virtues as a mere ornament, a badge of three flowers in our lapel, but as a constant sign of our strength, as a mark of the potentiality of what we do, as a solid guarantee of two qualities in our relationships.

"They are marks of the authenticity and goodwill of our relationships."

These are two qualities of which they are the source, which flow naturally from them, which are the trademark, the quality label, attached to these qualities.

They are two aspects which complement each other, which harmonize with each other. Goodwill is there to take away whatever they may be in authenticity which is hard, intransigent, to give it a "heart". Authenticity prevents goodwill from falling into the traps of simple-mindedness, flattery, sychophancy.

There is a subtle balance, relatively difficult to maintain, where we lean sometimes right, sometimes left, according to the circumstances of our character.

However, to continue, who are the objects of these relationships?

In the first place, our Brothers, our nearest neighbours, our community of faith, of love, of pardon and reconciliation, the community we have tied ourselves to in order to build the Kingdom: "See how they love one another..." In humility, simplicity, and modesty.

But also all those we meet, which takes in just about everybody — passersby in the street, the folk next door, our pupils, the teachers, the parents... the ones we meet every day and those we meet only now and again, the shopkeeper, the public service employee, the policeman, the unknown who stands on your feet in the crowded Underground, the little old lady trying to cross the road... in fact everyone with whom life puts us in contact.

Can we say that this desire for authenticity, this need to remain true in our goodwill, that is our giving ourselves, our welcoming, our being available, has become so natural in us in our way of life, in our apostolic choices, in all that we do, that we have no longer any need to examine ourselves on the subject?

I would like to examine two types of relationship which in my view are very important, and where balance is difficult to attain and to maintain. In these two cases, the relationship starts from the beginning with an orientation of preference, a privileged direction, so to speak, whether we define it from the hierarchical angle, or the theological or the social. I refer to the cases where a Brother is called on to exercise authority over his Brothers, or a teacher over his pupils.

In what way is a Marist superior to show humility towards his Brothers? How is the Marist teacher to show humility towards his pupils? Not being a teacher any longer, I still feel I can ask the question, even if I do not pretend to give a complete and perfect reply.

Before beginning, let us state something which I feel is irrefutable. As far as I know, there is only one human being who can claim infallibility, and that only within well-defined limits. The implicit corollary, which is self evident, is that all others, with respect to their authenticity, recognize in theory and in practice that they are fallible in their statements and in their decisions, at no matter what level. I am not waving the wellworn and torn flag of discord and mounting the barricades! Our goodwill is active, and is there to aid the growth of mutual love and to establish a dynamic balance. In Art. 40 we find the solution to help us out of possible anarchy or of dehumanizing servility.

(40) "Our love for God's will and our desire to carry it out throughout the whole of our lives, lead us to accept a series of mediations... Whether we be Superiors or not, we are all heirs to the Founder's charism, and hence it follows that we must all be mediators for one another, according to the grace and the role given to us."

In school, how do we see the place of the three virtues at the time when, in our relationship with our pupils, we have to inflict punishment? How do we live our goodwill and authenticity? Is it possible to punish in a humble manner?

I leave out deliberately the word repression. This takes our relationship as broken, become impossible. It destroys us without mercy. Punishment is really a gesture of love, which attempts to re-establish a relationship which has gone wrong. If it destroys the relationship, then it is spoiled, it has turned into repression. Punishment creates the obligation of asking for pardon for ourselves also, and it is this pardoning that makes it authentic in bringing back the goodwill.

Our memory of the past remind us that in the case of conflict, the two parties have a tendency to dramatize either the gravity of the act, or the consequences of the sanction... which leads to a little lawyer's argument, if I may use the term, with all the sense of theatre that this profession excels in, leaving us to ask, where, at this moment are the need for truth, for humility, for modesty?

I have often admired in mothers this innate sense of mixing firmness and tenderness, punishment and pardon, and seen from this angle, Mary can show us her attitude, and be our guide.

- (84) "Our attitudes towards young people find their inspiration in Mary, bringing up Jesus at Nazareth."
- (34) "As Marist Brothers, we study in the school of the Handmaid of the Lord."
- (4) "To make Mary's spirit our own, we contemplate the life of our Mother and Model."
- (49) "Living with him (the Founder), living close to our Good Mother, the Brothers grew steadily in the sense of brotherhood, of devotedness and of self-renunciation in the service of one another."

In conclusion, may I offer you, in a spirit of admiration, these words of a Br Provincial to one of his Brothers: "Pray for me that I may never do any hurt to any of my Brothers."

This is a witness of a deep humility, a great simplicity and modesty in carrying out his work, and it was from this that flowed the truth of his request and the interior attitude that it expressed.

"To educate someone, you must love them." The authority which truly educates is born in love and from love. How many examples we see of this in the life of Marcellin, which are for us models of his pedagogy, and which go back to the source of his authority over the first Brothers.

"Love the Brothers" ... he said it often, not in a spirit of oratory, but as a reality, a constant disposition of his being, a continual motivation for all his acts.

