



# EAST ASIA

# MARIST LIFE

## Newsletter

April 30, 2023 Volume 02, Issue No. 08

*Featured Community*

## MARIST BROTHERS KOBE COMMUNITY

Japan

Hello everyone. Welcome to Kobe Community. We are composed of four brothers, namely Br. Joseph Yoshida, Br. Bernard Yamaguchi, Br. Yohan Oh, and Br. Allen Timola. This year, Brother Joseph is celebrating his 60th anniversary as a Marist Brother.

Br. Yohan, aside from being both our community leader and treasurer, is active in conducting talks and programs on *Laudato Si* during the ongoing monthly meeting in Kitasuma parish. He was invited by the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of the nearby community in Tarumi last year during their annual retreat.

Br. Allen is teaching Religion and Values Education to Grades 1 to Grades 7 here at Marist Brothers International School. He also coaches boys' and girls' middle school basketball teams and runs an afterschool chess club every Wednesday.



*The members of Kobe Community.  
Br. John Allen Timola, Br. Joseph Yoshida,  
Br. John Oh and Br. Bernard Yamaguchi*

Even though the two elderly Japanese brothers are retired already, Br. Bernard and Br. Joe are still sharp in mind and even helping with translation works. Their presence during morning and evening prayers and monthly meetings makes our community spirit very much alive.

Last November 2022, we welcomed a group of visitors with the Provincial Council members visiting Kobe. It has been a long time since we were able to welcome guests from other countries, and starting this year, we are anticipating more brothers to visit us.

Br. Allan de Castro stayed after the November 2022 Provincial Council Meeting and visited Marist Brothers International School (MBIS) here in Kobe, the Marist High School in Kumamoto, and he also visited the Archbishop of Osaka Diocese, Cardinal Maeda. His presence communicated the fact that our Marist presence here in Japan is alive and kicking.

The brothers in Kobe community are in dialogue with the school administration and teachers about the possibility of reconnecting Marist International School here in Kobe to the wider network of Marist Schools throughout the world. And to begin that, we started first with the Marists living here in Japan. Our community welcomed student leaders last January, and our elderly brothers are very open to sharing the Marist story from their perspective of living here in Japan.

Thank you very much for reading. 最後までお読みいただきありがとうございます。



# PROVINCIAL VISIT TO CHINA SECTOR

## CHAMPAGNAT HOUSE, SINGAPORE (April 24-26)



With Br. Canisio, Mr. Yap, our Lay Marist, and Br. Josep



With Br. Josep, Br. Canisio and Lay Marists of Catholic Kindergarten



With Br. Josep, Br. Canisio, Br. Elmer, and Parish Priest of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish

## KUCHING COMMUNITY, SARAWAK MALAYSIA (April 26 - 28)



With the CEO of St. Joseph Schools-Kuching



With the Archbisihop of Kuching.



With Bros. Joseph, Canisio, Robert and Emil



With the students at Marist Hostel

## SIBU SARAWAK COMMUNITY, MALAYSIA (April 28 - May 1)



With the Bishop of Sibiu.



With the Lay Marists of Catholic High School Sibiu



With Br. Anthony Tay and Br. Anthony Cheng



# News from

## Giasnogor Community SY - 2023 Molouvibazar, Sylhet, Bangladesh

Giasnogor community is composed of three brothers on loan from three continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe. They are directly involved in administering St. Marcellin Secondary School with more than four hundred students from classes 6 to 10. The work they do is in collaboration with the Marist Missionary Sister or SMSM, represented by Sr. Shakuntola Arjun, or Sha in short from Fiji, as the overall in-charge of the hostel for girls. Her lay assistant is Pinky Mankhin. Kotrim Yang works for the boys with Sumon Hembrom as his assistant. There are sixteen teachers and three non-teaching staff. The timely arrival of Topu Mondol, a newly professed young Bangladeshi brother from Sri Lanka Tudella Novitiate, was, indeed, a tremendous help for us, considering that Br. Marti Enrich was absent in the community on the first week of the opening of classes in January 2023. Topu was on his way to MAPAC. Hence, his time with us was not that long at all.



Left to Right:  
Brs. Vigilio, Topu, Marti & George

Bro. Marti Enrich, from Spain, is the current principal or headmaster of the school; Bro. Vigilio Bwalya, from Africa, is the country coordinator, school /community bursar, community leader, and Bro. George is a part-time English teacher, a basketball trainer, and a full-time itinerant vocation promoter.

