



Marcellin would, in time, place Mary at the center of the community of brothers he founded. In keeping with the spirituality of his times and particularly of the region around Marlies, she became eventually for him a “Good Mother,” his “Ordinary Resource”.



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From the Editor's Desk!

Celebrated on May 31, the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary honors Mary's visit to her cousin, Elizabeth. The joyful meeting of these two women celebrated two miraculous pregnancies: Elizabeth had conceived in her old age after suffering from infertility, and Mary, as a virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit. At their reunion, John the Baptist leapt into Elizabeth's womb, and she blessed Mary and the Christ Child. Mary, in turn, responded with the famous Magnificat praising the Lord.

The First Lesson of the Visitation: Mary's Obedience

As Pope Benedict XVI has said, this feast day calls us to recognize Mary's humility and willingness to be used by God, and strive to imitate it in our own lives:

"Going beyond the surface, Mary "sees" the work of God in history with the eyes of faith... Her Magnificat, at the distance of centuries and millennia, remains the truest and most profound interpretation of history, while the interpretations of many of this world's wise have been belied by events in the centuries...

Let us bring the same sentiments of praise and thanksgiving of Mary to the Lord, her faith and her hope, her docile abandonment in the hands of Divine Providence. May we imitate her example of readiness and generosity in the service of our brethren. Indeed, only by accepting God's love and making of our existence a selfless and generous service to our neighbor, can we joyfully lift a song of praise to the Lord."

Ultimately, Mary's ready acceptance of God's will for her life enabled her to practice the true charity of Christ:

"We find reflected in Mary's visitation the hopes and expectations of the humble, God-fearing people who were awaiting the fulfillment of the prophetic promises... By accepting the divine will, Mary offered her active cooperation so that God could become man in her maternal womb. She

bore the divine Word within her as she went to visit her elderly cousin who, in turn, was awaiting the Baptist's birth. In this act of human solidarity, Mary demonstrated that authentic charity grows within us when Christ is present." – St. John Paul II

The Visitation is Reminding of Us of Our Joy in Christ. Mary and Elizabeth's joy reminds us of how the Church ought to respond to Christ's incarnation:

"Mary, living Tabernacle of God made flesh, is the Ark of the Covenant in whom the Lord visited and redeemed his people. Jesus' presence filled her with the Holy Spirit. When she entered Elizabeth's house, her greeting was overflowing with grace: John leapt in his mother's womb as if he were aware of the coming of the One whom he would one day proclaim to Israel. The children exulted, the mothers exulted. This meeting imbued with the joy of the Holy Spirit, is expressed in the Canticle of the Magnificat.

Is this not also the joy of the Church, which ceaselessly welcomes Christ in the holy Eucharist and brings him into the world with the testimony of active charity, steeped in faith and hope? Yes, welcoming Jesus and bringing him to others is the true joy of Christians!" – Pope Benedict XVI

Just as Mary went to visit her cousin to share the good news of her pregnancy, so too should we share the joy of Christ with the world:

"We recognize in the Virgin Mary who goes to visit her kinswoman Elizabeth the clearest example and the truest meaning of our journey as believers and of the journey of the Church herself. The Church is missionary by her very nature, she is called to proclaim the Gospel everywhere and always and to pass on the faith to every man and woman, and to every culture."(Pope Benedict XVI)

"Because of her unique role in Christ's life and work, [Mary] has become the exemplar of the Church's life and mission. What Mary has been to Jesus the Church is now called to be in the fulfillment of Christ's saving work to the ends of the earth. Like Mary bringing to Elizabeth the Good News of salvation and the presence of the Savior himself, the Church exists through the centuries to proclaim the Gospel message to all peoples and to offer them the light, life, and love of Christ the Savior."(St. John Paul II)

Bro. Chamara Hettiarachchi FMS



Mother Mary's Inspiration in my Spiritual Journey

The name "Little Brothers of Mary" that was given to us by Fr. Champagnat expresses our closeness to Mary. This closeness is expressed not only by having recourse to her but also by following her footsteps to become like her. This reality is well expressed in our constitutions Article 50:

Following the example of Marcellin Champagnat, we turn to Mary as sons to their mothers. We draw inspiration from her as our sister in faith, to live as disciples of Jesus.(Constitutions Art 50)



“We turn to Mary as sons to their mother” expresses a warm relationship that exists between sons and mothers. This is a deep emotional bond. In my life journey, in my early thirties, my growing in love with Mary, there was a period that I did not get the feeling of a son towards mother addressing Mary as “mother”. Later on, when I found that as a Marist I need to turn to Mary as a son to mother, then I began to pray asking for this grace. From that time onwards, when I turned to mother Mary, I have been feeling of a son to the mother. Her closeness has been a great strength to me to face failures and successes, joys and sorrows, fulfillments and disappointments etc.

Another important factor in my journey of spiritual growth is the inspiration that I get from her to live as a disciple of Jesus. Some places in the scriptures that I meet Mother Mary are:

- at the Annunciation
- At the Visitation
- At the foot of the cross when Jesus is crucified.
- And among the frightened disciples before and during the reception of Holy Spirit.

Though the above are a few highlights, I can see Mother Mary’s passion to fulfill God’s will and follow in the footsteps of Jesus all through her life. When I see the fulfilled life of Mother Mary in following Jesus, she continues to inspire me to find my “inner peace” and happiness by following Jesus as she did.

**Bro. Nicholas Fernando,
Provincial**

Marist Community of India Celebrated 50 Years of Presence

On 18 May, in Trichy, the Marist Community gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Marist presence in India. The colored solemn Eucharistic Celebration was broadcasted (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj2fyLY6izc>) and counted with the participations of representatives from different parts of the Institute. Brothers Josep Maria Soteras and Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa represented the General Government of the Institute and Br. Sunanda, Vice-Provincial, the Province of South Asia. There were also Brothers representative from the Province Star of the Sea.

The mass was celebrated by the Archbishop of Madurai, Most Rev. Antony Pappusamy and concelebrated by the bishop of Tiruchirappalli, Most Rev. Arokiaraj, and the bishop of Dindigul, Most Rev. Thomas Paulsamy. The celebration was followed by other priests, consecrated people and many laypeople link with the Marist Mission in India.

The Golden Jubilee celebration of the Marist Brothers' foundation in India (1974-2024) had as theme "Heart of Mary, Hands of Service".



Marist presence in India

The three pioneer Brothers were Sri-Lankan and arrived on 1st May 1974, and they were Brothers Gregory Appuhamy, Sunanda Joseph Perera and Godfrey Edward Perera.

