

Being Marist

WEST CENTRAL EUROPE



What will the «New Normal» be for us?

In the last few weeks as we moved out of lock-down we have been told that at least in the short term there will be no return to normality and we have moved into a transition zone called the «New Normal». Maybe in the rush to return to normal, we should reflect and use this time to consider what changes we should make in our personal and working lives to create a new rhythm of life, that could lead to a permanent more life-giving «New Normal». Maybe it's time to let go of old baggage that we carry, old ways of seeing and behaving and have the courage to improve how we live. A key experience from the past few weeks has been the opportunity to slow down and appreciate life, as well as the quality time we have been able to share with those close to us. We have also become conscious of the consequences of Zooming and using other social media which can be physically

and emotionally draining, while at the same time missing live social interaction with people. We have become aware of the continuing challenge of combining work and personal life even when working from home, especially for those who have children to take care of as well. Some of our colleagues have to deal with the reality of not been sure what the future holds for them. All of us have experienced anxiety at some level about the pandemic in the past few weeks. Victor Frankl in his work *Man's Search for Meaning* has some words of wisdom for us dealing with a post Covid-19 environment when he says «When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves». We have some excellent contributions in this edition of «Being Marist» from school leaders, project managers and others in the Province on the impact of the past few months on themselves and their schools

and projects. We also have some thought-provoking reflections on the reflection day «On the Way of Mary» the Irish Marist core teams had in Maynooth in February. I would also like to wish you all a very happy feast day as we celebrate the life of Marcellin Champagnat on 6th June. Let us turn to Mary and Champagnat and invite them to accompany us as we reframe our «New Normal». Champagnat would encourage us that Mary can provide a useful reference point and guide, as we develop a roadmap to live with the continuing reality of the virus and adjustments to our way of living for the foreseeable future.

Mary pray for us. St Marcellin Champagnat pray for us. And let us always remember to pray for one another.

P.J. McGowan.



We are watching Saint Marcellin Champagnat

June 6, 2020

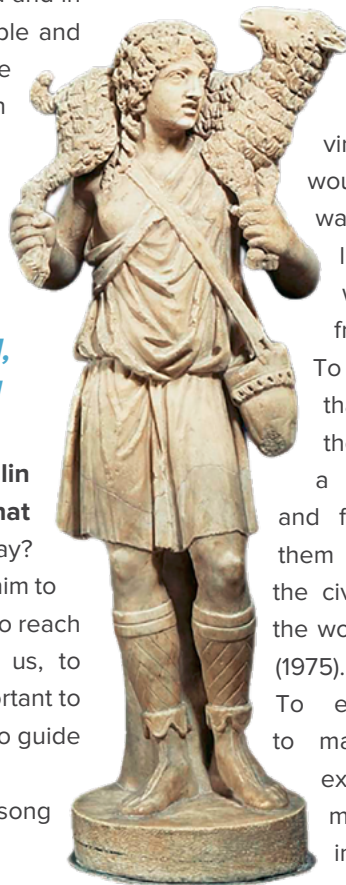
On this day of June 6, I wish a very beautiful feast to all the Marists of Champagnat in our Province. We may not be able to celebrate it with all of our friends, as in previous years, due to the restrictions on assembly and distance. However, everyone will be able to find, alone and with others, the right way to express their gratitude to God for the gift of the charism that He transmitted to us through Marcellin, for the life of the Church and the world.

I believe that the best way to celebrate it is undoubtedly to integrate into our own life his passion for God and for people, to have like him a heart filled with mercy in the face of the needs of this world and in particular of children, young people and their families. This is all the more true in the current situation in which we are faced with Covid-19.

I can't see a child without telling him how much God loves him. To educate children well, you have to love, and all equally

St Marcellin Champagnat

What would Marcellin do for us today? His faith and his love would push him to be close and united, to find ways to reach the young people entrusted to us, to make them feel that they are important to us, to give them our support and to guide them in this difficult time. In this context, an image and a song inspire me.

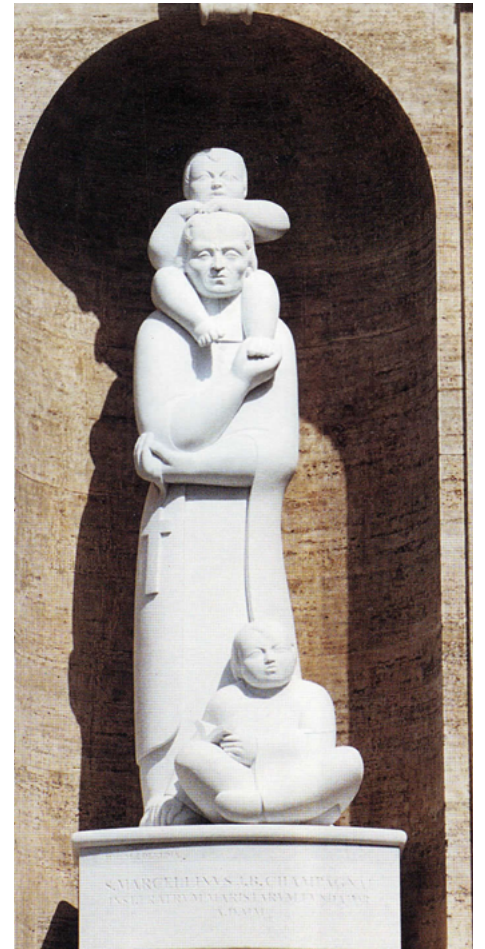


First of all the image: that of the [statue](#) which was erected, in the Vatican, in the year 2000, one year after his canonization. A completely unusual representation for a saint. However, it could echo the most frequent representation of Christ of the first 3 centuries: that of the good shepherd, carrying a sheep on his shoulders.

Marcellin appears there with a child at his feet and another on his shoulders. This statue expresses all the love that Marcellin had for the poorest children. He wanted to offer them the best for their human and spiritual development through Christian education. He wanted to «raise» them to their vocation and dignity as children of God - nothing less - and make them «good Christians and virtuous citizens». We would say today that he wanted to help them

live as men and women standing, free and responsible. To train them also so that they can make their contribution for a more just, united and fraternal world. Let them become artisans of the civilization of love, in the words of Pope Paul VI (1975).

To educate, to raise, to make grow... These expressions also refer me to a song: that interpreted by Josh



Groban, You [raise me up](#), well known among the Marists and sometimes chosen to illustrate our educational attitudes, like this [assembly](#) carried out in Brazil. «I am strong, when I am on your shoulders. You raise me up, to more than I can be. (I am strong, when I am on your shoulders. You raise me to more than I can be). Help children and young people to become fully themselves, with all their potential... This song, like the statue of Father Champagnat in the Vatican, is a good illustration of our educational mission. May they nourish our ideal and help us to journey together as Marists of Champagnat.

Brother Robert Thunus, Provincial

Testimonies of certain students of the Marist Brothers in Mouscron Belgium with the Covid 19

Hello. For me, containment is going well. At first, I was very happy to have so much free time to read and do my homework, but I never thought I would miss school so much. My parents continued their work as usual, only my older sister does telework.

It is already May 2 and lockdown continues all the more! No more outings with friends, more drinks with family, more lessons. I find that the weeks pass quickly enough but (I would never have said that before), I miss school anyway. We always have work to do, so on that side, nothing changes, but what I miss is contact with my friends; eat lunch with them, laugh with them between lessons, pass and miss tests together.

