

# Marist Fathers Australian Province Provincial Circular



No 3 - Jun 2021

## From the Provincial

Confreres,

On May 21 Cardinal Reinhardt Marx, facing the catastrophic history of sexual abuse in the German Church, offered his resignation as Archbishop of Munich to Pope Francis.

The pope's letter in reply of June 10 (in which he refused the Cardinal's resignation) we can apply to our own "catastrophic" history, as one of the male clerical congregations in Australia especially blighted by the abuse of minors and vulnerable adults by a shamefully significant proportion of our number and the lack of appropriate responses by our leaders.

Let all of us read with humble receptiveness to the Holy Father's words.

Tony

*I agree with you in calling the sad history of sexual abuse and the way in which it was dealt with by the Church until recently a catastrophe. Realizing such hypocrisy in the way we live the faith is a grace, it is a first step that we must take.*

*We must take responsibility for this history, both personally and communally. We cannot remain indifferent before this crime.*

*Accepting it implies our entering into crisis.*

*Not everyone wants to accept this reality, but it is the only way, because making "resolutions" to change one's life without "putting the meat on the grill" leads to nothing.*

*Personal, social and historical realities are concrete and must not be dealt with as ideas; because ideas are discussed (and it is good that this is the case), but reality must always be accepted and examined. It is true that*

*historical situations must be interpreted with the hermeneutic of the time in which they took place, but this does not exempt us from taking charge of them and assuming them as the history of the "sin that besieges us". . .*

*Therefore, in my opinion, every Bishop of the Church must accept it and ask himself: what should I do in the face of this catastrophe?*

*The "mea culpa" in the face of so many historical errors of the past we have made more than once in the face of many situations even if we have not personally participated in that historical situation.*

*We are being asked to do the same today. We are being asked for a reform, which — in this case — does not consist of words, but attitudes which show the courage to enter into crisis, to accept reality whatever the consequence. And every reform begins with oneself.*

*The reform in the Church was made by men and women who were not afraid to enter into crisis and let themselves be reformed by the Lord. It is the only way forward, otherwise we will be nothing more than 'reform ideologues' who do not put their own flesh on the line.*

*. . . burying the past leads us nowhere. Silence, omissions, giving too much weight to the prestige of institutions lead only to personal and historical failure, and lead us to live with the burden of "having skeletons in the closet", as the saying says.*

*It is urgent to "examine" this reality of abuse and how the Church proceeded, and let the Spirit lead us to the desert of desolation, the cross and the resurrection.*

*It is the path of the Spirit that we must follow, and the starting point is humble confession: we were wrong, we sinned. We will not be saved by investigations or by the power of the institutions.*

*We will not be saved by the prestige of our Church which tends to conceal its sins; the power of money will not save us nor the opinion of the media (so often we are too dependent on them).*

*We will be saved by the One who can do it and confess our nakedness. . . And then we will feel that healing shame that opens the doors to the compassion and tenderness of the Lord who is always close to us.*

*As a Church we must ask for the grace of shame.*



## Provincial Diary

**Jul 5**

Personal Zoom meeting with GA

**Jul 7**

Maryvale/Montbel Management Committee

**Jul 13**

Health and Aged Care Committee

**Jul 20**

Provincial Council

**Aug 2-5**

CRA National Assembly

**Aug 17**

Provincial Council

## CLOC

At the commencement of the April meeting of CLOC the Provincial Elect of the USA, **Joe Hindelang**, was welcomed. Joe takes over from **Paul Frechette** on Jul 1. **Albert Kabala** (Africa) informed the meeting of the return of the Marist Fathers to Burundi after 20 years of absence.

The Superior General revealed that as a temporary measure the next one or two international novitiates will take place in Italy, the venue as yet not finalised. John Larsen also reported on the recent meeting of the leadership of the four Marist branches at which the possibilities of a cooperative approach to the Marist Heritage places in France was discussed.

Also noted was that the Sahagun community on the Camino is again open to pilgrims and La Neylière is now open for business.

Among the items on the agenda were updates on the upcoming Vocations Year, plans for a future Formation Meeting and Mission and International Formation Funding.

