

Marist Laity Australia



From our leader....

Dear ALL,

As the Jesuit scholastic Brendan Busse reflects:

“The true beauty of this season lies in the way in which it sanctifies that which is most human in us: our desire to love and call ourselves beloved, the desire for the eternal to break into our mortal lives, for light to break into our darkness, for God’s loving presence to become a felt reality in our all too frail human condition.”

Welcome to the final MLA Newsletter for 2022. These words of Brendan Busse remind me that throughout this year with all the darkness of Covid illness, war, natural disaster and people’s personal tragedies, the opportunity for God to ‘break into our mortal lives’ is ever present.



"Annunciation," Henry Ossawa Tanner, 1898

The Annunciation so beautifully portrayed above by Tanner reflects this reality so powerfully. Mary said ‘Yes’ as the Eternal broke into her mortal life thereby changing the course of history.

As we enter this time of Advent and then Christmas, I’d invite you to join me, to take time to respond to, and experience God’s presence in our lives. To allow our hearts to be filled with gratitude for all we have received this year, and for the opportunity we have had to share with others.

I have been extremely grateful for the past 12 years leading Marist Laity Australia with Andrew Dumas. I now step back from my position as MLA Coordinator and invite Cathy Larkin and Andrew to continue the wonderful work of this committed group. It has been a blessed opportunity not only to work with our MLA companions within Australia, but to also meet and enjoy rich discussions with Marists across many countries of the world. The gatherings both locally and internationally have been energising and inspirational in nature, and have fed my spirit, deepened my Marist connections and reminded me that Mary’s Spirit is relevant to our world today.

Living our lives in a simple untethered way, being authentic, flexible, compassionate, and inclusive, to respond to life’s situations with a heart full of gratitude and love, is always relevant, timely and powerful.

Thank you to ALL that have so generously contributed to the Australian Marist Laity over

these past years. You have made that experience a reality for me. I know I leave the leadership of MLA in very capable and well committed hands. As the Christmas Season unfolds may gratitude cultivate within our hearts a desire for love that brings reconciliation, peace, and joy for all who co-exist upon this precious gift we call Home – our planet!

Yours in the love and peace of Christ this Christmas.

*Margaret Woods
MLA Coordinator*

Hello and Welcome

I'm delighted to be part of the MLA committee again, having had a very long sojourn! I was a member of the original committee which launched MLA some 20 years ago. Being part of something in its genesis was enlivening, full of promise and possibilities. It was a wonderful gift to help coordinate and participate in reflection days, retreats, conferences, liturgical celebrations, and the creation of the original MLA guidelines.



I was a student at both St Margaret Mary's Merrylands and Cerdon College, Merrylands. The impact of the sisters was profound, so much so, that I joined up! Experiencing such deep formation shaped me forever.

When I 'transferred' to the Lay Branch, I was delighted to be part of the establishment of Marist Laity Australia.

I am retiring from a life in education which began at Marist Sisters Woolwich in 1983. With more time and availability, I am very happy to assist Andrew Dumas as Coordinator of MLA.

May I express great gratitude to Margaret Woods as she moves from this role, and to all

the members of the committee who have been steadfast in their commitment, especially at a very challenging time in our history.

I wish you a Blessed Christmas and look forward to connecting in 2023! Stay tuned!

*Cathy Larkin
Newly Appointed MLA Coordinator*

From Hunters Hill

The Hunters Hill Lay Marists wish to thank the parish priests of Hunters Hill and all the priests that have supported our meetings or have given us daily reflections. This support has helped us maintain the momentum to assist or co-ordinate or help initiate other groups in the parish for example The Eucharistic Ministry, Holy Name of Mary Ukelele group, the Rosary Group and Shelah Lekha Scripture group.



The Scripture group is the newest group which culminated in a wonderful Sabbath dinner.

We are still continuing to support the Marist Missions Fr Gil and Sr Lilibeth and their orphanages in the Philippines. We will be selling raffle tickets for a beautiful Christmas cake decorated by one of our members on 10 and 11 Dec weekend at Church.

This year we have also joined other Marist groups and worked on Pope Francis' Encyclical Laudato Si and have produced an Engagement booklet in the lines of the Marist Sisters' initiative.

We wish to thank everyone who has helped us build and renew ourselves this year and in particular our Mother Mary who guides us in all that we do.

*Cathy Gallo
Hunters Hill Lay Group Leader*

National Assembly – Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat



Our recent Marist Association National Assembly Gathering was a wonderful combination of discernment, dialogue and 'direction – setting'. The sheer joy of connecting again as Marist Family also made this a special experience.

Whilst there are learnings to take on board for future events, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. I wish to thank all our facilitators, speakers, helpers and the members of our very dedicated Working Party. I pay tribute to all our participants – whether in-person or online – who made this event so special by their participation.

