

# Star MESSSENGER

Dear Brothers

As you know, last week the Provincial Council was in Solomon Islands for the second of its extended meetings for the year. Given the limited accommodation at Laumanasa, we stayed in Honiara and travelled to Tenaru on several occasions. To clarify: Tenaru is the name of the area on the outskirts of the Capital, Honiara, where the Marist school was established nearly 80 years ago. Laumanasa is the name of the property and Formation Centre that is nearby. It's named in honour of Br Alphonsus Laumanasa, the first Solomon Islander to die as a Marist Brother.

The community is currently comprised of four Brothers:

- **Simon Serero**, Community Leader, who was still in Madang, following the deaths of his mother and father.
- **Epalle Taega** who is completing the final year of his education studies at Solomon Islands National University.
- **Hudson Horoto**, who took his final vows last year and is undertaking some further study this year.
- **Sixtus Winduo** who has been appointed as Principal of St Joseph's College, Tenaru until the end of 2025.

There are also two Aspirants in residence: **John Chipuruka** and **Randall Muriatu** (who is related to Br Alphonsus). They will continue their formation in Timor Leste as Postulants.

Among the highlights of our visit, over and above the three days of discussion, were:

- A welcome assembly at St Joseph's where we were greeted with traditional dances by the students and local customs;
- A meeting and meal with the Brothers and lay Marists;
- A meeting and lunch with the members of the new Board of the College;

- A tour of the College;
- A meeting with Ruth Hihiru who has been the lay partnership coordinator in Melanesia for some years;
- Similarly, a meeting with Benedict Tooming, who had travelled from Bougainville, to discuss developments and issues at Mabiri and Tenaru.

The College has a reputation as a high performing school and therefore has significant demands on its enrolments. Its student population is nearly 800 and all but 100 are boarders, both girls and boys. Classes are large, with some as high as 75, and the dormitories are simple and overcrowded. The College was used to house athletes attending last year's South Pacific Games, so the government funded improvements to the buildings and facilities. However, there is much to be done. The new Board is aware of these challenges and is making plans for the future.

It was a pleasure to be in the Solomons and to spend time with our Brothers and Marist colleagues and supporters. Council acknowledges the planning and organisation of John Hazelman and Kevin Wanden.

## New Caledonia

The situation in New Caledonia is still tense. Br Jean-Paul keeps us informed on a regular basis. Unfortunately, he has ruptured his achilles tendon and is suffering from pain and limited mobility. He was able to visit a clinic today. Georges has been looking for food supplies.

Jean-Paul added: *"It's much more difficult, for example, for the community of our Petites Filles de Marie sisters at Le Thabor. They have had no electricity since the riots began. Enercal installed a generator, but it has broken down. They are calling for help. They have sisters with bedsores on inflatable medical beds. The oldest is 95"*.

Yesterday he sent an update from Bishop Ghislain:

*It is the 16<sup>th</sup> day of rioting here.*

*480 new mobile guards arrived this morning, which brings the police presence to more than 3500. There have been more than 500 arrests in the last 15 days, and 7 deaths. 135 police officers have been injured and we don't know the number of civilians. The morgues are saturated but burials are resuming. Neighbourhoods are gradually being cleared of their roadblocks. There has been much looting and destruction in Greater Noumea. Traffic is gradually resuming, but refuelling continues to be difficult. Shops, companies and administrative services that can reopen are doing so little by little, but are not yet really supplied and operational.*

*The flour, produced by the Saint Vincent flour mill, is starting to run out and the few bakers who have opened have only a few days' supply remaining. The hospital is still strongly impacted by the difficulties of access, even if the roads have been cleared in recent days. Staff have difficulty in travelling to work and only emergencies are accepted.*

*Many schools, colleges and high schools have been. This has affected thousands of students. In any case, school cannot resume until travel is possible and canteens can again be supplied. The start of the school year is planned for June 17, at the end of the 15 days of quarterly vacation.*

*The bush areas are calmer but still mobilized, and the villages are running out of everything.*

He concluded with a short prayer for peace:

### **TEACH US LORD...**

Teach us, Lord,  
to look with your eyes, at all the peoples of the Earth.  
Help us to recognize Your presence every day,  
in order to emphasize hope.  
Teach us, Lord,  
to rejoice with those who know joy,  
and to support those who are going through difficult times.  
With You as our companion, our heart will flood  
the world of Your peace.

