



2018

ANNUAL REPORT

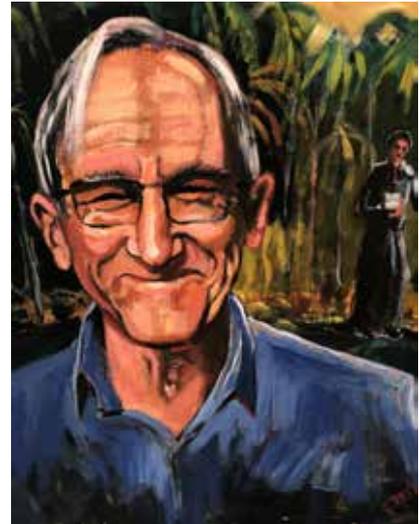
Marist Solidarity Cambodia



Executive Summary

The year of 2018 was a momentous one for Marist Solidarity Cambodia. On June 22nd Lavalla School celebrated 20 years of continuous care for children and young people with a physical disability. This event was celebrated by all the staff and students of Marist Solidarity Cambodia. Later in the year our MSC community tragically lost our founder Brother Terry Heinrich who passed away on November 20th 2018 in Australia as he battled ill health. Marist Solidarity Cambodia will continue to honour his legacy in providing education, health and pastoral care to the young people entrusted to us.

This report summarises the life of MSC. Its educational objectives, a financial report and images that tell the story of care for young people.



Thanks

We wish to thank the following for their ongoing support for Marist Solidarity Cambodia and the children and young people that we care for. Without the support of these organizations, dioceses, individuals and schools the work of caring for these young people could not take place.

Australian Marist Solidarity
Marist Province of Australia
Misereor (Germany)
Liliane Fonds (Netherlands)
Mission Bambini (Italy)
Marist Mission Centre (Marist Fathers, Australia)
Little King Movement (Australia)

Catholic Mission (Australia)
Grapes for Humanity Global Fund (Toronto)
United World College (Singapore)
Diocese of Bozen-Brixen (Germany)
Dougherty Family (Australia)
Woodlawn College (Australia)
St Rita's College (Australia)
Australian Marist Schools, notably North Shore, Hamilton, Ashgrove, Canberra, Hunter's Hill, Sacred Heart Adelaide
Kindermissionswerk PMK (Germany)
Joe and Veronika Butta
Maurice and Heilan Renshaw
John and Jacqui Tesoriero
Lenity (Australia)
Innocents Relief (Australia)
Changi Rotary Club
Diocese of Regensburg (Germany)



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History and Mission

Marist Solidarity Cambodia (MSC) is an international non-government organization encompassing LaValla School, Villa Maria Hostel, a rented house and an Outreach Programme. MSC aims to support young Cambodians with physical disabilities by way of furthering their education and assisting them into employment.

MSC is an integral part of the mission of the Marist Brothers whose foundation in France 200 years ago initiated a commitment on the part of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, the founder, to provide schooling for poor children from marginalized families. That commitment and that dream are being realized here in Cambodia as MSC works for poor young people with disabilities wanting to give them new and better opportunities, hoping that their formal education will prove decisive in changing their circumstances.

LaValla School established in Phnom Penh in 1998 is the only government approved school in Cambodia providing a full elementary school education for children and young people with physical disabilities.

Villa Maria, built by the Australian Marist Fathers in 2005 is now a hostel for the young people attending secondary and high schools and those attending university.

An outreach programme based at LaValla assists more than 100 young Cambodians with physical disabilities who live at home and attend their local schools.

All but a few of MSC's students live-in coming as they do from all over Cambodia.

In 2010 MSC was established to integrate various programmes and sites into one entity with its own Board of Directors under the aegis of Marist Brothers Province of Australia.



Values

From their beginnings the Brothers were urged to be simple, humble and modest and the image of the three violets was associated with those three virtues. In time we came to think also of the violets as reminders of “little virtues”, like hospitality, courtesy, friendliness, patience, encouragement, and others....



Executive Directors Report



Brother Tony Burrows

In this edition the Marist Solidarity Annual report we welcome Brother Tony Burrows back to Cambodia and thank him for accepting the nomination of the Board for the position of Executive Director of Marist Solidarity Cambodia.

There will be a note later about Mr Cheng Buntoeun who was Executive director from July 2017 to December 1st 2018.



“Giving children and young people with a disability a sense of their own value as individuals and as members of their community; a sense of purpose; a sense of the many possibilities that could be before them, and the means to live life in a meaningful way seems to me to be the essence of what we strive for at our Marist Solidarity Cambodia missions. That is the Marist way.”



