



Updates

CHINA SECTOR

Kuching Community

2021 School year terminated on 26 Nov, 2021. After two weeks of marking paper and grading our students, we finally have about a month of year end break. Br. Emil decided to tour some interesting tourist attraction spots in West Malaysia together with Vincent Lai, a year 12 student from Marcellin Hostel, from 15-26 December, 2021.

The community then visited Kota Kinabalu Marist community together with Fr. Joseph Ng, SJ and Fr. Lucas Ng, CDD from 26-31 Dec, 2021. All of us enjoyed the hospitality of Kota Kinabalu community. We visited Maluku Island and have a break at the foot of the famous Mt. Kota Kinabalu. Br. Robert visited the centre for special need students started by the parents and the Brothers in Kota Kinabalu. Two generous donors responded to our appeal and donated a smart TV for teaching and learning at the centre. During Chinese New Year break Br. Robert visited his family but Br. John Emil spent some times with Rickey in Port Dickson and Melaka.

Our new school year school began on Jan 10, 2022. We started the school year with 38 teachers, 12 supporting staff and 350 students from year 7 to Year 13. The first 2 weeks of school life coincided with the release of A level and IGCSE result from Cambridge. Our school did very well in both of the exams.

We also spent time to pray and participated in the sondage for new Provincial and election of delegates to the Provincial Chapter. Br. Emil also completed his first- year study with the University of Adamson with excellent result. He is continuing his study and he should be able to complete his Master's Degree by this year. He has finalized the initial preparation for his final vows on April 20, 2022.



Our community decided to have two evenings per week praying together with those staying at the Marcellin Hostel. For the other evenings we will pray our evening prayer at our community by using the Constitutions. We are waiting to participate in vocation activities organised by the sector or province during this year of vocation of our Institute.

Marist Sibü.

January 10th marked the new beginning of school year 2022, with the covid-19 regulation, all the senior students were allowed to be present in the school, but the Junior students had to rotate between online and classroom study by weekly basis. We had the total number of 868 students' enrolment in the new school year. Due to the Covid-19 SOP, only 663 students (94%) reported on the first day. We hope that after March when the new junior one students report to the school, our enrolment will reach 1000 students.

On January 12th, Br. John Heng was called back by God. Few days before he died, he was in the state of semi comma. Every time when someone visited him in his room, he kept raising his both hands it seem somebody is welcome to visit him. Unfortunately, none of us understood what his was trying to tell us. Fr. Philip Hu came over to give the Sacrament of the sick the in morning, and Br. John Heng took his last breath at around 1:45 in the afternoon. His wake was held in the school stadium for 3 days and the funeral was on the 15th of January.

The 2021-year UEC Exam result was announced on January 17th. Our Science stream students scored excellent result. Aside from Additional Mathematics II, all the subjects scored 100% passing rate. Four (4) students got 8 straight A's, 5 students with 7A's and 1B. The art stream students scored more than 85% passing rate with 1 10A's student and 7 9A's 1B students. We managed to be the best result performance school in Sarawak state. Well done, Boys and Girls.

On January 28th, the school celebrated the beginning of the lunar New Year. All the school personnel and students participated in the Chinese calligraphy writing in the school' stadium. All were asked to write the motto for the school year 2022, "Wake up and move on" "起来向前走". Bro. Anthony Cheng was the most popular person in the stadium due to his expertice in Chinese calligraphy. Many teachers asked him to write the Chinese banner for them to hang on in their house door during Chinese New Year.

Bro. John Tan WE came on Jan 29th to celebrate Chinese New Year in Sibü. He took this opportunity to visit his friends in Sibü. Sometimes we went together to have meals in different benefactors' houses. He went back to Kota Kinabalu on Feb. 5th.



CMMF KIDAPAWAN BEGINS THE PROCESS OF REFLECTION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAITY VOCATION

On February 13, members of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family in Kidapawan gathered and begun the process of reflection for the International Forum on the Vocation of Marist Laity. Ms. Ivy Yecyec organized the said event while Mr. Jano Dalumpines, laity leader from Notre Dame of Cotabato was the facilitator. Attendees of the gathering shared in depth their experience of receiving gifts and, themselves being gifts for others. Drawing from each one's personal experience, the Marist vocation as a gift found its deeper appreciation. Key questions were also asked for reflection particularly on the signs of the Spirit that needs to be nurtured, changes that need to be encouraged, and new steps seen as important in the horizon of Marist vocation. Journeying with the process of the group was Br. Demosthenes Calabria, FMS, the Kidapawan community link person for the concerns of the laity and Ms. Agnes Reyes, coordinator of Laity Desk.



