



Newsletter

Fourviere Bicentenary Special Edition

Welcome to this very special edition of MLA newsletter as the articles within reflect the wonderful celebration of 200 years of Marist Spirit across the world!

I hope you enjoy this special MLA edition that honours the lives and stories of the founders, delights in the recent celebratory events and which, through the words of fellow Marists, continues to inspire us today !

Warm regards

Margaret Woods
Coordinator Marist Laity Australia

The banner seen on the right (used at the Hunters Hill Fourviere celebrations) reflects the core values of MLA.

The **simplicity** in which family, friends and acquaintances are invited to say "YES" to the call to live the Marist spirit. A spirit, simple in its focus on the love of God as revealed through Christ and reflected so beautifully in the person and spirit of Mary.

The **flexibility** to handle life's challenges and changes, in a spirit of acceptance, love and hope.

To be **inclusive** in all manner of dealing with others, especially those who are part of our outreach programs through either work or

MLA group projects. The banner celebrates the spirit of Mary in today's world, fleshing the values and teachings of the Gospel, which in turn honour Christ's life.

This is the invitation, are we ready to say "YES"?



Laity Speech given at the Fourviere Celebration

By Maria Baden
July 23 2016 – Hunters Hill

In June, I travelled to the south of Germany with my family to celebrate a family reunion. Mum was one of 12 children (as pictured here with her family) and from the family tree, I estimated there would be some 200 people at the reunion. Only 70 turned up! We had come all the way from Australia and yet, many who lived in Germany, weren't there!

I learnt 3 things from this family reunion.

1. All the females in Mums generation had been given the name MARIA as their second name, in honour of Mary!
2. Not everyone who belongs to a family has the same enthusiasm, commitment, and depth of belonging.
3. The importance of passing on the stories and traditions of the family to the younger generation; to visiting the places that are vital to the family; the effect it has when you meet other family members face to face and seeing yourself reflected in them, recognising who you are, through the other and realising that you belong to something much bigger than just yourself!



The Fourviere pledge formally gave us our family name: MARIST. It is the name of a woman and it is her first name, a personal name. Her name appears 5 times in the pledge. There were 12 young men who signed this promise in her presence in the chapel at Fourviere. Not all would remain committed to the promise. The ones we know of – Courveille, Declas, Colin, Champagnat and Terrailon. The others, for whatever reasons, took another path. And that's OK! Because, the family grew!!

Today, the Fourviere Pledge must be interpreted anew, for our times. Here is my attempt.

1. We (a group) work together as committed people: "sincere intention"
 2. We are human/fallible: "in so far as we can".
 3. We are a deeply reflective, prayerful people: "having weighed everything before God"
 4. We accept the inevitability of suffering because Christ's strength is in us; we remain in a church that renews
 5. We will not be an obstacle between God and others: "saving souls in every way"
- Fourviere was a promise for the future. One could describe the events of 200 years ago as the twelve's YES to a call they fervently believed came from Mary.
- And, just like Mary, full of expectation and joy when she went to Elizabeth to share her Annunciation, these men began sharing this new reality. Marcellin, quickly gathering young men to be the teaching brothers that he had insisted should be part of this multi-

branched Marist family. Colin, sharing with his brother, Pierre and he was immediately inspired to contact Jeanne Marie Chavoin and Marie Jottillon – the beginning of the Marist Sisters. Lay people were attracted to the society from the very beginning. Eymard, organising the 3rd Order which later provided lay missionary Sisters to follow in the footsteps of the amazing Francoise Perroton and which later became yet another branch - the SMSMs. Each person recognising themselves as belonging to this family of Mary.

In a reflection by Francis Drouilly SM, he asks: "For us ...we who say that we are and want to be Marists, can the commitment they took 2 centuries ago still be our own? Today, what are they, the young men of Fourviere, telling us?"

In the Fourviere pledge, apart from promising to found "the pious congregation of Marists", the only other goal they set themselves was "saving souls in every way". What does this mean? Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, speaks of the wisdom of the Desert monks of the 4th century and I saw in that a closeness to Marist wisdom in how we, as Marists, can approach this. The desert monks spoke of "winning" the neighbour for God. "The foundation is our neighbour whom we must win. That is the place to begin. Every commandment of Christ depends on this one." Colin said: "Let us win hearts for her. In winning them for Mary, we win them for Jesus". To win the person is to put them in touch with God. Colin spoke of "tasting God". Isn't this our mission today, as Marists, to put people in touch with God? Not to preach rules but to be "like a bridge".