We prayed, we listened, we spoke and we celebrated. We heard the voices of both young and 'young at heart'. We were challenged to open our minds and to stretch our hearts. We were given the space to imagine our common Marist future. Strong and consistent themes emerged:

- How do we include and reach out to, ever more effectively, those at the margins? To those who struggle, in one way or another, and are in need of compassion and love.
- We are part of the Church. Can we be 'gamechangers' - helping it to follow, ever more closely, the way of Jesus?
- In what ways can we, ever more faithfully, heed the call to live sustainably,

to be good stewards of our God-given home?

- We are called to growth, to personal transformation. How do we open ourselves, ever more deeply, to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, in our journey of faith?

Our dreams and our longings, together with those from our two recent online forums, will now be the basis for our Association's future.

*Michael Evison
Coordinator of Membership
Marist Association of Marcellin Champagnat*

Gemma Ando from Davao Philippines



1. Who attracted you to the Marist?

The first attracted me to the marist are the Marist Fathers. They organized a group of lay marist when they arrive in Digos City Philippines and I one of the pioneer. I am attracted with the ministry, Mother Mary, about the founders of the Marist and their mission.

2. What do like about the Marist lifestyles?

I like the Marist lifestyles about the ministry in jail. We bring our presence together to listen the gospel of God and to have a faith sharing after the sharing we have choir practice to the inmates to use the song for the mass, serving the Mass. Being a lay Marist its good to share the time or give time in sharing the talents in service, visit the sick, visit the person who is not in jail already or person that are out of jail already and more.

3. What is your best experience as a Marist in the mission?

My best experience in the mission is being together with the inmates. Also I can see the total conversion of some inmates. Inmates also know how to forgive the people that they are the reason they are in jail. Inmates know how to pray. Inmates also know that there is God and mother Mary to protect us, to care, to love and to forgive. Also the faith that I can see them that there is really God our savior.

4. What advice would you give a young person considering religious life?

Through Prayer, invite, participating church activities, attending the mass, charity work, sense of belonging.



5. Who is your favourite Marist figure?

St. Peter Chanel. A young priest with a great success.....many people were converted.

*Gemma Ando
Marist Laity Davao the Philippines*

Join the Conversation

When Marists from different branches gather together, we strengthen each other. Jesus said, "where two or three are gathered in my name there I am also". We would like you to Join the Conversation on the Marist Laity Australia web site.

In November Marist Laity Australia created a new Conversation feature on the Web site. This allows Marists to add comments and suggestions to each web page. Initially, a small group of Marists were invited to Join and test out this new Conversation feature.

The conversation is open to ALL. Here are the three web pages they were invited to contribute to

Vocations - Who first attracted you to the Marists?

<http://www.maristlaityaustralia.com/2030/People/854.php>

November Prayer Intention - Could you please share a "November Prayer Intention"?

<http://www.maristlaityaustralia.com/2030/Prayer%20Intentions/872.php>

November Cooking Recipes - Do you have a favourite cooking recipe?

<http://www.maristlaityaustralia.com/2030/Inspiration/873.php>

Please **click** on the link and have a **read**.

If you would like to join the conversation, please send us an email and we will gladly add you. We have recently updated the security code for each individual person. You will then receive a special security code to give you access via email.

We have added a "Nickname" feature, so that your full name is not displayed. Sometimes on the Web, people may use an "Avatar" or a different "Display Name". Please feel free to use the "Nickname" feature, which may be different from your full name.

This is a great opportunity for Marists from all branches to enter a conversation. Marist Laity Australia's committee is made up of members from all 6 branches. Marist Missionary Sisters, Marist Sisters, Marist Brothers, Marist Fathers, Marist Association of Marcellin

Champagnat and Marist Laity. This feature goes to the heart of who we are. A family.

Please **email** us today and Join the Conversation!

Andrew Dumas
Marist Laity Australia Leader

Web Site Update



In early August Marist Laity Australia cleaned out our Marist Laity resource room in the Colin Library at Hunters Hill. This has provided a great opportunity for discovering a rich treasure trove of Marist Spiritual resources from various sources. Marist Laity Australia is endeavouring to place many of these resources on our web site.

Throughout the year there have been assorted array of resources created online. Please tick the thumbs up button on the page if you like the resource.



When a new resources is ADDED we share this on **Facebook**. Please check these out <https://www.facebook.com/marist.laity.Australia> - Please FRIEND us if you have not already done so. Please LIKE and SHARE our resources..

Watch the video walking through our web site new features
<https://tinyurl.com/mla-web-updates-2022>

Join us via ZOOM The Spirit of the Lord is upon me on December 11



It is time to join together with other Marists from across the world as we prepare for Christmas.

Marist Laity Australia would like to invite you to join us on Sunday December 11 at 7 pm (EAST Eastern Australian Time) to As we prepare for Christmas.

We will reflect on 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me' which is taken from the day's Gospel.

Please click on the [REGISTRATION link](#)

<http://www.maristlaityaustralia.com/2030/Events/866.php>

and join us with other Marists from across the world to pray, discuss and join together.



Marist Online Prayer

The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me

Sunday December 11 @ 7 pm

Marist ZOOM Prayer - The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Me - December 11

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