Giving children and young people with a disability a sense of their own value as individuals and as members of their community; a sense of purpose; a sense of the many possibilities that could be before them, and the means to live life in a meaningful way seems to me to be the essence of what we strive for at our Marist Solidarity Cambodia missions. That is the Marist way.

The Primary students at Lavalla, the Secondary, High School and University students living at Villa Maria and all those living at home who we support, are encouraged and enabled to focus on and develop their abilities, rather than have their lives defined by their disabilities. After working with these young people, even for a short time, one no longer “sees” the disability but rather a young person with the normal dreams and hopes you would expect of any young person their age.

Most of the students come from remote, rural and very poor regions of the country and because of distance and their disability would never have the opportunity to get to school. By sending their children to us their parents not only show a commitment to their child's development and well-being, but a very great trust in Marist Solidarity Cambodia. Our resolve then is to provide the best

possible education, access to health, personal and social development, so that their children return, not only well educated but self-assured young citizens and members of their communities.

Many of the staff at Marist Solidarity Cambodia are themselves people with disabilities. They are wonderful role models for our students as are all staff who care for our students in so many ways. Some have been with us since the very beginning, others were our students who went on to complete University and now are with us as teachers. The commitment of staff to the care and development of our students is inspirational. My sincerest thanks to all of you.

Marist Solidarity Cambodia could not function without the support of our many generous donors. These are acknowledged elsewhere in this report, but I take this opportunity to thank them sincerely on behalf of Marist Solidarity Cambodia, the staff and particularly the students who are the main beneficiaries of this support. A very pleasing aspect is that more local people and firms are acknowledging and generously supporting the work we do for these young people.

I also wish to acknowledge the support and assistance of various Commune, Provincial and National Government officials who take an interest in and support the work we do.

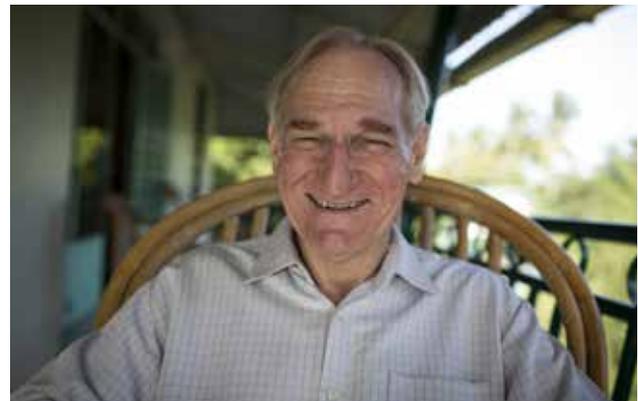
FROM THE BOARD - Vale Brother Terry Heinrich 20/11/2018

Brother Peter Carroll, the Provincial of the Marist Brothers wrote that Terry was an idealist and perfectionist. This was a blessing, and the reason why he inspired others and why they trusted and admired him. However, it also meant he was a harsh self-critic; never quite satisfied that he had lived up to his own lofty standards. At various times this caused him uncertainty and pain.

However, it was one of the motivating factors that led him to the work for which he will be most remembered: founding the La Valla School in Phnom Penh (which later moved to its current location in Takhmao) for children and young people with disabilities – initially at least some were victims of land mines. Between finishing in Canberra and commencing at Ashgrove, Terry worked in a Refugee Camp in Thailand. This led him to consider how he could make a positive difference in the lives of young people in Asia. Terry finished his term at Ashgrove in December 1996, and arrived in Cambodia at Easter 1997. Initially he observed and investigated, and then when he identified the needs he believed he could help address, he acted decisively. Over the succeeding 22 years the project he began has developed in scope and in reputation. It has been well supported by Brothers, Aid Agencies, Australian Marist Solidarity and many individual donors in Australia. Many regard it as a lighthouse ministry in our Marist world. Terry put his heart and soul into this school, these young people and his Cambodian colleagues.

Marist Solidarity Cambodia grieves Terry's sudden and tragic loss. We offer our sympathy to his family, his Marist companions and his many friends. Brother Peter wrote that he was

acutely aware that the people of the La Valla School and the Marist Solidarity Community have felt his loss equally and possibly even more intensely – for it is here where his heart was and will always remain.



FROM THE BOARD

The Board of Marist Solidarity Cambodia is the highest in country governing body and has final legal responsibility and authority. The Board is primarily concerned with the policy, strategic direction and financial oversight of Marist Solidarity Cambodia.