### **Prayers please:**

- Br Kieran Fenn RIP
- Br Tony Boyd, recovering from recent surgery
- Br Paul Bailey, recovering from recent surgery
- Br Donald Teixeira



**Br Peter Carroll**  
Provincial



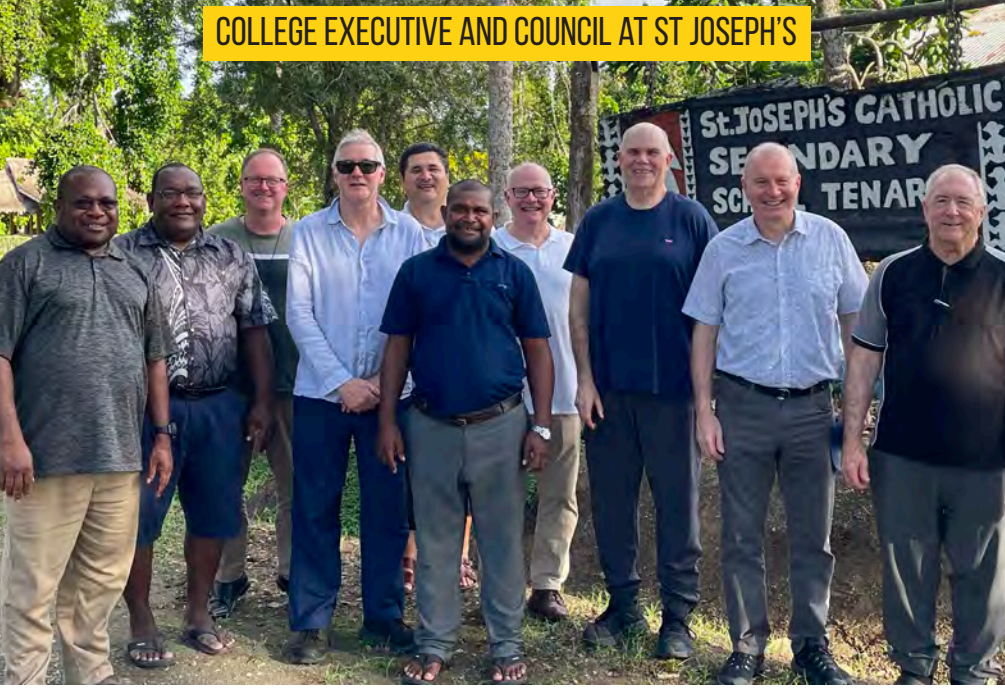


# SOLOMON ISLANDS

## PROVINCIAL COUNCIL VISIT

### 20-24 MAY 2024

COLLEGE EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL AT ST JOSEPH'S



THREE OF OUR LAY MARISTS AT LAUMANASA



COUNCIL WITH BROTHERS AND LOCAL LAY MARISTS



ASSEMBLY AND CULTURAL WELCOME ON OUR FIRST DAY

ASPIRANTS: RANDALL, JOHN, BR HUDSON, GREG MCDONALD







ABRAHAM HIHIRU (LEFT) WITH TWO OF THE BOARD MEMBERS



RUTH HIHIRU WITH COUNCIL



RUTH SPEAKING AT THE COUNCIL MEETING



PETER WITH TERESA, LONG-TERM TENARU TEACHER, & BENEDICT TOOMING



VISITING THE RECENTLY RENOVATED GRAVES OF BROTHERS ALPHONSUS, EDWIN AND MARK PORO



# RECOMMENDATION

## TEILHARD: VISIONARY SCIENTIST

You may be interested in watching a new online documentary which outlines four key ideas that emerge from the life and mind of Jesuit, **Fr Pierre Teilhard de Chardin** (1881-1955): evolution, integration, fire and passion.

This fascinating visionary, paleontologist, theologian, geologist, philosopher, evolutionary theorist and mystic influenced the Second Vatican Council. Anyone who has read and studied *Laudato Si*, on “Care for Our Common Home” will recognise Pope Francis’ own high regard for Teilhard’s vision of God, respect for creation and the transforming power of love.

It is currently streaming online for free:

<https://www.pbs.org/video/teilhard-visionary-scientist-pt9dc1/>

Highly recommended.

*Br Mark O'Connor*



MPT PRESENTS

### Teilhard: Visionary Scientist

Special | 1h 57m 51s |

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The life of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a French priest-paleontologist-visionary, suppressed by his Jesuit order for advocating evolution is revealed in a drama of personal awakening, a search for meaning, scientific adventure, unresolved conflict with authority, and human love.

Aired: 05/19/24 | Expires: 05/19/26 | Rating: NR

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# CELEBRATION CHAMPAGNAT 2024

*“ Together to look beyond ”*

## WEBINAR

THE FOOTSTEPS OF  
MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT:  
MARIST EDUCATIONAL MISSION



12th June

**MEETING A** (60/75 min)

➤ **09:00** (Rome time)

**MEETING B** (60/75 min)

➤ **16:00** (Rome time)

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**Scripture Reading: Luke 1:39-56**

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup> where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup> and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup> And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup> For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." <sup>46</sup> And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, <sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup> His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." <sup>56</sup> And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

**Reflection 1: The Visitation**

Today's feast of the Visitation of Mary and Elizabeth invites us into a deeply personal moment of the Scriptures (Luke 1:39-56). The precursor, John the Baptist, and the Lord are both initially hidden from each other. Yet, even before the two women embrace, John leaps for joy in his mother's womb, having recognised the presence of the Lord and Messiah in the womb of Mary. Both births are hailed by two beautiful canticles: the *Benedictus* sung by Zechariah, father of the Baptist at his son's birth (Lk 1:68-79) and the *Nunc Dimittis* prayed by Simeon, the "righteous and devout" man in the Jerusalem temple, as he takes the infant Jesus in his arms (Lk 2:22-35).

