



July.2023

MARIST DISTRICT OF ASIA NEWSLETTER





Conflicts and growth [48]

Wherever people live together, tensions and conflicts arise. This is no less true in a Marist community. **Learn to speak with your brothers in a manner that is open and transparent.** Doing so will strengthen unity and help you to overcome difficulties. (R.26.56)

Letter from a brother:

I read between the lines, from the letter sent to me by a brother. The great pain that the hurtful words of a confrere from his community had caused him. "Your first mission is to be a brother, and promote brotherhood." Says the rule of life. How to get along with this ideal presented for our Marist style of life and the verbal expressions that speak of another kind of relationship, not friendship but enmity...for the wounded brother, life changes; he does not feel welcomed in his community, he has lost his dignity, his confidence, his desire to continue living in that "place" and He has asked to leave the project and return to his country...

Remember also that refusing to listen to ideas that make you uncomfortable will not resolve the matter. Moving in that direction might serve only to impoverish everyone or damage, above all, whomever is most vulnerable at the time.

Never cease reminding yourself that community is a grace of the Spirit (cf Eph 4:2-6). We have come together without choosing one another; **welcome each other as a gift from the Lord.** Remain united in his name, despite your difficulties (cf Jn 17:11-12).

Just some days ago I returned from visiting some communities in Bangladesh and India and I saw the same situation in some places ... lack of acceptance and dialogue...so closed in their criteria that communion between the members of the community cannot be expected...

They speak the minimum and no feelings are expressed, the minimum and irrelevant information is given without opening the heart because it is known that it will not be accepted but once again it will be criticized and humiliated, treated as an idiot for having asked a question or for expressing his way of thinking about different situations.

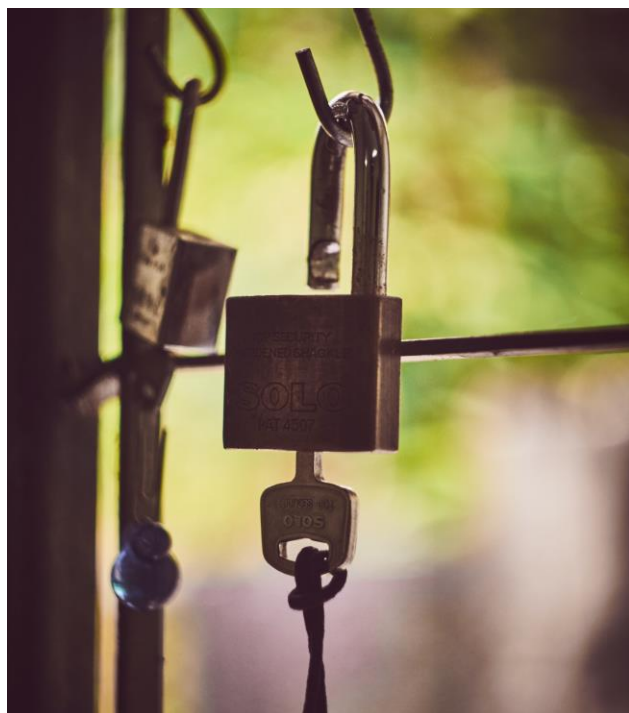
Contemplating the table of La Valla [54]

*“BROTHER, the table at La Valla is an icon of our Marist fraternity, a powerful symbol of the communion that exists among diverse cultures, peoples and personalities. To this table, we bring our human stories, as well as our concerns, convictions, and dreams. At this table, we share the bread of our lives, blessed by our common faith in Jesus, whom we follow in the way of our Good Mother, Mary. **In choosing to sit at this table, you and I help each other to become the person that God has called us to be.***

From this table, we set forth to witness to God’s love for all people, especially children and young people who are most vulnerable”

It is not an isolated case, nor an isolated situation caused by tensions or misunderstandings. Humiliated, and excluded without the possibility of being listened because his word does not count... expressing internal pain is hard to express and sometimes only tears of loneliness and rejection communicate what they feel in those situations.

