



# SERRA CLUB of MELBOURNE Newsletter

June 2018

## K.S.C. DINNER

The Annual Archbishop's Dinner, sponsored by the Knights of the Southern Cross will be Friday 24th August 2018. This will be the 20th Annual Dinner and it has raised over \$1,000,000.00 to date to assist in the education of Seminarians, and additional study for priests. The Guest Speaker is Andrew Bolt, journalist and commentator.

## SCANZSPAC CONVENTION

A booking has been made at Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne, for 19th and 20th October. The SCANZSPAC Board Meeting would be held on the previous day. Registration is anticipated to be \$300 per person, with a \$25 discount for 'early bird' bookings. Accommodation is available at the Centre at an additional cost. Serrans should remember that this was the venue for the Serra International Convention held in Melbourne in 2015, and what a wonderful occasion this was.

The Theme of the Convention is "The Universal Call to Holiness". The keynote speaker will be Father Marcus Golding. Other speakers will be Sister Melanie Edwards MGL, Father Nick Pearce, assistant Vocations Director for the Melbourne Archdiocese, and Father Denis Stanley, Rector of Corpus Christi College Seminary.

## JULY MEETING

Our Club Chaplain, Fr Gerard Dowling, will celebrate the wonderful achievement of being ordained a priest on 27th July 2018. To celebrate this great occasion, the club meeting on Wednesday 25th July, will provide the opportunity to mark this special event. Three other men were ordained at the same time, and they have been invited to attend so that Serra can honour these men who have given their lives in the service of God. The three others are Bishop Hilton Deakin, Fr Clem Cafarella and Fr Jack Brady.

## GUEST SPEAKER

The guest speaker for the May meeting was Br John McMahon FMS, a Marist Brother. He explained the origins of the Order, and the purpose of it.

The Order was founded by St Marcellin Champagnat, who was born at Le Rosey, a hamlet near St Etienne in France, in 1789, the same year as the French Revolution. He grew up on a small farm with his parents, four brothers and four sisters.

During the religious persecutions of the Revolution, many Priests were killed and as a result, leaders were anxious to find more vocations. The Archbishop of Lyon issued such a directive and a priest from a local seminary was dispatched to Le Rosey to see if there were any who might take up religious life. Calling on the Champagnat family, he inquired if any of the boys were interested in the

priesthood. Marcellin decided to accept.

Marcellin had not had very much schooling and when he entered the Seminary he found the other students were far more advanced than he. At the end of his first year, he was asked to go home and think about his future. After talking to his family and praying about his difficulty, he decided to return to the Seminary and make a fresh start. The priests who ran the Seminary were very impressed with his new enthusiasm and dedication to study.

Marcellin had a great devotion to Mary, as did his mother, and he was delighted to find she had an honoured place in the Seminary. He found friends in the Seminary who shared similar ideals and goals in life. They believed that following the Revolution, the Church needed to be '*born again*'. They planned an institute in honour of Mary, and their hope was to include Priests, Religious and lay people; a radical idea for the time and in which the Marist Fathers, Marist Sisters, Marist Missionary Sisters and the Marist Brothers have their origins. Marcellin's particular contribution to the plan was his belief that there also needed to be Brothers to evangelise and teach the young.

He was ordained on 22nd July 1816 at the age of 27 and his first appointment was to the parish of La Valla. He set out for his new home immediately. Having suddenly caught sight of the village clinging to the hillside, with its church spire pointing skywards, he knelt down on the bare ground and prayed that God would bless his future work.

Soon eager children crowded to his catechism classes. Sometimes arriving before the church was opened. Grown-ups too flocked to the church every time he was to give a sermon. He was severe in denouncing scandalous conduct and his influence on the parishioners produced rapid improvement.

In spite of his many duties, Marcellin still believed in the idea of founding an order of Brothers. Once, when he was called to the bedside of a sick boy, he found that he knew nothing about religion even though he was twelve years old. For two long hours Marcellin spoke to the boy about God and finished by hearing his confession. He was just in time as the boy died soon after. From then on he was more determined than ever to begin the Order of which he dreamed.