The best thing about confinement is that you can do a lot of other things like reading, writing, making music, playing sports, working for lessons, watching series, movies, playing board games. I hope that all the teachers are doing well and that it will all end quickly.

I must admit that my vision for today is much more relaxed. We do not know how to change things so we might as well accept them. And then, life is not just theory accumulated during our 18 "first years". It's also a lot of things that

we don't do at school!

For my part, I learn to garden and cook what I grow. I learn new cultures which brings new recipes too. I help my mom a little with household chores. I take time to play with my family, watch old known films or read certain classics. I also take time for myself, away from all the stress that school imposes to grow and mature.

Speaking of stress, I'm not anxious about the idea of covid-19. I know this is all very serious, I realize that, but I admit to staying away from all sources of information counting the number of deaths every day. I put things into perspective by saying that this is not the first pandemic and that we will soon see the end of the tunnel. Besides, I have faith in humanity. Millions of people help each other, support each other and reach out, isn't it beautiful? We have to keep hope in removing the positive from this whole story. Because without hope, we die.

Even if it is heavy, confinement allows us to focus on important things of daily life and to spend time with family or friends by message. What is certain is that this global crisis has affected us all. Who would have thought of arriving there?



Then this desire to take this time to improve myself more academically but also personally. Our relationship with time seems more evident to us than ever. Before, we complained that we did not have time and that it passed too quickly. Now it is offered to us. So I take the opportunity to read, watch series, garden, cook, listen and play music, learn new things... Family ties do not change, however, because we pass this confinement like every test of life. I keep daily contact with my relatives and friends. I must admit that I miss physical contact.

What is certain is that when we are done with this virus we can raise our glass!

Loïc, Jean, Clémence, Sarah, Valérienne, Mathéo - Group of the pastoral care of the Brothers in Mouscron.

Virus Covid 19 - impressions at the Free Secondary School Saint-Hubert

(merger of the Institut Saint-Joseph, founded by the Marist Brothers in 1909, and the Institute of the Sisters of Notre-Dame, founded in 1809)

End of second term without students.

A school almost at a standstill, doors open to welcome who would come, student, parent, teacher.

An open school, as if it were on call. Kind of like «in the time of the Brothers», where you were always sure to find a Brother when you unexpectedly arrived.

Easter holidays with funny taste, extension of a confinement established three weeks earlier. A third trimester starting in the same way. The Management team listens to the instructions that arrive in some drops, sometimes contradictory. At work to prepare

for deconfinement.

Listening also to the teachers, who deal with the news, who maintain contact with the students, by remote work, by imaginative use of modern means of communication.

The workers who, in an empty school, can advance in repair and accommodation projects. Which refresh the statues of Saint Joseph.

The spring of the Ardennes countryside which illuminates the nature of the tender green young shoots, delicate colors - white, yellow, pink - primroses, crocuses, daffodils. Who hears the birds sing, and admire

the return of the swallows. This spring which makes the air lighter, softer, more transparent; who does the same with our state of mind.

Who helps calm, who shelters the surrounding tension and restlessness.

Which makes everyone realize that school is a place of life, human contact, solidarity, guidelines for young people.

A school that remains a school, whatever happens.

**The Management Team
Aurélien Gomez, Patrick François, Frédéric Falmagne, Marianne Henon**

Marist School in Times of Corona

Please allow me to say a word on my own account: Momentarily I am not allowed to be in my Marist school for health reasons. And this really hurts. I know that the school leadership is in really good hands with my deputy Stefan Schulze Beiering and that the staff is doing everything to bring this strange and rather weird school year to a good ending. I am missing the personal contacts and talks. Most of all I miss my students, their questions, their laughter, their participation. «Learning at a distance», telephone and Internet cannot replace encounters with humans.

Of course we provide the pupils with tasks to do, we give them feedback, encourage them and keep contact with them. This works via our internet platform «schulbistum» and various other forms of digital conversation. In general this is successful, but of course there are difficulties. We are worried about those pupils who do not have the technical requirements or the support of their families to cope with the tasks assigned from school in an appropriate way.

In this context the personal talks offered to parents and students by our school counsellor Kristin Jostarndt-Fögen and our school chaplain Ulrike Weber have become of great importance. In the same way meditative and religious impulses hopefully give confidence and courage in difficult times. But we sadly miss our regular school services in our parish church St. Paul, the «Silent Break» (a



weekly offer to spend the morning break quietly in our meditation room) and the «Morning Impulse» on Thursdays before school.

For three weeks now our graduating classes (classes 10) have been coming to school to prepare well for their final written exams. For security reasons every class has been split into thirds, thus creating smaller groups of about 10 pupils each. Masks that cover mouth and nose are compulsory whenever you walk around in the school. Rules to keep a distance and hygiene regulations help to stay healthy. Our pupils support our efforts in this really reliably.

10 of 29 teachers are still doing home office and are not allowed at school due to age reasons or to pre-existing illnesses. The teachers who are allowed perform extra ordinarily and care for their students intensively.

From today on, 11th May 2020, it is planned that the years 5 to 9 one by one return to school in a kind of rolling system. This will be tough to organise but the happiness



to see our charges again will overweighs these issues. Until the beginning of the summer holidays at the end of June each class will come to school at least for some days. It is important for the kids to meet their classmates again and to talk to their teachers. They really do miss their school and their teachers.

We are thankful for the moral support of the parents, who, in difficult times also for them, help us carry these sanctions patient, engaged and solidly united.

Maybe there is in the present reduction which has been forced upon us also a chance to take a new look at some things in life, to arrange them in a new way and to distinguish between what is important and what is not. What this crisis clarifies for our school: Marist education needs living encounters between people, the closeness to the children, the humour and the common religious experience.

**Thomas Birkenhauer -
Maristen Realschule Recklinghausen
Germany**

ANNOTATIONS: The pictures show the efforts of two class 9 students, Paula and Sophia, to keep in contact with other students from our school. They asked students, teachers and parents to paint a stone and to write some greetings, a short statement or just to draw something on the stone and put it down in front of the school to form a long «stone snake». The motto of this event is «Marists stick together even with a distance.»

Recommencement of teaching at the Maristen Realschule and the Gerhardinger Realschule in Cham in difficult times

The Corona Virus caught us all pretty unaware. Many existing plans have been swept away from one day to the next. The Ministry of Culture has published new dates for the final exam, we have created new internal school plans on this basis, always with the uneasy feeling that this planning network could suddenly become brittle again.

However, we were able to respond very well to this development. The introduction of the school manager (www.schulmanager-online.de) over a year ago made it easy for us and our students to use tools that were already familiar to both the students and the teachers. At the end of the Easter holidays, the offer was supplemented by the new module «Learning», which our students and teachers rate as particularly helpful when exchanging teaching materials.

Our teachers provided the students with assignments, responded to their questions, corrected the returned assignments, provided the students with strategies for solving problems, provided learning tips, and had great time without lessons at school using the digital tools available and bridging telecommunications.

We have been talking about digitization for years, now there was no other way. Our teachers and students mastered the new challenge extremely well and made the best of it.

On the part of parents, there was only praise. Few parents felt overwhelmed. Some parents also had children in elementary school who needed special help from their mother or father. Some of them were at the limit of their strength.

I would like to express a special thank



Photos (Josef Kerscher): The new joint Marienrealschule in Cham continues to work hard even during the corona crisis.

you to all teachers and all employees who have contributed in some way to the fact that the time after school closed could be managed well.