Upon arrival they prepared the first Marist House at Thillainagar, in Trichy. Later, in 1975, was inaugurated a house for the Postulancy at Ramilinga and, in 1977, began the novitiate at Tricky. In 1978 the First Indian Brothers professed in Sri Lanka scholasticate. Since then, the brothers have also developed several schools and projects to help "untouchable" children break the cycle of poverty.

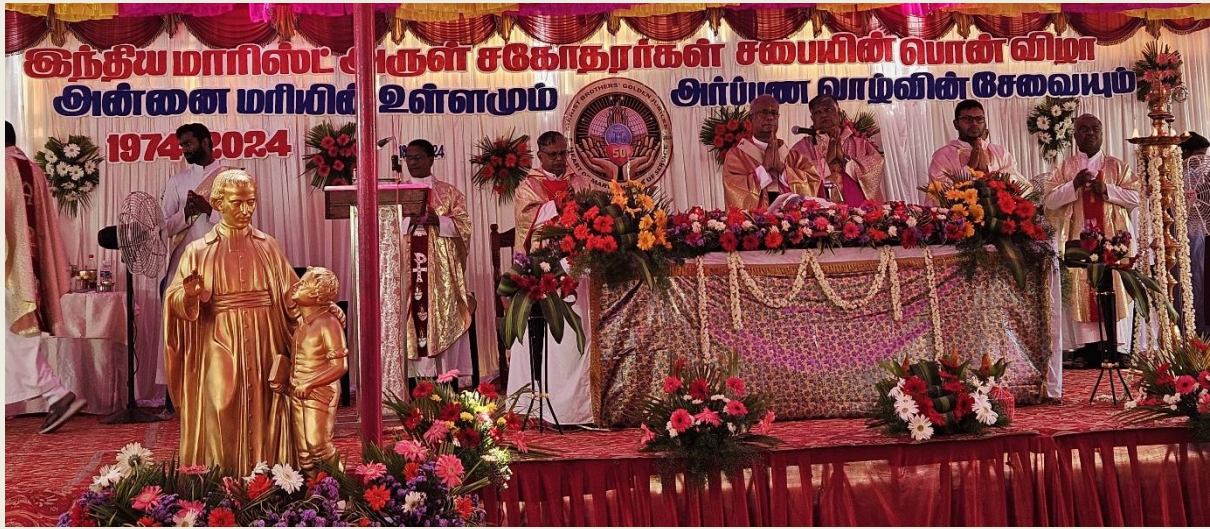
Marist Brothers in India are engaged in both educational and social services. Thousands of students have graduated in the last 20 to 30 years through the Marist schools. Many children and young people have been empowered and supported in terms of education and healthcare. The Marist mission has had a significant impact on the children especially in rural villages.

Currently South Asia Province has four communities in Tamil Nadu, India. And all together there are 17 Brothers from the province in the sector, divided into the following Marist communities:

- Maria Shanthi Illam at Uyyakondan Thirumalai, Trichy. This is also Regional Office and formation house. There are 6 Brothers.
- Marcellin Nivasa Community at P.Udayapatti, Karur district. There are 5 Brothers and all of them are working in the schools there.
- Gregory Illam, Marist Community at Mangamanuthu, Dindigul district. There are 2 Brothers working in the school.
- Marist Brothers House at Viyazhanmedu, Trichy district. There are 2 Brothers.

There are four schools belong to South Asia Province, India Sector: Marist Boys Primary School at P.Udayapatti, Karur; Marist Higher Secondary School at P. Udayapatti, Karur; St. Marcellin Higher Secondary School, Mangamanuthu, Dindigul; Marist Nursery and

Primary School, Viyazhanmedu, Trichy. Those schools are both self-financed and partly supported by the Government except Marist Nursery and Primary School at Viyazhanmedu which is fully self-financed. All the schools are in rural villages and students belong to economically backward class.



Marist District of Asia (MDA) is also present in India and has a community in the village of Talit. Two brothers from South Asia are commissioned here working in MDA. In Talit community there are other 2 Brothers from West Bengal (India) that belong to MDA.

Marcellin Trust

Marcellin Trust is a registered and non-profit organization run by the Marist Brothers. There are different projects under the Trust such as Operation Rainbow which provides care and support to HIV/AIDS affected people, La Valla Evening Study Centre. These two projects Chetana Tribal Boys Hostel and community College come under Marcellin Trust but which belong to MDA.



Support for the Mission in India

Missions in the Indian sector are supported by FMSI, Australian Marist Solidarity, India Village Project (Dundee, Scotland) and Maist colleges in Australia and Scotland. There are others such as Misan Cara and the Italian Bishop's Conference.

Bro. Raj Kumar

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Sports are not just about winning or losing; they are about teamwork, discipline, and the joy of participation. As our primary students take the field, let us applaud their efforts and encourage them to give their best. Whether they finish first or last, what truly matters is the spirit with which they compete.



It's our job in Marist education to deliver active and engaging lessons where the children will learn many skills. Being active is of course good for your physical attributes which will keep you healthier and stronger. But it's also proven to help with mental states such as depression and anxiety, with the effects of the changes in our society unfortunately mental health cases has risen among primary aged children which is why physical health is as important as ever.



According to my point of view for many children; their first taste of competitiveness can be through primary school sport and it's not just for the gifted

and talented, all children are offered the opportunity to represent. From my experience all I see is beaming smiles from the children who thoroughly enjoy the competitive side, the opportunity for them to showcase something they are good gives the children a real sense of empowerment. Of course it's not the winning that counts it's the taking part but it's an amazing feeling when the school or individual has won and you have had a part to play. Many will thrive in secondary school and beyond from foundations that have been laid in primary school through sport.

I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation and sincere gratitude to Mr. Anton Niroshan, the secretary of the Sports Meet and his team and our staff for your unwavering support in organizing this event. Your dedication ensures that our Sports Meet runs smoothly and that every participant has an unforgettable experience.



I offer my sincerest thanks to our students and their parents. Thank you for your unwavering support in nurturing the athletic talents of your children. Your encouragement goes a long way in shaping their confidence and resilience.

May this Sports Meet be filled with memorable moments and valuable lessons that our students will carry with them throughout their lives.

God Bless You!

Bro. Mervyn Perera

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Maris education believes that a person's success in life largely depends on the kind of person he would become. That's why we aim for the right balance between academic and character development. Marist curriculum focuses on building strong foundations in character, curiosity and community as well as providing an opportunity to dive deeper into subjects of interest and achieve great results.