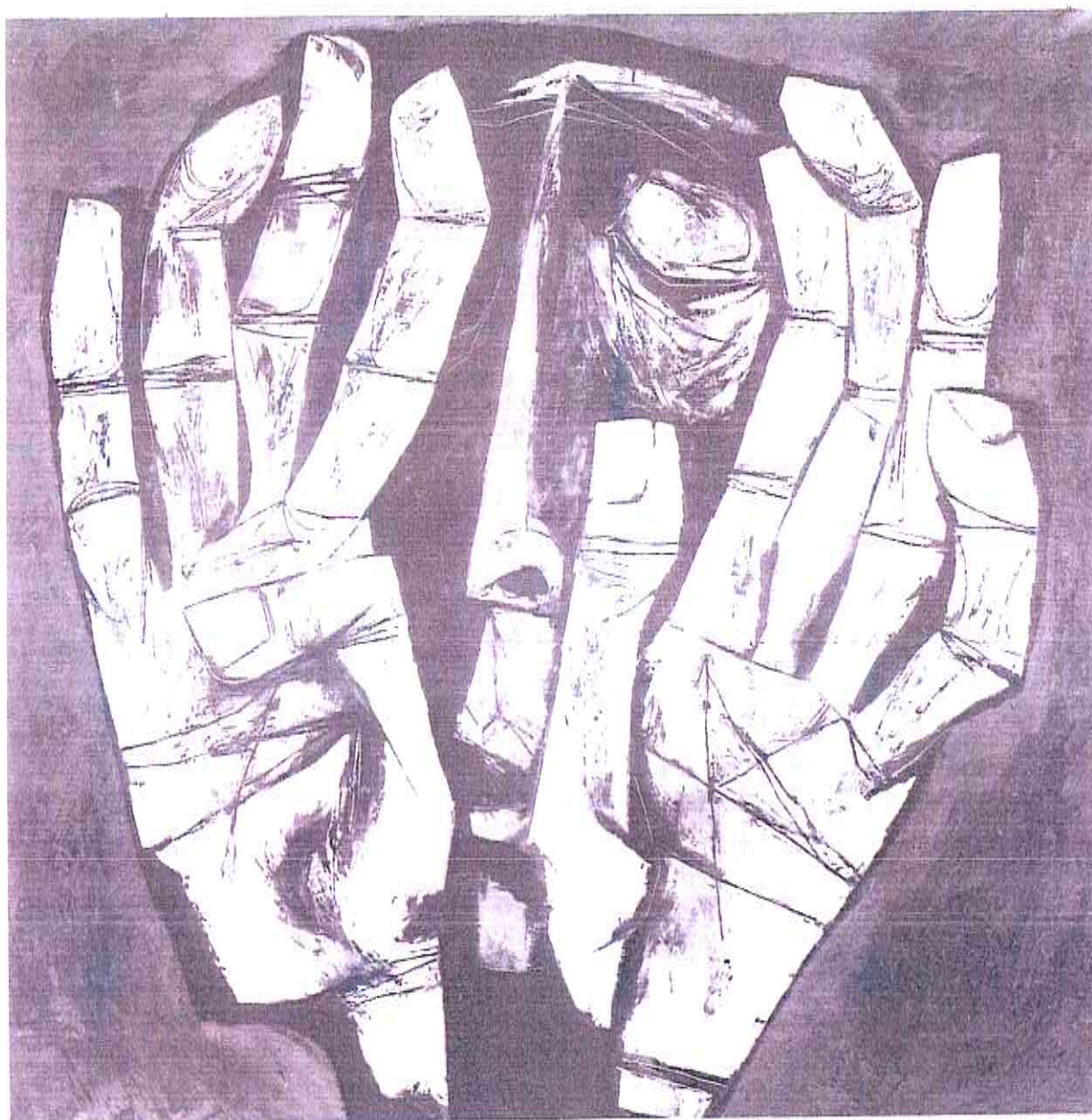
If you want to "share" life, you will "sleep on the balcony" for as long as is needed, and if courage is wanted, you will break the roc yourself. Here are two gestures inspired by love, in which you pay with your self, as against social conventions and usages, or dodging issues. Words alone cannot conquer love.

***Your are our most beautiful sister,
you bear the most astounding good news.
You are the dawn, you are the door, the threshold of God,
welcome us from the night without warmth.
Be mindful of our weakness,
rescue us from sadness, o Source of our joy.***

In the School of the Faith

(84) She unites herself to him in the suffering and the humiliation of the Cross before she takes up her role of mother in the young Church.

(30) Like her and in union with her, we allow our earthly attachments to be broken off progressively in accord with the purifying will of the Lord, who is fashioning in us the soul of the poor man.



"The hands of the silence" (Oswaldo GUAYASAMÍN. Ecuador).

A certain parallelism in these two paragraphs will put us into a prayerful frame of mind in our contemplation of Mary. In the first place, Mary, at the most painful, the most sorrowful act of her human motherhood, standing near this son of her body at his last agony; and Mary, accepting from the depth of her faith the gift of a new motherhood: to be the spiritual Mother of the Church and of all those who, for generations to come, will claim to belong to her Jesus, the Redeemer, the Son of the Father.