The Desert monks spoke of being an obstacle in another's path to God. The church has, at times, been this very obstacle! Colin's prophetic words ring true today: "The Society must begin a new church over again." We Marists are about being part of a church that

renews.

The desert monks identified these obstacles we put between God and the neighbour: inattention to the other, inappropriate kinds of harshness, looking down on others, superiority, eagerness to judge. To counter these obstacles, they advocated an approach of humility, solidarity and identification with the other. This surely is the language of MERCY! I hear strong echoes here with Marist spirituality.

"Let us learn to understand the human heart. Let us put ourselves in the place of those to whom we are speaking. Would outbursts of invective win our hearts? (Fr Colin) If we can manage to do this, we are doing the work of Mary!"

Last year, Margie Woods and I attended the 3rd European Meeting of Lay Marists in Madrid: With Mary we Advance: Marist Mission in a Church that Renews. There were lay Marists from all over Europe. The invited guests came from NZ, New Caledonia, Philippines, USA, Canada, Mexico, Peru, Brazil and Australia. Every person there had the "sincere intention" to work together, was a person of deep reflection and prayer, had had to struggle to incarnate the Marist vision in their countries, remained faithful to the Church and was so full of joy and enthusiasm, eager to bring God to others. This was a Fourviere for us!

My point is that Fourviere didn't just happen 200 years ago! We are always, in a sense, beginning.

Fr Drouilly: "Let us look at this word: the beginning! To truly honour these first confreres, means to dare after them...We need to begin....we never finish beginning as we never finish loving...Somehow the promise of Fourviere is before us."

I'd like to finish with the story of the Moreton

bay fig tree which stands in our top paddock. It's been around for some 250 years, well before colonialists cleared the rainforest. We came back from our trip to find our beautiful tree uprooted. I called in the Landcare man & we potted about 100 cuttings.



Then he said this: " See that branch? It's still alive! Just leave the tree lying for 6 months and, if I'm not wrong, that branch will grow into a new tree."

Hope and joy to you all!

Fourvière Novena: a personal experience by Josieane Espinosa

The nine days of reflection that I spent in preparation for the celebration of the bicentenary of the foundation of the Marist congregation allowed me an exceptional opportunity to ponder the significance of the Fourvière Pledge. In particular, it helped me, as a lay member, to put into perspective the commitment I made to live the ethos of the Marist family.

Knowing that Marists around the globe were

united in prayer lent me the wonderful feeling of solidarity and humility which further intensified my commitment. With gratitude and great admiration, I read each day, of the faith, the dedication and the resilience of the first Marists. The enthusiasm with which they united as one to bring to fruition their dream of doing Mary's work in the world, led me to ponder on my own faith and my attitude to the trials and tribulations that life brings.

Those nine days of reflection also provided me an insight into our holy father's spirituality. We often hear how 'very Marist' it is. While reading his thoughts on the Church today and his insights in living the Gospel values in everyday life, I began to see that similarity more clearly. Pope Francis' teaching is so close to that of the founder of the Society of Mary, Father Jean-Claude Colin. Both leaders share the same image of the Marian Church and an equally inspiring passion with which they speak of the tenderness of God.

The two questions below recurred in my mind during my days of reflection:

Is it simply a coincidence that we celebrate the two hundred year anniversary of the Marist Foundation at the same time as the Jubilee Year of Mercy?

Is it another coincidence that the themes for the Fourvière Bicentenary Celebration in Sydney, were those of hope and joy when our world today is so fraught with terror, despair and poverty?

The Prayer "Mary of Fourvière " that we recited each day provided me the answers to these questions. I share this prayer with you below so you too may find the answers.

I pray that with the Marist Family, we can be Mary's presence in the world today, in the Church and in our daily life.

Mary of Fourviere, show us what love is and from where it draws origin and its constantly renewed power.

Holy Mary, good Mother of Fourviere, you have given the world . true light, Jesus, your Son, the Son of God.