Having obtained two young men who volunteered to be the first Brothers, Marcellin bought a little house near his presbytery. It was in poor condition but his carpentry and masonry skills enabled him to repair it. The two young men moved in on 2nd January 1817. So the Marist Brothers' Order was born. In the small house, the two lived as family. They prayed, studied and worked together. They made iron nails to earn themselves a living. In the Spring they received a third companion and then a fourth, and soon the little community had increased to five members. With the growth of the community, Father Champagnat thought it was time that it should have its own Superior. Brother John Granjon was duly elected by secret ballot. Champagnat then hired a school teacher who agreed to come and live with the Brothers and teach the children of La Valla. He also instructed the Brothers in the methods of teaching and soon they were able to give him a hand with the pupils. In a short time, the Brothers were able to go out and teach in the villages around La Valla. They were well received by the parents who were delighted to see that someone was interested in their children.

With the arrival of a new group of young men, the house at La Valla became too small. Father Champagnat knew of the ideal place in a valley between La Valla and St Chamond. As this project required a large amount of money, Champagnat was forced to borrow some, as well as rely on local supporters who believed in what he was doing. The Brothers did the building themselves with

Champagnat working by their side. It was a difficult task as they had to quarry out a whole solid rock face to make their bricks. Also, confident that the Brothers would grow, Champagnat designed a large building. In all, this venture proved to be a very onerous, and a times, dangerous task. However, after a year of hard work the building, which became known as *Our Lady of the Hermitage* was completed and open for use. One remarkable thing is the fact that there was not a single accident during the whole time of construction. There were, however, several close calls.

Many people had looked upon Marcellin's foundation of the Brothers with skepticism. These attitudes became worse during the building of the *Hermitage*. He was laughed at and ridiculed by many people. One of these was the local Bishop who told Champagnat that he was a "madman" and that he would not support him. The success of Marcellin's venture, in spite of opposition, highlights his faith, tenacity and courage.

During the following winter, the Brothers' schools began to flourish in the district. However, in 1830, another Revolution broke out and everything came to a halt. Once more the country was shaken by disorder, riots and religious persecution. Troublemakers whispered that priests were hiding arms and ammunition. The rumours even said that certain nobleman, an enemy of the state, was hiding at the *Hermitage*. One day a government official appeared on the scene to search the house. He was accompanied by a squad of soldiers. Father Champagnat calmly said he would shown them over the house to see if guns were hidden there or not. The man quickly saw the rumours were false and prepared to leave. But the priest insisted that they must be thoroughly convinced and took them through the house from top to bottom. As one of the rooms was locked and Father could not find the key, he sent for an axe and broke down the door.

Marcellin Champagnat died in 1840 and was declared Venerable in 1920 by pope Benedict XV, beatified by Pope Pius XII on 29th May 1955 and canonized by Pope John-Paul on 18th April 1999.

His Feast Day is observed on 6th June.

**IN AUSTRALIA**—In 1872 four Brothers arrived from Europe to form the first Australian community. Marist life and work flourished, the current Province of Australia was formed when the Melbourne and Sydney Provinces of the Marist Brothers amalgamated in December 2012.

The Order currently manages 54 schools in Australia. Br McMahon has been 54 years as a Marist and feels very blessed.

## NOTICE OF MEETINGS

June	20th	St. Catherine's Church, 2 Buchan Street, Moorabbin
July	25th	Rosary 6.15 pm. Mass 6.30 pm. followed by
August	22nd	Dinner Meeting in the Sweeney Centre.

## SATURDAY MORNING MASS for VOCATIONS

June	St Peter's, Clayton	9.00am
July	St Finbar's, East Brighton	9.15am
August	St Anthony's, Glen Huntly	9.00am

**MASS ROSTER**

	<b><i>June</i></b>	<b><i>July</i></b>	<b><i>August</i></b>
<b>Reader:</b>	Dan	Anne	Frank
<b>Prayers of the Faithful:</b>	Terry	Dan	Terry
<b>Offertory Procession:</b>	Jolyon/Christine	Max/Terry	Max/Alison
<b>Minister of Communion:</b>	Concelebrants	John/Frank	John/Dan
<b>Meals Clean Up:</b>	All Members urged to assist.		