



District of the Pacific Update

Champagnat Marist

Kia Ora, Greetings, Ni sa bula vinaka, Kam na mauri, Talofa Lava



District Dates

Friday 4th June: Sacred Heart College Mass at the Cathedral—10.30am.
 Saturday 5th June: Renewal of Vows for Brother Tabunga.
 Sunday 6th June: Renewal of Vows for Brothers Ienraku and Ieremia in Fiji
 Sunday 6th of June: Death of Marcellin Champagnat SM aged 51 at the Hermitage.
 1961 Introduction of the Causes of Beatification of 21 Brothers martyred in Spain.
 Monday 7th June: Public Holiday—Queen’s Birthday weekend.
 Tuesday 8th June: Father Champagnat was buried in the Brothers’ cemetery at the L’Hermitage.
 Friday June 11th: Renewal of Vows for Brother Anitela in Samoa

Attached Reports:

Marist News from Rome 674

[Download Marist News—PDF](#)



Friday 4th June 2021

Star of the Sea Province Some Thoughts Offered



Recently we received the Official name of the new Province which covers all of Oceania plus East Temor. The new Province is to be called “Star of the Sea”. Here are some reflections from Brothers of the District regarding the name of the District

Brother John invited us to share our thoughts about the name of the new Province, so here are my thoughts for what they are worth. I am disappointed in the name because I thought there were, far better alternatives that spoke more clearly to the narratives and images that are reflected in our part of the world. However, my disappointment can be turned into gladness if we avoid making assumptions about the name and embark on an open honest dialogue about how we can shape the name to express our realities rather than the other way round.

I was asked for a Maori translation of the name and the one I came up with was **Whetu Moana** which is a transliteration (an English concept in Maori) but there is not enough story, images, metaphor or explanation around the name to arrive at a good expression in Maori.

I have seen descriptions of Our Lady Star of the Sea and of the boat that the early Marist journeyed to Oceania in called Star of the Sea but there are many other stories behind the words as well.

Maori don’t have a tradition of a woman being associated with the Sea. Whetu Moana (Star of the Sea) is for us a navigational reference. A journey reference. A directional reference. It is what made us seafarers who journeyed from Hawaiiiki (our homeland) to Aotearoa.

I don’t know what Star of the Sea means in other cultures and if there is a meaning, then I wonder if it is a traditional meaning or a colonised meaning. They both have very different starting points.

Anyway, like I said, John asked us to share our thoughts which I have done. I sincerely hope that we seriously consider his request. All views are legitimate, and sharing them would help establish a dialogue that could eventually result in a metaphor or story that suits who we are and what we are in this part of the world in our new province. It will be a worthwhile journey which may surprise us.

Best wishes

Brother David

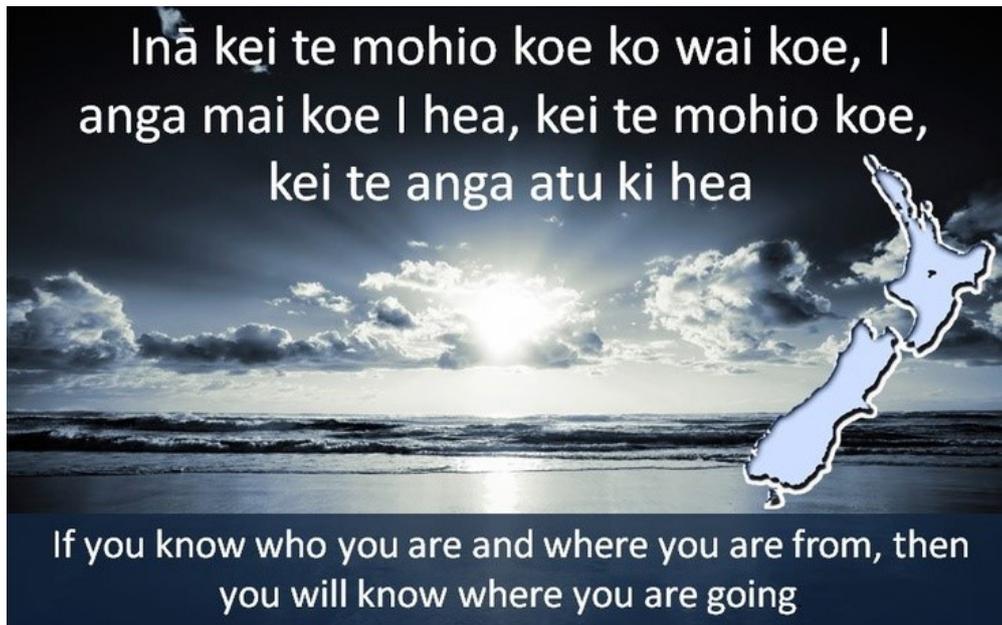


Stella Maris - Star of the Sea - Whetu o te Moana:

*Learning from our past, making sense of our present
building a future together as Champagnat Marists.*

My first teacher training placement in 1994 was at Our Lady Star of the Sea in the small Christchurch coastal suburb of Sumner. I recall there only being two classrooms, including the presence of the schools Labrador dog taking centre stage on the teaching mat area. What struck me the most, alongside the strength of a small, faith-based community, was the connection of the name with the geographical region - Mary's role as our 'guiding star' and 'protector'. For me, the connection with our people, our land, our ancestors, shapes our identity. As followers of Jesus, in Mary's way, I feel this new name captures a new beginning built on a solid 'back story'. Our challenge now is to come together and authentically share our gifts and talents for the betterment of the Oceania region and our global village at large.