MARIST CYBERGUARDIANS NETWORK WITH NDEA

Last February 08, Br. Crispin Betita, FMS met with the NDEA Executive Director Dr. Evelyn V. Dollete to propose partnership in the advocacy of protecting children and youth from all forms of cyber threats. Br. Crispin shared with Dr. Dollete the programs which were implemented in close coordination with the CyberguardiansPH, a coalition of organizations: government agencies, NGOs and private institutions; and individuals who recognize the urgent need to co-create a safer cyberspace to protect children and the youth against online sexual abuse, cyberbullying and other forms of cyber threats. It is hoped that this partnership will generate a strengthened action for the protection of children and youth in the cyberworld.



Tree Planting-Nurturing Activity in Marist School Marikina

As part of the school's journey in making Marist School Marikina a *Laudato Si* school, members of the school community participated in the Tree Planting-Nurturing Activity on the feast of the Blessed Mother Mary's apparition in Lourdes last Friday, February 11.

Avocado (15), Marang (10), Kaimito (3), Ibo (7), Mabolo or Kamagong (23) and Ipil (2) seedlings were planted after blessing the natural space as a reflection and meditation area. It was led by the school president Br Allan J. De Castro, FMS.

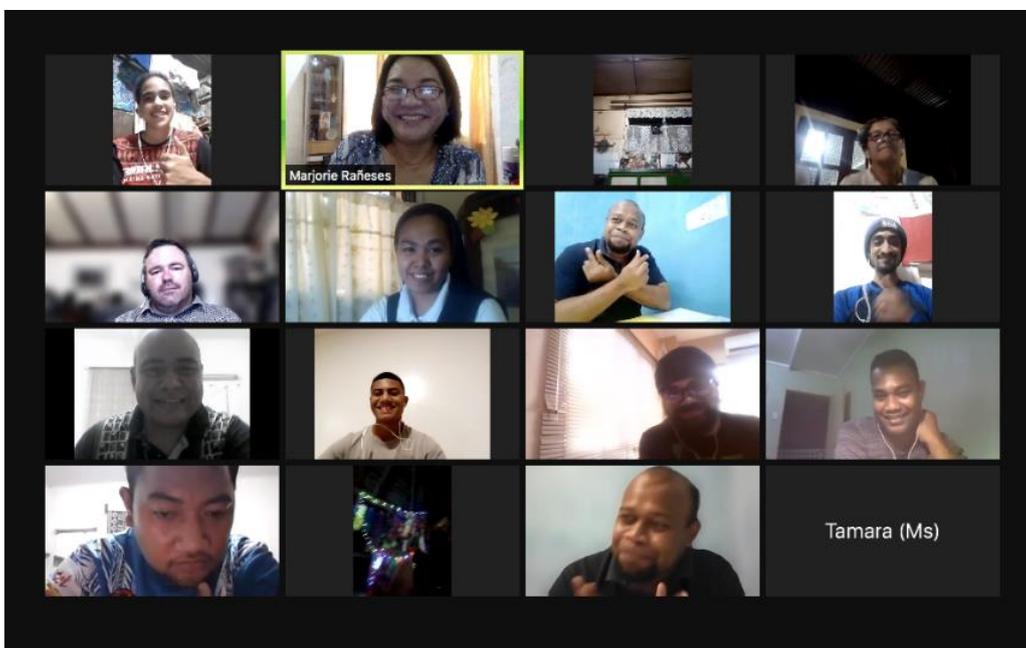
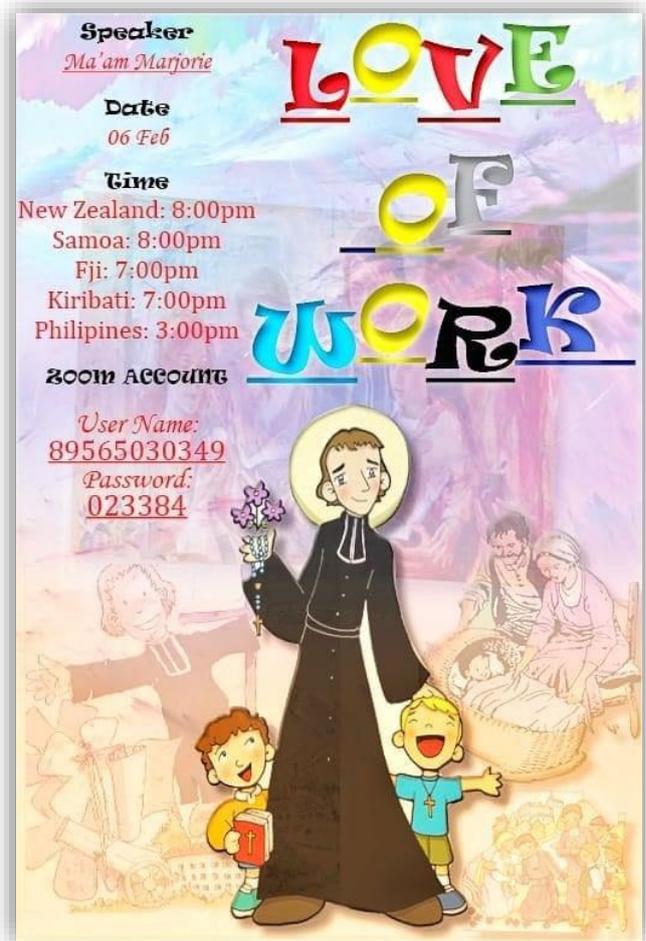
The activity is in response to the *Laudato Si* goals on the Cry of the Earth and Ecological Spirituality. The gathering ritualized love and commitment to nurture and protect the environment. Being part of the Sacred Creation, each one was reminded that the trees serve as living witnesses to our commitment to heal our common home.