The values learnt in sports nutritious this aim of Maris education; since these values are parallel to those in life. Tolerance, determination, self – confidence, teamwork, discipline, fair play and specially respect enable people to succeed in sports as well as life. Taking part in Sports teaches us that without disciplined hard work and perseverance, a winning spirit and respect for others, we will not attain our goal.

According to my point of view The Annual Inter House Athletic Meet 2024 is a remarkable event in our school calendar as it's a celebration of the hard work, dedication, and passion that our students invest in their athletic pursuits. This year promises to be even more thrilling with a range of sports and activities planned to engage participants and spectators alike.

I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation and sincere gratitude to Mr. Anton Niroshan, the Prefect of Games and his team and our staff for your unwavering support in organizing this event. Your dedication ensures that our Sports Meet runs smoothly and that every participant carry with them an unforgettable experience.





I offer my sincere thanks to our students and their parents. Your support and encouragement mean the world to us. We invite you to witness first-hand the talent and determination of our students as they showcase their skills on the field.

Let's come together as one Marist family to celebrate athleticism, teamwork, and sportsmanship. I look forward to seeing you all there!
God Bless You!

Bro. Mervyn Perera

Inter House Athletic Meet 2024 Maris Stella College Thimbirigaskatuwa

Maris Stella College Thimbirigaskatuwa's Inter House Athletic Meet 2024 was a spectacular event, held on Wednesday, the 1st of May at the college grounds. The much-anticipated competition saw enthusiastic participation from the four houses: Lewis, Julian, Joseph, and Anthony. This year's meet, under the leadership of the sports captain, Master Nadila Abisheka, showcased not only athletic prowess but also the team spirit and camaraderie among the students.



The event was graced by the presence of the chief guest, Mr. B.C. Prasad Fernando, Assistant Superintendent of Police Attanagalla. An illustrious alumnus of Maris Stella College Negombo, Mr. Prasad Fernando has had a distinguished career in law enforcement. His expertise in criminal investigation, crime scene investigation, and forensic medicine, along with his unwavering dedication to justice, has earned him significant accolades both within Sri Lanka and internationally. His presence added a sense of pride and inspiration to the event.

The meet was a vivid display of talent and discipline, starting with track events followed by relays and the march past; a highlight that embodies Marist pride and the rigorous discipline instilled in the students. The march past set the tone for the day, demonstrating precision and unity as the houses paraded with their house flags held high.



Following the march past, the grounds buzzed with a variety of displays. The cadet, the Western band and karate performances captivated the audience, showcasing the students' dedication to their training and their ability to perform under pressure. These displays were followed by the drill routines and a variety of other performances, adding color and excitement to the event.



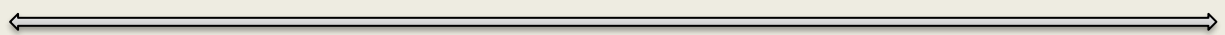
The athletic competitions were fiercely contested, with athletes from all houses giving their best in every event. The determination and competitive spirit were palpable as each house vied for the coveted championship title. After a day of intense competition, it was Lewis House that emerged victorious, clinching the championship with a series of stellar performances across the board.

The success of the Inter House Athletic Meet 2024 was made possible by the dedicated efforts of many individuals. Special thanks are due to the principal of the college, Rev. Bro. Mervyn Perera, whose guidance and support were invaluable. The prefect of games, Mr. Anton Niroshan, and the entire staff played crucial roles in organizing and executing the event seamlessly. The media unit and the prefects' union also contributed significantly, ensuring that the event was well-coordinated and memorable.



In conclusion, the Inter House Athletic Meet 2024 at Maris Stella College Thimbirigaskatuwa was not just a display of athletic talent but also a celebration of the school's spirit and discipline. The event highlighted the importance of teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended. Congratulations to Lewis House on their well-deserved victory and to all participants for making the event a remarkable success.

Thathsara Fernando



Vesak Plant Dansala Fosters Inter-Religious Harmony at Maris Stella College, Negombo, by Maris Eco Friends

On May 23, 2024, the Maris Eco Friends Society of Maris Stella College in Negombo organized a remarkable "Vesak Plant Dansala" in celebration of Vesak Poya Day. This event, rooted in the spirit of Vesak, which commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and passing of Lord Buddha, showcased a unique initiative to promote environmental consciousness and inter-religious harmony.



As a Catholic school, Maris Stella College's commitment to fostering understanding and unity among diverse religious communities was clearly reflected in this event. The "Vesak Plant Dansala" was not only a tribute to the Buddhist community but also a step towards strengthening inter-religious relationships in the region.

This initiative was made possible through the unwavering support and guidance of several key individuals and organizations. We extend our deepest gratitude to Rev. Bro. Sunanda Alwis, the principal of Maris Stella College, whose visionary leadership and encouragement were instrumental in the success of this event.

Special thanks are due to Mr. Jude Preman, Mr. Jayantha Modarage, and Mr. Marcus Fernandopulle, the dedicated masters-in-charge of the Maris Eco Friends Society, for their continuous support and supervision.

A heartfelt appreciation goes to Mas. Algard Fernando, the President of the Maris Eco Friends Society, and Mas. Ashen Devinda, the Treasurer, whose leadership and dedication were vital in organizing the event. We also thank all the members of the Maris Eco Friends Society for their tireless efforts and enthusiasm.



The event would not have been possible without the generous contributions and partnerships from various organizations and individuals. We are grateful to Mr. Samudra Appuhamy, the Rotary Club of Negombo, the Negombo Municipal Council, Goldi Sands Hotel Negombo, Ceylon Agri Pvt. Ltd., and Arigatou International's SDGs Model Classroom in Sarvodaya. Their support significantly contributed to the event's success and impact.

The "Vesak Plant Dansala" served as a beacon of environmental stewardship and religious harmony, embodying the true essence of Vesak. Through the distribution of plants, the Maris Eco Friends Society not only celebrated a significant religious festival but also promoted sustainable practices and the importance of nurturing our environment.

This event stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and mutual respect among different religious communities. It reflects Maris Stella College's dedication to nurturing a harmonious and inclusive society where every individual and community is valued and respected. As we look forward to future endeavors, we remain committed to fostering unity and understanding among diverse communities while promoting sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Together, we can build a brighter, more inclusive, and environmentally conscious future.



A. Einston Fernando

Aloneness and Loneliness

The key difference between being lonely and being alone is emotional attachment. Being alone is a state of being, while loneliness is a feeling. We can be perfectly happy being by ourselves, but we can also be lonely even if we're with a group of people. The two can coexist, but they also quite often separate from one another: being alone physically doesn't need to be lonely, and the feeling of being lonely can happen at any time, even when you're not alone.

