

Cupertino Marianist Community May, 2013

Very warm greetings from Cupertino where we are experiencing summer-like days while still praying for much needed rain. We had a little rain when I wrote my last update during Holy Week, but not a drop since then. The community retreat led by Father Allen DeLong concluded at the Easter Vigil when those making the retreat renewed their profession of vows. One of the new features of our Holy Week liturgies was a revival of the old as Father Allen vigorously washed the feet of several volunteers. Father Bill Marshall, a former Marianist priest, and now a retired priest of the Diocese of Oakland, was with us for the week and it was duly noted that Holy Saturday was the actual date of his ordination 50 years ago in Fribourg. Some attended his jubilee celebration in Alameda a week later where Bishop John Cummins gave an excellent remembrance of the Marianists.

The Easter Season has been moving along very smoothly here, although most recently we were reminded in a very personal way of Christ's conquest of death when we learned of the deaths of Brother Richard Joyal in Haiti, Father Joseph Lackner in Korea, and Father Mark Catalana, one of the younger diocesan priests, here in San Jose.

Father Paul Marshall made his official visit with a stimulating final talk after meeting with each of us as well as the community council and enlivening the dining room with his hearty laughs. I always appreciate his insightfulness and positive approach. Shortly after that Mary Ellen Garcia, Province Director of Human Resources made her annual visit which included a surprise birthday celebration for her during the luncheon for community and staff. She brightens our home and we are very grateful for her dedicated service which facilitates the smooth running of the Marianist Center. Awards were presented to four staff persons classified as "Floaters" for their adaptability in moving from nursing to housecleaning to kitchen as needs arose. I call them "triple threats" but they are really "triple treasures" Ruby Arteaga was also recognized for her 35 years of cheerful and devoted service which began in the fall of 1978 in the "Vicky era."

Father Larry Mann has joined us for mass and meals more often than not. We are looking forward to the jubilee celebration on June 9, which will feature the 80th anniversary of his first profession. He also led the singing of the Cathedral Latin School song at the time of Father Paul's visit. He may well be the oldest living alumnus of CL. Father Larry has the habit of saying "No" to various offers at table, but Brother Tom tricked him recently by asking "Father Larry, have you had enough ice cream?" One evening his plate held a small scoop of potatoes and gravy along with three tiny Vienna sausages – which prompted him to comment with mock amazement "Is this it?" But don't be alarmed – he always has side dishes! Ordinarily he enjoys lunch in his room – and one day had a beer and a hot dog, which is memorable because he rarely drinks yet asked that the next time, "Get me a Budweiser!" He joined a group for the first picnic of the year held in a nearby park. Brother Pat McMahan is struggling to regain better health and invites us daily to join him in prayer for that intention – and also for the Marianist Family in Asia. Brother Tom Redmond consistently prays for the Staff. Meanwhile, Brother Tom Deasy faithfully reminds us to pray for all those who support the Marianist Mission. A new project where some of us make phone calls of thanksgiving to contributors to the Marianist Mission is going well. A feature of our community prayer is the reading of the necrology by Brother John Samaha, reminding us of those who have gone before us in Marianist life.

Several of us attended the Diocesan celebration of consecrated life honoring this year's jubilarians. I also attended the 50th anniversary of Father Dan Derry in Gilroy. It was a lively parish liturgy including an Aztec entrance procession, an enthusiastic orchestra, a vigorous sprinkling rite, lots of clapping of hands and great singing in both English and Spanish – with Father Dan functioning as both cheerleader and celebrant. On the drive back from "South County" I noted the dry hills. They are delightfully golden, but that doesn't take away the need for rain!

Very quietly, but most efficiently and artistically, with the aid of Jan and Jeanne, Brother David Betz continued to brighten the chapel and the dining room for the Easter Season. He was slowed, but not silenced, by foot surgery. Also very quietly Brother Frank Spaeth, besides all the chauffeuring, continued his rosary making with home grown Job's Tears. He also repaired a fragile pair of sunglasses for me, making them even better than new so that I can enjoy the beauty of the Rancho San Antonio park. In a recent walk I caught some of my fellow hikers off guard by greeting them with "Happy Summertime!" The only unusual sighting – and just by chance as I was climbing one of the hills – was a small turtle alongside one of the paths I take from time to time. I now call that the Turtle Path.

Brother Bill Bolts playfully pointed out a recent headline "Broken Bolts" referring to a structural problem on one of the San Francisco bridges. He continues to serve on diocesan committees and leads a discussion group at our parish church, Saint Joseph of Cupertino. And he keeps in touch with former students in Los Angeles. Above all, he is a great promoter of the Marianist Sponsored Schools on the West Coast and consistently asks for our prayerful support of Mr. Joseph Conti, the new president of Archbishop Riordan High School. Recently, the school's jazz band came for lunch and a concert.

When Brother Howard blew a fuse in his room, I tried to console him by saying "Better the computer than you!" – to which he countered that if he blew a fuse we would know it! His great sense of humor has kept him from exploding – so far. He takes delight, however, in calling our section in chapel the "Trombone Section" and posted a quote from Richard Wagner "Never look at the trombones – it only encourages them." He beamed the other day when Father George observed that his remarkable range is even greater now. That's like the line in the psalm: *walking with ever growing strength*. We noted Brother Stanley's mother's 99th birthday, gently reminding us what it means to age gracefully.

I now have two young flowering plum trees outside my room. It seems that Brother Joseph Nu'uaniu had ordered them long before his death. They were planted by our new assistant gardener. We are looking forward to the arrival of Fr. Chris Conlon later this month. We knew it was official when he was given a mailbox! Brother Tom Redmond thoughtfully prepared a memorial prayer-luncheon-cemetery visit for members of the families of our recently departed Father Bill O'Connell, Father Dave Schuyler, and Brother Joe Nu'uaniu.

Overheard in the dining room "You're acting like an old man!" "What did he say?" "I don't know, I couldn't hear him!" What we all heard was a crash at the close of breakfast one Sunday morning – prompting the remark "Thank God it wasn't the bacon!" And a popular cartoon circulating among us features this dialogue: "My memory is so bad" "how bad is it?" "How bad is what?"

Brother Gene is a man of many interests which he pursues with great intensity – the latest being the San Diego Padres, rivals of the San Francisco Giants! The visits to interesting spots around the Bay Area continue to be one of the favorite outings. Father Joe Hartzler seems calm and peaceful with a welcoming smile most of the time. When he appeared with an eye patch I asked him "What's that?" to which he replied very clearly "Do you want it?" Monday features meetings with our Wellness Coordinator and Wednesday is known as Donut Day. A Hitchcock film festival was a new feature, and the picnics are sure to be popular as we move along. The first Open Swim Day began on the first Friday of May. We began the month of May by celebrating the Feast of Saint Joseph the Worker, with a hymn in honor of Saint Joseph that dates back to the Villa Saint Joseph days. Then Father George Onida brought several themes together in his lively reflections on the history of May Day and the greatness of Saint Joseph.

For the first time this year I am going to the airport not to meet someone, but to travel. This first flight will take me to New York where I will participate in the meeting of the Province Committee on Aging Gracefully. I will miss the Cinco de Mayo celebrations here, but I am scheduled to return on May 9 for the first of several birthday parties on our calendar for May. Be assured I am with you in thought and prayer, grateful for your encouragement and prayerful support.