From Dan Dungey



“Mary, Star of the Sea”

(Sonnet – Prayer)

By Brother Romuald. 2021



Above the Sea relentless surge and shift,
Beyond the cloaking drift of clouded sky,
Bright jewel-light gleams, set on high
The evening guiding star; star that lifts
The anxious heart, assuring, calming gift -
And yet the challenge that before us lies
The demand restless now, future's surprises -
Mary, dearest Mother, so easy now to choose to drift
Content to ride the crest of times now past, afraid
To open hearts to change, to risk; yet trusting you
Will walk with us this cold mist of uncertainty -
Restless times, shifting grounds, lights that fade.
Values that decay and die—be with us, continue
To inspire is, Mary Mother, Star of the Sea.

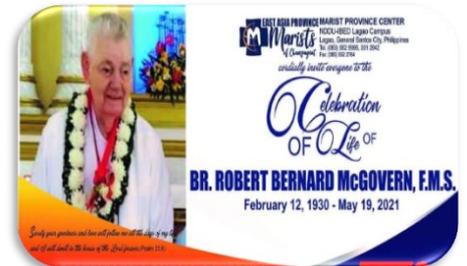


Mabuhai from the south of the Philippines, Mindanao.

We had arrived safely from Metro Manila to General Santos city, Lagao, Mindanao on Saturday 22nd May. The flight took approximately one hour and thirty-five minutes. The weather was fine and the onboard service via Cebu Pacific, exceptional. We are currently undergoing our fourteen days quarantine period at the Sacred Heart formation Center, in General Santo city. The house, which resides within the NDDU IBED campus, has been vacant for some time now. Its just Br Engel (Philippines), Br Steve and I occupying it at the moment. Its spacious, comfortable and has a peaceful and prayerful atmosphere. It almost feels like a 14-day retreat rather than a quarantine to me. The weather here is relatively cool just like in Fiji or Samoa. While landing, I took a peak outside the cabin window and all I could see was green fertile farmlands, as far as the eye could see and at a visible distance, majestic mountains racing towards the clear blue sky, as if the ultimate goal was the heavens itself. Truly breath taking if you ask me.



The East Asian Province has just buried an American Confrere Br Robert FMS (aka Br. Bob) who has been serving here in Mindanao for half his life. He passed away at the age of 91, after a long illness. While attending his tribute service via zoom, I was taken by the impact Bob had on the lives of the people of Mindanao. Despite the current lockdowns in General Santo's and in surrounding cities throughout Mindanao, approximately 125 viewers both here and abroad zoomed in and perhaps many more on Facebook livestream. Just listening to the testimonies of many grateful people, on the life of this gentle giant of a man, a deep sense of gratitude came over me, not only for Bob but also for the mission of the Marists both here in the Philippines and around the globe. I also thought of our Br Peter and all our Brothers who have lived this life to the best of their abilities who have given all, to all, so as to return empty handed to the greatest gift giver of all, our compassionate Abba Father. My imagination and faith prompt me to believe that definitely, they are now taking up residence in our "hermitage" in heaven, with our fallen confrere's and saint Marcellin as their Community leader. With Mary our Good Mother, they would all be joyfully praying and watching over us. I shall leave you all with the Psalm 23 :6 "surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."



..... Till my next update. Paalam Po sayo Lahat, God bless and stay blessed.

Brother Petero



'Gold' Reading Awards.

Samoa Marist Brothers Primary School students 'Learning to Read by Reading'



Thirty two (32) students of Marist Brothers Primary School in Samoa were presented with 'Gold' Reading Awards on 21 May, Week 5 of Term 2; 2021. The Gold award represents the completion of the First Level of the 'Learning to Read by Reading' programme comprises of thirty one (31) Scholastic readings. The thirty two recipients of the Gold reading awards were taught through instructional strategies of how to read, correctly pronounce and understand meanings of the three thousand and twenty six (3,026) word count and three hundred and six (306) new words in the (31) readings. The goal of achieving the 'Gold' reading award is the attainment of 'comprehension' skills whereby students are equipped with skills of how to summarize, finding the main idea, following the chronological order of the story, how to infer and predict which enhance and increase their comprehending skills.

The parents have expressed their heartfelt gratitude because Marist Brothers Primary School has given their children a 'second chance' and a 'head start' in their education journey.

In fact, this is the third Gold Award presentation since the 'Learning to Read by Reading' was introduced in 2019 as a key component of the Literacy program. The Literacy program was initiated in 2018 by Brother Siasoi, the principal, who's 'Vision' states ...

'Every student of Marist Brothers Primary School should be able to
'read' and 'comprehend'
What is read'