The three brothers are working under the diocese of Sylhet with about twenty thousand registered Catholics, and the majority are Indigenous people or IPs. Reverend Shorot Gomez, the former rector of the major seminary in the capital of Dhaka, is the current administering diocesan bishop. The diocese is located in the Eastern part of the country, which is about 6 hours by bus either from the capital or the formation community of Mymensingh diocese.



First Assembly of 2023

The school is primarily intended for the children of the tea garden workers who cannot afford to send their kids for further studies after class 5 or primary level due to financial constraints, distance, security among girls, and accessibility. The workers live in villages or Punjis, as they call them here, according to their ethnic group located along the hilly borders of Bangladesh and India where the tea plants grow naturally. Historically speaking and according to the records of enrolled students at the school in 2021, there are 37 tribes working in the garden who are originally from India. The tea owners and planters during the British occupation between 1700 and 1947 were lured to come to Bangladesh because of the abundance of golden-leaf plants growing everywhere.







There are 5 Punjis in Giasnogor alone with, more or less, 400 families in each Punji and an average of five members per family residing as workers only. Out of the 401 enrolled students, 113 are from the Garro tribe, 69 Bengali, 49 Urang, 45 Kashia, and 15 Karia, and the rest are distributed almost evenly among the remaining tribes. That is why the majority of the newcomers or class 6 could hardly speak straight or correct Bangla. They always mix it with their own dialects. But after a year or so, many of them improved and got more conscious as well as confident in speaking the national language when they are in school and even in public places.

The Campus has four main buildings with the school as the first from the main gate northwest and adjacent to it is the boys' hostel then followed by the Brothers' house and the girls' hostel southwest, after the mini-football field. Across the seasonal river, opposite of the girls' hostel or southeast around 200 meters, is the diocesan minor seminary of Sylhet. Recently, the third floor of the hostel for girls was completed at the first week of December 2022 and was occupied in January by twenty girls, a day before the opening of classes in January 2023 and occupied the 2nd floor. Imagine how the forty girls managed to occupy a 20-person capacity room with double-decker beds not only a year but almost four years. Boys were lucky because they got enough space at the second-floor auditorium of the school.



*School Northwest*



*Boys' Hostel Northeast*



*Girls' hostels southwest*



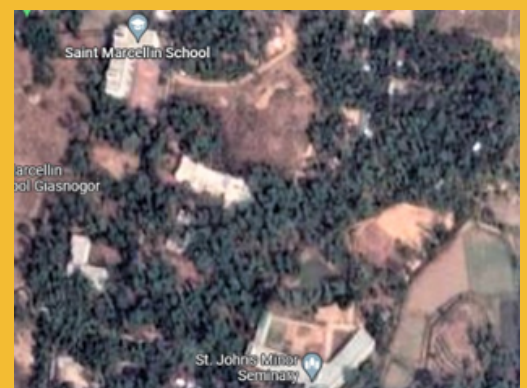
*Brothers' house southeast*

Their hostel and the chapel were completed ahead of time but were occupied after 1 year and a half due to covid19 pandemic.

Take note folks that this type of mission work is so tiresome, however, after the end of each day I am HAPPY, at PEACE, and feels so good to pray! Yan din ba ang hinahanap mo? Fear not, "come and see," baka nandito lang.

This is all for now, guys. Until the next issue, hopefully!

-Br. George E. Valle, FMS





# STUDENT-LED SEMINAR ON ANTI-OSAEC ADVOCACY

The Child and Youth Protection Desk of East Asia Marist Province, in collaboration with the Notre Dame Educational Association (NDEA) and Miseen Cara (Mission Support from Ireland) through FMSI-Rome, held a seminar-workshop for student leaders on the Cyber Youth Empowerment Program on April 22, 2023, at Notre Dame of Cotabato Instructional Media Center, Cotabato City. Key Resource Persons were the student leaders coming from Notre Dame of Marbel University, namely, Aika Grace Magadia and Ryle Andrei Aguarillless. Mr. Arvin Eric A. Caga, from Notre Dame of Dadiangas University, provided input on the importance of the anti-OSAEC law for the academe to be properly guided.

