



EAST ASIA

MARIST LIFE

Newsletter

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MARIKINA COMMUNITY

Marist School Compound, Marikina Heights, Marikina City, Philippines

The Marist Marikina Community has had a transformative and dynamic formation year in 2023-2024, marked by significant leadership changes and notable achievements. Our community comprises five members: Br. Armando B. Mana-ay (June 2023-December 2023), FMS; Br. Rosendo J. Yee (January 2024-Present), FMS; Br. Mark Roberth R. Laurea, FMS; Br. Christopher C. Gorit, FMS; and Br. Jo-An C. Legaste, FMS.

In the first half of the formation year, Br. Armando B. Mana-ay led the community until December 2023. However, a pivotal transition occurred in January 2024 when the provincial council transferred Br. Armando to the Dadiangas Community, appointing Br. Rosendo J. Yee as the new Community Leader. Br. Rosendo quickly immersed himself in the school community, engaging with both pupils and students, visiting teachers, and spending quality time with students during their breaks. His approachable demeanor and active involvement have fostered a sense of unity and support within the school.

Complementing Br. Rosendo's leadership, Br. Mark Roberth R. Laurea serves as both the school president and principal, focusing primarily on the administrative and academic operations of the school. His leadership ensures that the institution produces breakthroughs and innovations that are responsive to the needs of the students. Meanwhile, Br. Christopher C. Gorit balances his duties between teaching and studying at ICLA. He is dedicated to his academic pursuits and provides invaluable guidance to students working on their thesis. Br. Jo-An C. Legaste, the community's final member, teaches Religion in the Junior High School Department, contributing significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the students.

In the Marikina community, celebrating the birthdays of the brothers and the monthly birthday gatherings for Marist Lay Partners (including teachers, staff, and administrators) at the community house is a multifaceted occasion. These events involve



reflection, connection, and enjoyment, making them meaningful and cherished by all. These gatherings also emphasize the communal spirit that defines the Marist Marikina Community.

Recognizing the collective responsibility of school ministry, the Brothers ensure that leadership is not solely the President's burden. During our regular community meetings, Br. Mark shares updates and concerns, while other community members contribute their observations and suggestions. Although these discussions can sometimes be challenging, they are essential as each member embraces their sense of accountability. One thing is certain: there are always valuable takeaways from these discussions.

Looking ahead, the Marist School Marikina is set to host the National STEP (Society for Technology in Education Philippines) Conference 2024, themed "STEP Into the Future of Learning," from July 18-20. This conference promises an enriching experience for educators, featuring inspiring keynote presentations by renowned thought leaders, engaging workshops on innovative pedagogies and cutting-edge EdTech tools, thought-provoking panel discussions on educational challenges and opportunities, and ample networking opportunities. Additionally, participants will have the chance to earn Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points, furthering their professional growth.

In connection with the school ministry, the administration is diligently working to enhance the school's facilities and curriculum. They are striving to adapt to modern educational trends in technology and the learning environment, ensuring that Marist Marikina remains at the forefront of educational excellence.



The Brothers in Marikina together with the Lay Marists.



PERPETUAL PROFESSION OF

BR. JICK DE LEON, FMS AND BR. ENGEL FREED JAVA, FMS

On the 6th of June 2024, the 184th death anniversary of St. Marcellin Champagnat marked a memorable occasion for the Marist Brothers of East Asia Province. The young brothers, Br. Jick de Leon and Br. Engel Freed Java made their Perpetual Profession at the Notre Dame of Kidapawan College, a place that holds great significance for them as it was there that they discovered the distinct meaning of their vocation to religious life.

Donning the theme "Everything is Grace", it was a moment for the entire province to reflect upon the grandeur of how well the spirit leads in the lives of these two young men and how it brought them to this path despite their humble, timid beginnings in the institute.

The ceremony was presided over by Most Rev. Bishop Noel Pedragosa, D.D. of the Diocese of Malaybalay, Bukidnon, a long-time Marist mission partner. In his homily, he emphasized the great importance of following Mary's example as a "motherly disciple who brings people closer to Jesus."