At the time of writing, it was far too early to take stock of this development. We are still in the process of dealing with this crisis situation emotionally. We are still too agitated by the impressions that storm in on us every day. We all ask ourselves whether it will be possible to get positive impacts from this period and to continue them. We all hope that the cohesion of society that is lived by most will carry us forward.

I wish all members of our large school family and the Marist family around the world a lot of strength for the next few weeks and months, serenity when things

are not going as we expected and stable health.

I would like to recommend an ancient word by Martin Luther to all of us: «Freedom, courage and happiness should be our guidelines, not fear and powerlessness. Whoever wants to shape this world should not be despondent. He must stand by his beliefs and need not be afraid. »

As a large worldwide Marist family, let us look to the time ahead with confidence and stay calm. Let us be protected by the protective hand of God and let us stay healthy!

Josef Maier

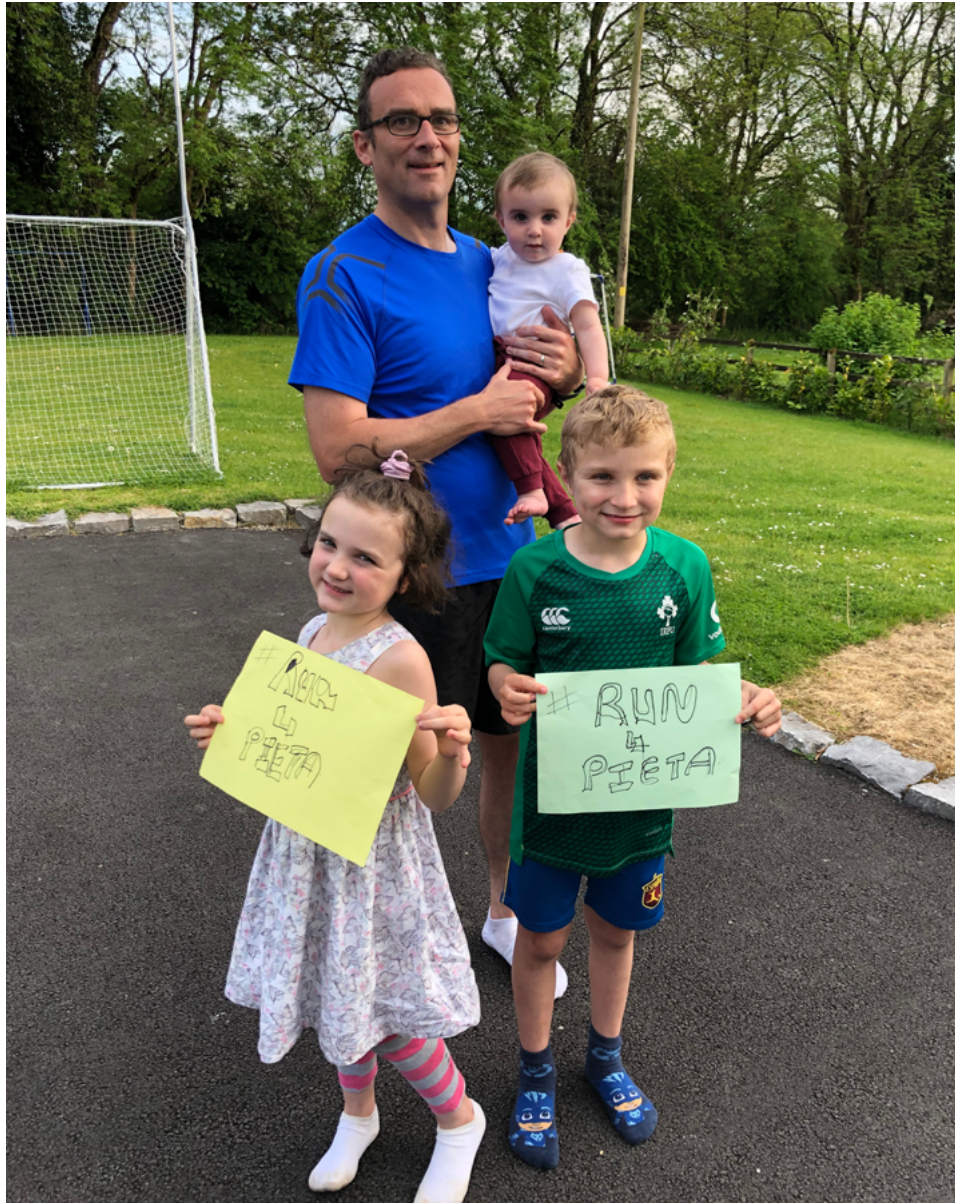
**Gerhardinger and Maristen Realschule
Cham of the school foundation
of the diocese of Regensburg**

«Its life Jim, but not as we know it»

In times of great crisis and upheaval, we often struggle to make sense of what is happening, we may seek some inspiration as we dream of better days and times ahead. In doing so we often turn to the wise words or lyrics from some of our poets, songwriters or inspirational leaders. I am no different and so I have turned to that not so well known 1987 song «Star Trekkin», which contains the line «its life Jim, but not as we know it» in order to try and describe life in a coronavirus world.

Over the last number of weeks and months, we have all been challenged to adapt both personally and professionally to the new reality brought about by Covid-19. In all walks of life, I can but marvel at the manner in which society and people across the globe have responded and adapted to this challenge. In our own school community our Senior Rugby squad have taken part in a fundraising run to raise money for our frontline workers. Like any challenge we face and deal with in life, it can be difficult when you are in the moment or in the eye of the storm to pause and reflect on what you have learnt from the experience. Often in life our challenges are private ones, not stretching beyond our family unit in most cases. This however is a shared and very public challenge, which has touched most parts of the world, in many ways that has helped us (me!) cope, a realisation that this is something global rather than a singular crisis or challenge that you are struggling to cope with.

The whole experience has highlighted for me the importance of one of our core Marist values, that of Family Spirit. While it is something we value greatly it is only in these times I truly appreciate what it



means for our students and staff. For it is that sense of family and community that we miss most, it highlights that our schools are about far more than what happens in the classroom. It is that family spirit, sense of community and deep sense of care that has seen our staff adapt, upskill and fully commit to helping their students through distance learning.

Pat of our educational philosophy is to develop the whole student, not merely the

academic. To develop and nurture young, resilient and socially responsible young men, this crisis has for me reinforced the importance of this philosophy, as we moved forward it is vital that we retain this as a core value, that our students realise that they will not be defined or limited by any certificates that they may accrue as they journey through life.

It highlights the important role we as educators play in the development

of young people and ultimately in the shaping of our communities and society. Across the world, and I have no doubt in our own homes, we are seeing individuals and communities coming together to help those most affected or impacted by the restrictions and impacts of the coronavirus. We can but hope that this sense of civic duty will continue in the times ahead and that the most needy and vulnerable in our society will remain a priority.

Throughout his life Marcellin faced many challenges, however his resilience, fortitude and faith ensured that he never lost hope or abandoned his life's mission. In these uncertain times I look to the resilience that Marcellin displayed and take inspiration from it.

Since 1884 the school motto of Marist College Athlone has been «Virtue Scandens Ardua» which translates as «Striving to Climb the Steep Hill», perhaps it was never more apt than for the times we are now living through. In normal times we strive to prepare our Marist students to climb the numerous hills they will encounter on their journey through life, I believe that the sense of family and community we have created amongst our Marist students is helping them in no small way as they seek to overcome the current sharp incline.

