NOT ANGELS, NOR MEN CONFIRMED IN GRACE:
The Marists in Post-Federation Australia, 1892-1938

Peter McMurrich S.M.
...is it not a fact that one should expect this mixture of good and bad when one has responsibility for administering a Religious congregation the members of which are not angels nor men confirmed in grace.


Our history, like that of every family or nation, is an interplay of lights and shadows. As we celebrate our past we must avoid the temptation to idealise it. We must accept its low ground as well as its high, for we know that without valleys there can be no hills, and without the Cross there is no Resurrection.

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This work follows on from John Hosie’s *Challenge: The Marists in Colonial Australia*, which tells the story of the Marist Fathers in Australia from their arrival in 1845, until the eighteen nineties.

Beginning with the death of Fr Claude Joly sm in 1892, *Not Angels Nor Men Confirmed in Grace* outlines the history of the Society of Mary in Australia until 1938, when a separate Australian Province was established. Prior to that date, Marists working in Australia had been initially part of the Pacific Missions Province, and then after 1926 were part of the numerically strong New Zealand Province.

As the title suggests, this is a story with contains a considerable degree of human weakness and failure. Based mainly on internal Marist correspondence and governance records, it outlines an alarming cavalcade of administrative incompetence, financial mismanagement, deviation from professional standards, and the tragedy of some patently unsuitable individuals who found themselves trapped in a life commitment to the priesthood and religious life.

At the same time, side by side with the sad, misguided, and tragic elements in this story, there is much that is inspiring and deeply moving. Above all else, this is a profoundly human story. Because of the wealth of the source material and its quality and richness, it has been possible to come to know and understand in an almost privileged way the personal struggles, qualities, hopes and dreams of the Marists who walk, run, stumble or soar throughout these pages.

The subjects of this work are mainly Frenchmen who travelled to the other side of the world to live out a dream of religious commitment. For reasons which will be explained, they lived in a situation of some isolation and distance from the mainstream of the Catholic Church in Australia. As John Hosie explained in *Challenge*, this sometimes allowed them to present to their superiors in Europe a unique and valuable perspective on aspects of the Australian Church. This book therefore contains some fascinating glimpses of the inner workings of the Sydney Church in particular, under Cardinal Moran and Archbishop Kelly.

My thanks to the many people who have helped me in researching and writing this book, which is substantially based on an MA thesis I completed in 1988.

*Peter McMurrich sm*

*September, 2008.*
### ABBREVIATIONS

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<td>Roman Catholic Archives of Fiji, Suva</td>
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CHAPTER 1

FOR THOSE WHO CAME IN LATE (1845-1892)

On the evening of Friday, 4 March, 1892, Claude Mary Joly, a Frenchman and a Marist priest, died peacefully at Villa Maria monastery, Hunters Hill, Sydney, in the 62nd year of his life. Joly had first passed through Sydney in 1856 as a young missionary bound for Samoa: he was recalled from there in 1858, and spent the remaining 34 years of his life based in Sydney and engaged in support activities for the Marist Pacific Missions.

The story of the Marist Fathers in Sydney from the time of their arrival in 1845 until the eighteen nineties is told by John Hosie in Challenge: the Marists in Colonial Australia. Reaching Sydney only ten years after the first Catholic bishop, they came to set up an administrative headquarters and supply base for the rapidly developing Marist Missions in the South Pacific. Despite their limited numbers, their French nationality, and their preoccupation with the Pacific Missions, the first Marists made a humble but effective contribution within the Catholic community of Sydney and beyond during their first 50 years in Australia.

At the time of Joly's death there were nine Marist priests in Australia and nine coadjutor brothers. At Hunters Hill, a harbour-side suburb with a strong French character about eight kilometres from the centre of Sydney, the Marists had completed a two-storey sandstone monastery in 1865. They called it "Villa Maria", surrounded it with acres of reassuring European parkland, planted a vineyard, grew vegetables and grazed cows. It was "home" for the Marists in Sydney. It functioned as administrative centre for the Marist Mission areas in the Pacific, provided a rest facility for missionaries recovering from the sea voyage from Europe prior to embarking for their Mission posting, and served as a sanatorium for sick missionaries who had to be sent to Sydney for medical treatment. Priests from the monastery also cared for the parish of Hunters Hill, celebrating Mass for the faithful in a pretty, tiny, French-style church adjoining the monastery, and in a partially completed church of more pretentious proportions in the Woolwich-peninsula section of the parish.