The Marist East Asia Provincial, Br. Allan de Castro, FMS, received their vows on behalf of the Superior General, Br. Ernesto Sanchez, FMS. A good number of Marist Brothers, religious, family members, friends, and delegates from different Marist schools where the two Brothers were previously assigned attended.

The joyful occasion marks a new chapter for Brothers Jick and Engel as they commit themselves for life to the Marist way of life.



Some photos...



MARIST BROTHERS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CELEBRATES FOUNDERS' DAY

Last May 17, the Marist Brothers International School celebrated its Founders' Day in commemoration of the rich heritage of the founding of the school by the Marist Brothers in 1951. Through the years, the school has upheld excellence in education, defining excellence as more than a rigorous and stimulating curriculum. Rather, the school approaches excellence to include a "holistic approach focusing on dedication to character – developing skills which make students stand out as having true Marist identity.

Ms. Agnes S. Reyes, Coordinator of the East Asia Laity Desk, was present during the celebration and she shared about Marist life and mission during the assembly. A continuing conversation is being engaged with Br. John Allen Timola, FMS on how an ongoing formation on Marist life be facilitated. Br. John Allen is currently a Religious Educator in the said school.



MESSAGE OF A MARIST FORMER STUDENT

by Mr. Sanjay Rajpopat, Batch '71 Alumnus



Good morning, Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Pilgrim, students, and the Marist community! I am thrilled to have this opportunity to share my memories of the Marist!

I may be a '71 graduate, which means I am way past the founding days of Br. Charles, Br. Stephen, or Br. Raphael. Although I have some fine memories of each one of them, I have many more with the younger Brothers and teachers I want to talk about today.

Let me go back to the early years when I was in first grade. I was still new and feeling lost. One day, I found myself crying at the doorway to the hall for no specific reason. Just then, Br. Anthony noticed me, bent all the way down, (he must have been 2 meters tall), and asked me what the matter was. I could not find the words to explain, so I just looked at my feet, crushing a piece of white cardboard. Suddenly, Br. Anthony turned stern and said, "When you're talked to, young man, you look at the person straight!" When I finally looked up, I saw this very handsome, glowing face, right in front of me. I had never seen such clear eyes so up close. I was stunned. But then, Br. Anthony noticed the white cardboard I was crushing. "Oops, that's my collar!" Imagine that! He picked up the remains, smiled at me, and walked away, visibly upset!

As the years passed, we said our prayers before class and had Bible readings, and I learned to respect all living things as a Hindi in a Buddhist country. It was a journey of growth and understanding. I was terrible at sports, but I joined the Boy Scouts, and there I learned the value of solidarity. Our patrol was the most disorganized and we were the smallest, but we stuck together and created our own "sub-culture." It was an incredible experience. Our own language, signs, and jokes. Our pet phrase was "Don't tease me!" We said it with a shy, but direct smile. And it always worked. Even the big boys started using it.

By the time I reached 11th and 12th grades in '69 and '70, it was the era of rock 'n roll, student protests and the "counterculture". We challenged authority figures like Br. Matthew, for everything from the student uniform to haircuts. We roped in Br. Augustine and Br. Bruens in our rebellious skits. We had political debates with Mr. Bill Foster, who later became a key person in the American Embassy. We were ready to change the world and define our generation forever.

Last year, we had our class reunion, and it was a moving one for all of us who attended. Despite challenges, 13 out of 25 graduates came. It is a sad thought from where you are now, isn't it? What happened to the other half? Couldn't we have been more in touch? That is how we, the gathered, all felt.

You are blessed and privileged to be part of the Marist community. Even if you do not fully realize it yet, The Marist Culture and Spirit have already shaped your priorities and will continue to define who you are. Your community is incredibly important.

Let me lastly share a recent experience I had in Osaka. Earlier this month, I attended a Bible reading session held by a Franciscan Brother, Honda Tetsuro. This session took place in Nichinari, which is considered the largest slum area in Japan. A refuge for the homeless. But frankly, it really did not seem like a slum to me especially compared to what I had seen in other countries like India. During the session, we read from the book of Philipians, which I had first heard about from Br. Konrad. Although I did not understand which of the time, it felt familiar hearing about it later.