The goal of the seminar-workshop is to provide the 68 participants with the information and skills needed to spot and report cases of abuse or neglect. The training addressed a wide range of subjects, including Stop Online Sexual Abuse and Child Exploitation Advocacy Program Rationale, Workshop on Reality Awareness and the Urgent Call to Action, Advocacy: Stop Online Sexual Abuse and Child Exploitation (OSAEC), Case Reporting Protocols, Review of the school's existing Child Protection Policy, Cybersecurity Tips, and a workshop on How Can We Make Schools Cybersafe.

Br. Crispin P. Betita, FMS, East Asia Province's Child, and Youth Protection coordinator, along with the facilitators and some school administrators, praised this student-led initiative for its proactive approach to child protection and emphasis on empowering young people to take the lead in protecting their peers.

The facilitators, school administrators, and child protection policy officers believe that teaching young people the warning signs of abuse and the right measures to take would result in a safer and more supportive school environment for all.

The seminar-workshop was one of the numerous activities organized by the program's facilitators to enhance child safety and protection in schools.

The task for student-leader attendees and school child protection policy officers is to establish a safe and welcoming atmosphere for everybody. It is intended that by taking the initiative to promote child protection and safety, a culture in which every student feels supported and protected would be created.

The program was rated successful by attendees, who commended the organizers, facilitators, student leaders, and moderators for their dedication to promoting child safety and protection.

School leaders that attended the seminar-workshop could make their schools a model for other schools wanting to build a safer and more supportive learning environment for children through initiatives like these.

*(Anna Marie D. Piodena, NDC Faculty)*





## ANTI-OSAEC ADVOCACY: SEMINAR-WORKSHOP FOR ADMINISTRATORS FROM ALLAH VALLEY AND DADIANGAS NDEA MEMBER SCHOOLS

Last April 28-29, 2023, around 50 administrators joined the Seminar-Workshop on the Protection of Children and Youth Against Cybercrimes held at the Marist Asia Spirituality and Mission Center, Lake Sebu. School officials coming from the NDEA member schools of General Santos and Allah Valley Cluster and from a private institution, Ramon Magsaysay Memorial College (RMMC), participated in the said event.

The program began with the welcome message of Dr. Evelyn Dollete, NDEA Executive Director. Ms. Leann Jester Daus Rosali, Principal of Notre Dame of Marbel University, Senior High School, shared the theme Creating Cybersafe Schools. Br. Crispin Betita shared the policies and protocols for reporting cases.

The key Resource Person, Atty. Raena Marie P. Asistores, Member of the International Justice Mission (IJM) and Lead Lawyer, Manila Prosecution Development and Legal Expert on OSAEC, shared her expertise on The Law on Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC), the impact of OSAEC to victims and tips on how to combat OSAEC.

On behalf of the Provincial, Br. Ernie Sentina, FMS, expressed gratitude to all those who participated in the said event and enjoined all to continue working for the best interest of children and youth in need.



## BR. ALBERT MEETS WITH PALAWAN MISSION POINT PERSONS

Last April 25, Br. Albert Bolibol, FMS, member of the Palawan community met with the point persons from the different schools and the laity Desk of the Province to brainstorm ways on how to proceed with the fundraising initiatives in support of the students served in the Palawan missions. Key ideas were shared and one of which was to continue the advocacy of supporting the Indigenous Peoples not just through financial contributions but also on extending encouragement and be an accompanying present to the adopted IP student. The team looks forward to a more engaging means of calling for support to the Palawan Missions as we approach the year of celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Marist Presence in the Philippines.





# WORKING ON THE PROPOSED ONE ASIA PROVINCE

Visit to Vietnam, Marist District of Asia (MDA), April 14-24, 2023



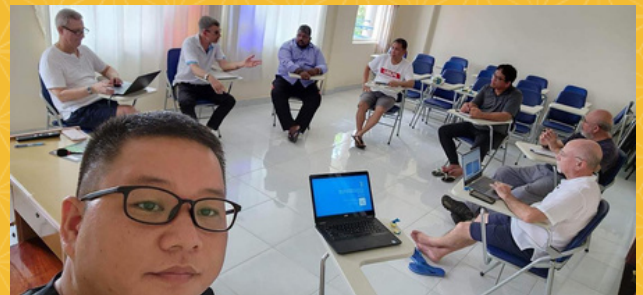
April 14:  
Marist Student House, Saigon, Vietnam



April 15:  
Marist Brothers' Ministry with Undocumented Migrants



April 16:  
Marist Brothers Pre-Novitiate House, Cu Chi, Vietnam



April 17-20:  
Meeting with the MDA Council Members at the  
Our Lady of Phuoc Hai Cistercian Monastery



April 20-23:  
MDA Vietnam Country Recollection and Assembly at Vung Tau, Vietnam, at Our Lady of Phuoc Hai Cistercian Monastery.