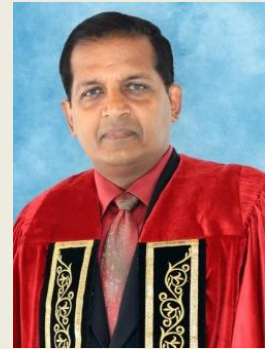
The most prevalent cause of loneliness is feeling disconnected. Many young and old speak about being lonely because they feel unable to express themselves, and their feelings or talk about their issues. They also talk about being lonely due to feeling they do not matter to others and are not understood.

Loneliness can leave people feeling isolated and disconnected from others. It is a complex state of mind that can be caused by life changes, mental health conditions, poor self-esteem, and personality traits. Loneliness can also have serious health consequences including decreased mental wellness and physical problems.

Loneliness can increase stress. It's also associated with an increased risk of certain mental health problems. For example, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and sleep problems. Anxiety and depression isolate us from people and stop us from being able to do the things we would like to do.

Feeling aloneness is a complex state of mind that can be caused by life changes, mental health conditions, poor self-esteem, and personality traits. Loneliness can also have serious health consequences including decreased mental wellness and physical problems.

Belonging to or attending a religious or spiritual community may not be enough to keep loneliness at bay, engaging with religion and spirituality can decrease feelings of loneliness and isolation and positively impact mental health.



Ajith Perera

Ph.D. in Linguistics at European Continental University USA

Message from Principal, MSC Negombo

The annual Sports Day is a tradition that started ever since the school was established. The primary focus in many cases is academic that certainly is an important aspect in building a student's career and life but many fail to recognize the importance of sports.

Extra Curricular activities and sports teach students many important life lessons. It teaches discipline, focus, dedication, hard work, commitment and teamwork.

Sports instill plenty of values that help students to cruise through life with honesty and responsibility for themselves and others. It also allows students to agile and fit that only increases the concentration in academics and the willingness to perform better in any field.



I would like to extend my utmost gratitude to the sports committee headed by Mr. Susan Thamel, the Prefect of Games for their unstinted cooperation towards success of the meet. I also am grateful to the teachers who have worked tirelessly to carry forward the tradition of this day every year with so much concern.

With warmest greetings, I wish all students who take part in events an enjoyable contest.

Bro. Sunanda Alwis, Principal

Message from Prefect of Games

It's with great pleasure that I wish to extend my greetings on the occasion of the Annual Inter-House Athletic Meet - 2024, yet another glamorous event of our Alma Mater.

Sports and games are important for all-round development and are an important part of our routine. Moreover, along with routine education, they help to shape our personalities to read speech on sports and games.

Also, they keep our bodies strong, healthy, and fit. It gives us a change from the same old routine and relaxes our mind and body. Moreover, it is important because it is a useful means of entertainment as well as a way to do physical activity.

These sports and games activities make a person more capable of a high level of efficiency. Also it removes the mental exhaustion and makes us more capable to do any hard work. Besides, in the modern education system, sports and games are an integral part of the syllabus and make education interesting, enjoyable and tension free.

With warmest greetings I convey my best wishes to all participants in this glamorous event.



Susan Thamel
Prefect of Games

The Value of the Maris Stella College Negombo Sports Meet: Fostering Leadership and Creativity through House Decorations

The annual sports meet at Maris Stella College Negombo is not just a display of athletic prowess but a grand celebration that encompasses various elements of student development. One of the most significant aspects of this event is the house decorations, a tradition that has grown to become a symbol of creativity, leadership, and teamwork. As the Master In-Charge of Joseph House for the past ten years, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of this activity on our students.

The Role of the House Captain and Committee

The journey of house decorations begins with the appointment of the house captain and the committee for the year. This leadership role is crucial as it is entrusted to a student who has demonstrated the ability to manage peers, coordinate with house teachers, and communicate effectively with other house leaders. The house captain is not only responsible to the Master In-Charge and Prefects of Games but also plays a pivotal role in fostering a spirit of unity and enthusiasm within the house.

Gratitude to Supportive Figures

Special thanks must be extended to Mr. Susan Thamel and Brother Principal, whose unwavering support and commitment to student development have been instrumental in sustaining this tradition. Despite facing opposition from a few negative minded individuals, they have steadfastly stood by the students, providing them with the opportunity to learn and grow through this unique experience.

Learning from House Decorations

House decorations involve a multitude of tasks that impart essential life skills to students.

These include:

1. **Managing Diverse Mindsets:** Students learn to handle peers with varying attitudes and perspectives. This experience teaches them diplomacy, patience, and the ability to motivate and unify their team.
2. **Engaging with Parents and Teachers:** Coordination with parents and subject teachers is a complex but rewarding task. Students develop communication and negotiation skills, essential for future leadership roles.
3. **Resource Management:** Securing materials, managing finances, and transporting resources require meticulous planning and problem-solving abilities. These tasks teach students how to manage budgets and resources efficiently.
4. **Design and Execution:** Designing the house, creating 3D models, measuring dimensions, and dividing tasks among peers involve creativity and technical skills. The house for Joseph House, for instance, stands at 28 feet high, requiring precise planning and execution.
5. **Time Management:** Meeting deadlines is crucial. Students learn to prioritize tasks and manage their time effectively, ensuring the project is completed within the stipulated timeframe.
6. **Team Collaboration:** The entire process fosters collaboration and teamwork. Students share their experiences and learn from each other, creating a strong sense of camaraderie and mutual support.

Overcoming Challenges and Innovating Solutions

The house decoration process often presents unforeseen challenges, prompting students to develop alternative solutions. This iterative problem-solving process involves numerous meetings and collaborative discussions, where students propose and refine different designs and plans. Such experiences are invaluable, providing practical lessons that extend beyond classroom learning.

Building Leadership and Responsibility

Through house decorations, students exhibit remarkable leadership qualities. They stand by their peers in times of



difficulty, acting as guardians and advocates. This sense of responsibility and support strengthens their bonds and enhances school spirit.

The Grand Finale: A Spectacle of Creativity

The culmination of these efforts is the unveiling of the house decorations on sports meet day. This event attracts visitors from Negombo and beyond, including alumni who fondly recall their own experiences. The beautifully decorated houses not only inspire awe but also serve as a testament to the students' hard work, creativity, and dedication.