Honda Sensia interpreted the words of St. Paul, who talked about the importance of dialogue. He said that every dialogue is a prayer to God. Whether you are feeling good or bad, it is important to maintain that dialogue with your friends. Because in that dialogue, you are praying for and with your friends, teachers, family, and even for your own soul.

So, friends, this is the gift I received from the Marist, and you will too. Treasure them, lean on them, and let them guide you on your journey. You are a part of a special community, and it is where your passion and compassion will thrive. Keep the dialogue alive, and let it be a prayer for yourself and those around you. Amen.

MESSAGE FROM THE MBIS HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL - STEPHANIE HANAMURA

Our most recent Founder's Day was a truly lovely occasion, highlighted by the presence of a very special guest, Ms. Agnes Reyes, the East Asia Province Laity Desk Coordinator. During our assembly, Ms. Reyes delivered an inspiring speech on what it means to be a Marist, in her powerful message: "I am Marist, You are Marist, We are Marist." Her words planted the seed of Marist identity in all of us, prompting both students and teachers to reflect on this concept.

In response to Ms. Reyes' speech, our entire school community engaged in an activity to express their personal interpretations of what it means to be a Marist. As I read through these reflections, a clear picture emerged: our students feel supported, recognizing that Marist students and staff are caring individuals who contribute to a family-like environment. This welcoming atmosphere is something that everyone looks forward to every day.

Moreover, these reflections highlighted that embodying our school's values is not only a daily practice but also an honor. We extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in making Founder's Day special, especially to Agnes Reyes for her inspiring words and, most importantly, to Marcellin Champagnat, the founder of the Marist Brothers.

Additionally, our Student Council (StuCo) had the unique opportunity to meet with Ms. Reyes. They asked insightful questions and learned about how Marist students around the world engage with their local and global communities. The idea of connecting with other Marist students in the future is exciting and opens up new possibilities for our students to broaden their horizons.



CLOSING MESSAGE DURING THE FOUNDERS' DAY IN MBIS Mr. Shawn Hutchinson, Head of School

Good morning students, faculty, and special guests!

As our Founder's Day Assembly draws to a close, I want to take a moment to reflect on the significance of this day. We have gathered here to honor the Marist Brothers, whose vision and dedication established a strong foundation upon which our school stands.

The Marist Brothers have left us legacy rich in faith, love, and Service. Their commitment to education and the holistic development of young people has been our guiding star. Today, as we celebrate their contributions, we also renew our commitment to the values they cherish -humility, simplicity, and family spirit.

As we revisit the stories of our founders, we are reminded of the enduring power of compassion, perseverance, and community. These values are not just historical facts; they are living principles that continue to shape the school's identity and mission.

As we move forward, let us carry the lessons of today with us. The core values of the Marist Brothers, we can create a school environment where every individual is valued and supported, where excellence is pursued, and where service to others is a way of life.

Special thanks to Mr. Pilgrim, Br. Allen, Ms. Reyes, Mr. Rajpopat, Mr. Lipp, Mrs. Hanamura, Mr. Tay and the symphonic band, and everyone here for being part of this special day. Let us leave here inspired by our Founder's legacy, ready to embody their values in our daily lives and commit to making a positive impact in our community and beyond.

Happy Founders' Day and may the spirit of the Marist Brothers continue to guide us all.

Thank you.

Sharing Marist life with Br. Joseph Yoshida, Br. Bernard Yamaguchi, Br. Yohan Oh and Br. Allen Timola in Kobe, Japan last May 17-24



Photo News

Br. Allan's visit to South Asia Province as part of the dialogue on Asia Region Reconfiguration.

With the Brothers of South Asia-India Sector



Photo News

Br. Josep Soteras and Br. Allan with the brothers of South Asia-India Sector.



**Re-creating and Family Bonding:
Marist Province Center Staff Outing**
June 1-5 : Cebu-Bohol, Philippines



BUILDING BEYOND BRICKS: UNVEILING LESSONS FROM THREE BRICKLAYERS

-Br. Mark Roberth Laurea, FMS

In the heart of 17th-century London, amidst the humdrum of construction, unfolds the timeless tale of three bricklayers, which artfully encapsulates the power of purpose.