Marcelline invite us once again to practice the little virtues listening attentively, being available, honest, patient, gentle, hospitable, mutually supportive, courteous, tolerant, and of the service of our sisters and brothers. They are our way of living out the attitudes of Mary of Nazareth, doing ordinary things in an extraordinary way



Br. Juan

Last eight months I stayed in Spain for health reasons. It was a new experience in my life. It was an opportunity to take care of my health, to rest, to stay in contact with my original Marist Province, to do different activities, to contact my friends, to refresh my mind, to walk, to read, to do manual work, to visit my sister and nephews, etc. After a prostrate surgery and 28 radiotherapy sessions I needed to return to India to update mi visa and it was an opportunity to meet a different Community. I could celebrate the Feast of Saint Marcellin with Bro. Luan and Bro. Alex. Next day, Bro. Luan returned to Vietnam. We thanked him the year stayed with us in Talit. He enriched us with his personal qualities and skills; his enthusiasm and dynamism. He entered in contact with many people and he helped in many ways to the hostel boys in the classes and activities. We wish him the best in his studies and future mission in Go Vap Student House Community of Vietnam. Bro. Alex stayed with us some days, before travelling to Tamil Nādu to celebrate his Religious Profession's Silver Jubilee. Also, Bro. Michael stay in our Marist Community learning Bengali and on June, 24th he travelled to Sri Lanka, after he got the missionary visa to Bangladesh. Bro. Manoj and Augustin will stay in our community some months while they study the College's first year, They are studying in the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Open University of Burdwan. Manoj is studying Commerce and Augustin History. The Sundays we don't cook and we eat with the Hostel boys. They enjoy our presence and relation. Every day, after supper, we enjoy our community time playing cards and doing fun. On 3, July we received the good news of the appointment of the new bishop for our Diocese of Asansol, Fr. Elias Frank. Next day, some priests and religious welcomed him in the Pastoral Centre of Chetana. On July, 6th. Brother Jiji returned from Rome to our Community. He stayed one month doing the course Gier for the Brothers that did the perpetual profession last years.

About the hostel, to say that the boys had long summer holidays because the hight temperatures and they stay in the hostel studying and doing different activities. Now, they go normally to the school. Next days will come Cristina and Elena from Spain. They will stay one month helping us in the hostel activities.

Last June, Bro. Malangmei started the Community College mini-project in four Santali villages with the collaboration of FMSI and the funding of Miseen Cara. The idea is to organize this activity in another two new villages. We help the boys/girls with two hours of class every day.

The Marist Community follows a sustainability plan taking care of a farm with chickens and ducks. The farm produce eggs every day and it contributes to sustain the economy of the community.

The new Marist House is almost built. In May was a strong cyclone and part of the roof was destroyed. Now the roof is complete and the electricians and painters are completing their work.



This year 2023, we celebrate the Feast of Saint Marcellin with a special morning prayer and the lunch in a restaurant.



Our Talit Marist Community: Brothers Manoj, Augustin, Michael, Malangmei and Jose Maria.



**Playing cards after supper.
A good community moment to do some fun.**



Last July, 6th, Bro. Jiji finished the Gier Course in Rome and he returned to our Marist Community in Talit.



Last days we welcomed and greeted the new Asansol Bishop: Fr. Elias Frank.



Bro. Manoj visiting Dangatola in Kamarpara Parish., a new Marist Tuition centre, part of the Community College mini-project.



Bro. Malangmei visiting the new village of Nawatola in Kamarpara Parish.



Nawatola, a new tuition centre for the Santali boys and girls. Every day they have two hours of class.



The Brothers Manoj and Augustin in the entrance of the new Marist House, one kilometer from the Hostel.



This new Marist House will be a Formation House for new Marist Aspirants.



Next September will be the Inauguration of this new Marist Formation House.

on 25th June, we celebrated the committed life of our young brother **Br. Robert's 4th Vows renewal** in our community Chapel. We Brothers Cesar, and I along with our Aspirant Timash Hawee had a special with Br. Robert. **Our Cathedral Parish priest Fr. Bijon Kubi** was so, generous to sacrifice his time to celebrate Mass though he is busy on Sundays. It is a blessing to have young brother in our community



and celebrate life and his commitment. During the Mass, Br. Robert Renewed his vows, and Br. Alex, received it behalf of the Superior General, delegated by Br. Canísio our District Leader. we continually give our brotherly support to Br. Robert and for his studies through our prayers.



Mr. Timash Hawee is our Aspirant from Mymensingh Diocese. He is completing his Aspirancy soon here and now preparing to go to Davao for his further formation Program. Things are going well with him and eagerly waiting for his next stage of formation. Once we get the green signal from the District Superior and his Council, in first week of September he will be in

Davao, accompanied by Br. Alex. We wish him all the best for our Aspirant Timash Hawee for his vocational journey as a Marist. Our prayers go with him too. All the Best Timash.

Bro. Alex Arokiasamy, fms

Go Vap Community

During this time, Sai Gon community has welcomed several Brothers to our community and shared our life with them.



On June 6th, the Sai Gon community came together to celebrate the feast day of Champagnat alongside all the members of Marist in Vietnam. The joyous occasion took place at Ha Dong Parish.



We warmly welcomed two new members into our home. Br. Juan and Br. Luan joined the community in May and are currently residing in a newly acquired house, along with Br. Thuong and Br. Nghi. Their presence has breathed new life into our community.