The second paragraph will be able to help each and everyone of us to recognize and accept the purifying will of the Lord in the depths of our inmost being.

(Note: The first theme will be developed by reference to the Circular of Br Basilio Rueda, "Mary in our Lives". Page references will be in heavy print.)

As in the Circular, we take it for granted that Mary, the Faithful Virgin, listening and "keeping all these things in her heart", knew about the acts and words of her son Jesus during his public life, either directly or indirectly.

"318 Mary is the mother of Jesus. As mother, she could not remain indifferent before the unfolding of the momentous human-divine drama which her Son was to live out. Mary could not have stood aside from all this. ... It was natural and inevitable that she should follow closely the drama of her Son's life and see its vast significance."

There are three phrases of Jesus that can help us to understand better this progressive education in faith that Mary received and in fidelity to her role as the Handmaid of the Lord:

- Why were you searching for me?
- Woman, what is that to me or to you?
- Anyone who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

"342 For Mary, his mother, what was implied in these words of Jesus -"loving son or daughter more than me?" He was her son, but that son had already said in the Temple "Why were you looking for me?"

For Mary then, not loving her son more than Jesus (this Jesus, Son of God, who was going to his death for all mankind) meant accepting that she would have to lose her son to let him accomplish his mission, with all the consequences arising from this.

She was being invited to seek Jesus as something beyond her own flesh-and-blood son -this was the extraordinary sacrifice asked of her.

"349 After proclaiming that he was the Son of the Blessed God, that he would come again on the last day, that he was a king, even though not of this world - after all this, he permitted the functioning of the

whole mechanism of hatred and iniquity wherein, in mysterious fashion, the will of the leaders of the people and the will of the Prince of this world conspired to crush the Just One.

Mary knows that her role is simply to be there as totally as possible, sharing her Son's pain as deeply as possible...

"352 It was at this supreme moment, when Christ's love is most vividly manifested, when her own human maternal instincts feel the uttermost depths of bitterness, that she hears herself proclaimed Mother of those whom the death of Christ would bring to a new birth, Mother of the disciple John, Mother of the Church.

We have journeyed progressively through these two phrases addressed by Jesus to his mother and the other one which, though addressed to everyone, can have a particular application in his mother's understanding the mystery of the faith.

Mary, faithful handmaid of the Lord that she was, could not fail to try to read there the will of the Father.

Mary's faith became not only a source of strength enabling her to face up to the greatest suffering a human being can face: the physical death of her son in pain, and in the hatred and anger of a whole society, but it led her beyond all that, and prepared her to understand and accept a new role towards the inheritors of Christ's work on earth.

In the same way that her FIAT at Nazareth, covering her with the shadow of the Father, had given her the exceptional fruitfulness of being the mother of the eternal Son, so this mystery of the death of her son gave her a new fruitfulness of being mother of the disciples, mother of the Church for all time. Mary then was able to interpret these last words of her earthly son, not simply as the last words of a son at the moment of death, but even already as the first words of a Son risen from the dead, which gave her a place in his Kingdom, a new role to play in that Kingdom which was already there and was still to come.

By the words "Woman, behold your son", "Son, behold your mother", God demands a new presence of her.

The same discretion which her whole life has accustomed us to is seen here; we do find only one sign of this presence: *Acts 1:14*, and perhaps implicitly, *2:1*.

"All of them joined in continuous prayer, together with several women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers."

"When Pentecost day came around, they had ALL met in one room..."

Living her second motherhood, Mary is there with them, totally mother, only mother.

***Virgin filled with the Word:
you know what doubt and what sin can tear the heart of man.
Awaken in us the joy of believing even into the night.***

Introduction

In the wake of these meditations on the Constitutions and Mary, we want to give a few examples of the activities of some of our Brothers among the most marginalized. In humility and simplicity, we offer Mary this little bouquet of violets. In front of the enormous problems all over the world created and multiplied by inhuman powers, it remains quite modest.

These Brothers have been inspired, they have chosen, they have obeyed the call to risk themselves, off the well-kept beaten track, and on to a "journey of discovery" with the sun in infinity as their goal and the compass of the heart as their guide. It is another world. They have had to learn anew, and have opened their hearts to a new love, which often, after fighting all night, leaves us victorious but a little lamed.

The replies are various. Locally they adapt to the multiple faces of poverty, of being abandoned, of being marginalized, as these faces are seen and felt by the Brothers.

This guided tour is far from being complete. We would need a much longer study and more precise details to take full account of all the situations, but this goes beyond the skills and resources of one man editing this work.

"The poverty is immense... may these few testimonies help us to pray to the Master to send labourers into the field... to his Poor."



CHICHICASTENANGO (Guatemala).

TARAUACÁ

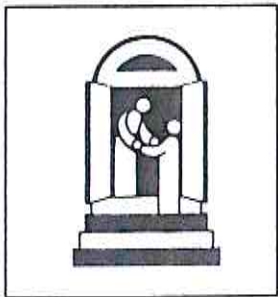
In the State of Acre - Brasil

Lost on the outskirts of Brasil, in the middle of the forests of the Amazon, three Brothers share with the people a life bereft of all the comforts of modern life.