The Board convenes four times a year. The members of the Board are Brother Peter Carroll who is the President of MSC, Brother Brian Kinsella – the Chairperson of the Board, Sister Regina Pellicore, Br Allen Sherry, Ms Yi Sophea and Brother Max Meier. Also attending is Brother Tony Burrows the Executive Director of MSC and Mr Chhom Sopagna the chief Financial Officer of MSC

Board Information

Mr Cheng Bunthoeun announced that he would not be continuing as Executive Director in November due to ill health and also his plans to start a small business. His resignation was announced at the Board meeting of 5th December 2018. The Board thanked Bunthoeun for his 2 and a half years of work as Director of Marist Solidarity Cambodia. His gentle kindness endeared him to the young people.

The meeting of 5th December was also the last meeting for Board Member, Maryknoll Sister Leonor Montiel. Sister Len was heading to the USA after close to 20 years of service to the people of Cambodia. She will be missed here by many friends. She has been a very supportive friend of the Marist Brothers over the time that she has been here and her wisdom and experience have been invaluable to the Board. At this same meeting we were happy to announce that Sr Len's place on the board will be filled by another Maryknoll friend of the Marists in Sister Regina Pellicore. The board will again have the presence of someone with wisdom and experience of life in Cambodia and we are grateful to Sr Regina for accepting the request to join the board.



Lavalla School Activities



At the start of the 2017-18 school year the enrolment at LaValla was just over 95. When school ended in September 2017 there were 92 students, all but five of them residential. 21 Grade 6 students graduated in August 2018. Of these 15 students have continued to Secondary School at Takhmao, while being accommodated at Villa Maria Hostel. Three students returned home and go to their local Secondary School. The remaining three returned home to find employment.

The course of studies at LaValla is made up of Ministry of Education curriculum requirements - the study of Khmer, Mathematics, Social Science and Science and of subjects required by MSC itself - English, Computing, Art, Music, Health and Physical Education, Sewing and Agriculture. Students are encouraged to learn to play a musical instrument and tuition is offered in our own Viola Wheeler Music Programme.

Given that most of our students are over age for their grade, we initiated an accelerated programme of learning: it's our aim and our hope to have students living with us for just 3 years which means they need to complete 2 elementary school grades in 1 year.

Our students are from poor families and their own education has been constrained by the difficulties facing their families. At LaValla the aim is to broaden their horizons, deepen their knowledge, increase their skills, improve their health, lift their self-confidence and prepare them to meet the challenges that await them, in high school, at work, and beyond. One of the enriching experiences afforded them is their encounter with young adults from Australia who come to spend a week with us. They have the opportunity to practise their English and to try to engage with young people from a very different background. Usually our students do very well in this regard - come the end of a visit by the foreigners saying goodbye is not easy to do.

Residential Programme

All but a few of LaValla's students are from the provinces and live-in., returning to their homes for 4 weeks at Khmer New Year and 6 weeks at P'chum Ben, our end of year holiday.

Lavalla School

MSC takes responsibility for a number of costs normally met by parents: tuition, food and toiletries, school clothing and health care, school materials and transportation. In return the residential students are expected to care for the property, facilities and equipment, as any proprietor would. Just as important, to care for visitors.



Inclusive Education

The Current Program

The Inclusive Education Program catered for 161 students. Of these 96 were in our Villa Maria residential hostel and a rented house and attend the local High School in Takhmao, or University in Phnom Penh. The remaining 65 live at home and attend their local Primary School, Secondary School or University. In the program there are 66 Female and 95 male students.

There are currently on-site tutors at Villa Maria, employed to assist students with Mathematics, and Computer Studies.

As well as providing access to good education, students have access to a comprehensive health and rehabilitation program.

We have, over the years, provided infrastructure (e.g. wheelchair accessible toilets, ramps etc) in schools that our students attend and have worked with the teachers to assist them in working with young people with physical disabilities. We have also provided equipment to assist students' mobility (e.g. wheelchairs, bicycles, walking frames). Staff travel to locations in the provinces to support students



Pagna and Rong supporting students at Kompong Chhnang

with school fees, uniforms and school materials, such as stationery.

The program employs a total of 10 staff.

The cost of the entire program is almost US\$160,000 per year.

Main Sources of Funds (2018):

Australian Marist Solidarity, Lenity Australia, Liliane Fonds, Marist Mission Centre, Misereor, St John’s College Woodlawn.



Distributing bags with school materials at Kompong Chhnang

Academic Results

Each year students in Grade 9 and Grade 12 sit for National Examinations. The results for 2018:

Grade 9 2018

At the end of the 2017-18 academic year 27 Students sat for the National Grade 9 Examinations. 26 of the students passed the exam. 12 of these students continued High School in their local communities and 3 stayed at our Villa Maria Hostel. A number went on to do Vocational Skills training courses while other found employment.