Permanently residing at Villa Maria in 1892 were four priests and eight coadjutor brothers. The community was elderly, bordering on geriatric: Zephirin Muraire, at Villa Maria since 1864, superior of the community and parish priest of Hunters Hill, in his 62nd year; Louis Hurlin, business manager for the Marist Missions, newly arrived from the Fiji Mission, 34 years old, but with a heart condition; John Baptist Coue, assistant priest in the parish of Hunters Hill, retired from work in the Missions, in his 46th year; Maurice Tresallet, 63 years old, chaplain to nearby St. Joseph's Marist brothers college, retired from Mission work in New Zealand because of poor health; and coadjutor brothers Florentin, Gennade, Andrew, John, Louis, Augule, Patrick and Matthew - all, with the exception of the last one named, elderly and beyond heavy work. A small community of sisters of the Third Order of Mary Regular lived in a sandstone cottage about 50 metres from the main monastery building. They assisted with domestic chores at the monastery, and provided accommodation for Third Order of Mary sisters passing through Sydney on their way to the Pacific Missions, or returning there for medical attention. A small group of Pacific islanders also lived at Villa Maria, the outcome of some benevolent blackbirding on the part of Claude Joly; they helped with kitchen and laundry tasks, and with gardening.

In the city of Sydney the Marist fathers had been caring for St. Patrick's church and parish since 1868. The parish was centred on Sydney's Rocks area; the Catholic population there was
predominantly Irish and predominantly poor. St. Patrick's was a success story for the Marists; the three French priests who were working there, Peter Le Rennetel, Augustin Ginisty, and Peter Piquet, were popular, dedicated, and competent. While serving the residents of The Rocks, St. Patrick's was also a church frequented by people from the suburbs of Sydney.7

In the Dawes Point section of the parish, the Marists had bought an old colonial mansion, Cumberland House, in May, 1872,8 and began using it from 1879 as a procure office, and warehouse and despatch centre for their Pacific Mission areas. Close to the wharves, it was conveniently situated for supervising the unloading of stores from Europe, and for redirecting them to the various Mission stations in the Pacific. In 1882 a church was built on an adjoining property belonging to the Josephite sisters, and both the church and the procure residence were called "St. Michael's".9 Two Marist priests lived there: Michael O'Dwyer, an Irishman, whose indolence and profligacy had alienated him from his diminishing congregation; and Charles Murlay, an aloof, crusty Frenchman, former pioneer priest of the Rockhampton district in Queensland, who had joined the Marists in 1883.10 Louis Hurlin, business manager or procurator for the Missions and resident at Hunters Hill, journeyed to St. Michael's each day to carry out the work of the procure, which was crucial to the Marist missionaries in the field. The role was well summarised by one of Hurlin's successors in 1945; it had changed little in 50 years:

The procurator's business is to receive missionaries: fathers, brothers, sisters, as they arrive in Sydney ... to supply them with all that they may need in transit and in their future Missions, to arrange for their transportation to the islands and to keep them well provided in the field with food, clothing and tools; to receive them again, if need be, for rest, medical care or return to their home-land ...11

Considering that they had been in Australia almost 50 years, the Marists in 1892 were a small, essentially insignificant group within the Australian Catholic Church. That the congregation had developed little since 1845 is not, however, surprising. In the eyes of the Marist general administration in France, the Australian operation existed primarily as a service facility for the Pacific Missions. Prior to the 1890s there was no genuine attempt to implant the Society in Australia and establish it as a vehicle of evangelisation within the Australian Church.12 In 1877 a request from the coadjutor archbishop, Roger Vaughan, for the Marists to open a secondary college in Sydney had to be declined. Again, in 1885 there was a brief flirtation with an offer from Cardinal Moran for the Society to establish a junior seminary in Sydney, but the Cardinal lost patience with slow answers from Europe, and the project lapsed.13

As well as the policy at headquarters, there were other reasons why the Society of Mary had developed little in its first 50 years in Australia. To begin with, the early Marists who came to Australia were almost exclusively French, and many knew little or no English when they first arrived. There were, therefore, major cultural and language barriers in the way of significant involvement in the local Church. Further, the Marists had found themselves, since the time of their arrival in the colony, in conflict with the Catholic archbishop of Sydney, John Bede Polding.14 Initially, because they threatened his dreams of a Benedictine monopoly and, in the late 1850's, because Polding suspected them of aiding and supporting a group of lay dissidents who eventually appealed to Rome about the archbishop's manner of governing his diocese.15 Relations between Polding and the Marists gradually improved, and this was expressed concretely by Polding's entrusting the parishes of St. Charles, Ryde (1856) and St. Patrick's,
Church Hill (1868) to the Society. But in the latter years of his life Polding again threw the Marists into uncertainty about their position in the archdiocese when, through his coadjutor, Roger Vaughan, he took a section of St. Patrick's parish from their care, and created a separate parish, with a diocesan priest as pastor. The Marists wondered whether Polding's ultimate plan was to exclude them from St Patrick's entirely.  