“Love of Work” for the District of the Pacific Lighthouse Project

by Marjorie Rañeses

Around 21 young people, Champagnat Lay Marists and young Brothers from Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati, New Zealand, Australia and Philippines joined the reflection last February 6 via Zoom. I am humbled by the invitation by Br. Anitelea, FMS and Br Petero, FMS to share on the topic “Marist Pillar on the *Love of Work*” for the District of the Pacific Lighthouse Project. I took the task because like Marcellin, we show our availability whenever necessary. It was an example of a “love of work” in giving of time and effort as a distinguishing characteristic of our Marist way of life. It was indeed a fruitful and life-giving sharing.



THE ARCHIVIST'S CORNER

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Br. Romulo I. Porras FMS



The following article is reprinted from the research paper done by Br. Niño Pizarro and Br. Demosthenes Calabria. This Research Paper entitled 60 Years of Marist Presence in the Philippines (1948-2008) was part of the requirements of the Patrimony Course in Rome in 2008. This section is found in pages 116-119.

RESTRUCTURING

Who could forget the significance of the 20th General Chapter in 2001? As Brothers, just like in any other General Chapters in the past, we could attest to the fact that it brought something for us, namely, challenges and blessings. We came to know that one of the things that the chapter dealt with was the call for restructuring. I presume everybody in the Institute had been confronted with this vociferous call with all its implications in the Institute. Bro. Luis Sobrado, the Vicar General of the Institute, in his unpublished article entitled, "Vitality and Viability of an Administrative Unit in a Religious Institute of Apostolic Life", emphasized important points when one would engage in the process of restructuring. Allow me to quote some of these points: *"Restructuring can provide opportunity and possibilities for sharing and reorganizing the Institute's resources in such a way that will strengthen the quality of life and increase a sense of belonging to the Institute and the charismatic identity and spirituality of members and*

*community. By its very nature, aims at securing the necessary resources of personnel and finance at the different levels of organization: General Administration, Administrative Unit, community and individuals. Restructuring is to secure that there is no member, community or Administrative Unit left in the Institute without a proper human and spiritual environment and conditions of accompaniment and animation in their lives and mission. This implies a proper financial planning, proper house conditions, proper functional communities, proper plan and structures to provide sick and elderly members with fraternal care, functional communities and the required quality of health care. Restructuring can reorganized Administrative Units within a global restructuring process that will provide the necessary personnel and finance resources to secure the essential elements required by the viability of the laity and other membership sharing at different levels(...). Restructuring can increase pool of effective leadership and resources to secure viable ministries. Restructuring can provide the necessary conditions for a restructuring of the communities themselves to allow for a needed number of members, a convenient balance in the age groups in the community and the necessary periodical renewal of membership. Restructuring can provide the necessary opportunities, structures and resources to effectively move the Institute into a situation of proactive responses to these signs of the times."*¹

For the Marist Brothers in the Philippines, the General Chapter, with its significant call to restructure Provinces and Districts in the whole Institute, indeed brought both challenges and

¹ Vitality and Viability of an Administrative unit in a Religious Institute of Apostolic Life (Unpublished paper of Bro. Luis Sobrado, Vicar General)

blessings. There are important events that need to be remembered during the process of restructuring in the Province. They indeed remind us of the essence of this call and the great efforts of the General Administration to lead us to venture into a new paradigm of giving witness of our lives as Marist Brothers. They are as follows:

On February 23-24, 2003, the General Council had a meeting together with the Councils of Asia in Hongkong. The Brothers from the Philippines who joined the meeting were Brothers Teodulo Fernandez, Manuel de Leon, John Tan and Rene Reyes. In the gathering Bro. Sean Sammon, the Superior General, requested the leaders of Asia to look beyond their respective Administration Units and posted the question of vitality in the years to come for these Units. In October of the same year, a Regional Meeting in Manila was held and again the Superior General challenged the Superiors in Asia to consider the idea of restructuring rather than simply promoting a regional collaboration. In February 2004, Brothers Manuel de Leon and Rene Reyes attended a meeting in Singapore. The group came up with a questionnaire on the Vitality Survey. In March, the survey was conducted to all the Administrative units in Asia.

