



May – September 2023

NEW BEGINNINGS (Br Rod Thomson)

Every season is ripe for 'new beginnings', and particularly so here at the Novitiate. With the return of our Second Years after their time in ACEP, we began our community building workshop and follow-up meetings, producing our updated



Mission statement. And following Br Kikko's return from his work on the new Formation Guide (and a home holiday) he presented us all with some memento's of his visit to Santiago de Compostela.

Journey's ended and journey's begun fill this present Newsletter, and so we invite you to enjoy our journeys so far this year!

Ending of Canonical Year (by Pech Reun)

As a novice, personally, I feel very happy after finishing the canonical year in novitiate. Finishing the canonical year doesn't mean we have finished our formation. We are involved in different programs and more focus is on our studies and experience in different places. We just finished our Apostolic Community experience and now we are going to have different workshops with other congregations to go more deeply into our formation. Generally, I feel so happy to continue our new programs after the canonical year.



Human Sexuality Workshop (by Simon Maia)



Our five-day Sexuality Workshop, in May, was attended by other novices from different Congregations. From what Sister Margie taught us, it was helpful for me to be aware of my body's needs as time goes on in my journey.

Our sexuality can be male or female depending on our body's reaction towards other people. She gave examples talking about self-discipline, and that our sexuality is a gift of God and generates new life. These are some good things that I have learned from the workshop.



Fourviere Day Celebration (by Bomes Tukana)

The Fourviere Day celebration was celebrated on July 6th in our Marist International Novitiate community. The celebration was led by Brother Kiko and it was a joyful moment for ourselves and the novices and Lay Marists who were invited during the celebration.

It was a new experience for some novices to celebrate Fourviere Day, as we never celebrated this day in our own countries. After the presentation we all gathered in the dining room for a few drinks and dinner together with the help of Br Réal, Br Kiko and the Novices.

Spiritual Direction Workshop (by Nguyen Quoc Cuong)



The workshop was run by Br Rod and Br Réal and had different congregations present. Spiritual direction is meeting with a trained and experienced guide to consider how God is present and active in our life right now, and about how God might invite us into a deeper relationship.

I have had a Spiritual Director for nearly a year, and I find it helpful in to keep in touch with my journey, and being faithful to my prayer time.

During the Workshop I was reminded that God is the one who is guiding us. The one

who is our spiritual director or guide acts as a channel through whom the Holy Spirit works, inspiring us and helping us discover what God is doing through our daily experiences.

The content of spiritual direction is simply our life: any aspect, story or experience that touches us can lead to prayer and reflection. It is us who seek, together with the one who guides and the Holy Spirit, meeting in holy conversation. Above all, our spiritual director listens and helps us come to understand the suggestions and possibilities, the invitations and the “impulses” of the Holy Spirit in our life.

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Assumption Feast (by Shuvo Chiran)

Assumption is a significant day for the Marist Brothers; therefore, we had a very good celebration in our community. Usually in Bangladesh, we don't celebrate this feast as a special day because of our country's remembrance of the death of our national father who was killed in 1975. That's why in the church we pray for the country and for his departed soul. But here, I experienced something very different. It was a wonderful celebration, made more so by our guests, with the presence of Br. Nicholas (Provincial of East Asia Province), four Aspirants from East Asia Province, local Lay Marists and friends. It was truly a time that we shared our happiness and joy with our neighbors.



ACEP Evaluation (by Dedimo Soares)

The experience of self-evaluation was done September 6-8, at Subodhi Retreat Centre.

I would like to confirm that all the experiences we had were positive. We shared some of our experiences and gave an overview of our three months in our ACEP. Each of us had a different community, with myself at Maris Stella Thimbirigaskatuwa; Pech and Simon at Maris Stella Negombo; Manecas, Ruben and Ky with the Charity Sisters in Nugegoda; and Cuong and Eddy at Kalpitiya. I would like to thank all the Brothers and Sisters in these places for



giving us the chance to experience their life and to develop our skills during our ACEP time. During our three day Review, we had a good time and a little bit of relaxing with our minds and thoughts, and we caught up with our two Brothers Réal and Shanthi. Those were moments when we found more peace and were thrilled with our inner-voices. As a result, we felt very happy and optimistic to improve our knowledge and abilities, and we feel called to continue to develop, by being led by the Holy Spirit to help us in our discernment in future stages ahead.

The Dreaming Novices (Br Réal Sauvageau)



I have a dream... Those of my generation will all remember Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous speech to a huge crowd in Washington in August 1963.

"...I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character...I have a dream today..."

The first Marists and Marcellin Champagnat were also the great dreamers. They were dreaming of a new Church, a new world, the family spirit inspiring the whole world. They were great dreamers being in connection with God's dream, with Jesus's dream: "That they may all be one" (Jn 17,21).

We find the similar dream in many ways in Pope Francis, with his letter *Fratelli Tutti*.

Exploring some ideas of this encyclical with the novices, I asked them what their dream as a young Marist was. Here are some of them ...