Conclusion

The house decorations at the Maris Stella College sports meet are far more than an aesthetic endeavor. They are a powerful educational tool that nurtures future leaders and managers, instilling skills and values that are essential for personal and professional success. The impressive displays are a source of pride for the entire school community, validating the efforts of students and educators alike.



As I reflect on my decade-long experience as the Master In-Charge of Joseph House, I am filled with pride and gratitude. This tradition, supported by dedicated individuals like Rev. Brother Sunnada Alwis and Thamel Sir, continues to shine a light on the incredible potential of our students. Thank you, Maris Stella College, for providing this invaluable opportunity for growth and learning.

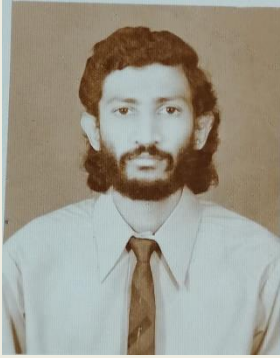
By Sumedha Appuhamy,
Master In-Charge, Joseph House

The Nation Builders Par Excellence!

(This column 'The Nation Builders Par Excellence!' is a tribute to the veteran teachers who have immensely contributed to the growth, progress, and success of Maris Stella College Negombo. Their incomparable contribution to the nation's development, the propagation of the Catholic Church, and the advancement of the World at large should be admired.)



"He acts in the Passion Play (Pasku Natya)" Chanaka started the conversation when we were in grade 4 and when he was our Religious Knowledge teacher. "It's news to us." Can't you see that he resembles Jesus?" Unlike in his photograph, he had long black hair and black beard when he was young. No student dared to ask Mr. Lalith Obris, to whom we were referring. Not that he was strict but we maintained the distance. The unanswered questions are answered today after 45 years. "No, I didn't."



He is the son of Mr. Leonard Obriss, one of the eminent old boys and veteran teachers at Maris Stella College, Negombo. In short, Mr. Leonard Obriss was a legend in the annals of the Alma Mater. Mr. Lalith Obriss was a student from 1956 to 1966, and during the tenure of Bro. Gregory Aloysius Appuhamy (1977) joined the academic staff and he served his Alma Mater for 31 years.

Most he taught religion in primary grades and some years at the request of the principals he taught religion in upper grades. He was quite supportive of Bro. Joseph Fonseka for cub scouting. He was an active member of the College 'Daham Committee' and was also the master in charge of the College Book Shop. In addition to his duties at school, he was a lifelong member of the Julian House.

In the latter part of his 31 years of service to his Alma Mater, he attended school without obtaining leave for fifteen years at a stretch. What an outstanding achievement of a teacher! It is a testimony to his dedication and commitment. After saying 'adieu' to his career he enjoys life in tranquility. Let us thank the Lord for all the good He has done through Mr. Obriss to the community and implore God's choicest blessings for him to continue to silent mission.



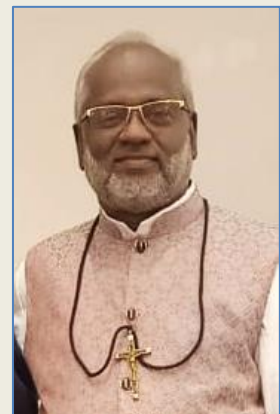
Ajith Perera
University Lecturer

Short reflection from Bro. Alex's diary

Am I an individualist or communitarian as living in my community?

A guru asked his disciples if they could say *When the night ended and the day began.*

One of them said, "When you see an animal from a distance, you can tell if it's a cow or a horse" "No," said the guru. "When you look at a tree from a distance, you can distinguish whether it's a mango or a cashew." - "Neither," said the guru. "Okay," said his disciples, "tell us when it is." "When you look a man in the face and recognize him, He is your brother, when you look a woman in the face and you recognize in her your sister. If you're not able to This, then, whatever time it is, it's still night." This is one of the familiar stories from the book of *"one-minute wisdom"* by a famous Indian theologian Fr. Anthony de Mello



Dear Brothers, for the last two weeks I was challenged by many areas of community life, especially our Marist community life. I am happy to share with you a few points what I learned or renewed learning about our Marist community life. Last 27 years as a Marist brother, I met

different types of brothers; there are brothers fully committed to their commitments, community life, mission, and collaboration with the local parish, diocese, particularly with the young people and children as their Apostolic life. But there are brothers who live alone in the community, for some reasons... maybe neglected by the other members, by color, caste, language, dignity, power and authorities; which is a curse for the brother. Some brothers are choosing their companions, favourite ones, to relate with selfish in the community, whom they like. Some may love them, and do anything for them while rejecting the other brothers for nothing. By language, country, power and authorities, groupism... all kinds of division... but we professed to live with the three vows and call ourselves brothers and talk more about 'Brotherhood' or 'brotherly love'. Is there any meaning? Are some of us also doing the same, living a partial brotherly love, choosing to whom we want to love, even supporting the brother if he committed a big mistake, hiding it because I love him? Other hand, if I don't like a brother, even if he commits a small mistake, make it a big issue and wait for the chance to pull down the brother? Pope Francis often speaks of one thing for some years wherever he meets the Religious people...the big issue very active among the Religious is "**gossiping**" it becomes very common among the men religious... isn't it true among us? How long we spend time talking about other brothers, especially when the particular brother is not present there... Even small things but we make a big story and spread it quickly with less truth and try to spoil the name of the brother or give him more difficulties in his life. I heard this from some brothers, "*living in the community... alone...*" How good it is to hear as the members of the community by our profession?

These years (2021-2024) Pope Francis started the Synod of the Bishops... but it's not only the bishops and Cardinals with the Pope, religious priests, Brothers, sisters and some lay people also working together. One among them is our Superior General, Br. Ernesto also an active member in this Synod. The last circular brings this article, "*The family is the pillar of every Christian community. Parents and grandparents and all those who live and share their faith in the family are the first missionaries. The family, as a community of life and love, is a privileged place of education in faith and Christian practice, one that needs special accompaniment within communities. Support is especially needed for parents who must reconcile work, including within the Church community and in service to its mission, with the demands of family life.*" If we don't learn this community living in our own family, it's hard to live it here in our communities. Let us think about what I was re-challenged about community life though you know better than me about it. Community is not only an institution; it is also a process.

- Community is not constituted once and for all, but is built day by day. It is an action verb and not just a noun.
- Community is not a conquest of ours achieved by our own efforts. We are not capable of achieving the ideal of the Acts of the Apostles: to be "*of one heart*", "*of one soul*" and to have everything in common.
- Community is grace when: we recognize God as our Father and Mary as our Mother and you feel as children and brothers and sisters; you welcome the presence and the word of the Risen Lord and recognize each other as disciples of the one Master; you feel stimulated by the love of the Spirit that is poured into your hearts.
- Community is "When you look a man in the face and recognize him, He is your brother, when you look a woman in the face and you recognize in her your sister.