The decision to move new houses was prompted by an unforeseen circumstance: the police preventing the community from registering our accommodation. Despite this challenge, the Sai Gon Community has embraced the excitement of this change and appreciates the opportunity to relocate to a new, more accommodating house. This new space provides an ideal environment for engaging in various activities, including community prayers, shared meals, and teaching English to children in the surrounding area.



In terms of individual pursuits, Bros Bao, Hung and Thuong are excelling in their studies at university while actively participating in various activities within the parishes, orphanages, and engaging with the children in Ta Do.



Br. Thuan has returned to our community after dedicating himself to apostolic works with the De La Salle Brothers in Gia Lai province. His experiences have enriched our community.





Br. Nghi is currently attending an English course at the local English center and taking music lessons from a local teacher. Additionally, he devotes his time to teaching English to students residing in our community's vicinity.



Br. Luan is currently on a home visit but is expected to return to our community soon to prepare for his university plans.



Br. Pietro, the backbone of our community ("our Mother"), continues to ensure the smooth operation of our community. He actively engages with candidates and establishes friendships with young men from neighboring parishes. He goes to Thailand to renew his visa monthly.





Br. Juan is acclimating himself to the new environment and diligently learning Vietnamese. He has been making valuable contributions to our community and has recently renewed his visa for an additional three months.

Our Candidate, Mr. Son is having his summer break. He is going to have a surgery at his hand please remember him in our prayer.

Thank you and may God Bless you all.

Br. Thuong





Giasnogor School Community Highlights, Moulovibazar, Sylhet, Bangladesh



The month of April was still within the Ramadan holidays and it kicked off with Marti attending the 4-day Moulovibazar Headmasters' New Curriculum Training Program 2023 at the oldest Gov't High School in the district that was established in 1891. According to him, he was the only foreigner, the oldest and supposedly not qualified anymore. However, many were pleased and appreciative of his presence. And as a proof of this appreciation, he was compensated with a sum of 6,800 taka (62 USD) like any other local headmasters, as an honorarium and food allowance for complying with the required training. The overwhelming joy in the face of Marti was so evident when he received the amount. This episode reminded George of his own experience, when he directly received, for the first time in his life as a teaching brother, 2000 taka (18 USD/month) in the mission parish of Pirgacha under Mymensingh diocese. Several brothers, including him, collaborated with Holy Cross Fathers or CSC as teachers in their Secondary High school for more than 6 years.



The proceeding days of the week kept the brothers together with the Smsm sisters Janet Ninipua and Ruma Gomes as well as the incoming novice Shuvo Chiran, who was on a community experience, busy preparing for the Holy week Triduum services. The Parish priest of Srimongol Fr. James Shemol, CSC, in the previous parish clergy-religious gathering, assigned them in three villages near Giasnogor. Fr. Robert Nokrek, CSC, the assistant parish priest in blue short-sleeve-shirt in the picture, gave the orientation couple of days prior to the scheduled dates of the communion services at the brothers' house.

Sr. Janet and Shuvo went to Meertinga, around 20 minutes away by car or CNG while Marti and Sr. Ruma took care of Kalachora, 30 minutes away and Zereen, an hour. Vigilio was still on home leave 'til the 30th while George was in Shimulia, Khulna diocese following up the two incoming young men for the Aspirancy program 2023.

In this country, the month of May and October are dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mother Mary. Holy Rosaries and Pilgrimages are the frequent religious or spiritual exercises performed during these months among Catholic families and other Christian faithful. The visit of Juan Castro was indeed timely. He did not just meet the brothers in Giasnogor School and Mymensingh formation communities and their apostolates from the 7th to the 20th but also got the firsthand experience on how mixed, local & foreign, style or manner of Marian devotions are done in this part of Asia. Marti took advantage of his visit and requested him to give a brief talk about the painting of our Lady of Guadalupe given to him by the provincial of Juan when he attended the Champagnat Marist Schools Network meeting in Mexico. Sr. Ruma Gomes, smsm was the translator.



Lunch with the Brothers & Smsm sisters



Marial prayer at the neighbor's place in Mymensingh



Pre-departure meeting with Robert in Dhaka



Towards the end of May, Marti and George had several meetings with the teachers usually after their last period in the afternoon. The purpose of which was to organize an information drive on the life of the founder among students and teachers. It was done through a quiz bowl competition in preparation for the Champagnat day on the 6th of

June as well as the closure and continuity of the Marist Vocation year. Since the auditorium cannot accommodate all the students at once plus having it in an open court is just impossible due to the scorching heat of the sun, so the contest was divided into two levels.