Bomes Tukana (Star of the Sea Province – PNG) *My dream as Marist and is a personal dream: it is to serve in most remote areas where most people are neglected from education. And the other thing is to build an orphanage home for those with disabilities because I have seen this as the foremost contribution, I can achieve my dream. A dream could be a challenge for me. Being a Marist is for everyone. And I am sure that all of my dream is to serve and not to be served.*



Shohel Costa (Marist District of Asia – B'Desh) *I would like to be a social worker as a Marist Brother." A social worker is a trained professional who works with all types of vulnerable people, groups, and communities to help them learn to live better lives. Social workers tend to work with populations suffering due to poverty, discrimination, or other social injustices. I remember, when I was a child, it was hard for me to say "No" if anyone asked me to do something and it made me happy. Then when I was involved with Youth Club, I participated with others for the social work. And that time I decided that I will be a social worker.*

Prathap Ranasinghe (South Asia Province – Sri Lanka) *...as Marist, we are working with Lay mission partners who are sharing Marist Charism. So my dream is that we become people who are contemplative in action to accompany and co – Journey with all of our brothers and sisters in the world*



Shuvo Chiran (Marist District of Asia – B'Desh) *From the beginning of my journey as a Marist, I have had a dream to work with poor children. Through education, I will help them and make their future bright. Gradually I realized that many young men don't know the love of God and they are going far away from God. Then I asked myself what I can do for them instead of academic teaching. Eventually I decided that I will catch fish for Jesus.*

ACEP Experience at Daya Mina (by Ruben De Oliveira)

For our ACEP, Manecas, Ky and myself were sent to the Charity Sisters community in Nugegoda. We stayed in a small house just up the road from the Sisters. We ate supper with the Sisters as well as participated in evening prayer the first night. The next morning, we joined them for Morning Prayer and breakfast at nine o'clock.



When we got to the school, called Daya Mina, on June 12, we officially started our ministry. We simply accompanied students while learning how to interact with them. Since each of their circumstances is so dissimilar, we made an effort to comprehend each of them individually. As a result, we simply followed whatever the teacher had planned to teach the students each day, assisting the instructor in noticing when a student was 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 was for us to comprehend one another when we communicated in another language, there were occasions when we felt challenged. On the other hand, we had some easy experiences of ministry, when we gave communion in the church every Sunday; we occasionally attended Mass and assisted Father in giving communion after being invited to do so.



Initiation Re treat for 1st years at Subuddhi (by Shohel Costa)

A retreat is an opportunity to step away from everyday life and focus on yourself and your connection to your spirituality. The meaning of a spiritual retreat can be different for different religious communities, one of the main objectives of all retreats is to feel and find your inner peace. Find a peaceful place where you are welcome to

go to relax, renew, and reinvigorate. Last 13th of June we had a retreat for the preparation of our Canonical year. We arrived around 11:30 a.m. and started in the evening at 3:00 p.m. I love the place very much because of the quietness. There were many activities we did and now I am going to share some of the activities.

A Review of Life: Br. Rod started our retreat with this session, and it was a great chance for us to look back on our past, especially the postulancy. A review of life means not only remembering the story but also an opportunity to check our successes and mistakes. There, we shared our goal/aim by drawing pictures, and I found that it was easy to express our opinions. The brothers also shared their life experiences.

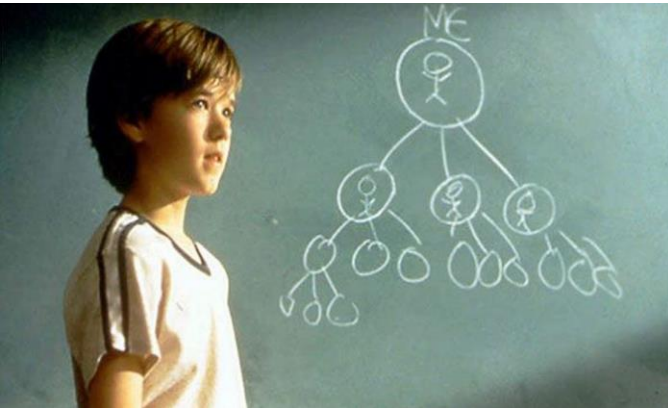
Vocation: During our formation period many times, we heard or studied about this, and every time new definition. Like- according to Br. Real “the vocation is our call to communion with God or strong inclination to a particular course of action, especially a divine call to the religious life.” We drew our vocation journey and then explained. Our life is a journey, a pilgrimage, here we can see our life, our vocation, as a pilgrimage, a journey of prayer and discernment, led by God’s spirit.



Egg Drop: Brother gave us some materials to protect the egg. First, we covered it then threw from the first floor. There, three were able to protect and two failed. I learned one thing, overconfidence never brings any good solution.

Mary is a source of light: Mary bore her suffering with courage and patience. And that’s where she becomes a source of light for our ministry. Here, light means Hope, and Mary always be with us to show us the right path. Fourviere invites us to understand the path of life as a consecration connecting us with our Marist origins so that we can enter fully into our Novitiate formation. Then we wrote our consecrated prayer to Mary and started our canonical year to recite that prayer.

Recreation: For our relaxation, we watched the movie “**Pay It Forward**” and it really touched my heart. The story of a social studies teacher who gives an assignment to his junior high school class to think of an idea to change the world for the better, and then put it into action. The simplest way to define “pay it forward” is that when someone does something for you, instead of paying that person back directly, you pass it on to another person instead. In this movie also like the same, twelve-year-old Trevor McKinney's idea is simple: Do a good deed for three people and ask each of them to “pay it forward” to three others who need help.



Another part was playing cards where I learned new varieties of games. When I was in class Eight my guardians never supported us playing cards, they thought that if we played cards, we would be gamblers. But now I understand that it is only for entertainment.

1. How do I experience God’s love?
2. How do I experience the motherly care and love of Mary?
3. How is my relationship with the founder?

Conclusion: Our retreat finished with some questions that really touched me, and I think we need to reflect more on these questions personally. Thank you God for this great opportunity to prepare ourselves for the next stage and I believe that all the experiences will be helpful for us.