In this distant spot, deprived of all communication, the Brothers must build a religious community life, and provide an apostolic activity suited to the needs of the people.

Needless to say, young people come first in the concerns of the Brothers. They have tried to help the christian teachers in the different schools; they have been concerned with catechetics at the various levels; they have formed groups of young people and fostered the work of vocations.

After three years some results of this Marist presence have begun to show.



"LAZARUS HOUSE"

Lawrence-Massachusetts

The idea was born during the course of three visits to India to work with the Missionaries of Charity of Mother Teresa. The example given there was not in vain. The homeless of Lawrence, all those people rejected, living under bridges, in abandoned houses, all the poor, seeking out an existence beyond the various institutions, all these found a voice that resounded and became insistent in the ears of Brother Tom Petite. In 1982 he founded "Lazarus House".

"Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me:
Is it not sharing your food with the hungry,
and sheltering the homeless poor;
if you see someone lacking clothes, to clothe him,
and not turn away from your own kin." *Isaiah 58.*

Give to the poor, food, lodging and dignity.

The house is run by a small permanent staff together with some two hundred volunteers. Each one gives his time and energy. There is much to do and includes all that is necessary for a large family: cooking, washing, cleaning, welcoming all who come.

"Working at Lazarus House is important to me, for it is an expression of my christianity" (*Kathy, a Bank employee*).

"If you wish to change the world, you must first convince the young people of the existence of poverty and give them the will and the means to re-establish greater justice.»

—Ellen and Brigitte, High School students, seventeen years of age, come to do the house work and to make beds.

—The pupils from the parish of Saint Elizabeth of Acton prepared dinners for the guests of Lazarus.

—There is a group of Girl Guides who send vegetables for the poor.

"Bless these young people, Lord, who, within the limits of their age do not remain insensitive to the desperate cry of those you love.»

It is possible to help many of these people through social and court work. Other possibilities are: to find a house, give information on possible employment, help in apprenticeships. Each day there is someone present to answer callers at «The Good Shepherd».

At first the district was not very inviting. But that is where the poor are, and it is only there that you can meet up with them. In this ghetto of immigrants, more or less legal, misery exists alongside prostitution, the weaker ones take to drugs, crime and fights take their toll. Spray paint has been used to decorate the walls. Now, the soutane of Brother Tom has become part of the scene, and a motorcyclist turns down his noisy motor to send a friendly greeting: "Good hunting, Brother.»

A small community of Sisters has come to lend a hand at Lazarus. They are the Sisters of the Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. They take on everything: nursery, supervision, health care, kitchen, serving at table, not to mention, hair-cutting as required. There are times of prayer in the small chapel to confide to the Lord all the misery that they come up against each day, and which they try to alleviate.



Misery takes many forms, it eats in everywhere, and in every way.

One young mother had six children. One of them whom the father was swinging around him holding on to her neck, had to have her two legs amputated. Finally, in order to save the children she fled from him and took refuge in an old abandoned wagon at Lazarus House. After some time, she regained her hope, and set out again to try to live with a little more dignity.

A boy of twelve years had spent two days wandering around and sleeping on the streets. He was afraid. He ran away from home, not knowing where he would go. His mother had ill-treated him, and he could not put up with it any longer. Lazarus received him as an abandoned child. There he was able to find something to eat, a bed of his own to sleep in and the affection normally associated with a home.

Albert was at the lowest ebb. He had no family, could not find work, did not know how to read or write. Lazarus took him in when he saw nothing for the future. At the Good Shepherd he found some work, and learnt a little to help him on his way. Albert now has a future to look forward to.

Another, returning home from school found no-one left in the house. His parents had simply abandoned him. At first he thought it was all right, with a little liberty, he did as he liked, sleeping under the bridges. But the street people saved him from disillusionment and handed him over to Brother Tom. Now he will be able to finish his studies, and has found an adopted family to tide him over.



SOCIAL CENTRE: PAU D'ALHO

Province of São Paulo

Three Brothers have worked here for twelve years, and it could be said for twenty four hours a day.

Open to young people of ten to fourteen years, the house takes in those subjected to the injustice of our society. Without anyone who loves them, in want of food, they lack all human values. They are those who will grow up to increase the numbers of those who live on the margin of society.

It is always hard when you cannot take in all those who ask; but if one is going to do some real good to young people the number must be limited to thirty.

A few teachers paid by the government and a social worker make up the staff.

The Centre provides also a new home for those abandoned youths, already on the down-grade, and provides the possibility of a slow but sure interior transformation. You cannot but admire the care of the Brothers, the demanding but rewarding efforts of patience, of kindness, which gradually attract and transform the young people.

One Sunday a group of former members of the Centre came to express their gratitude and joy at the opportunity that the Centre had provided for them. Brother Paulino Ignacio, the Master of Novices, was delighted, as he had always wished to be able to give an account of the value of the work.

The Centre is open during the whole of the school term. During the long holidays it is necessary to allow the children to return to their natural family environment. The Centre sees to the re-insertion of its members into the society. It is a difficult transition, especially if you wish to maintain the work done at the Centre itself.