Level 1 is composed of class 6 & 7 while level 2 is made up of class 8, 9 & 10. The bowl was made up two parts namely: Spelling for the easy part and question & answer for the difficult part. Teachers were provided with booklets and brochures on the brief history St. Marcellin's life as the source of their information. Series of orientation on the mechanicals of the competition were held as well. Final rehearsal of the officials involved in the contest was done a day before the 6th.



The Champagnat day celebration at St. Marcellin School campus bustled with various activities. The day started with a mass for Christian and Catholic students, teachers, parents and friends. It was followed by round 1 of ballgames for class 6 & 7 and quiz bowl for class 8, 9 & 10. Round 2 was just a reverse of the round 1 but after a short break with free snacks for everyone. Prizes were awarded right after the competition. Everyone went home a winner and equally received the same awards of one pen, a pack of biscuit and unlimited fresh and cool water from the tap.



Spiritual, physical & mental exercises on Champagnat Day

A day after the Champagnat day, George resumed his vocation follow ups on the 7 young men, recommended by the two young brothers Robert and Topu, 1st novice Shuvo Chiran and aspirant Timash, for the Aspirancy & candidacy program. He accompanied first the lone incoming aspirant Josh James Mondol, who was on a three-day community experience the 4th to the 8th of June, back to his parish in Shimulia under Khulna diocese then proceeded to Mymensingh diocese that is 6-7 hours night trip by bus. So far, he visited 5 of the 7 incoming candidates, 4 from Mymensingh diocese and 1 from Dhaka. The last two, who are related to each other will be visited hopefully on the first week of next month.



Josh J. Mondol with Bro. Topu's mom



Lan Rozario from Dhaka Diocese



Shovo Dalbot from Mymensingh Diocese

This is all for now folks & hear from me again in the next issue.

Have a pleasant and fruitful days ahead with Mary, Marcellin and Marist Saints!

Br. George



Cu Chi Community



On May 4th, our community celebrated birthdays of Br Cong (35 years old) and aspirant Chinh (27 years old). We invited the parish priest, some of our friends from the parish, especially the present of Br Angel Medina the Director of the Secretariat of Brothers Today. We enjoyed the moment and thanked the Lord for the gift of life of the two brothers with a simple meal.



On May 12th – 14th, our community had an outing together with Br Cuong who has spent about a month in our community after first profession. We spent three days in



a touristic area called Mui Ne. We enjoyed the beautiful view of the sea and the sand field was very impressive. It was a good occasion to visit had the community of Sr Dung who is the older sister of Br Cong. Thanks God for the time being and enjoying together.





From May 16th to June 14th, our aspirants Trung and Chinh had spent time in Pailin and La Valla School for their community and apostolic experience. After almost a month being in active in communities the two with Br Cong had two days trip around Phnompenh visited some historical places. It was an important experience for the aspirants before moving to the next stage of formation. Thank you Pailin and La Valla School communities for accepting our aspirants be part of your communities for their experience.



Every month, Br Cong collaborated with the parish priest goes to visit the poor and needy in surrounding area. We give food and accessories to help those whose are in difficult situation. It's blessing for me to be involved in these meaningful activities, in the future the community might involve more in charity works.



ACEP : Apostolic Community Experience Program.

After the canonical year, you know that the novices are invited to do a three-month-ministry experience. As it is specified in the Guide of formation: **“This period of apostolic activity should deepen the novice’s understanding of our Marist mission and our apostolic spirituality.” (Guide of Formation No. 266).** They are 8 novices in the second year. Three of them went to our school Maris Stella at Negombo (one at the campus of Thimbirigaskatuwa), two in our community at Kalpitiya and three at the Daya Mina Center of the Charity Sisters at Colombo. It is a center for young persons “differently abled.” I let them to share about their experience.

1. Ruben, Manecas and Ky at Daya Mina Center.

Our ministry with children

We arrived there on June 11. The first night, we ate supper with sisters as well as participated in evening prayer. The next morning, we joined them for morning prayer and breakfast at nine o'clock.

When we got to Daya Mina on June 12, we officially started our ministry. We simply accompany students while

learning how to interact with them. Since their circumstances are so dissimilar from one another, we make an effort to comprehend each of them. As a result, we simply follow whatever the teacher has planned to teach the students each day, assisting the instructor in noticing when a student is having trouble writing, drawing, or otherwise expressing themselves. We mostly assisted them with the handwork that their teacher had assigned to them, such as making rug materials. Because of how difficult it is for us to comprehend one another when we communicate in another language, there are occasions when we feel challenged. On the other hand, we also give communion in the church every Sunday, we occasionally attend mass and assist the Father in giving Communion after being invited to do.