In September 2005, a General Conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka was conducted. After a month, a meeting of the Provincials and Councilors in Asia, together with the Superior General and Bro. Emili Turo was held in Tudella. This meeting was the occasion wherein our leaders had gone into the process of sorting out the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining a status quo or creating one or two provinces. The survey for this was conducted from November to December of 2005.

In April 2006, during the Brothers Assembly in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, Bro. Manuel de Leon officially conveyed the decision made by the General Council during their Plenary Council in January. It was decided by them that by 2007, a new Province composed of Philippine Province, China Province and District of Korea would be created. The Brothers then, from this time on, were regularly informed and updated on the development of the restructuring. In August of the same year, a Transition Commission was created. Bro. Peter Rodney, General Councilor, was

part of the commission to represent the General Council. The commission had their first meeting in Kuala Lumpur on December 18-21, 2006.

In January to February 2007 was the first consultation on the election of the new Provincial. The second consultation was done in March to April based on the short list of six names; 3 Brothers from the Philippines, 2 Brothers from China and 1 Brother from Korea. After the consultation, Rome appointed Bro. Manuel de Leon as the first Provincial of the new Province of East Asia. It was proclaimed on 11th day of May 2007. The election of delegates for the Chapter was conducted in June to November 2007. During these months also was the time for the preparation for the Provincial Chapter to be held in the Philippines. The first Provincial Chapter of East Asia Province happened on December 3-8, 2007 in the Philippines. Bro. Peter Rodney, had come to help to facilitate the Chapter. In this occasion, the installation of Bro. Manuel de Leon as the first Provincial Superior of the New Province was done. A new set of first Provincial Councilors was also created. Two Brothers from the Philippines, two also from China and Korea were elected as new councilors of the Province. The following were: Paterno Corpus (Philippines), John Tan (Philippines), Brothers Thomas Chin (China), Robert Teoh (China), Jacobo Song (Korea) and John Oh (Korea).

Finally, in our case, the process of restructuring was finished and paved the way for us to create a new Province named East Asia. Does this mean that we are now assured of our own future as Religious Brothers in Asia? We do not know. We still do not know what will happen ahead of us

after restructuring. But if we remain faithful to our vision – mission found in our Constitutions and Statutes and live our vocation in faith and love, the vitality of the Province will follow. I suggest that we entrust everything in God and we commit ourselves to our daily task and do whatever priorities we would agreed upon. I also suggest that we pray for our chosen leaders in the Province, superiors in our communities and each Brother so that together, in God’s hand, we would be able to perform our roles in the Province and in the Church. On behalf of the Brothers, I also encourage our Lay partners to continue to live Marcellin’s dream and be a part of our Marist Family. # # #

Birthday Greetings to:



February 15
Br. Timothy Song (Hyo-seob)



February 17
Mrs. Romula Oyao
(Affiliated member)



Death Anniversaries:

- February 14, 1978 – Br. Jonas Cruz died in Sri Lanka.
- February 15, 1944 – Gregory Pien, a junior died in Beijing.
- February 15, 1962 – Br. Joseph Romain died in St. Genis-Laval.
- February 15, 1967 – Br. Marie Daniel died in St. Genis-Laval.
- February 17, 1971 – Br. Joseph Gerard died in Singapore.
- February 17, 1972 – Br. Elie Alexis died in St. Genis-Laval.
- February 19, 1921 – Benedict Tsai, a junior died in Beijing.
- February 19, 2016 – Br. Paul Clet died in Sibu, Sarawak, Malaysia.



Let us pray...

- For the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we continue to prepare for the 6th Provincial Chapter.
- For those who are recovering from the psycho-emotional difficulties brought about by the crisis of pandemic,
- For an educated awareness in preparation for the national elections.
- For our families that in the midst of the crisis, they may find hope in the Providence of God.
- For the journey of synodality in the Church that the voices of those least and in the margins of society be heard and their needs attended to by the generosity of people.
- For all our birthday celebrants, may they receive God's abundant grace in their lives.