## Provincial Council

At its May and June meetings the council treated among other things:

- The present status of the Chapter declarations and decisions now before the General Administration.
- Advancing the Decisions of the Chapter
- The visitation of Herston, the

communities and individuals in the Sydney area

- Membership of the Health and Aged Care Committee
- Current Professional Standards matters
- Providing for holiday accommodation post-Currumbin
- Marist Mission Centre Report
- Marist Charism Committee

## Appointments

### Health and Aged Care Committee

The following have been appointed to the committee:

Fr Michael Carroll

Sr Ruth Davis SM

Mrs Anne Fehon

Fr Garry Reynolds

Fr Paul Mahony

It is planned that the committee will normally meet four times a year. Its role is:

- To assist the Provincial in the oversight of the health and aged care policies in the Province.
- To offer advice on best practice policies concerning aged care and health related issues.
- To offer advice on access to aged care facilities and resources.
- To engage with the Provincial in the ongoing review of the health and aged care within the province.
- To respond to requests for advice from the Provincial.

## Calendar

### *Provincial retreats 2021*

Sep 12 – 17 at Ormiston, Qld;

Sep 19 – 24 at Hunters Hill.

### *Jubilarians' Celebration:*

Fri, Sep 24

## Information

### *Reform of Book VI of the Code of Canon Law – on Penal Sanctions in the Church.*

The following comments on the reformed text come from the **ACBC Media Blog, Jun 3, 2021** based on a response from canon lawyer Rodger Austin.

The reform is intended to clarify the nature of certain canonical crimes and seek to ensure they are dealt with in an effective way.

The revisions will strengthen the application of canonical penalties, when necessary. "Pope Francis recalled the need the Church has for a penal system of law to address the restoration of the demands of justice, the amendment of the offender and the reparation of scandals which damage the faith and life of the people of God," Dr Austin said.

Dr Austin said one of the key amendments relates to the balancing of justice and mercy, with a recognition that there may have been too much leniency in recent decades: "The reluctance in the past to impose punishment on offenders must be replaced by an understanding 'on the part of the pastors and the superiors, it is necessary to apply the penalties'," he said.

"Pope Francis is saying that while bishops and major superiors should do what they can to rehabilitate people under their care, sometimes you cannot and must not avoid imposing penalties."

Dr Austin said the location of crimes against minors and other people who are vulnerable in the new section of "Offences Against Human Life, Dignity and Liberty" is a significant change: "That amendment highlights the seriousness of these crimes, giving them their own place within the Church's legal system," he said.

Among the changes in the area of sexual abuse are the extension of abuse beyond minors to include "a person who habitually has an imperfect use of reason or one to whom the law recognises equal protection" to that of minors. The revisions include "grooming", a practice used by some abusers to increase access to children, and possessing child pornography as crimes.

In addition to the changes with regard to sexual abuse, the revisions also address areas of financial impropriety, misuse or abuse of sacraments and negligent administration.

There is also a broadening of penalties to include lay people who

## Deaths

- **Fr Wilfried Brand** (Europe / Netherlands) who died on May 12, 2021
- **Maureen Redmond** (mother of Kevin) who died on Jun 14, 2021

hold key roles within the Church.

The new provisions will come into force on December 8 this year.

## Personnel

### Jim Carty

Because of serious eye problems, Jim has had to curtail his supply work in the Lismore Diocese and return to Maryvale/Montbel. He expects to be undergoing eye treatment in early July.

### Our Elders

#### Lou Molloy

On May 26, Lou moved to Crowley Care, an aged care facility in Ballina. Fortunately it is also where his niece Christine works as a registered nurse. Due to his recent fall and hospitalisation it was not safe for Lou to return to his unit at St Andrews.

Lou's contacts are: Ph 02 66861376; Address is Crowley Care 154 Cherry St. Ballina NSW 2478.

Lou does not have a computer at this stage so cannot receive emails. This may change in the future.

## Publications

### Tom Ryan

- 'Jean-Claude Colin, Moral Theology and Pastoral Practice', Forum Novum 22:1 (December) 2020: 65-74.
- 'Conscience, Sin and Divine Mercy: Footprints from the Past', The

Australasian Catholic Record 98: 2 (April), 2021: 217-229.