Our Daily Routine

Our, time spent living in a community with our Brothers Ky, Manecas, and Ruben has been wonderful because everything is done together. We spend time together making jokes and telling amusing stories, especially at dinnertime or after we get home from school. This is how we unwind. We also shared our struggles in class with one another and did our best to help each other find solutions that we felt were best for us.



Our Community Prayer

We three agreed that because we had morning and evening prayers, we would take turns leading the prayers for a week. So, we had adoration with the sisters on Sunday. We attend mass every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday and we don't do evening prayer thereafter.

2. Didemo at Thimbirigaskatuwa (campus 2 of our Maris Stella School)

I share when I arrived in the school being in contact with students. They are grade 8. I was really excited and amused with them. It was a good experience for me while I was standing up in front of them to teach English.



This picture is I asked some of my students to give a hand to take that photo with their teacher” her name is Shyien. She is teaching Science start from the grades 6 to 9. By the way, I was really enjoying with her lessons. Because she is a very good teacher and I found her methods and techniques teaching are inspired me too. When I was participating in her class. They are grade 9.



Some photos I took from the grade 3 when I have the spare time. I used this time to participate and to get to know them as well. They were very happy and excited to welcome me with the smile faces. And then, I did some activities such as games and animated with them as well. I am feeling happy and humoristic with the students.



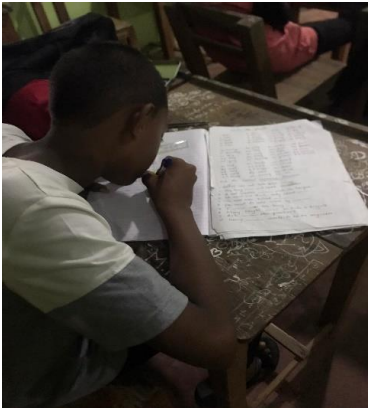
Two weeks ago, we had celebrated the Feast Day of Macellin at school. The school was invited one of the diocese priests came to celebrate a mass. The same time we also had the procession of our Lady around the school and the students were showing their band music to animate it. Brother Mervin Perera the one who is the principal in this school. I am staying with the five brothers in the community. I was feeling very happy and comfortable to live with them. I would like to say that this community I felt at home.



3. Cuong (and Eddy) at Kalpitiya

With only a few days left to complete a month, I left the novitiate and went to another community. Here everything is different from the people, the language, the skin color and the culture. We were greeted with a simple meal, living poverty in the community. So far, I feel happy and meaningful with the work I'm doing. Hopefully, I will have more opportunities to explore the same experiences of community life. So that will be the luggage for my future life.

Language, Culture, Community Life and Apostolic Work, Joy, Integration, Openness... that's all I've received these past weeks.



Beginning of the Canonical year in the Novitiate.

(Shovo) At the beginning of the Novitiate, we had a retreat in Subodhi. We began our retreat with a small prayer. Then, the Orientation about Novitiate life. Each of us shared different aspects and thoughts about Novitiate. Even, we had a secession about our vocational journey. Each one of them has different stories and motivations. It was an excellent moment. The retreat was led by Br. Rod Thomson and Br. Real.



JUNE 6 CELEBRATION

(Vinh) On the 6th of June, the Novitiate community celebrated the feast day of St. Marcellin Champagnat, our founder of the Institute. In the evening we had a Eucharistic celebration presided over by Rev. Fr. Joseph TOR. During the Eucharistic celebration, 5 postulants (03 MDA 01 South Asia & 01 Star of the Sea) were accepted as Novices and began their canonical year in the Marist International Novitiate Tudela.



As a symbolic gesture of acceptance, Br. Canisio and Br. Kikko handed them the Constitution and Rule of Life of the Marist Brothers and the Marist cross symbolizing that they now belong to the Marist Institute and Holy Bible to symbolize that the Novices should always listen to God's voice and a "sarong" to symbolize Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan culture now they are living in. The celebration was attended by Brothers, Lay Marists, and neighbours. After the mass, we had a celebration party with our neighbours and Lay Marists.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

(Shohel) For me it's a great chance to share something about our Novitiate of Tudella in Sri Lanka. We are thirteen Novices among them five are 1st year and 2nd year Novices are in ACEP also five Brothers. I will share about three things of Novitiate.

First Study- we have three classes every day with the Brothers. Br. Kiko about Marist Studies, Br. Real Religious life & Constitution and Br. Rod Scripture & Theology. Every Brother give us assignments and before the class we have opportunity to correct our assignment with them.

Second apostolic work, we are involved with different congregations for the apostolic work in three groups. It's a good way to improve our teaching skill and prepare ourselves for the future. Though we are foreigners, but we are able to manage with the local students and it's a good sign that we are able to work in with other cultures.