As a leader of a Marist school it has highlighted for me the importance of us continuing to transmit our Marist values, messages, ethos and educational philosophy to future generations of young students.

This global crisis has provided us all with an opportunity to reflect and engage in some introspection. The challenge in a post coronavirus world is how we use this examination of our values, how the reimagining of the simple things in life and the new sense of perspective that we have gained will be utilised as we move forward.

**Michael Dermody –
Principal Marist College Athlone**



The Jay Bird

The picture is of a Jay. Being from Dublin, I had never seen one in the city before. I noticed it in my garden for the first time because I had time. These are unique times. My regular routine has changed. I am no longer travelling to work, rushing to meetings, running to shopping, booking appointments, taxiing my children to A and B and C and then back to A.

I am working from home, supporting my school anyway I can, emailing, zooming, home schooling, trying to keep a teenager on task, baking, trying new recipes, missing my extended family, nieces and nephews, waving at my parents through the window, emailing, walking, listing the DIY jobs that need doing, planning for next year, cancelling holidays, saving on petrol, online shopping, learning about tigers in America, oh and did I say emailing.

During the covid-19 pandemic, I have felt the pain and anxiety of my own family, my friends, my colleagues, my students particularly 6th years, their families and my school community.

I have been overwhelmed by the generosity of spirit, that Community Spirit which is perhaps unique to a Marist school. I have seen the support, persistence and resilience shown by all whether online learning and teaching, meetings, lunch schemes, laptops, local bingo, karaoke or just caring.

As one 6th year writes, «these past few weeks have opened my eyes on so many different levels. I have learned not to take the basic things in life for granted and to cherish every single moment we have with people we meet over our life time, «J Purcell Time is so precious – make more time for family and friends, or like the Jay, blink and it is gone.

**Oonagh McCaul, Principal Marian
College Dublin**

Unprecedented Times

Dear Members of the Marist Community, I am writing to you at an unprecedented time, when we face significant challenges as school leaders and as school communities. Schools are multifaceted hubs where friendships are forged, where learning is nurtured and where relationships are built. Schools are places of laughter and fun and where growth is nurtured. Schools are environments where students are safe and secure, where routine and structure become the norm. Schools are an intrinsic part of our community, providing essential support to families. With our schools closed and our school halls quiet we strive to evolve and adapt to our new reality.

As our school community face the daily challenge of homeschooling, we are acutely aware of the challenges some families may face. With illness, bereavement, unemployment and financial pressures in many homes, education may seem insignificant, yet we strive to provide normality and structure for our students. Families and friends like so many of our counterparts in other Marist schools are divided. Elderly relatives cocoon in isolation, separated from their grandchildren. Students are isolated from their friends. As staff, though divided, we are united in our purpose and we are mindful of the challenges the current restrictions have on all members of the school community.

Our Staff and students have shown huge resilience, developing new methods of teaching and learning and novel ways of communicating. Online forums allow teachers to share resources, lesson notes, presentations, diagrams, assignments and more. Students engage through online classes and submit and upload classwork. Our students are becoming more independent learners with our teachers assuming the role of facilitators.

Our schools are much more than institutions. We aim to provide a holistic education, guiding students spiritually, emotionally and academically. Our teachers are mentors and supporters, nurturing development and applauding success. As a Marist school, we pride ourselves on values such as family spirit and presence and though apart, we stand together as a community.

Our Leaving Certificate students face significant challenges with the deferral of the State Examinations and the anxiety caused by the uncertainty of the current crisis. Their 6th Year Graduation, like so many other celebrations has been cancelled and will no longer take place in May, as is the tradition in Moyle Park College. We are confident however, that these young men have been given a firm foundation in the Marist tradition. They are ready to face the next step in life's journey. In the words of Seamus Heaney; «Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall, confident that we have built our wall».

What lessons have we learned from this experience?

If this experience has taught us anything, it is that money and power have little influence when it comes to something like Covid-19. We have seen millions of people confined to their homes, limitations on movement and restrictions on activities. We have seen empty streets and shops and businesses closed. We have been reminded of the excesses and the fact that we were living at an extraordinary pace and we have been reminded that in the simplest of things, lie the greatest healing. In the words of Kitty O'Shea (2020)



And the people stayed home...

And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed.

Our schools will reopen and our school communities will come together again but we must remember the lessons learnt and we will emerge as stronger Marist Communities.

When this is all over, may we never again take for granted a handshake with a stranger...

When this ends, may we find that we have become more like the people we wanted to be, we were called to be, we hope to be, and may we stay that way - better for each other because of the worst.

(Laura Kelly Fanucci)

To all members of our Marist Community Stay safe, stay well and stay at home and let's heal our society together.

Niamh Cahalane
(Principal of Moyle Park College)



#TheBigRugbyRun

On Saturday a total of 115 teams and 1,701 runners covered 5,696kms for #TheBigRugbyRun raising €40k! This will provide 5,715 meals to those on the frontline of COVID-19.

Demonstrating the Marist way a group of senior students from Marist College Athlone took part along with their coaches. Their main aim was to demonstrate the Marist Way, to link with their team mates virtually, and they set a target of 300 euro to raise by engaging friends, family and past pupils to donate. One of the first to lend their support was Irish international and Past Pupil Robbie Henshaw. The group were very conscious of the new economic situation many people find themselves in currently. On Saturday evening they had raised over 700euro for the front line workers. We are extremely grateful to all who supported this run.

Please find attached, images. Other runners Daniel Butler, Ben O Carroll, Iorcan Withers.

Principal Michael Dermody – Marist College Athlone



Making the Most of Lockdown in St Mungo's Academy, Glasgow

At the beginning of the Covid 19 lockdown in Scotland I read an article that resonated with me about leading in challenging times. The article spoke about three key areas of leadership to think about throughout this period:

- Relational Trust
- Collaborative Culture
- Collective Efficacy

Relational Trust

As the Headteacher of a secondary school in one of the most deprived areas in Glasgow, alongside my senior colleagues, having watched the news for weeks beforehand, we had anticipated well what was about to happen. We prioritised the young people and their needs but recognised the need to support our colleagues too. As a result we were determined to keep staff well informed, communicating and reassuring as much as we could. Our conversations were honest and transparent – maintaining contact with the whole staff team, ensuring that they could contact us anytime and that we are here for each other. This has been maintained throughout lockdown. It is critical that colleagues are trusted to get on with the job but I make it clear there are no expectations of anyone. Staff should only engage in work when it is convenient to do so. Family life, young children and elderly parents – these are the priority.

Collaborative Culture

Where would we be without online meeting spaces? Not only does it allow us to see each other face to face in separation and engage in personal interaction, it helps to spread knowledge, ideas, capabilities and information easily. I have realised that this is probably my key role during lockdown – to ensure that

effective collaboration leads to creativity and innovation and my colleagues have certainly responded to the challenge. We are having discussions daily which are leading to a shared understanding and a new awareness of our key priorities. I feel that we are stronger for it. Our vision for the months ahead has evolved collaboratively and purposefully and has created a positive view of the future. Our school values of Faith, Hope and Love underpin everything we do and help to connect our work to our mission creating a strong sense of purpose.