In 1671, Architect Christopher Wren observed three bricklayers on a scaffold: one crouched, one half-standing, and one standing tall, all working diligently and swiftly. When asked about their work, their responses varied significantly. The first bricklayer replied, "I'm a bricklayer. I'm working hard laying bricks to feed my family." The second one said, "I'm a builder. I'm building a wall." But it was the third bricklayer, standing tall and most productive, who answered with enthusiasm, "I'm a cathedral builder. I'm building a great cathedral to The Almighty.

These responses highlight how purpose can radically transform our view of our work and our lives. The first saw his labor as a mere means to an end, the second viewed it as a task, but it was the third bricklayer who grasped the profound significance of his contribution. He saw himself not just as a builder but as a creator of something enduring and transcendent. This perspective shift demonstrates how a clear sense of purpose can elevate our outlook and imbue our actions with deeper significance.

In the past few years, I have grown deeply passionate about becoming purpose-driven or pursuing a greater purpose. Truth be told, purposefulness and intentionality have become my guiding principles and advocacy since I came to Marist School Marikina.

The daily hustle and bustle in a school ministry can easily lead one to get lost in the monotony of routine tasks. The inability to live purposefully and to see the greater meaning beyond these daily tasks can cause one to merely exist rather than truly live.

As I continue my journey in the demanding environment of school ministry, it becomes increasingly clear that purpose is not a fleeting emotion but a steadfast guiding light. It gives meaning to my struggles, pains, and victories. Discovering my purpose helps me understand my "whys," and no matter how impossible these "whys" may seem, they illuminate the path for the "hows." Purpose brings clarity, ignites passion, and provides a profound sense of meaning. Viktor Frankl, in his seminal work "Man's Search for Meaning," underscores this by showing how even in the face of immense suffering, those who found a deeper reason to live were the ones who endured and made a difference.

Jordan Peterson, one of my favorite authors, emphasizes that a meaningful life is achieved not through the pursuit of happiness, but through the pursuit of purpose and taking on substantial responsibilities. According to him, setting meaningful goals and confronting the inherent chaos of life head-on are essential to living a fulfilled life.

I have come to realize that by facing challenges and accepting responsibilities that push us beyond our comfort zones, we find true fulfillment and purpose. However, it requires decision, intention, discipline, and a lot of courage.

Ultimately, I believe that we should all strive to find our purpose and create an environment where everyone has a clear sense of purpose. By doing so, we can uplift and inspire those around us, fostering a brighter and more purposeful future. Life, when lived with purpose, becomes a masterpiece – a legacy of love, service, and meaning that resonates through the ages.

St. Marcellin's life and teachings serve as a timeless example of purposeful living, characterized by love, humility, and a deep commitment to serving others. His words, "To educate children, you must love them and love them all equally," embody the essence of purposeful living – approaching every task with love, compassion, and a desire to make a positive difference.

Just like the third bricklayer, may we find a purpose that is beyond ourselves; one that would serve the bigger community and enliven humanity. May we dedicate the work of our hands to "making Jesus known and loved". In the end, may we be able to say that we did not only find our purpose, but we were able to purposefully live not only for ourselves but for others as well.

PLANNING FOR ASIA JOINT FORMATION PROGRAM

Last May 27, Ms. Elma Rafil, Member of the Extended Secretariat of Laity and Ms. Agnes Reyes, Coordinator of the East Asia Laity Desk met to begin organizing the program details for the 2024 Asia Joint Formation which target dates will be on November 11-15, 2024 and the proposed venue for the event will be in Bangkok Thailand. The planning is currently a work in progress.



PERSONNEL FORMATION FOR CATHOLIC TEACHERS IN SINGAPORE

Last May 31, a meeting with Br. Elmer Jandic, Ms. Elma Rafil, and teachers Audrey Chong and Ann Foo of Maris Stella High School, Singapore, was hosted in Zoom. The agenda was on Program planning and preparation for the Catholic Teachers formation to be held at Catholic Kindergarten Hall, 15 Flower Road Singapore. A day to look forward to on 21st June.