Third Manual work. It is an activity for us, where we can involve ourselves, learn something from others, do something for our community and show our Love. Gardening (flower, banana and vegetable), cleaning house, painting, compost, planting trees are the examples of our manual work. It is good physical work that keep us in good health; we should do it every day. Through this we can develop our work skills.

Brothers are always encouraging us in many ways, especially study and prayer life (community and personal).



Moving to the new house

In the week of July, our community start to move to the new house,

The new house is near Suoi day parish and the distance from the old house to the new house is about 10 km, and from the new house to the mission place is about 15 km, it can take about 25 to 30 minutes by the motorbike.



Blessing the new house

In the second week of July, after all, things had already transferred to the new house,

We invited the Suoi Day parish priest to bless our new house, including the birthday of Brother Long.

we thank you very much, Brs. Juan and Nghi visited our community that day, and with the help of some people from the parish was very well done and faithful.



Ta Do project

As you know, at the moment we are not allowed to teach the children at the lake,

And the government is not happy with us, but with love and care for the future of the children,

We are still going to teach the children but underway, and we still come to them every morning from Monday to Friday. They are very happy to see us every day and the children really really want to study.

So we continue to remember them in our prayer.



We also received some donations from the people priest or sisters.



Pailin Community



A TAPESTRY OF CONNECTION

Embracing the Marist Cultural Pilgrimage of Hope as a Volunteer

By Ma. Liezel Igoy
Cultural Pilgrim of Hope Marist Volunteer in Pailin, Cambodia

Editor's Note:

The Marist Cultural Pilgrimage of Hope is a transformative journey that goes beyond geographical boundaries and seeks to create meaningful connections among diverse cultures. By actively participating as a volunteer, one becomes a vital thread in a tapestry of connection, weaving together stories, experiences, and hope. This article of Miss Liz Igoy delves into the significance of embracing the Marist Cultural Pilgrimage of Hope as a volunteer and explores the profound impact it can have on both individuals and communities.

"Persons always live in relationship. We come from others, we belong to others, and our lives are enlarged by our encounter with others" - Pope Francis

When the Atlantis Marist International Community in South Africa closed in November 2022 and the new Marist International Community in Malawi took longer to open, I was given a new opportunity. My journey began when Brother Jose Willrich Canisio, the Superior of the Marist District of Asia (MDA), welcomed me and informed me that I would be joining the Pailin Marist Community in Cambodia.



I was all set to begin my new mission in Pailin in early February 2023. Despite various adjustments to the departure dates and a difficult experience at Manila airport, I finally flew to Ho Chi Minh City on February 25, 2023. Upon arrival, I had a quick meeting with Brother Kim Dong Reol, MDA's volunteer coordinator. I traveled to Siem Reap the next day and spent three days there. After exhausting and sleepless nights of travel, exploring the gorgeous Angkor Wat and walking the streets at night gave me a rejuvenating experience.



On March 2, 2023, I was enthusiastically welcomed by the Pailin community. Brothers Hoang Anh and Le Hai from Vietnam, Bernhard Tremmel from Germany, Gustavo from Spain, and Pierre Joseph from Madagascar were among the members of the community. I also had the pleasure of meeting the lively boys and girls staying at the hostel, who warmly refer to me as "sister" (Bang Srey) in the Khmer language. This form of address gave me a sense of peace, and I am gradually becoming accustomed to it. I was introduced to the kind-hearted people in the parish and the surrounding community. I also had the opportunity to visit the LaValla School in Phnom Penh, where I met other Marists. It was heartening to see how the Marist Brothers and staff were helping disadvantaged youngsters through education and skills training programs. I reminisced about my extraordinary experience at the Emmanuel Daycare for Special Needs Children in Atlantis, South Africa as I visited the facilities of the school.



People in Cambodia are naturally friendly, even if communicating with them can be difficult due to their lack of English skills. I admire their tranquility and their humble way of life. However, the sweltering summer heat presents a huge difficulty for me. There were days when I preferred not to go outside, and the hot nights made sleeping impossible.

My roles and responsibilities include empowering teachers at the Marist Education Center (MEC) and aiding them in improving their teaching and communication skills. I also teach English to high school students from public schools at the MEC and provide English lessons to a student in the hostel.



After a month apart, I returned to Manila on March 28 after a lengthy layover in Malaysia. I had a great time with my family and friends throughout April. I acquired a Courtesy visa from the Cambodian embassy in Manila on April 28. Finally, on May 15, I was ecstatic to be returning to Pailin.

As a missionary, one of the qualities I've learned and developed is the ability to "reach out or encountering the others". This is the challenge of Pope Francis when he reminds us to practice the "spirituality of encounter" with the "religious and culturally other". With this, I am able to establish friendships with community members, students and the locals. The young children in Pailin are the source of my inspiration and encouragement "being in mission".