You abandoned yourself completely to God's call and this became a wellspring of the goodness which flows forth from him. You inspired the first Marists to create a Society dedicated to showing the Marian face of the Church. Show us Jesus. Lead us to him.

Teach us to know and love him, so that we too can become capable of true love and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world. Amen.

Anyone who has worked in loneliness, with great adaptation required and with little apparent success, will find a kindred spirit in Peter Chanel. A timely reminder for us that what looks like failure is but a building block in God's hands.



The Fourviere Mass at Holy Name of Mary, Hunters Hill

By Cathy Gallo

Hope, joy and the future were the themes from the Fourviere Mass celebrating 200 years of the solemn pledge to found the congregation of Marists. Father Kevin Bates was the celebrant and he recalled in his homily "that sense of adventure, courage, excitement, youthful energy and earnest faith...."that the twelve young seminarians had as they made their pledge to be Marists. And the fact remains that all over the world and here in Australia we are their legacy today.

The HOPE for today as named by Father Kevin in his homily is that "today's prophets are calling us to breathe new heart into our world and our Church" And as in essence recorded in the vision statements presented by the various family members, to create a Church with Mary's features, to be game-changers, to be prayerful and active in the community, to be courageous and more open and "to set out in haste to the peripheries.....". All this to be achieved, by trusting in Mary's leadership.

Our JOY is our ability to respond to Mary's gracious choice with hearts open to the challenges of this new age of confusion, to work together and to live simply as Mary did. As a result, we just do feel the joy that Father Colin felt as stated in OM II doc639:1 "Never were we so joyous. Never did we laugh with such a good heart."

We can approach the FUTURE with confidence with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Mary the mother of our Saviour, Jesus. "She was the support of the Church in the first times. She will be so as well in the end."(EK 14)

The last verse of the song written and sung by Father Kevin at the Mass, "More than Memories" succinctly summarises as a prayer, our future direction, our hope and our joy.

"So Mary help us listen where God's Word may best be born. May your gracious choice sustain us; may your spirit be our home. May our founding grace soon risk again, may mission open wide, May we honour and embrace this time while you stay by our side. Ave, Ave Maria."



Marist Laity Australia Statement



**Read by Andrew Dumas
at Hunters Hill Fourviere Celebration**

Marist Laity Australia is an independent and interdependent branch of the Marist family. We strive to bring forth the vision of the early Marists to support lay men and women chosen by 'gracious choice' to the unique calling of living Mary's spirit in the world.

We seek to build relationships with our own families, local communities, other Marists, and the wider world. By being inclusive, flexible and choosing simplicity in our lives, we strive to follow Mary in our own lives.

We desire to share this vision with others through our MLA core committee, Marist groups across Australia, Oceania and Internationally, and through reflection days, retreats, conferences, newsletters, and the Marist Laity Australia web site. Our hope is that we can continue to build a framework and community to inspire others to live Mary's spirit within the world.

Fourviere Day Luncheon Report

By Jen Aduckiewicz

Following the Mass at Holy Name of Mary Church, the Marist family meandered their way to the Brother Emelian Hall at St Joseph's College. Time was given to gather, to re-connect with old friends and make new ones. They came from Canada to Caloundra, from Newcastle to New Caledonia and from Longreach to the Philippines in a spirit of friendship and camaraderie.



The Hall was stunningly decorated in black and white with birdsong table mats and huge balloons flying overhead. Pictures of our Marist heritage and of Young Marist pilgrims flashed onto the screens. For a moment quiet descended as we sang grace together. After a fabulous feast of unsurpassed pink salmon and rare roast beef with a wide range of side dishes we were treated to a vision of hope and joy for the future. Maria Baden's talk sprang from the heart. A story with cultural overlays and of personal connections (see shortened version of Maria's talk in this edition)

Dessert stumped many of us as we chose the smallest portions from the vast array of food delights too wonderful to deny. As we enjoyed our cake and coffee, Brother Michael Green

addressed us in his inimitable way with grace and a deep knowledge of our Marist history. Yes times may be challenging at present, our numbers dwindling, much of the church in crisis. Michael reminded us that it was ever thus. From our beginning 200 years ago there have always been great challenges. Even our inception seemed unlikely.