There are two aspects of the Visitation scene to consider. The first is that any element of personal agenda of Mary and Elizabeth is put aside. Both had good reason to be very preoccupied with their pregnancies and

all that new life brings. Both women had a right to focus on themselves for a while as they made new and radical adjustments to their daily lives. Mary reaches out to her kinswoman to help her and also to be helped by her. These two great biblical women consoled each other, shared their stories, and gave each other the gift of themselves in the midst of the new life that they must have experienced: Elizabeth, after her long years of barrenness and now sudden pregnancy, and Mary, after her meeting with the heavenly messenger, and her "irregular" marriage situation and pregnancy.

The second point of this moving story is Mary's haste. Luke tells us that she undertook in haste the long and perilous trek from Nazareth to a village in the hill country of Judea. She knew clearly what she wanted and did not allow anyone or anything to stop her. In his commentary on Luke's

# FRIDAY GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR COMMUNITY PRAYER

Gospel, St Ambrose of Milan describes this haste with an almost untranslatable Latin phrase, “*nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia*” which could mean: “*the grace of the Holy Spirit does not know delayed efforts*’ or ‘*delayed efforts are foreign to the grace of the Holy Spirit.*” Mary’s free choice to move forward and outward is reflective of a decision taken deep within her heart followed by immediate action.

How many things exist in our lives that we have dreamed of doing, should have done, and never did? Letters that should have been written, dreams that should have been realised, gratitude that was not expressed, affection never shown, words that should have been said, etc? Postponements and delays weigh heavily upon us, wear us down and discourage us. They gnaw away at us. How true St Ambrose described Mary’s haste: the Spirit completely possessed the Virgin Daughter of Nazareth and compelled her to act. Such possession by God’s Spirit is the only possession worthwhile, life-giving, hopeful and joyful.

The story of the Visitation teaches us an important lesson: when Christ is growing inside of us, we will be led to people, places and situations that we never dreamed of. We will bear words of consolation and hope that are not our own. In the very act of consoling others, we will be consoled. We will be at peace, recollected, because we know that however insignificant our life and issues seem to be, from them Christ is forming himself. The women of today’s Gospel show us that it is possible to move beyond our

own little personal agendas and engage in authentic ministry. Ministry is not simply doing things for others, loving difficult people, serving the poor, teaching others. Authentic ministers allow themselves to serve and be served, taught, cared for, consoled and loved. Such moments liberate us and enable us to sing our own Magnificat along the journey, and celebrate the great things that God does for us and our people. Let us consider our own journey and, hopefully, we too can sing with Mary our own great song of thanks to God for all that God has done for us in our lives.



**Corpus Christi: 2 June 2024**

**Scripture passage: B Mark 14: 12-16, 22-26**

Benedict XVI in his apostolic exhortation “The Sacrament of Charity”: “Eucharistic spirituality is not only participation in the Mass and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. It covers the entire life (77)... When our communities celebrate the Eucharist, they must be increasingly aware that Christ’s sacrifice is for everyone and that, therefore, the Eucharist impels everyone who believes in Him to become “bread” broken” for others and, therefore, to work for a more just and fraternal world... The vocation of each of us consists of being, together with Jesus, broken bread for the life of the world (88).”

### **A DECISIVE EXPERIENCE**

As is natural, the celebration of the Mass has changed throughout the centuries. According to the epoch, Christians have highlighted some aspects and neglected others. The Mass has served as the setting for celebrating coronations of kings and popes, giving homage to or commemorating the victories of wars. Musicians have converted it into a concert. People have integrated it into their devotions and religious customs...

After 20 centuries it could be necessary to remember some of the essential features of the Lord’s last supper, as it was recorded and lived out by the first generations of Christians.

The background of that meal is a firm conviction: his followers won’t be left orphaned. Jesus’ death will not be able to break their communion with him. No one should feel the emptiness of his absence. His disciples aren’t left alone, at the mercy of the ups and downs of history. At the center of the Christian community that celebrates the Eucharist, Christ is alive and well. Here is the secret of his power.

From him the faith of his followers is nourished. It’s not enough to be present at that supper. The disciples are invited to “eat”. In order to nourish our adhesion to Jesus Christ, we need to unite ourselves to listen to his words and introduce them into our heart; we need to come close to share communion with him, identifying ourselves with his way of living. No other experience can offer us a more solid food.

We mustn’t forget that “to share communion” with Jesus is to share communion with someone who has lived and has died, totally ‘given’ to others. That’s what Jesus insists on. His body is a ‘handed over body’ and his blood is “blood shed” for the salvation of all. It’s a contradiction to come close to ‘share communion’ with Jesus and resist concerning ourselves with something that isn’t our own interest.

Nothing is more central and decisive for Jesus’ followers than the celebration of this supper of the Lord. That’s why we need to take care of it so much. Well celebrated, the Eucharist molds us, goes about uniting us to Jesus, nourishes us with his life, familiarises us with the Gospel, invites us to live in an attitude of fraternal service, and sustains us in the hope of the final encounter with him.