Furthermore, the brothers in the community are hardworking, and the individuals I have met are grateful for what they have. They are proud of their natural environment, which includes mountains, waterfalls, plants, farms, traditional dance, music, and diverse foods. They appreciate the possibilities for learning and are always eager to offer what they have. MEC teachers and students often provide fruits, modest refreshments such as crackers, and bottled water. My Khmer language teacher, who refers to himself as my "al pok" (father), occasionally gives me an iced coffee and is always prepared to help, and my friends often invite me out. The students in the hostel are not only helpful but also exceptionally polite. These experiences are inculcating in me the values of simplicity, humility, and modesty.



A TAPESTRY OF CONNECTION

Embracing the Marist Cultural Pilgrimage of Hope as a Volunteer



During my time in Cambodia, I faced many difficulties, the most significant of which was the language barrier. I am grateful, though, for the Khmer classes I take four times a week, as they have helped me communicate with the children and the locals. The oppressive heat, both during the day and at night, has been a frequent struggle. I know I need to adapt to the present environment in which I am now. Thus, acceptance and adaptation are the keys to survival in the mission. Being away from my homeland, family, and friends can be isolating and inspiration does not always come easily. However, the people's gratitude, as if I'm making a difference in their lives, keeps me going.



Mission outside one's own country is always challenging yet wonderfully fulfilling. Being on a mission in Pailin, Cambodia is indeed an inspiring and fantastic experience for me. This experience will surely help me develop as a courageous missionary. Participation in the mission of God has indeed changed my life.



Being a courageous missionary as a Marist Cultural Pilgrim of Hope Volunteer is a noble and impactful role. As a volunteer in this capacity, I would be part of the Marist cultural pilgrim movement, which focuses on fostering hope, cultural exchange, and understanding among communities. My primary objective as a Marist Cultural Pilgrim of Hope Volunteer would be to immerse myself in different communities, both locally and globally, with the aim of promoting intercultural dialogue and fostering a sense of hope and solidarity.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Brothers of the Marist District of Asia, particularly the Brothers in the Pailin Community for their gracious welcome, and the Cambodian teachers and students for making me a part of their community and culture.

Being a courageous missionary as a Marist Cultural Pilgrim of Hope Volunteer is a noble and impactful role. As a volunteer in this capacity, I would be part of the Marist cultural pilgrim movement, which focuses on fostering hope, cultural exchange, and understanding among communities. My primary objective as a Marist Cultural Pilgrim of Hope Volunteer would be to immerse myself in different communities, both locally and globally, with the aim of promoting intercultural dialogue and fostering a sense of hope and solidarity.



A quite time to be closer to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Br. Canísio J. Willrich

Brothers in Thailand had the opportunity to have a retreat at the Sacred Heart Sisters' house in Cha-Am.

To be away and closer to nature helps us to quieten the inner self, to reflect and pray.

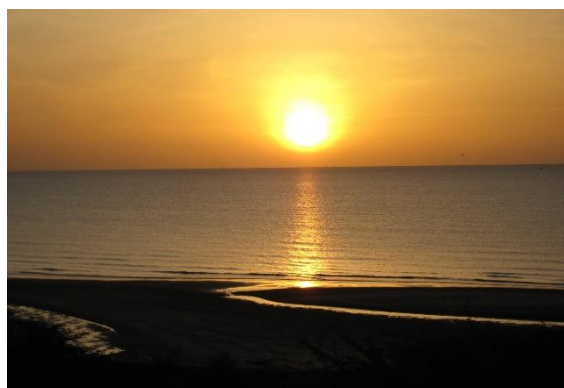
A renewal time that we need to take time to time to re-energize ourselves and strengthen our spiritual life.



Fr. Pricha (Carmelite), shared several aspects of Religious Life.

- It is good to have difficulties, obstacles, which gives us an opportunity to reflect and take fresh decisions.
- Congregations were often more effective with smaller numbers, with great dedication and vision. We should not worry about numbers, but foster passion, commitment and live joyfully our vocation.
- Promote family spirit with brothers, lay, other Congregations and Religions. We work for a common mission and should not compare or compete among ourselves.
- Being able to contemplate in today's marketplaces, peripheries.
- We learn from mistakes, live in times of uncertainties, which helps us to make room for the work of the Holy Spirit and have more trust in God's divine providence.

Gratitude for the graces received and the fraternal care of the brothers and sisters!