Collective Efficacy

We know that some of our learners will come back to school traumatised and distressed and we are preparing for that by planning ahead. We require to have a shared belief that through our collective action we can make a difference and affect change which will lead to positive outcomes. Our collaborative approach has led to clear actions that we believe will make a difference and thankfully nobody has dissented yet. Facing challenges together will be key but at this stage we realise that we need to be alert and prepared and we are up for it as a team. Work life in lockdown has been hard and demanding at times. I open my laptop early in the morning and close it well after



I should. However, I think that we will come out of this unique situation stronger and more determined than ever to support our young people, our families and our communities as best we can. We have used the time wisely and maintained our resolve to ensure our common endeavour is clear. The Marist values our school community is rooted in have never been more important. We will reflect on them often in the months ahead in the hope that we can remain responsive and alert to each other.

**Angela Milton, Head teacher,
St Mungos Academy Glasgow Scotland**



Be Mindful of the Gaps

Our daily normal has been changed significantly in the past few months, the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, has transposed and imposed limitations on our day to day lives. In a short period of time, our daily normal has become a lot less normal.

Mundane and practical tasks like going to the supermarket, now require strategic preparation and planning. Advance mind mapping of shopping lists is required now, following arrows on the supermarket floor, left, right, straight on, and every ten feet a warning to remain 2 meters apart. Waiting in a queue to get into the supermarket has also become normal, a long line of 2 meters by 2 meters moving silently forward.

During the lockdown, supermarket shopping was restricted to one trip per week, over the period of several weeks I had observed items missing from the shelves. The first few were obvious, hand sanitiser,

toilet rolls, the latter making headline news. How on earth did our ancestors managed to survive without 3plye, quilted, super soft toilet roll. By the end of week three, food products began to create gaps in the shelves, pasta, eggs, and flour. Relieved to see the toilet roll replenished in week four, I was not prepared for the gap in the shelf in week five.

On my list in week five was a card, I had mapped this out at the end of the shopping trip before checkout. The stationary aisle was remarkably quiet, I did not have to constantly look up to make sure the person 2 meters in front of me hadn't stopped, or that the person behind me wasn't getting to close as I stopped to pick items off the shelves. The stationary aisle was empty, now to get the card. A long six-meter row on three levels presented a multitude of cards for all occasions. I knew the card I was looking for was at the far end on the bottom shelf.

A gap had been created where the cards should have been. The absence of cards produced a shape not dissimilar to that of a small head stone, leaning back. There had been no effort to hide this gap, to shuffle other cards into the space. For several moments I stood in silence, head bowed in recognition of the meaning the gap presented. How many sympathy cards would there have been in this gap, how many of my local community had lost someone. The numbers reported in the news each day and recapped at the end of each week now presented a reality.

I offered up a prayer to the recipients of the cards, and to those who would find only a gap. The gap left behind by the absence of the sympathy cards has stimulated me to be mindful of the gaps not yet identified and to pray that we as a Marist community are resilient upon their discovery.

Eileen O» Neill - Glasgow Scotland

2020 is a year that no one will forget. Perhaps many people would rather forget these times, but the lessons being learned, and changes that are being made will have an effect on humanity for many years to come. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a lot of sorrow and anxiety to people all around the world, and with that comes a great deal of learning. However glum and bleak life may seem, it is fascinating to be a part of the greatest lockdown the planet has ever seen.

Having most of normality taken away reminds us of what really matters. We start to think about the things that under normal circumstances one would take for granted. It's all of the little things that add up and combine together to form our lives that we all miss. These little things vary from person to person, but what does not, is the feeling of love. The warmth that friends and family bring to the heart is unparalleled, and without it one may feel lost or isolated. This is the case for many people who were away from home when the lockdown was declared, and who were unable to return to their families due to the strict regulations. However, while love is the single most important thing in life, it is certainly not limited to the people closest to our hearts. Over the past few weeks, the world has seen more amazing acts of solidarity than ever before. People have united to spread positivity, and to help the doctors and nurses in whatever way they can. New personal challenges are being spread via social media encouraging people to donate to their chosen charity, and to nominate a friend to do the challenge, people are shopping for their elderly neighbours, delivering essential items that they would otherwise not be able to source, and colleges and companies are making the move to online learning and communication, allowing students and employees to work from home.



A year no one will forget

It comes as a shock to so many people when their lives are stripped back to the minimum. Often times it leads to frustration and anger, and for good reason too. However, if one can look beyond the endless excuses for negativity, it becomes clear that we have all been given a new opportunity unlike any generation before us. Up to now, daily life has been an extremely busy roller coaster with new obstacles arising each day. When we are not busy celebrating how we overcame these obstacles, we are busy trying to figure out how to solve the next one. This is a loop that plays on repeat for the majority of people. People tend to get so focussed on what they think at that moment in time is most important that they begin to lose sight of who they are themselves, and what really matters to them. Many live their whole lives not having an answer to this question, or perhaps answering it wrongly. Among all

of the negatives that a global pandemic brings is an opportunity to stop. Stop rushing from here to there. Stop trying to overcome obstacles that never really mattered in the first place. Stop talking, and start to listen. Listen to what the world has always been trying to say to you. Listen to what your body is telling you. Listen to your mind, and regain sight of who you really are.

While many people may not be keen on staying home for a prolonged period of time, it is only a matter of changing perspective to turn a negative into a positive. The monks who lived on Skellig Michael in the 8th century isolated themselves from the world by choice in favour of a simpler life, as did many other orders of monks throughout history. They would have welcomed a lockdown with open arms.

**Ciaran McDermott –
Young Marist Ireland**

The Impact of Covid-19



The world we live in currently is a very different place to the one we are used to. Covid-19, in one way or another, has altered the lives of people in every corner of the world. Workplaces, businesses, retail outlets, restaurants, pubs, hotels, cinemas and more, all closed. Hospitals and their staff working tirelessly, as they always do, but now more than ever. Families and friends separated. And of course, the sad reality, people are getting sick and dying.

It is a scary time for everyone that will hopefully pass in the near future. However, it has presented opportunities for deep thinking and reflection. It has opened the eyes of many to various different realities which had been forgotten. The value of people is the one we should focus on. Our greatest resource is each other. Now that we are not allowed enjoy the benefits others have to offer, we realise how we had maybe taken this for granted. This is okay though, once it won't be allowed happen again. I do believe that although we are further apart than ever on a physical level, Covid-19 has brought



humans together again. The numerous acts of kindness, both highlighted in the media, and those acts which go unnoticed by most, will have an everlasting impact, unlike Covid-19. We can say that the value of family spirit has been implemented as it is meant to be.

Personally speaking, my family, despite there being seven people (including three teenagers!) quarantined in the same house, has united and bonded during this time. From spending quality time together

creating art, to going on walks within the locality (as seen in photos), to simply eating dinner together, we have enjoyed and appreciated each other's company more than we probably usually would. Long may it continue after this pandemic. Many challenges lie ahead. We are not out of the woods yet, but we will be soon please God. Life will be allowed to resume in full again. What we make of it is up to us.

Shane Rafter - Young Marist Ireland

Corona and the Westerhelling

At the time of writing this post, the coronavirus disrupts our society and for many people life.

Physical contact is difficult or even forbidden, there is uncertainty about what is to come. The pandemic is a global crisis that affects and affects everyone.