Good relationships have been established with those responsible for the pastoral activity at Ribeirão Preto to provide professional training adapted to each one in order to help in his re-insertion in the world of work and in society.

The Centre itself has no means of support and the expenses are defrayed by the Province.

Archbishop Romeo Alberti of Ribeirão Preto gave the following witness at the end of June:

"The social Centre of Pau d'Alho is a HOME for marginalised children. Look at the Brothers who work there and you will see a living expression of brotherly love that is simple, wise, practical, devoted, joyous and happy."

PORTO VELHO

(Foundation of the Province of Sta. Catarina, State of Rondônia, on the river Madeira. Alongside the route to the Amazon.)

The social problems of Porto Velho arise from the uncontrolled increase in population coming from the east and the south. An increasing number is attracted by the gay lights of the city, but the slums are on the increase together with all the misery they bring. The contrasts are heart breaking.

The lack of educational facilities is alarming. The school time is limited to three hours a day, as four different groups must use the same facilities. More than thirty schools are required.

The Archdiocese has built a Centre that is open to everyone. Its purpose is to concentrate the different social and religious services that the Church is trying to provide.

The Province has sent a community of three Brothers to work there. Social organisation and religious formation are the main interests of the Brothers. They help in the Church services, organise catechism lessons, prepare catechists and act as animators for

groups of adults and young people. They are also trying to initiate social activities in order to improve the living conditions. An immense field of endeavour lies open.

VILA IGUAÇU

Here there is a community of two Brothers engaged in apostolic work in a country environment near to the township of Canudos, some 120 kilometres from Porto Alegre.

The Brothers share the life of the local people in an very simple agricultural activity. It is one thing to be there, but it is also necessary to be part of the life, to learn to live the problems of these people and try to be for them a light and a leaven. The Brothers experience the contrasts of modern life and are alive to the problems that the people must face up to.

A period of evaluation held with the local people has brought out just how much the presence of the Brothers is appreciated in these areas... education of the common people, catechism, co-operatives, liturgy, and pastoral activity amongst the young.

Sunday meeting in our missions.



THAILAND

Under the presidency of the Archbishop of Bangkok, with the active cooperation of the Jesuits, the Church in Thailand is preoccupied with the problem of some 300,000 refugees.

COERR —the Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugees— organises the activities, co-ordinates the efforts, and appeals to aid organizations all over the world, looking for volunteers in the field of social help and education as well as trying to feed the hordes in the 10 refugee camps scattered throughout the country.

The Brothers are in the camp at Phanat Nikkon, about 200 km from Bangkok, near the Gulf of Thailand. This is essentially a transit camp, with a normal population of about 23,000. There they try to prepare the refugees for insertion into the different countries which are prepared to receive them. Education is important, and there are three scholastic structures: French, for those going to Canada; English, for USA and New Zealand; and a separate school for those going to Australia.

Apart from language, there is emphasis on the social and cultural aspects of the countries to which they are going, and an attempt to give some technical education which will stand them in good stead when they arrive. There are sundry courses for both boys and girls: motor mechanics, dressmaking, welding, pottery, carpentry, to name but a few. This offer is gratefully accepted above all by young adults, motivated by the need to start a new existence in a new milieu.

The camp is enclosed and isolated, and entry is guarded by the military. The refugees are not allowed out, and have no relations with the outside world. Those who are working there must have a Government safe-conduct.

The Marist presence is assured by three Brothers from the Province of Sydney, who depend on COERR for their work of teaching. One Brother is in charge of the Australian school, while the other two give English lessons. Their meals during the day are furnished by the canteen, and after 5 p.m., they are brought back to their "residence", the upper floor of a bungalow in a small neighbouring town. Water is a luxury which they do not have in the house. Once a week, they have the joy of the Eucharist in community, the other days they attend Mass in the parish before going to work. Their relationship with the young people they work with is hampered by the number of different languages spoken in the camp. However, even this restricted relationship is important with people whom political troubles have deprived of even the most fundamental rights: land, country, culture, a responsible existence.

For the refugees, the presence of the Brothers is a sign of their hope that they will be able to lead their own lives once again, and undoubtedly find someone who is ready and willing to work for them and to love them.

JUVENÓPOLIS

This is in the State of Alagoas, in the North East of Brasil. It is a suburb of Maceió, a city of some 500,000 inhabitants.

The work began on the 2nd July 1982 when the Province of Brasil North started a school with forty two boarders and 180 day students. Now there are seventy three boarders from seven to fourteen years of age, and 376 day students. It is a Primary School from Kindergarten to Eighth Grade. In character it closely resembles the schools of the time of the foundation of the Institute.

The School collaborates with the SENAC (National Service for Commerce) and LBA (League of Brazilian Assistance) to provide courses that give a professional formation: boot-making, carpentry, cattle raising, gardening, and sewing. Girls can take courses in sewing, embroidery, cooking and crochet work. Similar courses are provided for mothers and other interested women. There is a very conscious effort towards social advancement. Aware of the great value of such an educative centre, the Archdiocese has built a series of houses for the most needy families.

The whole community provides scope for the apostolic activities of the Brothers.