This type of community makes your mission credible to society.

Our goal to grow as a community in mission can be expressed in three words: joy, home & school, witness and proclamation:

- **Joy:** Rediscovering the joy of living in Communities that are home and school of communion, that witness to the primacy of God and are themselves the proclamation of the Gospel. "To live in Community is Joy, individualism is not a source of Joy; disconnection from others leads to depression and self-destruction. Only relationships make us living being.
- **Communities home and school of communion":** to make grace and dialogue flow among all the brothers, so that joy may be contagious and mutual forgiveness and reconciliation may restore us.
- **Community shaped by mission:** it is itself a witness to the primacy of God against any kind of idolatry and is the proclamation of the Gospel of the New Covenant.

Our goal with regard to economy: The word economy means "the rule of the house". This objective as growth can be expressed in three words: *communion, solidarity, expression-style*: Our objective with regard to the leadership of the house can be expressed in five words: *discernment, accompaniment, missionary synergies, creativity and innovation*. (thanks for Fr. Cristo Jose, cmf, for his sharing)

Brothers, thank you for reading and listening to it... if it challenges us personally, we can change our attitudes and work together for the Kingdom of God as one brother. Share our brotherly love not with our beloved one, but the brothers who are needed, rejected ones, unnoticed ones and try to live first Christians with the guidance of the Apostles. "love your enemies" (Mt 5:44) here the enemies are the brothers whom we don't love in the community.

With good wishes and prayers... your comments will be well received.

Your brother

Br. Alex Arokiasamy, fms.

Marist Brothers' Journey into the Wilderness: A Spiritual Retreat in Nature

With the conclusion of the Marist Asia Committee meeting held at Bolawalana's serene pastures, the committee members were invited to visit the flora and fauna of Sri Lanka's best game reserve, Wilpattu National Park, also known as the "Land of Lakes." This adventure, organized and facilitated by Brother Chinthana, Mr. Jude, and several other lay members, began with a journey from Negombo at around 6:00 AM. The destination, 166 km away, was reached at 11:30 AM.



Upon arrival at Sri Lanka's largest national park, spanning 1,085 square kilometers, the brothers ventured 12 km into the forest to reach the 'Marandamaduwa' circuit bungalow. This bungalow, located next to a crocodile-inhabited lake, is surrounded by tall trees

providing sanctuary to various bird species, creating an eye-catching and serene environment.

Following a delicious lunch prepared by Nayana, Ayesha, and Thushari, the brothers embarked on a game safari in safari jeeps at 2:00 PM. They witnessed an array of wildlife, including the majestic Asian elephant, vibrant migrant birds, and local bird species such as the Sri Lankan junglefowl, blue-tailed bee-eater, Indian peafowl, painted stork, and Malabar pied hornbill. Reptiles like the mugger crocodile and Bengal monitor, along with mammals like the Sri Lankan axis deer, tufted gray langur, and Sri Lankan sambar deer, were also spotted. The highlight of the safari was the sighting of the elusive leopard (*Panthera pardus kotiya*) in its best postures, a rare and thrilling experience for all.



As the sun set, a barbecue was arranged by the lay team. Though music was prohibited in the sanctuary, the brothers shared their day's experiences amidst the natural sounds of the forest. Using torches, they glimpsed the gleaming eyes of a herd of deer and resting crocodiles by the lakeside, a fascinating sight under the night sky. The forest, alive with nocturnal activity, offered surprises such as the roaring of a leopard and the alarmed cries of deer during the night.

The next morning began early with breakfast at the park's entrance. On their return journey, the brothers visited the Kalpitiya mission managed by Brother Lal Fonseka and enjoyed lunch organized by Brother Sujith. They departed for Negombo at around 2:30 PM, concluding their enriching journey.

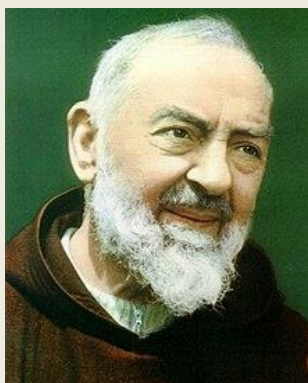
This retreat into the wilderness allowed the brothers to reconnect with nature and their Marist spirituality. St. Marcellin Champagnat once said, "Let us not forget that the creation is a book which is always open to us and that it teaches us a great deal about God." This profound connection with nature provided the brothers with a refreshing break from routine, deepening their bond with God's creation.



In the end, the rich wilderness and lively forest offered the brothers relaxation and a renewed sense of purpose. This journey into nature was not merely an adventure but a spiritual retreat, emphasizing the importance of spirituality and its intrinsic connection with the natural world. The experience underscored the beauty of God's creation and the profound lessons it imparts to those who take the time to listen and observe.

Chalana Pragnaratne

DID YOU KNOW?



Padre Pio (born 25th May 1887) is mostly known for his deep wisdom about prayer and peace; his stigmata; miraculous reports of his bilocation; being physically attacked by the devil; and mastering the spiritual life.

- 1) Padre Pio was only 5 years old when he expressed a strong desire to serve God.
- 2) Padre Pio was only 15 when he entered the Capuchin Friars Minor as a novice.
- 3) St. Pio received the visible wounds of Christ known as stigmata, just like St. Francis of Assisi.
- 4) The blood from his stigmata smelled of floral perfume.
- 5) Padre Pio heard confessions 12 to 15 hours a day.
- 6) Padre Pio suffered attacks from the devil consistently.
- 7) He had the gift of bilocation that, being in two places at once.
- 8) A sighting of a “flying friar” kept warplanes from bombing Padre Pio’s town during World War II.
- 9) Before dying at the age of 81, all his wounds healed without scars, just as he had foretold they would 50 years prior.
- 10) Pilgrims can visit the rooms in which Padre Pio lived.
- 11) Many miracles have been attributed to Padre Pio.
- 12) He established a hospital.
- 13) Even before his death on Sept. 23, 1968, Padre Pio reportedly spent his last moments in prayer.



Janith Jayamaha

Little Winners

May the name of Maris always shine in the world!

Under 12 Football Festival organized by Sri Lanka School Football Association - 2023. 48 sports teams participated in the all-Ceylon school tournament and among all Maris Stella College, Negombo won the all-Ceylon school championship by competing under the Bowl team.