SUMMER CAMP – HSU

Br. Bao

Recently from July 7th to 9th, I joined with my classmates and professor from Hoa Sen University collaborated to facilitate a summer camp at Lạc Lâm parish, in Lâm Đồng province. The camp accommodated to a group of 300 sponsorship students coming from around this highland area, and our role covered the organization and implementation of different activities. With a strong focus on their holistic development, we try to foster an understanding among these young individuals regarding the psychological, physical, and emotional changes that accompany the age of adolescence. Moreover, we aimed to guide them in expressing their emotions in a constructive manner while at the same time explaining them with various career pathways.



This summer camp not only provided a friendly platform for our academic and personal growth, leaving an impact on the participating students but also giving an enriching experience for many students from Hoasen university. The outcomes were more than what we expected, as we developed a connection with these young participants, we came to know that many of whom coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Hoping that the sponsorship program brings them many opportunities to higher education and that they continue to grow daily towards becoming to a good person. May God bless them, their families and the people who directly helping them every day.

My experience during this Gier program.

Br. Jiji



I like to express my Gier program 2023 experiences with 18 Marist Brothers from different countries. As we say always we are a global family of institutes of the Marist Brothers.

Our Gier program is divided into two parts. The first part of the program we stayed 15 days in Rome in the General house of the brothers.

The second part of 15 days we lived in the champagnat house in Hermitage France.

First 15 day of the program for me it's more about my Marist vocation and how I am taking care of my vocation as a young brother living in the Marist community. During the first part I am able to know other parts of the Marist world. As brothers working with the young people and children. For me it's more important that we build an international and intercultural community with the spirit of our founder Champagnat.

Last 15 days I am able to experience the spiritual life of Champagnat. For me it's wonderful to experience the camino from Le Rosey to Hermitage. At the same time, I am able to remember the story of the first brothers and visit the important places of the Marist institute.

To conclude my experience of this Gier program. As we know the name Gier is the name of a river. The river is not beginning from Hermitage it's beginning from the mountains it flows through the Hermitage.

For me this program is like this Gier river because we are from different countries. It's like Gier water from different mountains it's come to gather to flow through the Hermitage. We came together as Marist brothers. This Gier water does not stay in the Hermitage, it flows to different places and ends in the ocean. For me it's a significant moment to remember that I am a Marist brother not for my country or my people. I am available to the Marist world. As this Gier water gives colour to the ocean I too remember always I am for the Marist world.

With this new experience I started my journey like this Gier river.

At this moment I would like to thank all the brothers who supported me to get the real experience of the Gier program. Thank you so much, dear brothers.

Community exposure in Korea

I am Br Le Van Duy from Vietnam. I have been in Korea for 36 days to experience the Marist communities there and to know more about this country.

When I arrived, the first impression I had of Korea was that it was a fresh and clean country with cool weather that made me feel very comfortable.

Here in Korea, I have been able to visit different communities. I mainly stayed in Seoul, where the brothers had a gathering center and children's center. I really enjoyed this place and am thankful to the brothers that they have given me all the freedom to be myself and visit who I wanted. I felt really appreciated and welcomed by all the brothers, specifically the members of the community where I was staying. I found out the life of brotherhood in the community through the way they are being with one another and through their spiritual life.

In this country I have experienced being with students, and helping brothers to do some simple works like cleaning, gardening, and cooking Vietnamese noodles. I have tasted many kinds of food, and I was able to visit my sister-in-law and my friends too. I visited different tourist places in the city, with the company of different brothers and my friends, and I have even learned how to travel by subway here. With these travels it was really a privilege for me to come very close to nature and learn the attitude of people in taking care of 'our common home' in this country.

I also had chance to be and work with disabled people in the center run by the brothers in Chungju. I really liked visiting the different people, enjoyed working in the paper workshop with them and our time working in the garden with the brothers. It is on a mountainous side of the country so there weren't many people around and only two brothers in this community. I had time to be alone there so I felt that I didn't really know what to do in that community.

I would like to suggest what I feel for the next brothers who might come:

In Chungju community, it is better to let the brother who is coming to work a longer time in the workshop with disabled people, because I worked there only two days.

In terms of planning, it might be better that in the morning, the brother having the experience can work in the workshop with the workers. And in the afternoon, he can visit or push wheelchairs to be with other people who are not able to walk.



Blast from the Past

Estela, Rodriguez and their children Josue and Lucia were members of AMAG some years ago, based in the Pailin community in Cambodia. Lucia was actually born in Pailin. They are now back in Mexico and send their greetings.



Retreat presenter in Davao's AMAG Preparation Courses

Fr David joined the Davao groups for their final retreat before missioning to Ad Gentes. Many of those who joined those programmes will have fond memories of Father and his quiet but challenging talks. We are fortunate to again have him join us for the final week of the "Looking Beyond" course in Manziana.

