



MARIST COLLEGE

Bulletin

29TH JUNE, 2021.



Bulletin 3

LIFE DURING LOCKDOWN: *MY EXPERIENCE*

MANUELE BOTABUA



Covid 19 has posed so many unanswered questions. I am not intending to answer too many of those questions but I am going to reflect about my personal experience of living with it.

Pacific Regional Seminary started the 2020 academic year and I enrolled as a second year student. Marist College community were again flying all the colors of the various Pacific nationalities and the new year saw the arrival of two new students and soon after that 7 New propaedeutic students were to begin their journey with us too. Everything seemed to be going well and no one dreamt of all the possibilities that a pandemic might bring including lockdown.

Social gatherings within the community after a busy week is something that I always look forward to. Even on our monthly day off I have the opportunity of catching up with families and friends. Suddenly Covid 19 changed everything in a blink of an eye. It was an experience that I never dreamt of nor even thought it could be a reality in my lifetime. The word *Lockdown* was adopted and became part of my daily vocabulary.

Towards the end of last year and the beginning of this year things seemed to be back to where it used to be and I began this year again as a third year student at the Pacific Regional Seminary. Towards the end of the 1st semester, the Fiji News reported a case of Covid 19 that has leaked into the community. This was for me a real 'Deja-vu' experience, but this time I

didn't know what to expect, except entering into a quasi-hibernation mode or a period of uncertainty. The end of the term was quite a challenge and sadly the three weeks break were to be lived in

lockdowns. My life felt as if I was controlled by a super-power.

Though I didn't get out, in the confinement of my space I can feel the pain that most people around me are going through during this time, especially those who had lost their jobs, the panic of not been able to provide for their own families, and all other issues that certainly were involved. I believe that from all the trying times and uncertainties that we are going through it was good that we had time to pause and be still for a moment, to listen with the heart and think and let the Spirit work to show us some direction. For me personally, maybe there is a message that I did not recognize in the past but can now embrace anew during my troubled times.



As I sit now and reflect on what I have experienced during the lockdown there are a few things that surfaced that I needed to share and think about, those questions that I spoke of in the beginning as being unanswered seem to still be the learnings of this year.

- Much of my studies has been limited to virtual learning. Zoom classes- online learning is a new experience and a new medium of learning. In my experience it takes away the social and relational dimension of teacher and student. It passes on the information perhaps but is a very poor alternative to face to face classes.
- Social gathering is an important part of Pacific cultures - I have been deprived too of the relational bond between me and my family. I cannot travel to meet them and they cannot come for a visit.
- Panic seems to be a significant part of the daily aura of each individual. This is for me the hardest experience of Covid since I kept asking myself whether I will survive it through or not. This leads me to lose focus at times and can lead into discouragement in my studies too.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Total Cases	2848
Deaths	13
Active Cases	2173
Total Recovered	653
Daily test Positivity %	5.7 %

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK



Happy 13th Priesthood
Anniversary Fr. Denis Revi, SM.



Next Bulletin

6th July, 2021

Retreat – Peter Carde

Matakarawa



Learn more about becoming a Marist, contact us today.

Website:

www.maristoceania.org



Contact:

(679) 7730377, (679) 3387377



Email:

smocprov@connect.com.fj