ESCOLA ASSISTENCIAL SÃO LUÍS

This work began about 1904. It provides for the children of railway workers, the nature of whose work involves frequent changes of living places. It is known as the "Pilgrim School" because of the frequent changes of location.

For the moment it is located at Vila Renascença, where three Brothers exercise their apostolate amongst the most needy in the suburbs of Santa Maria.

"The Centre goes far beyond what is expected of a School, and provides a host of activities designed for the integral development of the young." There is collaboration with other agencies for religious, social and human development of the people of the area. It is estimated that some 4,000 people benefit from this Marist presence.



POUSO REDONDO

We are now in the State of Santa Catarina, in a spot with some 16,000 inhabitants. It is an agricultural area. It is made up of some 1,500 small properties. The allotment of land was made to original immigrants and handed on in the family.

In this small township there are three areas in great need: Ru São Paulo, Fadel, and Morro. There is a community of three Brothers. Working with the municipality and the Church, they share their efforts with both bodies. Their activities are varied. In the School area they look after the catechetical work. Outside the school, charitable works make many demands on them. With the help of volunteers they build houses, help families, provide food, look after old and abandoned persons.

There are groups for prayer and reflection where the liturgical seasons are prepared for: Advent, Lent, etc., or for the celebration of local festivals.

The Brothers look after their own property and this serves as an example to others and helps in good relationships with families of the area.

Practically the whole work is done without remuneration. The local authority helps pay for travelling. The Province of Santa Catarina maintains the community which has no income from its work.

The Brothers are very happy in this work and are convinced that it is something very much in the spirit of the Founder.

VILA FÁTIMA

Province of Porto Alegre

Vila Fátima is one of those "popular" areas that spring up spontaneously when deprived groups are looking for a place to settle close to a large city. Here there are some six thousand people, with very few resources and a very low cultural development. Coming together by chance, they have little organised infrastructure and their living conditions are very precarious.

Because the Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul is not very far away the Brothers have been able to obtain the collaboration of the different faculties for a variety of forms of help.

The Faculty of medicine has contributed a service of "Social Medicine". There is a mobile station to combat endemic and infectious diseases, provide for vaccinations and in general supervise indispensable hygienic conditions such as the purification and sterilisation of water. The same faculty provides gynecological assistance.

The Faculty of Education has seen to the necessary school structures. Besides providing Primary Education, there are courses for apprenticeships, typewriting, sewing, cooking and painting on textiles.

The School of Engineering has seen to city projects: roads and buildings. A service for the collecting of rubbish is provided.

The Faculty for Social Communication has provided a service of communication by means of a paper that creates links between the people. From time to time a session of evaluation is held.

Brother Avellino Madalozzo who is in charge of this project is happy to report on the way in which the people have taken an interest in furthering their own development and profiting from the various services offered them.

ALGERIA

We have been in Algeria for nearly a century and the work there has changed very much in that time. At the present time there are two Brothers who work in Alger and Sour-El-Ghoziane and try, despite the many difficulties, to show the Marist flag amongst the Musulman people amongst whom they live.

Since the time of independence, 1962, Algeria has taken Islamism and Socialism as its basic principles. Liberty of conscience is guaranteed by the Constitution. The Schools were nationalised in 1976, but the possibility remained for Religious teachers to continue to serve in the public schools. Our Brothers were able to take out a contract established by the Minister himself. Brother Henri Verges has his contract renewed for the twelfth time in 1987. No-one can say how long this will go on. Brother Jésus was refused his contract after four years because of the use of the Arab language in

teaching. There are so many young men without work now, that the end is in sight for a contract for outsiders. There was the possibility to help in the development of a very poor people in the Hautes Plaines, with the chance of directing them to some industries... cement and chemical products.

Our main concern, however, is to respond to the call of the local church, poor and with few resources, and to share, with Mary, the life of these poor people bringing to them the light of the Gospel. It would be a simple presence of prayer, penance, dialogue to open the ways of understanding, peace and love. So much has changed in the relationships between the Arab world and the Christian world. There has been a marvellous development in our sharing, particularly with the young. There is also the possibility of sharing Christian worship through our presence here. The presence of Jesus in the Eucharist has been made manifest and there has been collaboration with some Egyptian Copts.

By our presence we try to remain open to the signs of the times, without being disturbed by the uncertainty of the future, which is in God's hands. Even though Brother Jésus has lost his contract we have been encouraged by the Brother Provincial to remain on, maintaining our presence outside the capital, where the christian communities are fewer, even though it may be only for a short time. Brother Jésus makes use of his weekly holiday to travel to the libraries and improve his Arab, keeping in touch with the young Algerians of the capital. Moreover, during the year, he has been responsible for animating groups of young Algerians during sessions at the University or other Institutes of Higher Education. There is work for him and for many others!

We are conscious of working like so many of our Brothers throughout the world, in the spirit of our consecration, in the spirit of Mary, brothers amongst our brothers. We are happy to make our small contribution of love and peace through oecumenical activity, dialogue with other religions, conferences on peace.