Crisis comes from the Greek word *krinomai* and has to do with «purifying». Originally has a neutral (not negative) sound, and leads to judgment, judgment, therefore action, movement. First the realization of what becomes visible, the crisis, then the distinction, decision, and action:

Crisis (situation)... The word «crisis» has a negative charge in everyday speech. However, the term is originally neutral. Etymologically it arises from the (ancient) Greek verb κρινομαι (krinomai) with the meanings to separate, separate, distinguish, decide, settle, judge and judge. (Wikipedia)

After the guidelines changed in the Netherlands every few weeks from mid-March, the board of the Leerhuis Westerhelling Foundation has decided to halt all activities for the time being, including those starting from September. This creates space. The supervisors are invited to use this space as the description of crisis says: look - distinguish - focus - decide - and then act.

In this day and age it may become visible what is beautiful, precious and good, as well as what needs to be changed or even improved.

Simplicity, modesty and humility (Marist values)

For me, simplicity, modesty and humility as important values help to see a direction; to look, and to clarify and discern what



it means what I see at the moment. It is about an attitude that is not about me or ourselves, I am not in the center, but with two feet on the floor, upright, with an open look.

The question of simplicity touches many beautiful questions: what is the essence, what is important?

(How) can we remain a hiding place in this age of insecurity and vulnerability of people? (How) can we walk alongside people on their now perhaps wobbly path of life? What does SIMPLICITY mean to us as the Leerhuis Westerhelling Foundation?

In the coming period we have the space to look at our offer again. And also to our house: can we use the Silence House and the brother house the Westerhelling even more intensively?

Our center, our heart: «Living and working in the space of God» may also become more visible and tangible. What does that mean?

The Westerhelling as a place is an important place. A safe haven, without many incentives, where people can be as they are, with all their possessions and hews.

People who have experienced the silence of our place also recognize where or when it is not quiet in their lives. For example, a visit to the Stiltehuis has a double effect: it brings peace and tranquility, and nourishes the need to experience this at home.

Can we help people, especially now and after these corona times, to take the silence of the Westerhelling into their own lives? To Live Attentively, even if you are not physically on the Westerhelling? These are great questions to be busy with.

And I am grateful to the board that we are given the space to work on this.

Conny Stuart - Netherlands
May 7, 2020

**We are billion
of caterpillars
forced into our cocoons,
being called on to change
from the inside out, to
metamorphosize, to rest and
reflect, and to sprout wings.**

~ Anonymous



Irish Marist core Team Gathering 2020



The last few weeks have no doubt been an extraordinary time for all of us. It has been a time where we are tasked to re evaluate and re examine our needs and priorities, while at the same time look out for the needs and priorities of those more vulnerable than ourselves.

We have been asked to stay apart in order so one day, please God we can come together again. As Marists we know all too well the importance of that sense of belonging and presence with our neighbours, colleagues and friends. When we look back our last Marist core meeting in Maynooth on the 29th of February where we got the opportunity to be introduced and reconnect with all our fellow Marist, it is hard to believe that only a few short days later we, as teachers would be thrust so deeply into the unknown. Little did we suspect at that time the strange and unusual circumstances we would find ourselves in.

The main purpose of our meeting in February was to explore the Marist value «In the way of Mary» and what this means to us, and equally important what does it mean to the gentlemen that sit with us in the classroom every day. We challenged ourselves to ask what can we do as teachers to make «In the way of Mary» (probably the more ambiguous

of the values) relevant to their lives? What can we do to teach and model this value in a way that helps them to understand, recognise and appreciate «In the way of Mary» in their own lives?

We agreed that while the five Marist values are core to the teaching and learning that take place in our schools «Simplicity» «Presence» «Love of work» and «Family Spirit» are often the ones we are drawn toward in the school environment. It is simple to demonstrate and model love of work, it is easy to show the boys how family spirit enhances not only their school life but their attitude to life outside the classroom as well. As always there was shared ideas, and shared thoughts. We had so many suggestions of how we can promote ALL values equally. So that «In the way of Mary» receives the same consideration.

When we look back on our analysis of the value and the interpretation we decided on; the purpose of our meeting seems even more relevant now in the current environment with which we live. We decided that to us, and to many of our students, «In the way of Mary» means resilience. Resilience to overcome hardships. Resilience to face adversity and the unknown and to carry on regardless. Resilience to strive and nurture others even in a time that makes it difficult to

do so. I think it is fair to say that today «In the way of Mary» is a Marist value that we can all easily recognise, whether it be with our professional or personal lives.

We also identified that for many of us Mary represents somewhat of a nurturing figure. A person who cares and sacrifices to protect others. Something that we as a global community are familiar with today. During our meeting it was encouraging to see that all three Marist schools agreed that we must work hard not only to cultivate a community of faith in our schools but one of nurture as well. This of course is not limited to our relationship with students but also among our fellow staff members. This pandemic will no doubt have an enormous impact on our own families and communities, but on our school community also. While our well laid plans for school reopening in August 2020 may have to be put on hold for a short time, we can recognise through looking at our Marist values that our own wellbeing as an individual is interdependent on or wellbeing as a community. This crisis is our challenge, however, much like Mary and Marcellin Champagnat we can overcome it. Like Mary we will show resilience and eventually we will come together as a community.

**Kym Doyle -
Marian College Dublin**



Marist Gathering Maynooth 29.02.2020

As we gathered at The Glenroyal Hotel on the Leap Year day we had no idea how the world was about to become drastically different to anything we knew as «normal».

The only evidence of something being «different» was the conspicuous bottle of hand sanitizer on every table! As we greeted each other we embraced as friends do, something unthinkable now.

Our challenge for the day was to consider the one value that truly sets us apart from all other religious schools, that is «In the Way of Mary». We were set the task of identifying Mary's place in our school environment and to look at sustainable initiatives to keep this Value alive in our modern way of life.

We began by asking ourselves «how do we see Mary? What is her role? What are the obstacles involved in getting our heads around the idea of the mother of God?» We dissected some of the old adages attached to Our Lady. We looked at artwork and iconography. Many of the images we felt were too «detached» and «old fashioned» for our students.

Eventually we began to find the common ground. Mary is nurturing. Mary is loving.

Mary would care about you. Mary would feed you. Mary would lead the «Be Kind» movement, but she would never take the credit! Through open discussions we realised that what Mary would do, is in fact, what each of us as Marists strive to do for our students every day.

The question was posed» How do we keep this value sustained in our schools, in the lives of our students?» A difficult task you might say. The consensus was, that as Marists, Mary is truly valued and is loved by us. We continue to live out this value by nurturing our students and each other. We should look to become the «One Good Adult» in our staffrooms, we should look out for each other.

The Marist Family Spirit is alive and in evidence. At the gathering I spoke about my own experience of finding «In the Way of Mary». Not long after joining the staff at Marist College, our Principal, Bro John Hyland (RIP), senior staff members and our retired Principal, Bro Gerard Cahill, organised a staff bonding day as a form of induction for us new staff members. This was a phenomenon which was far before its time, 20 years ago. It was a wonderful experience to head off on a bus, driven by Bro Gerard, to the West

of Ireland, have a picnic provided by the Brothers, to drink wine and most importantly to have the time and the opportunity to chat. We had invaluable conversations about teaching, the story of Marcellin, the Brothers house in Athlone. All of the stories which were to become our formation. I remember going for a lovely meal and being so well «minded», forming lifelong friendships with staff members. It was to become one of the most nurturing experiences I have ever had.

It is this nurturing, minding, feeding of body and mind, which truly bring this value «In the Way of Mary» to life. It is our aim to continue this through new initiatives and developments within our staff.

Overall, we found the day to be challenging and thought provoking. We had many valuable conversations and open discussions. There was great input from Bro PJ and Bro Nick and the day was fantastically facilitated by Martin from Kinharvie.