The semi-final match between Maris Stella College and DS Senanayake College was 2-1. Semi-final match Maris Stella College and The match between Kalukara Muslim High School was 1-1 and then 3-2 on penalties.



The Finals Our Maris Stella college team 2023 - won the overall title of the competition. It was a tough match and our boys managed to lead throughout the match.

We appreciate and thank Mr. Thushara Silva as Team Coach and Mr. Boni Perera as the assistant. Navod Deshan / Vishwa A Wellawaththa / Rev. Bro Ranjith perera Rev. Bro Madushan Sasmika was officiated as the team in charge. Thank you to the sports teacher Susan Thamel, and the principal Rev. Br. Sunanda Alwis who always encouraged us and was behind this victory. we wish our little stars a bright future.

Navod Deshan

The Counseling Programme

Counseling for teens helps adolescents learn healthy coping skills and set realistic goals. Clinical mental health counseling provides a safe space for teens to explore distressing thoughts and emotions, work through childhood trauma, and build stronger connections with family members. Having realized the benefits of Counseling Rev. Fr. Anton Dinesh, the parish priest of Godalla invited Br. Chamara and a few other sisters listened to the students of grades 9 and 10, who were getting ready to receive the sacrament of confirmation.

During the programme we helped children to know why we need counseling. It gives you a safe time and place to talk to someone who won't judge you. It helps you make sense of things and understand yourself better. help you resolve complicated feelings, or find ways to live with them. help you recognize unhelpful patterns in the way you think or act, and find ways to change them (if you want to).

It was new for them the concept of counseling. We taught that Counseling provided by trained professionals can make a profound impact on the lives of individuals, families, and communities. This service helps people navigate difficult life situations, such as the death of a loved one, divorce, natural disasters, school stress, and the loss of a job.

We invite all the principals, in charge of catechism schools to develop Counseling and it can help our young people better understand their emotions, they can learn healthy ways to cope with stress, they can improve their self-esteem and build strong relationships, they can pursue their future goals. The programme was successful and found many students for further sessions.



Bro. Chamara Hettiarachchi

Laid a Foundation Stone to Build a Temple

Bro. Chinthana Nonis, the Treasurer of the Marist Congregation in South Asia laid a foundation stone to build a temple at Sri Vijayasundararamaya, Attidiya on Wesak day (23rd May 2024). "The virtuous healing made the disciple's irresistible effort a reality and it showed the unity and friendship that exist", said the chief monk addressing the gathering.



Inter Faith Dialogue

Interfaith dialogue refers to cooperative, constructive, and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions and/or spiritual or humanistic beliefs, at both the individual and institutional levels. The community at Kalpitiya always value the presence of the people belong to different races and religions. That is what we need in order to build real prosperous Sri Lanka.



Bro. Sujith Alwis

“Grand Vicennial 2024” The grand reunion of Maris Stella Alumni”

Twenty years ago, we stepped out of the hallowed halls of Maris Stella College, Negombo, our hearts filled with youthful dreams and aspirations. Fast forward to 2024, and we found ourselves back together to celebrate our brotherhood. It was a gathering that transcended time, bringing together the batch of 2004 for a night full of memories, laughter, and celebration.





We raised our glasses and toasted Maris Stella, the teachers who shaped us, and the friendships that stood the test of time. The “Grand Vicennial 2024” was a success not just because of the venue or the program, it was a success because we revitalized the Marist spirit.

It wasn’t just about reminiscing; it was about forging new connections. Spouses and children joined us, bridging the gap between generations. While our kids played tag in the ballroom, we enjoyed camaraderie extended beyond our batch, it was a Maris Stella family reunion.

We gathered around tables, sharing stories of our journeys since leaving school. Some had climbed corporate ladders, others had embraced entrepreneurship, and a few had become globe-trotters. Yet, for this night, titles faded; we were simply old friends catching up. As we enjoyed the night with our batch mates, past principals, teachers, spouses and kids, we made promises to meet more often, to support each other’s endeavors, and to keep the Maris Stella flame burning.

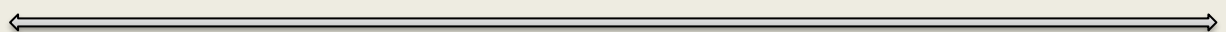


The stage came alive as the live band struck their first chords and the dancers took the floor together with guest performers. But this wasn’t just any band, it was led by one of our own, a talented batch-mate. Their voice resonated with the memories of our youth, and the rhythm carried us back to carefree days. The night ended with hugs, promises, and a shared resolve: Twenty years may have passed, but our bond remains unbreakable.



The Grand Vicennial 2024 was more than an event; it was a chapter in our ongoing story. As we left Goldi Sands Hotel, hearts full, smiles wide and spirits high, we carried with us the echoes of laughter, the warmth of friendships, and the promise of future reunions. Here’s to the next twenty years—a journey we’ll navigate together, just like we did at Maris Stella!

Charitha De. Silva
Batch President, Years AL 2004



Lay Marists

May 12th marked a significant occasion for all Marist lay members who convened at the OBA Centre. The day was filled with solidarity and insight, led by Brothers Allen de Castro, Silvian, and Soterias for those present, it proved to be a profoundly enlightening experience.

Commencing at approximately 9:30 a.m., the programme began with a brief introduction by Bro. Nicholas. Bros. Silvian and Soteris then guided us through a comprehensive overview of Marist endeavours worldwide, emphasizing the collaborative efforts between Marist Brothers and Lay members in various missions. Their narratives were rich with inspiring accounts from their involvement in the Marist community.



The second pace of the programme focused on the Marist Lay vocation. Bro. Silvian together with Bro. Soteris elaborated on discussions concerning lay vocations and proposed structural changes to formalize lay formation and involvement within the congregation. Following this, an open forum facilitated questions and shared experiences. Members of the Marist lay group, alongside Marist Brothers involved in lay Marist initiatives, shared their experiences and reflections, with special mention made of Bro. Allan, the Provincial of East Asia, who commended the efforts of Sri Lankan lay Marists, drawing parallels with his experiences especially in the Philippines. Bro. Silvian also shared insights from his interactions with lay Marists in Madagascar.



Following a fruitful exchange of experiences, we enjoyed a delicious lunch arranged with the help of Mr. Samudra Appuhamy, fostering a sense



of fellowship. We extend our gratitude to Mr. Jude and Mr. Chalana for organizing the programme, and to Bro. Nicholas for his support amidst his busy schedule giving us this enriching interactive experience with Brothers from Rome. Bros. Silvian, Soteris, and Allen thank you very much for spending your precious time with us empowering, inspiring, and rejuvenating all our lay Marists in their commitment to Marist endeavors.