Grade 12 2018

Of the 14 students who did the Grade 12 Examination, 8 passed and 6 failed. 4 of the students who passed went on to university and the others went to employment in their local communities.

University 2018

Two students completed their four year university courses and passed. Both have gained employment.





Financial Report

Statement of Receipts and Expenditure

	For the year ended 31 December 2018 USD	For the year ended 31 December 2017 USD
Receipts		
Funds received from Donors	489,381	594,604
Income from commercial enterprises	10,554	10,887
Other Income	27,016	32,956
Restricted fund receipt	244,013	0.00
Total Receipts	750,964	638,447
Expenditure		
Programme Costs	265,623	256,765
Personnel Costs	158,623	157,417
Administrative Expenses	18,710	46,647
Commercial Enterprise Expenses	5,449	1,761
Capital Expenses	235,518	308,902
Total Expenditure	683,703	781,492
Deficit of receipts over expenditure	67,261	(143,045)

(from MSC Audit report)



Health and Physiotherapy



Sokny physiotherapy with a student

programme there is a dedicated health care worker who monitors the health of the student, organises appointments with doctors, dentists and opticians as well as accompanying the students when they attend the centre for adjustments to prosthetics and assistive devices. MSC considers itself fortunate to have such a well-qualified and dedicated health care team under the direction of Mr Leang Sokny.

Health and Physiotherapy

As you can imagine having children and young people with disabilities living onsite the Staff in the health centre are very much in demand. MSC provides thorough health care through the provision of a physiotherapy programme tailored to the needs of each individual. The Physiotherapy staff monitor the progress of the children and young people. There is a programme of hydrotherapy in the pool at Lavalla School. As well as the physiotherapy





Summary of Health Services

Each month approximately 30 students at Lavalla have regular sessions of physiotherapy in a normal month this amounts to more than 450 sessions with the physiotherapy team. Allied to this was time spent in the pool for hydrotherapy.

Currently it is difficult for the students at Villa Maria to attend regular Physiotherapy due to transport and the student timetables. This will change when the high school students move to the Village.

Each week students from Lavalla and Villa Maria are accompanied to Rehabilitation centres to receive prosthetics or to have their prosthetics repaired. Some prosthetics and assistive devices are also repaired by staff at Lavalla.





Immersion and Visitors

During the year we welcome visits from students from Australia who come in immersion groups. In 2018 regular visitors Marist College Ashgrove, Marist North Shore, Francis Xavier College Hamilton, OLSH Alice Springs, Marist College Canberra, Marcellin College Bulleen, Maris Stella College Singapore, Woodlawn College, Lismore and UWSEA, Singapore, returned to spend time with our children and young people. These groups have each become one of our annual fixtures as groups from each school spend a week working, tutoring, interacting with our students either mid-year or towards the end of the year.

This engagement is for the students at LaValla and Villa Maria a great opportunity to get past fears to do with foreigners, overcome shyness, practise some English, broaden horizons. As

pleasing as all that, establishing bonds, even if just for a week, experiencing friendship from unexpected meetings – these we hope are formative experiences as well.

We believe they are and because we think the young people here are special we assure our visitors that if they put the time into getting to know our students, listen to them in spite of language constraints, watch them, they will go home changed. It's a promise we confidently make.

And we thank the young people who come: the time they commit, the risks they take, the expenses they undertake. We believe that the experience for us and the groups who come that it is all truly worthwhile.

During the year we have been visited by a number of individuals and Cambodian families who have generously brought gifts for the Children and for MSC.





A view down through the village



One of the accomodation units



The farm building donated by the Changi Rotary Club



The new music centre

Developments At MSC

For the last 18 months we have seen significant developments being undertaken at MSC. Most obvious is the construction of the “Village” on the land behind Lavalla School. This is accommodation for young people attending high school in Takhmao. It was originally planned to open the “Village” in November of 2018, however, adverse weather and difficulty accessing the site has delayed this until well into 2019. The photographs show where the buildings are in May of 2019.

Due to the support of the Changi Rotary Club in Singapore we have been able to construct a building to be used for the education of young disabled Cambodians in best practice in agriculture. It is hoped that this will assist graduates of the program to better utilize the land available to them and their families. We thank the members of the Changi Rotary club for their generosity and interest in the work of MSC.

Brother Terry had a wish for a Music centre to educate and enrich the students of MSC. Due to the support of Grapes for Humanity and The Marist Brothers Province of Australia, that dream is coming to fruition. The music centre will be ready for occupation around the middle of 2019.









MARIST SOLIDARITY CAMBODIA