The day ended in the Marist way with table fellowship in the form of a lovely meal and more lively conversations.

**Orla McGrath –
Marist College Athlone**

Reflections on the Marist Core Teams Day In Maynooth



As Fr. Liam Kelly, OFM, wrote in the December 2019 edition of «Being Marist» «In the Way of Mary» is a bit vague and unlike the other Marist values is hard to get a handle on. In taking this as our theme for the Marist Core team's day of Reflection at the end of February, we were taking on a major challenge for the day. Fr. Liam also claimed that «this was the one value that makes the difference and creates a school community with a difference».

This Marist value sets Marist schools apart from other religious managed schools. So, it was opportune that we should devote some time as Marist Core teams to reflecting on this important, key Marist value.

Of all the Marist values «In the way of Mary» is the one which most have difficulty trying to work out how it might be applicable in our school context.

To quote Fr. Liam Kelly again, «It depends very much on what Mary means to us. What do you picture when you think of Mary?» This was our starting point for the morning's reflection. For each of us we were asked to think of the «baggage» that comes with Mary. As could be

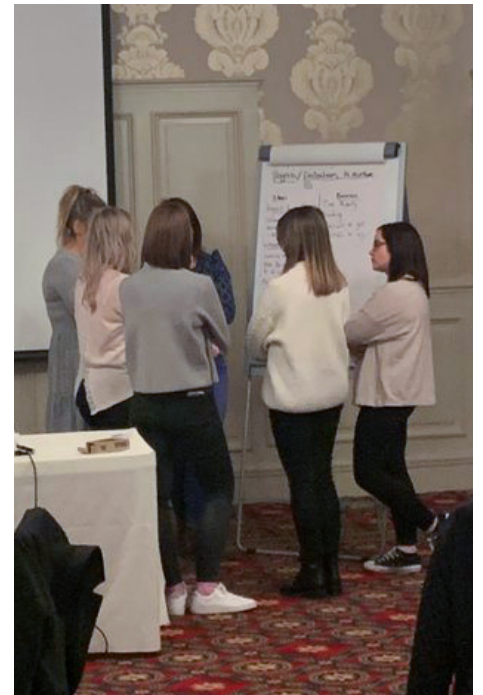
expected, most of it came from our own experience of growing up in a Catholic environment. Our image of Mary as being perfect, pure, never does anything wrong, over-pious, not human, not real, not relatable. Depicted by the Church as humble, always obedient, even to being subservient, even to the way the Church saw the role of women. The artwork around Mary didn't help either. In fact, it reinforced this image of Mary.

So, if this is our image of Mary, how



In the Way of Mary

- o Accompany her Relationships
- o Perspective Challenges
- o Adaptable Role-model to nurture Trusting Expectations
- o be open to unknown
- o 'Who is Mary to you?'
- o Hopeful
- o Change
- o Guiding
- o having
- o Not having all the answers



then can this Marist value - «In the way of Mary» - say anything to us or those to whom we minister today?

In order to live «In the Way of Mary» we need to let go of the negative baggage and construct a new image of Mary which has a more positive outlook - such as a woman of courage, a woman of determination, a woman of resilience, a woman who could cope with living in uncertain times, a woman attentive to the needs of others, a woman of faith. Mary had to live with uncertainty, being a refugee, homeless at times, never too sure of the future, bringing up a child who was somewhat different than the rest. At times she must have wondered what she got herself into by agreeing to be the mother of this «strange» child. Think of the answer he gave her when she found him In the Temple after being missing for a few days. But through her resilience and courage she never lost faith in God's plan for her.

To construct this new vision of Mary Is easier said than done. It will require help In forging pathways to a new model of «In the Way of Mary'. For ourselves and the young people to whom we minister the old images do not work, they say nothing to their and our lived experience. Their experience of mother may be that of a lone parent trying to meet the challenges of today's society, just as Mary had to



face the challenges of a male dominated society in her time. That is why images such as resilience, courage, attentiveness, trust, and faith say more to us today and young people can identify with.

Another image I have of Mary, is being a reflective person - «she pondered all these things in her heart». I think this Is another Image which could speak to young people today. Being reflective or giving time to pause and reflect in a world where so many things are bombarding them Is something which young people are longing for.

Another aspect of «In the Way of Mary» is attentiveness. Mary was very attentive to the needs of others around her. We see in scriptures that when she heard the

news of her cousin Elizabeth's pregnancy, she went immediately to be with her to help. Again, we see this in the story of the Marriage Feast at Cana where she realized that the wine had run out. She was concerned for the young couple that they wouldn't be embarrassed. She was attentive to the situation and did something about it. She hinted to Jesus that he should do something. And he did. These are images of Mary which speak to young people today. They are concerned for other people and the world around them.

In choosing resilience as a value in the Way of Mary as a workable Idea for the coming year in our schools was a good way to finish our morning's reflection. In the present coronavirus pandemic, it is a good value to cultivate both among each other as colleagues and among our students.

The challenge for all of us Involved in Marist education is to see Mary's faith journey as a model that gives meaning to all our lives and gives us a framework that sustains us in our daily endeavours. This will require ongoing opportunities for each of us to develop that framework at a pace we are comfortable with in our lives.

Br Nick Smith - Ireland



Irish Marist Core Team Gathering 2020

On Saturday 29th February 2020, members of the Marist Core Teams in the three Irish Marist schools (Marion College, Marist College and Moyle Park College) gathered together in Maynooth to link in with each other and continue the discussion on the way forward with our identity as Marist schools.

As everyone started to arrive, the atmosphere was warm and friendly, people catching up with old friends, greeting new faces and drawing them into the embrace of the Marist family. Martin Pearson from Kinharvie facilitated the gathering and after a lovely welcome from Bro PJ, Martin outlined the purpose of the gathering – to explore what the Marist value «In the way of Mary» means to us and to identify initiatives, which could sustain the way of Mary in our schools. The other Marist values have been dissected and discussed at length at our other gatherings in the past and everyone felt confident that this was the right time to approach this particular value.

The process started with a discussion in smaller groups on what «baggage»

is associated with Mary and everyone was asked to contribute their ideas and note them down on the flipcharts around the room. The conversations revolved around many interesting issues such as women's roles in the church and society, the artwork that depicts Mary in a non-relatable and unreal manner, the idea that she is not seen as integral in other faiths and the fact that we actually know very little about her as a person in her own right. I was interested by the conversation in one group where someone noted that «Jesus could not have been easy to have as a son» and all the worries and sorrow that must have come with that as his mother. She is often portrayed as frail or weak with her head bowed but she must have been a very strong woman to endure all her heartache.

When we all joined back up together into the main group, the discussion evolved into suggestions and ideas for sustaining the «Way of Mary» in our own schools and making it relevant and approachable to both our students and whole school community. These were then placed on post-its around the room and we were

encouraged to spend some time reading them and thinking about them in our own school context.

After lunch we narrowed down our findings into three of the most workable ideas that we felt we could work with to sustain the «Way of Mary» in our schools. These were Resilience and the possibility of having a staff team/relationship building day, Faith and Trust and the need to review our identity and plan for the future and finally Nurture, with the emphasis on the importance of us each having our own one good adult. There is an excellent opportunity with the Droichead process for new teachers and also in-house staff mentoring/coaching to expand on this with all our staff.