Madura Bulathsinghala

Visit of the General Councillors

Novices and the formators at the Marist international Novitiate had the pleasure of meeting Brothers. Jose Maria Soteris and Sylvain Ramandimbarisoa, from the general administration in Rome, along with the administrative unit leaders across the Marist Brothers in Asia Bro.

Nicholas Fernando, Provincial, of the South Asia Province of Marist Brothers, Bro. Allan De Castro, Provincial of the Marist Brothers East – Asia Province, and Bro. Canisio Willrich District Leader of the Marist District of Asia.



It was a moment of sharing between the Novices and the Brothers, To get to know about the different administrative regions around the world and the various ministries Brothers are involved in.

This was also a moment of sharing the motivation to become a Marist Brother, and to share how the experiences of the Novitiate has helped each one of us to realized our Marist dream. The visit conclude with a delicious lunch prepared by the novitiate staff and was a moment for sharing the fraternal joy with each other and to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the Marist world and the Various Marist ministries and Apostolates across the world and across the Asia.

Prathap Ranasinghe
2nd year Novice

Pakistan Visit of the General Councillors



During lunch at Peshawar community before Bros. Soteras, Sylvain and Allan leave Sarghoda community to go to their respective destinations.

Awareness Programme for Adolescence

The Lord has called me to bring good news to the nation. I had such a privilege to share God' s love in a multi-religious, multi-cultural society where we need and lacking humanity and discipline for a better society. We are called to lead children and youth to be responsible characters of our society. I am thankful Mr. Sudarshana , principal at Nirmalamatha National school at Kalpitiya for the Invitation for me. It was a red-letter day in my faith journey as I talked about love, sex and challenges for the senior students. It was a great day...



Mr. W. Sudarshana Fernando,
Principal, Kalpitiya Nirmala Matha National School

Seminar on Positive Thinking and Planning

Students with a positive attitude are more likely to welcome challenges as chances for personal development and education. Let us encourage students to take risks and embrace challenges, as this can help them to develop resilience and self-belief. They ought to foster a growth mindset.

A positive attitude means being optimistic about situations, interactions, and yourself. People with positive attitudes remain hopeful and see the best even in difficult situations. Br. Sujith Alwis conducted a seminar on positive thinking for the students of grade 12 at Nirmala Matha National School, Kalpitiya. The event was successful and students were motivated to be the leaders in the school and society as well.





Mr. W. Sudarshana Fernando,
Principal, Kalpitiya Nirmala Matha National School

Song of Elizabeth

**Oh cousin Mary, mother of God
Came to see me with my Lord
At the door heard the greet sweet
I stood to kiss her in spirit**

**My heart burnt flame of praise
The fruit in my womb kick of grace
The spirit of God's presence
Favoured of heaven outcast on earth**

**ever Humble blessed's humility
Mary came in haste country hilly
Brought God's grace and Spirit
Made my child in womb leapt**

**You are the most blessed woman
Standing with salvation from heaven
Model of the Apostolate of Church
Blessed are you bearing messiah**

**Hundred miles from Nazareth journey
The last trimester of my pregnancy
presence of the living tabernacle of God
Reminds us of our joy in the son of God**



**As you Mary bring Jesus to me
Teach us to reach love with self-
sacrifice
You called me to bring Jesus to others
And recognize Jesus, the savior in others**



Bro. Chamara Hettiarachchi

MARIS STELLA COLLEGE PREFECTS ASSOCIATION HOSTS SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP TRAINING CAMP.

The Prefects Association of Maris Stella College Negombo organized a highly successful leadership training camp from April 20th to 22nd, 2024, at the Chinabay Air Force Camp in Trincomalee. The event was made possible with significant support from Rev. Bro. Sunanda Alwis, Rev. Bro. Pradeep Hettiarachchi, and Masters-in-charge Sumedha Appuhamy and Gayan Fernando.



LEADERSHIP IS THE CAPACITY TO TRANSLATE VISION INTO REALITY

The camp saw enthusiastic participation from the Senior Group, Junior 1 Group, and Probationers, all eager to enhance their leadership skills. The journey began on the morning of April 20th, with a 9:30 AM departure from Maris Stella College. After a nine-hour trip, the group arrived at the Chinabay camp, where an introductory meeting was held. The first day concluded with dinner at the Eagles Golf Club, setting a positive tone for the days to come.



LEADERSHIP IS AN ACTION NOT A POSITION

The second day kicked off early at 5:00 AM with physical training exercises, followed by a golf lesson provided by the Sri Lankan Air Force Golf Club. After breakfast, the attendees participated in a leadership lecture, team games, and a session on table manners. A hike to Marble Beach and a refreshing dip in the sea, along with a volleyball game, highlighted the afternoon. The day ended with a social gathering filled with enjoyable activities and dinner. On the final day, April 22nd, the group started the day at 7:00 AM with breakfast at the Eagles Golf Club

A closing gathering was held to express gratitude to the Sri Lanka Air Force for their hospitality and support. The camp concluded with the group's departure at noon, arriving back in Negombo by 8:00 PM. This leadership camp not only provided valuable training but also fostered camaraderie and team spirit among the participants. The Prefects Association of Maris Stella College looks forward to organizing similar events in the future to continue developing the leadership skills of its students.

Photo of the Month

Triumph of Faith and Determination



"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." - Philippians 4:13

This month's featured photo captures a moment of pure joy and accomplishment. A young boy, beaming with a radiant smile, receives a winner's cup from a revered Brother after completing a challenging road race. His smile speaks volumes – it is a smile of success, of a victory hard-earned through determination, sweat, and perseverance. In his eyes, we see the admiration for the Father, a spiritual guide who has undoubtedly been a source of inspiration and encouragement. The boy's happiness is not just personal but shared with the community, symbolizing the blessings of Jesus that he feels in this victorious moment. His achievement is a testament to the strength he draws from his faith and the support of those around him. This

photo beautifully encapsulates the spirit of our Marist community – one of resilience, faith, and the celebration of collective success. As we admire this inspiring image, let us remember the words of Philippians 4:13 and find strength in our own journeys. May this image remind us all that with faith and determination, every challenge can lead to a glorious victory.

Ashela De Silva



Birthdays Month of June

16 Sunil Liyanage
16 Shanthi Liyanage
16 Savarimuthu
19 Mervyn Perera
22 Jiji Dasan
25 Eric Perera