On this day 200 years ago, 23 July 1816, a group of 12 young men climbed the hill to the Chapel of the Virgin at Fourviere. They held a secret plan for re-building the Church. They felt a call to do 'Mary's Work' and on that day they solemnly pledged themselves to that end. They were to be known as 'Mary-ists'. At that time the 'age of unbelief' was evident. The style of the Ancient Regime was incapable of addressing the problem. The Society of Mary was established in the hope that as our mother, Mary could rekindle the Church through love and nurturing.

The Council Fathers at Vatican 11 wrestled with what to do with Mary. The decision to integrate her into the Church, so that she is an icon of all the Church was called to be. This decision has given us a richer and more balanced Marian theology than the founding Marists had.

On reflection of Br Michael's words, we learn from Mary that we are called to centre ourselves on the Risen Christ so that as disciples we can be filled with hope and joy for the future.

A final farewell song - Salve Regina, Hail Queen of Mercy'. Our Holy Mother is ever with us. Surely the theme of this Fourviere Day of 'Hope and Joy for the Future' is off to a great start.

Marists Word wide United in Prayer

Our celebration at Holy Name of Mary Church, Hunters Hill and the Lunch which followed at Joeys with the presentations from each of the branches of the Marist Family, including that of Maria Baden for Marist Laity Australia, were part of a worldwide celebration.



The international celebration of the Bicentenary of the Fourvière Pledge was held in the Basilica of Our Lady of Fourvière, Lyon, France.

Superior-General of the Society of Mary, **Fr John Hannan SM**, presided at the Bicentenary liturgy. Also present and participating in the liturgy were Marist Sisters' Superior-General, **Sr Grace Ellul SM**, Missionary Sisters' Superior-General, **Sr Georgeanne Donovan SMSM** and Marist Brothers' Superior-General, **Br Emili Turu FMS**.

The Bicentenary Mass at Fourviere was simulcast and can be viewed by following the link: <https://youtu.be/NxKiuxQ53RY>



Pictured below and prominently included in the celebration of the International Bicentenary Liturgy was the Cross-Stitch Logo, the initiative of our branch members, lovingly cross-stitched by Tess Young and hand delivered by our young Lay Marists from Brisbane who attended the Fourviere Celebration on their way to World Youth Day. Truly a collaboration of our Lay Marists, a symbol not just of our solidarity but of our solidarity with our universal Marist Family, all our efforts joined together, In Marys Name.



Celebration of Holy Mass in the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourviere, Lyon, France 23 July 2016

200 year Anniversary of the Founding of the Society of Mary Marists



Representatives of the five Branches were present to give thanks



Fourviere Pledge

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All for the greater glory of God and the greater honour of Mary, Mother of the Lord Jesus.

We the undersigned, striving to work together for the greater glory of God and the honour of Mary, Mother of the Lord Jesus, assert and declare our sincere intention and firm will of consecrating ourselves at the first opportunity to founding the pious congregation of Marists.

That is why by the present act and our signatures, in so far as we can, we irrevocably dedicate ourselves and all our goods, to the Society of the Blessed Virgin.

We do this, not childishly or lightly or for some human motive or the hope of material benefit, but seriously, maturely, having taken advice, having weighed everything before God, solely for the greater glory of God and the honour of Mary, Mother of the Lord Jesus.

We pledge ourselves to accept all sufferings, trials, inconveniences and if needs be, torture, because we can do all things in Christ Jesus who strengthens us and to whom we hereby promise fidelity in the bosom of our holy mother the Roman Catholic Church, cleaving with all our strength to its supreme head the Roman pontiff and to our most reverend bishop, the ordinary, that we may be good ministers of Jesus Christ, nourished with the words of faith and of the wholesome teaching which by his grace we have received.

We trust that, under the reign of our most Christian King, the friend of peace and religion, this institute will shortly come to light and we solemnly promise that we shall spend ourselves and all we have in saving souls in every way under the very august name of the Virgin Mary and with her help.

All this is subject to the wiser judgement of our superiors.

May the Holy and Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary be praised.

Amen.

Prayers

Please pray for :

Marist Sister Dorothea White RIP