(Brothers Jesús Marcos and Henri Vergès)

ATEOS

The word ATEOS is a deformation of the word ATEHUAN, which, in the tradition of the people of the PIPILES, Salvador, means "Source of the water of God, Source of the Holy Water". These people of ATEOS live in the greatest poverty and subsist by working the land. You find them about thirty kilometres from the capital, San Salvador. It is a relatively quiet area, free from guerilla activities and their disastrous consequences. But the majority of the inhabitants are poor, illiterate, poorly fed, and in poor health.

Family life is unstable and alcoholism rampant. The people are widely dispersed around a very small centre. The presence of several protestant sects makes a combined effort very difficult.

Since January 1987, three Brothers, Luis Elosegui, Felipe Vallejo and Salvador Salinas have responded to the call of the Brother Provincial to found a mission in this district.

The Brothers share the life of these country people and participate actively in their joys and sorrows. They hope to bring something to the work of evangelising these poor people. They work in liaison with a Father Manuel, pastor of the region, and with the Sisters of Charity, established in the canton of Tepecoyo.

At the outset, the Brothers have confined their efforts to catechism, assuring the parochial service, and work with groups of young people in celebrations of the word.



▲ ATEOS. The via crucis. ▼



BROTHER CELSO

(Santa Catarina)

When they baptised him they called him Pedro Conte, but that was eighty years ago. For a long time now he is known on the streets of Florianopolis as "Brother Celso". The region of "Grand Sac", loves him as their apostle.

His first intention was to provide a Chapel, a place where the people could assemble, a small spot for the celebration of the liturgy. A priest came, at first, every two months, but now, on the insistence of the people he comes to say mass every Saturday. With the collaboration of all concerned, and by organising popular festivals, Brother Celso was able to buy a piece of land and on it build a church and a parochial centre. Thanks to this constant efforts this place to-day is a full parish with two priests who serve seventeen chapels in the area.

To celebrate his twenty five years of work, there was a procession with flowers and expressions of heartfelt thanks to this great pioneer. In 1978 Brother Celso built a Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes where the people could assemble for the recitation of the Rosary.



In 1981 Brother had a serious health problem with acute pain in the legs and the joints, which made it impossible for him to walk. He was cured almost miraculously by a daily dose of medicine prepared by an old lady of the district. He is now in great form again.

He continues to assist at many functions with energy and zeal. As Superior of the Community he has twenty young Brothers doing University studies under his charge. He is the co-ordinator of the parochial catechism classes, animator of the liturgy, and each Wednesday he presides at the parochial Rosary. He gives courses to prepare subjects for baptism, for confirmation and for marriage.

Thirty years ago he started up his social work. All those years he has worked at "The Old Shelter", a social work for the abandoned of the city of Florianópolis. Besides, each week-end, he would take two buses to go to "Grand Sac" to give catechism lessons and bring spiritual aid to these poor people.

Because of his contacts at "The Old Shelter" he has been able to help many who have fallen into the hands of the police. A friendly visit from one they know goes a long way to comfort those who find themselves in detention.

Congratulations to a confrere for such a long life filled with such goodness. The long years cannot stop the good example that he gives.

*"To rely completely on God's kindness."
"To be vulnerable to his love."*

NEW ZEALAND

In the north of New Zealand in a town called Moerewa there are large numbers of Maori young men and women who are not able to get employment. Many of them have not been able to complete their secondary schooling successfully, and that has made their situation more difficult.

The town had become a centre for gangs with much violence of various kinds, among the young people.

The Marist Brothers decided to try use the experience they already have through their teaching of Maori boys and young men in two Maori secondary schools, to bring more peace and brotherhood into the lives of the youth of Moerewa.

Encouraged by the Bishop of Auckland, two Brothers have gone to live there in a small community house, to be a Christian and Marist presence of brotherly love and service among the young people. They have not undertaken any specific apostolate of a structured and regular kind. They preferred simply to be available to help out in whatever situations of need arose, in the local state secondary school, the parish, or the town.

The Brothers are supported financially in this work by the Province.

After two years now the Brothers are very happy that their presence has been an encouragement not only to the young people but also to their parents, and to the town generally. This apostolate of Marist and brotherly presence is one they feel has a special meaning for the people in difficulty since it is obviously based on love rather than on a position of authority. With the experience the Brothers already have, and their sensitivity in their new situation, every effort is made to understand and respect the rich culture of the Maori people which includes their own way of thinking, feeling, praying, etc. The Brothers have some knowledge also of the Maori language, and this will be an important part of the apostolate in the future. Already there are a number of Brothers in the Maori schools who speak or are learning to speak the Maori tongue.

This new "work" is part of the overall effort of the Brothers of the Province to serve the more needy sections of the youth, especially the Maori and Polynesian young men and women. Not only in New Zealand but also in the Pacific Islands of Tonga, Fiji, the Samoas, and Kiribati. One half of the Province of 180 Brothers is now directly engaged in that thrust.

HOLLANGE

Province of Belgium

This is one of the small villages established over the years in the green spots of the forest of the Ardennes. It is a typical rural area with a dozen houses clustered around a small church, with its primary school, where each morning fifteen to twenty children assemble, thus avoiding the tedious daily journey by school bus. When they are twelve it will be time enough to begin to go to their secondary studies in one of the centres of Bastogne or Arlon.

