

Cupertino Marianist Community

GREETINGS FROM CUPERTINO AND SAN ANTONIO AUGUST 2013

In Cupertino we began the month by celebrating Blessed Junipero Serra. Brother Bill Bolts had written a short history which had been published in PAC, the newsletter of the Province of the Pacific, and it remains a basic reference. Brother John Samaha provided some spiritual reflections for the occasion and, at breakfast, Brother Paul pointed out that Serra was the Patron Saint of the Indians giving new hope for Father Larry and the Cleveland Indians. That afternoon Mr. Brian Reavey, Province Assistant for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, gave a stimulating presentation on Advancing Justice.

On July 3, we watched the impressive Province video on India. The next day we celebrated Independence Day beginning with our morning prayer and continuing with a poolside bar-b-que. When Father Mann was questioned for not wearing an appropriate shirt, he showed off his red, white and blue napkin. He also told us he couldn't be a curmudgeon because he was too gentle. One of his greatest delights is in identifying guests who came in numbers before and after the Province retreat at nearby Vallombrosa.

As we have been doing for several years, we highlighted the feast of Our Lady of Refuge, original patroness of the Californias, which is celebrated here on July 5. That date also marks the anniversary of Grace Pancipanci's arrival in 1995. On July 8 we had a prayerful remembrance of the Marianists who had died in the Province the past year. Photos of these men when they were young and when they were old jogged many memories.

On July 11 we celebrated Benedict, "our Patriarch" because the Marianist Rule of Life is based on the Benedictine Rule. Mr. Peter Ng came to visit that day, bringing with him his remarkable medical history. Diagnosed with cancer in December, he had fully responded to treatment a few weeks ago. He and I and many others were praying for his cure through the intercession of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.

July 12 was the anniversary of my ordination in 1953. I was celebrant for the community mass and we had early evening prayer in order to continue the celebration before dinner. July 16 was another special anniversary for me because Brother Wilfrid Hartke, my mentor at Hamilton Catholic, drowned on that date as a seminarian at Saint

Meinrad's. His death occurred less than a month before my first profession of vows in the Society of Mary. I also joined the retired diocesan clergy in the annual luncheon sponsored by Bishop P.J. McGrath. Then on the 17th I went to San Antonio.

Before and after the province retreat at the Oblate Renewal Center I was able to visit many, principally at the Marianist Residence on the campus of Saint Mary's University. The community at the Marianist Residence now numbers 50 so several of us lived in the Guest House in the building I knew well as our home during the 1971 General Chapter. Weather during my time in San Antonio was similar to my remembrance of that summer – except there was no thunder and lightning!

During the time before and after the retreat I simply visited old friends at meals and at other times whenever I found an open door. One door that was nearly always open was that of Father Miguel Barber who remains paralyzed ever since a frightful car accident several years ago in Mexico. I always found him alert and welcoming and eager to pray together with me. At mass he is able to say one of the prayers assigned to a concelebrant.

Another open door was that of Brother Joe Barrett one of my friends from my earliest years as a Marianist. Although nearly blind he has a huge outreach and is one of our best known Brothers. One I failed to reach was Brother Richard Roesch, one of the pioneer members of the Province of the Pacific, but now in peaceful and quiet retirement. In past visits Ricky welcomed visitors warmly and spoke wonderfully about the community and staff. I presume he would continue to do so if he could! I should stop now, but I do want to mention my special friends from the novitiate year of 1943-1944, Father John A Leies and Brother Leo Willett. Brother Leo's hobby is researching family history. He knows more about my ancestors than I ever dreamed of! The Annunziata brothers, Carmine and Frank, were in town for medical checkups before returning to East Africa where they have labored most of their life. Brother Skip Matthews came to San Antonio for the retreat, but also for a reunion with his co-workers when they were all together in Zambia. I learned there is a colorful bird in Zambia called Carmine Bee-Eater. I had to check the internet, however, before believing it. By some marvelous instinct, the birds remove the stings before devouring these delicacies! One of the links between the Marianists in San Antonio and Cupertino is Brother Tom Suda who worked so industriously and well in the remodeling – and beautifying - of the Marianist Center. Other links were the Marianist Sisters who served here in Cupertino for many years.

It was hot, day and night, and yet there was a refreshing breeze most of the time – and the buildings were well air-conditioned! I was able to make a couple early morning

walks at Saint Mary's concluding with a stroll through the cemetery alongside the chapel. I knew most of the men who are now buried there...

The Oblate Renewal Center is about twenty minutes away and is one of my favorite retreat and conference centers. I was the only Marianist from Cupertino so my reports of life here were unchallenged! I have written about the retreat in another paper, so I will limit myself to saying that I am very happy I signed up for this retreat. During the week we celebrated the feasts of Saint Mary Magdalene and the Apostle of Spain, Saint James. Father Jim Mueller was the homilist and gently reminded us that all Spain was in mourning because of the tragic train accident that happened on the eve of the feast celebrated with such zest in Santiago de Compostela.

I am grateful to Brother Tom Redmond and Brother Paul Fennelly who kept me informed about life in Cupertino, including updates on Father Joe Stefanelli who is still resting peacefully in hope of recovering strength. After all the medical tests were in, the only conclusion was "old age!" Father Chris Conlon graduated quickly from wheelchair to walker and was able to celebrate his first birthday in Cupertino with gusto. Mr. Peter Ng remembered Father Larry Mann as one of his teachers at Chaminade, noting that the students referred to him as "Bob Hope." When I returned to Cupertino Father Larry grilled me about San Antonio and was pleased to hear that we sponsor a university, high school and parish – and among other things, Brother Chas' vegetable gardens and Brother Cletus' Art Studio.

We will begin the month of August by celebrating Father Larry's 97th birthday. I will write about that in my next report from Cupertino. Meanwhile I want to thank you for your interest, encouragement and prayerful support. I was especially mindful of you in prayer while on retreat in San Antonio.

I am going to Dayton next week to attend the jubilee celebration there and to visit friends and family in the area. Be assured that I will continue to be with you in spirit, whether in Cupertino or in Dayton...

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