Canberra Regional Gathering

A wonderful Regional Gathering was recently held in Canberra, with time spent exploring the new ‘We Marists’ booklet. This document is the culmination of 18 months of discernment and visioning which has taken place locally and nationally amongst Australian Marists. It sets out the priorities and strategies of the Marist Association for the next 30 months, leading up to the next Assembly in 2018. The Regional Gathering brought together 23 Canberra Marists and five new Marists Association members were presented with their badge and certificate. We commenced our gathering with a reflection on the perspective of tiny Tim, a character from Charles Dickens’s A Christmas Carol, who is looking in at a gathering of Marists in Canberra. We pondered the following questions: What would he see? How would he know these people are Marists? Would he want to be part of those gathered around the table? Would he feel welcomed inside? We placed this poster in our staffroom and our community was provided with an opportunity to add their thoughts and reflections. Some of the response included: we make room for God, we put others first, we make do with simple comforts, we bring hope, we are sensitive to the needs of others, we bring Jesus to birth in the hearts of others and in the most unlikely and inhospitable of places, we love generously, we are compassionate, we meet young people in their places of need, we are generous, we are uncomfortable, we are family and we welcome all. It was evident from our gathering that we are committed to living out the three priorities of being mystics, prophets and living in communion. Our next step forward will see further consideration of the key priorities in ‘We Marists’ and their alignment with our local strategies for Marist mission in Canberra.

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