The work here concerns those whose families would not be able to ensure for them a sound future. The circumstances are varied, and each child that enrolls has had his share in one way or another of the lack of love, difficulties of character, failure in studies or a distaste for school, discouragement, lack of interest, interior revolt against society.

Here there is an environment of constant care, a concern for others, devotedness, educational supervision. Patience can help re-establish and encourage the growth of a stable personality. The group remains small in order to ensure the greatest possible educative work. A normal school environment, apart from the work itself, favours social insertion and facing up to real life.

The founder of this work ten years ago was Brother André. Not one to be easily taken in, he manages to balance the budget, despite the many administrative difficulties. He is the leader both for the young people and for his team of teachers. This team, young and enthusiastic, but without much experience, rely on the Brother to maintain discipline and exercise authority. Even though he is somewhat isolated by his daily work he maintains an active contact with the life of the Province.

During the holiday time each one lends a hand to do the necessary repair work or transformations around the centre. A period of camping is provided as a reward for work well done. Bearing the hoe, working as a mason, animating or directing games, Brother André lives out his vocation at the service of his protégés.

"EDELWEISS" suggests the route he is trying to travel with these young people.

*It is no easy to help for the poor's
personal effort to be estimated and increased.*



◀ KOREA. Crossing over that world made of silence to bring in the Word. ▶





CURSO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD - mayo - junio 1987. Roma

1. Manuel Esteban Suárez García. - Antonio Félix Fernández Díez. - Miguel Brenner Hundshammer. - Efrén Revelo Unigarro. - Apolinar Villacorta Pascual. - Luis González Gallo. - Antonio Santiuste González. - Avelino Parisotto. - Antonio Rodrigues Rodrigues. - Ernesto Bramen Knipper. - Godofredo Vogl Schonberger.
2. Pedro Marcon. - Arsenio Celedonio Cruz Slivinski. - Jaime Villarrodona Ferrer. - Ramón Urteaga Arruabarrena. - Pedro Otto Poersch Tengaden. - Feliciano Sola Echevarría. - Víctor Martínez Gómez. - Alipio Iglesias Monedero.
3. Hermes J. Pandolfo. - Antonio Zorita Echeverría. - Eduardo González García. - Julio Torres Villanueva. - Juan Goldáraz Zubieta. - Maximino Echávarri Aramendia. - Ángel Gofí Leredegui. - Eutimio Pedrosa Zapatero. - J. Fernando García del Valle. - Remigio Paulo Rizzotto. - Germán Chaves Alonso. - Rafael Rengifo Reina.
4. Ernesto Moreno Vera. - Santos Garrido Miguel. - Antonio Marchiori Boratti. - Miguel García Baños. - Teodoro Andoáin Fernández de Onrait.

CENTRE DE SPIRITUALITÉ de langue française - Rome - juin 1988

1. Jean Roche, l'abbé Charles Cauty, Charles Howard, S.G., Majella Bouchard, Michel Morel,
2. Alphonse Peters, Bernard Beaudin, Jean Beauvois, Roberto Di Troia, René Paulus, Marc Frappier, Pascal Shanyungu.





CENTRO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD MARISTA DE EL ESCORIAL, febrero a junio 1987

1. Gonzalo Arnaiz. - Rafael Ortigosa. - Julio Longares. - Carlos Wielganczuk (Subd.). - Amaro González - Arturo Buet. - Roque Brugnara. - Eutimio Rubio. - Agustín Pestaña. - Adolfo Pérez. - Luis López.
2. Arturo Moral Muñoz. - P. Guillermo Rubio, OSA (Capellán). - José López Fernández (Dir.). - Eliseo de Miguel. - Gabriel Michel. - Tricínio Ramos. - Celestino Lozano.

CURSO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD DE LENGUA ESPAÑOLA: mayo - junio 1988. Roma

P. José María Arévalo (Capellán). - Florentino Adami. - Rafael Amo. - Elías Arribas. - Antonio Boldú. - Eulogio Belloso. - João Batista Camilotto. - Agustín de la Hera. - Luciano de Gastañazatorre. - Elías Delfim. - António Joaquim Dias. - José Dolores. - Jesús María Escobar. - Donato Fernández. - Eugênio Franco de Jesus. - Balbino García. - Javier González. - Ignacio González. - Leopold Gorizek. - Alejandro Herro. - Victoriano Jiménez. - Ismael Julián. - Hipólito Lapeña. - Balbino Lezáun. - Valentín Lesaga. - Roque Plínio Loss. - Cecilio Martín. - Fulgencio Martínez. - José Macho. - Oscar Mombach. - Antonio Ospina. - Rafael Palomar. - Jesús Manjón. - Enrique Ramalle. - Marcos Ramírez. - Juan Bautista Rovea. - Eliseo Ruiz. - Lorenzo Santamaría. - Basilio Santos. - Francisco Schüller. - Martín Zugasti. - Ángel Zucchet. - Plácido Zullanello.



SESSIONS DE SPIRITUALITÉ