A Mother's Day Special: Preserving Traditions of Love and Generosity



In the bustling tapestry of village life, where traditions intertwine with daily routines, there exists a saying that echoes through generations: "The closest way to the heart is the stomach." These words, spoken in our dialect by my mother, resonate deeply whenever love or relationships become the topic of conversation within our family or among neighbors.

In our close-knit community, this saying is not merely a collection of words; it is a testament to the enduring values we hold dear. Whenever someone dares to challenge or disagree with this cherished saying, all eyes immediately turn towards the person, curious to learn his or her perspective and background. It is almost inevitable that the conversation would then steer towards the question, "And where are you from?"—a subtle reminder of the bonds that unite us all.

But my mother didn't just impart this wisdom through words alone; she embodied it in her actions as well. Her kitchen, the heart of our home, served as a hub of warmth and nourishment for both family and passersby alike. Whenever the duties of cooking shifted to a new hand, she would gently remind them to prepare extra, mindful of the hungry souls who might seek sustenance along their journey.

Among the many traditions she upheld, one stood out as a beacon of generosity and community spirit: her homemade ham. This culinary masterpiece, crafted with love and care, was rarely found in the bustling cities that lay beyond our village's borders. Every January, as the air grew crisp with anticipation,

she would begin the ritual of preparing the ham, knowing that its savory aroma would soon fill our home and hearts with joy.

But it wasn't just our family who benefited from her culinary talents. On Christmas and New Year's Day, she would open our doors to the villagers, sharing her beloved ham with all who came to partake in the festivities. The sight of four bags hanging above the kitchen stove became a symbol of celebration, heralding the arrival of cherished holidays and the joyous gatherings that accompanied them.

Then came the unexpected moment when our village displayed its brand of solidarity and camaraderie. Several years ago, a group of villagers arrived at our doorstep, offering to assist my mother in preparing the ham using a pig they had brought along—a gesture that touched our hearts and reinforced the bonds of community that we hold dear.

As time passed and traditions evolved, the commercialization of ham became inevitable, with readily available options replacing the labor-intensive process of homemade preparation. Yet, amidst these changes, the spirit of generosity and sharing that my mother instilled in us remained unwavering. Even after she departed from our home, her legacy lived on, with her name and her famous ham continuing to be cherished topics of conversation among family and villagers alike.

So, as we gather around the table this Mother's Day, let us not only celebrate the mothers who have shaped our lives but also honor the traditions and values they have passed down to us. For in preserving these timeless treasures, we keep alive the spirit of love, generosity, and community that defines us as a village and as a family.

As we sit together, let us remember that the heart of a village beats strongest in the kitchen, where food is more than sustenance—it's a symbol of our interconnectedness, our shared history, and the love that binds us. Through the simple act of preparing and sharing a meal, we pass down stories, traditions, and values from one generation to the next.

In every slice of my mom's ham, there is a story of love, dedication, and community. It reminds us that while the world may change, the core of who we are remains the same. We are bound by the meals we share, the hands we hold, and the memories we create together. And in that unity, we find our true strength and identity, ensuring that the spirit of our village—and the wisdom of our mothers—endures forever.

Happy Mother's Day to all the incredible moms, both here with us and those watching over us from above!

George



Immensity Community, Bangladesh



Glimpses of the Past

MARBEL COMMUNITY OF SCHOOL YEAR 1980-1981

- by Br. Herbert Daniel, fms

A reprint from the Marist Newsletter of Philippine Vice Province, July 26, 1980 issue, page 18.

Greetings from the Seven from Marbel: Ever since Rome stole Br. Ray from us, Herbert has no more French Lessons to prepare and he seems to have nothing to do but fill gaps here and there and everywhere. Wency is putting on weight to fit more snugly to Ray's presidential chair. He's turned out to be a worthy sub for Ray; he has a more professional approach to his role as president of a future NDM University. Everybody is happy of the Provincial's choice except Wency of course. Marbel is no pushover assignment like Malaybalay's... His is a warmer personality than Ray. There is no American influence and culture in him. Ray was the ideal pick for the job he handles now in the general administration. No one envies him. Jim and the entire faculty and house community gave Wency a special welcome.