- Book Review: Conscience: Writings from Moral Theology by Saint Alphonsus, translated by Raphael Gallagher (Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 2019), The Australasian Catholic Record 98: 2 (April), 2021.
- 'Devotion: "Being Shore to the Ocean"', in Claude-Hélène Meyer & Elisabeth Vanderheiden (eds), International Handbook of Love. Transcultural and Transdisciplinary Perspectives (Springer, 2021).

## Holiday accommodation

Information on the sale of the Currumbin house was always accompanied by the assurance that some substitution would be provided for accommodating holiday makers somewhere in the region.

Now, upon further reflection, the provincial administration has proposed on a **twelve-month trial**, providing accommodation by way of **rental holiday apartments** for members of the province at a time and place of their choosing.

This model is proposed in the light of the following considerations:

- Individuals may get to choose the place where they go for a holiday (it is noted that in the recent province survey there were a variety of different preferences for where to purchase or rent an apartment);
- Compared to purchasing a property, there will be no need to outlay large amounts of money;
- A rental of one unit alone would have times of the year where the province would be paying rent for an empty dwelling;
- A full-time rental or purchase

requires the further costs of furnishings, bonds, removalists, etc.;

- As the clientele ages, such an option is adaptable to suit the changing needs of the individual.

### Guidelines for booking serviced accommodation:

- The cost of renting the apartment needs to be consistent with the values of our Marist religious life.
- Confreres planning their holidays will contact the provincial administration nominating the intended holiday location and be assisted in finding suitable accommodation, arranging the booking and paying for the accommodation.
- Provincial financed accommodation covers the period of annual leave, i.e. a maximum of four weeks. These may be taken together or in shorter periods according to need.
- Living expenses, holiday allowance and travel are normally provided by the individual's community or himself.
- Family members are not included under this arrangement – unless a cost sharing arrangement is negotiated prior to the booking.
- This holiday arrangement does not include road trips involving staying at a variety of places.

In June 2022, a review of this policy and process will be undertaken to ensure we can continue to provide satisfactory holiday accommodation.

## Currumbin final bookings

**Jun 20– Jul 3:** Gavin Foster

**Jul 4-10:** Dylan Hatobu

For information about future holiday see '**Holiday accommodation**', above.

## JPIC Corner

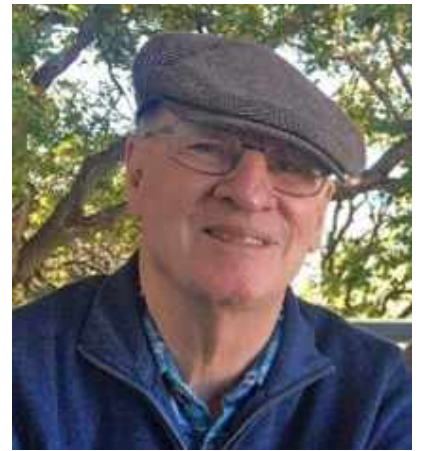
Provincial Committee  
for Justice, Peace and  
Integrity of Creation

**Gerard Hall, Peter Healy, Ted Keating, John Larsen, Ben McKenna, Ron Nissen, Tony O'Connor, Luigi Savoldelli, Justin Taylor and Michael Whelan.**

### Monday Blog

From Rome, and thanks to Ben McKenna's commitment, the Aussie-initiated JPIC Blog has continued with regular Monday postings throughout the first half of the year. The Blog is re-posted on the Province website JPIC page each week. Marist contributors to the page have included **Fritz Arnold, Kevin Bates, Frank Bird, Jim Carty, Jose-Maria da Silva,**





*Clockwise from top left:* Provincial's birthday. | Farewell, Currumbin. | Post-op, **Gerard Hall** in Brisbane. | Professions in Yaoundé. | Marist Family leaders, Manziana. | **Ben McKenna** with **Albert Kabala** and **Luigi Savoldelli**, Cameroon. | **Marist Laity** rosary in presbytery garden, Hunters Hill.