# Photo News

*Kobe Community: Brother Dan O'Riordan, Provincial of USA Province, visited the Kobe community from April 27 to 30. It was his first trip to Japan. He met the Brothers, visited the Marist Brother's International School, and a few historical sites. Brother Dan, together with Joe, Yohan, and Allen, visited the Brothers' cemetery and offered a prayer for the dead. Before Br. Dan's departure, the community tendered a farewell dinner for him at a Japanese restaurant.*



*April 28:  
Br Lindley and Br Lawrence in Rome*



*April 30:  
Korea-Japan Sector- Having lunch with guests after Sunday Mass outside the Marist Educational Center.*



*April 29: The Chungju Community put up this tent outside of the building to give the residents on wheel chair protection against rain and sun.*



*Last April 15, the Brothers put new wallpaper in one room of our house in Seoul.*



# Brief News from Ansan Community

Our community struggled a little with water leaks last year. To repair the damage before the monsoon season starts, we finished a couple of days ago the waterproofing of the roof. The monsoon season usually begins in June here in Korea. With the roof repaired, we hope we won't have any water leaks in our house again this coming summer.

*Br. Iggie*



# Happy Birthday

**BR. ALLAN J. DE CASTRO, FMS**  
PROVINCIAL





## THE CONSTRUCTION OF MARIST ASIA SPIRITUALITY AND MISSION CENTER IN LAKE SEBU

The Marist Asia Spirituality and Mission Center is a joint project of the three sectors of the East Asia Province of the Marist Brothers. It is located in the municipality of Lake Sebu in the province of South Cotabato. The Center is around 2 kilometers from the town's business center. Even before the completion of the project, a community of Brothers was established there in June 2018; they were Br. Pius Tajo, Br. Pepito Mahong and Br. Albert Bolibol. Two major events took place before the Center started its operation: the Provincial Chapter of April 2019, where Br. Ador Santiago was installed as Provincial and the Golden Jubilee of Br. Romy Porras in July 20, 2019.

The Brothers who are presently assigned there are Br. Rustico Lumbo, Br. Hilario Sevilla and Br. Jick de Leon.

Below is some significant information about the Center:

### Contractors:

- a. April 20, 2016 - contract to build the Center was signed with Megabuild 101;
- b. Sept. 16, 2016 - the start of actual work;
- c. April 2018 - termination of the contract with Megabuild 101 with 52,19% of the work accomplished;
- d. Various Contractors took over:
  1. HP Marin Design & Construction - for Convention and Dining Halls
  2. MCS Builders for Dormitory B
  3. AV Seneca Construction Corporation for Dormitory A
  4. PM Matinong group for road works and drainage.

Lake Sebu is recognized as one of the country's most important watersheds. It is one of the many bodies of water supplying important irrigation for the provinces of Sultan Kudarat and South Cotabato.

The villages around the lake have been turned into an independent municipality called Lake Sebu after being a former village of Surallah.

The T'boli and Ubo tribes have been the traditional dwellers of the lake. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has recognized the claim of these tribes that the lake and its surrounding areas are under their ancestral domain. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake\\_Sebu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Sebu))







## Provincial's Schedule

*May 01 to May 15, 2023*

**May 1-3:**

*Kota Kinabalu Community Visit*

**May 3-5:**

*Petaling Jaya, Kuala Lumpur Community Visit*

**May 5-7:**

*Hongkong Community Visit*

**May 7:**

*Meeting with Br. John Yang, FMS*

**May 8:**

*Flight to Manila*

**May 10-13:**

*Provincial Council Meeting at Marikina Community*

**May 14:**

*Flight to General Santos City*

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**May 02:**

*Br. Allan J. de Castro  
Provincial*

*Br. Pio Yu (Wan-hee)*

## Prayer Intentions:

- We join Pope Francis in praying for his prayer intention for the month of May: That Church movements and groups may rediscover their mission of evangelization each day, placing their own charisms at the service of needs in the world.
- That we grow in vocations for priestly and religious life.
- That the laity will continue to carry on their mission of sanctifying the world where they belong.
- That the children and the young experiencing confusion in life may find people who will journey with them in getting through tough times.
- That our birthday celebrants be filled with the abundance of God's blessing of love, peace, and abundance in their lives.