Wency glided through the summer assignment like a pro despite his so-called shortcomings. Hell, who doesn't have these! The entire summer months has nothing exciting. Wency ran the institutes; Jim tried to raise funds for his Cocofed students and complete the cement wall along the back creek. He allowed a lot of his time with the Notre Dame Experimental Farm in Matulas. Jim can't stop; his energy is boundless! Herbert spent the summer months with the scholastic Brothers. He drove the young Brothers "mad" for his projects for improving the campus site: lopping off big branches from all the acacias and boring the youngsters every evening with a 1 ½-hour Voice and Diction program to improve their enunciation. They were glad when Lenny returned from Malaybalay before classes resumed.

There were three monks in the house until Col's (Columbanus Pratt) arrival on May 20: Jim, Wency and Ted. But Provy took away Ted for Marikina. Fabs, Rick, and Willie came at the end of May. No one replaced Ted. Br. Col is an Aussie on loan to us as a Vice-President for International Affairs. He's a specialist in geology – any strange looking rock catches his interest; he's a collector.

Marbel is a traveling community: everybody likes to travel. They like retreats and recollections and renewals. Construction is the byword on the Marbel campus. Jim keeps dreaming of new projects. He's presently out to raise five million pesos for 42-room college building. The Cocofed dorm is not yet completed, never mind!

Marbel made a mistake of enrolling more students that it had classrooms for students. They are all over the campus. For some time we had some in the dining room. In the evening every room was used.

Fabs, Rick, and Willie are in the high school, with Willie helping out with religion classes in the college. Herbert is fulltime with the graduate school. Col teaches in both the undergraduate and graduate school, replacing Belen de Jesus who is Manila.

Herb was at his culinary attempts once more. He prepared three batches of mango jam from the excess mangoes that Jim harvested from his farm. He has twenty-six jars.

Everybody went to Cotabato for July 5th, the provincial celebration of Jim's Silver Jubilee. Marbel will have his special day on the 26th.

A recent acquisition in Marbel is the old Marist Brothers' bus from Lagao. It works very well. It has gone to Dupalco twice already recently. ###

¹Marbel Community for SY 1980-1981: Br. James Adams, Director; Br. Wenceslao Calimpon, President, Br. Fabian Casidsid, HS Principal, Br. Herbert Daniel Dumont, Br. Columbanus Pratt, Br. Wilfredo Lubrico and Br. Ricardo Nayal.

Provincial's Schedule



June 1 - June 15, 2024

June 1-3:

Outing with the Marist Province Staff

June 4-5:

Provincial Council Meeting No. 16 at Kidapawan Community

June 6:

Perpetual Vows of Brothers Engel and Jick at NDKC, Kidapawan, Philippines

June 8:

Marcellin Foundation Inc. BOT Meeting at the Province Center, Lagao

June 10-11:

Cotabato City for meetings on ND Commercial Stalls, Marian Hills Cemetery, and Tamontaka Novitiate

June 13:

Marcellin Homes – Katangawan for the visit of MANOS UNIDOS

June 14:

Lake Sebu – Meeting with the personnel of Marist Asia Spirituality and Mission Center

June 15:

Koronadal City – Corporation Meeting of Marist Development Foundation Incorporated (MDFI)

June 16-20:

Marist Province Center, Lagao, General Santos City, Philippines

June 21:

The Culmination of the 75th Year of Marist Presence in the Philippines

June 22-July 12:

Community Visits to Korea-Japan Sector



June 12:

Br. Paul Saw Fatt Lean

June 14:

Br. Anthony Tay Woon Dwi

June 16:

Br. Andrew Chan Chou San

June 18:

Br. Rosendo J. Yee



Prayer Intentions:

- For the Church, that it may continue to grow in faith and holiness, inspiring all people to seek the truth of Christ.
- For world leaders, that they may govern with wisdom, justice, and a commitment to the common good.
- For those who are sick, lonely, or suffering, that they may find comfort and healing through God's grace and the support of our community.
- For the faithful departed, that they may rest in eternal peace in the presence of our loving God.
- For all those who have graduated for this academic year, may they feel blessed for the accomplishments in all their endeavors.
- For increase of vocations particularly for the Marist Brothers.