The gathering ended with the three schools discussing between themselves what the next steps should be in their own schools to bring staff together before the new school starts to discuss this work with them. Everyone agreed that the day had been energising and affirmative to the great work of our Marist Core teams.

**Christine Kilcoyne –
Moyle Park College Dublin**

Celebrating Marcellin

This is a pretty special edition and it's very apt that in it we also celebrate the feast of Marcellin Champagnat. As I read back through all the beautiful articles, I feel myself nodding and smiling as they echo and help me reflect on my own muddled thoughts and feelings during this difficult time. I'm reminded that «Being Marist» is so much more than we can comprehend at times; it really is being connected by a way of being.

Br PJ tells young Marists every year about his belief that the Road to Emmaus symbolizes being Marist for him, «wherever you're at on your spiritual journey is ok» he says to each group, «we'll meet you there». I think that has come to mind as I have read through what have been at times feelings of confusion and anxiety during this COVID-19. What is this thing that has happened to us? Maybe this time we've just experienced is our road to Emmaus. I know it has taken me to a much deeper place on my spiritual journey and I'm sure I'm not alone.

Marcellin in so many ways showed us how with courage, belief and kindness you can build something beautiful. Now that we begin to spread our wings again, and we have time to reflect on the beauty of what has been growing inside us as we cocooned with our loved ones; what beautiful personal growth will we see flourish as we become present with each other once again?

Where will we be on our spiritual journeys now?

I for one, am very grateful for what this journey has given me.



Maybe this time we've just experienced is our road to Emmaus. I know it has taken me to a much deeper place on my spiritual journey and I'm sure I'm not alone.

I have never felt so present to my children, my husband and to myself. A renewed sense of appreciation for the simplicity of life and all nature has to offer us.

My sense of family spirit has never been so alive in my heart and thoughts.

The love I have for my work is burning so strongly in my soul.

And without a doubt doing things in the way of Mary have come alive in my heart and my home; leading my children with warmth and in a nurturing way as I would like other children to be lead, giving them a means to believe, hope and love.

Marcellin Champagnat feels more present on my journey than ever before and I look forward to letting that flourish. For all Marists across the province and beyond I wish you a very special Feast of Marcellin Champagnat and am ready to imagine how we will walk together in the days to come.

Aisling Demaison

Meeting Marists in the Province

Interview with John Paul Cecil

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself

My name is John Paul Cecil and I'm the Principal Teacher of Religious Education in St John's RC High School in Dundee. I'm 37 years old, married to Nicky and we have 5 children – Eva, Daniel, Mary Beth, Marianne and Flora.

I'm very much a family man and I enjoy spending time with my wife and kids. I'm also a Dundee United supporter and enjoy going to the games when time allows. I enjoy reading and have recently finished the 5 «D'Artagnan romances» by Alexandre Dumas and totally loved them. I am currently ploughing my way through the Old Testament (at the time of writing I'm on the 2nd book of Maccabees)

2. How did you get involved with the Marist world?

When I started at St John's in 2009 the head teacher, Mr Haggarty, still spoke about our school being Marist even though the last Brother retired in 1993, so I was familiar with the idea of the Marist Charism. But it only really started to mean something to me when Br. Douglas and Br. Brendan Geary started to have more of an input in the early 2010s. At that time the first 2 members of our staff went on pilgrimage to l'Hermitage and came back inspired to revive the Marist Charism here. Their enthusiasm, and then reading about St Marcellin got me hooked.

3. What does being a Marist mean to you?

Discovering what being a Marist is all about and reading about the life of St Marcellin helped put my own vocation into context. Like St Marcellin, I feel a real desire to make Jesus known and loved and, like him, I've always had a devotion to our Blessed Mother who I turn to as «Ordinary

Resource». But in addition to that, I love his attitude to educational pedagogy – the centrality of loving relationships, living a vocation joyfully, and being unafraid to present the eternal truths of the faith in season and out of season.

4. For those that don't know Marists in St John's RC HS, can you tell us a little bit about them?

Our senior leadership team are committed to the Marist ethos and have visited l'Hermitage and attended the summer conference in Guadamar – Fiona McLagan (HT), Wendy Sinclair (DHT), Kenneth Black (DHT) and Rebecca Lapadula (DHT). We have a small core team consisting of my brother, David Cecil (PT Guidance), Lynn Andrews (PT Guidance) and me. Lynn and Laura Robbins (RE) facilitate the Marist Leadership program in the school.

5. As an active Marist in the province, can you tell us about some of the work you do?

I'm responsible for the delivery of RE in St John's, but I'm also tasked with promoting the Catholic life of the school. The re-connection with our Marist identity has given that an additional dimension that is very worthwhile. So, I put on retreats for all S1 and S3 classes on the values of our Marist school and the story of St Marcellin. I also run the school's St Vincent de Paul group and I co-ordinate the Caritas Award.

6. Who is a person you admire and why?

I enjoyed thinking about this and I could have put one of many, but I'm going for St Joseph. I love how, even though he is one of the greatest saints, he is so humble and low key. I love how he is a model

of holiness doing the most simple and basic of things – being a loving husband and father, being a hard worker, being chaste, and being obedient to God's will. He's a perfect saint for a husband, father and worker like me.

7. What accomplishments are you most proud of in your life?

I don't really have any big accomplishments in that sense to be proud of, but I feel really blessed to have everything that God has given me – my wife and kids and my vocation as a teacher. As long as I'm doing those things well, I feel like I've accomplished everything that I want to.

8. What is the best part about being a Marist for you?

I'm very proud to be a member of the family of St John's. I really believe we have something special here. When we researched the school archive in 2018 for our exhibition you could see the story of our school since 1937. There have been some amazing people involved with the school along the way – I'm happy to think that I'm now part of that story.

9. If you weren't doing your job what would be your dream job?

A professional snooker player

10. How would your family and friends describe you?

Happy

11. What is a significant event in your life?

My wife had a really difficult birth with our fourth child, Marianne, and she was hospitalized for a week afterwards. The consultants said we could have easily



lost the baby. This had a massive impact on me because it could have gone so wrong. It made me appreciate everything I have even more than I did before.

12. When is your birthday?

22nd September

13. When you're enjoying free time what do you like to do?

Spend time with family and friends, read, watch Dundee United

14. What is your dream for Marists in the province and around the world?

I am very inspired by the Marist motto

«All to Jesus through Mary, all to Mary for Jesus.» as it perfectly sums up the Marist mission. I would love us to return to this motto often to remind us of the foundation and the goal of all our work.

15. How you have been managing during lockdown?

What have you learned about yourself as a Marist? What will you take from these learnings going forward? how this period of COVID 19 has been for you as a Marist and what you've learned that you will take in the future?

I feel very grateful to have what I have

during lockdown. Many people are scared, isolated, lonely and struggling to make ends meet because of the lockdown. I'm very blessed that that doesn't apply to me. Having the means to keep connected with people and doing my job through access to technology is also a blessing.

The thing I find the most difficult is the closure of the Churches. Ours is a sacramental faith and so I really feel that lack. I know that others feel the same too and so I hope that this desire for the sacraments inspires a rejuvenation of faith in those that feel it once we can get back to Church.



The Pledge of Fourviere

*Marcellin, help me to be more like You.
By invitation and community,
may love come to life in my own home.
Be a model for me, Mary,
so that I may better know Jesus and be
God's hands, feet and heart for all I meet.
In the little moments of my life, each day
may I be open
to the hope and joy of the Gospel.
May Your story be my story.*

Amen.