But, on 4 March, 1892, the day Claude Joly died, all this was history. Polding, and his Benedictine successor to the see of Sydney, Roger Vaughan, were both dead, and the Marists had regained the severed limb of St. Patrick's parish. An Irishman, Patrick Cardinal Moran, a supporter of Pacific and Asian Mission ventures, was now archbishop of Sydney, and the Marists were on good terms with him. Perhaps the time was opportune for the Society of Mary to begin to have a greater impact on the Australian Church.

With the death of Joly the Society decided to take stock of its Sydney operation. On 21 March, 17 days after Joly's death, the Marist superior general, Antoine Martin, signed a document at Lyon in France commissioning John Leterrier, Marist Provincial superior of New Zealand, to make an official visitation of the Sydney communities, and to recommend a successor to Claude Joly. Leterrier was in Sydney in August, and wrote to Martin before leaving, on the question of Joly's successor. His report on the Sydney communities was not written until 25 October, from Wellington.

Leterrier was impressed by what he saw of the Society's work and personnel in Sydney. He praised the observance of the religious rule at Villa Maria monastery, and the zeal of the priests at St. Patrick's. Conversely, he thought that the parish at Hunters Hill was poorly run, and noted that the St. Patrick's priests had a reputation for not keeping their rule. He praised Hurlin's work as procurator, and suggested that he be allowed to reside permanently in the city instead of having to commute each day. As for St. Michael's residence and church, he thought the operation should be scaled down: the functions of the procure could be transferred to St. Patrick's or to some smaller house in the area, Murlay and O'Dwyer could be moved elsewhere at no great loss to the district, and church services at St. Michael's could be handled by the priests at St. Patrick's. Leterrier expressed his belief that Muraire's controlling nature as superior at Villa Maria was limiting Hurlin's effectiveness at the procure and hampering Coue's work as assistant priest in the Hunters Hill parish. Finally, he suggested that the Marists secure their position in the parishes of St. Patrick's and Hunters Hill by asking Cardinal Moran to grant them care of these parishes in perpetuity. He had raised the question with Moran, and had found him perfectly amenable.

As regards a successor to Joly, he found no obvious candidate among the Marists in Sydney; his recommendation was Father Augustine Aubry, a French Marist working in the Diocese of Christchurch (NZ). On 8 November, 1892, the Marist general council in Lyon named Augustine Aubry as visitor general of the Oceanian Missions.

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ENDNOTES CHAPTER 1

1  Freeman's Journal, 12 March 1892 (hereafter FJ). The Freeman's Journal at this time was published on Thursday, but carried the date of the following Saturday. Its account of
Joly’s death states that he died on the previous Friday, that is 4 March. The same date is
given by Bishop Hilary Fraysse in a memoir published shortly after Joly’s death, and in
the official “Notice Necrologique” published in Annales Des Missions De L’Oceanie
(No.4, August, 1892). Traditionally the date of Joly’s death has been given as 5 March,
but I am not aware of any contemporary source to substantiate this dating.


3 Challenge is based on Hosie’s thesis "The French Mission", M.A. (Hons.), Macquarie
University, Sydney, 1971. It incorporates fresh material for the period 1875-1900.

4 John Bede Polding was consecrated as Australia’s first Catholic bishop in June 1834, and
arrived in Sydney in September 1835.

5 As their name suggests, the Marist fathers are basically a congregation of priests, but they
have always had attached to their group a number of non-ordained members called
coadjutor brothers who normally performed manual tasks. These latter should not be
confused with the more numerous, and administratively independent Marist brothers of
the schools (FMS).

6 These and subsequent listings are based on the Society of Mary Index, generally
published annually, and the Australasian Catholic Directory, likewise an annual
publication. No complete set of the Marist Index exists in Australia; a complete set is
held at the Marist fathers archives in Rome. The Sydney archdiocesan archives holds a
set of the Australasian Catholic Directory. Both these listings of personnel contain
inaccuracies, and are often an indication of where administrators wished their subjects
were, rather than where they actually were. Information contained in them always needs
to be checked against church registers, newspaper lists of funerals and other functions,
and correspondence.

7 As an analysis of the parish baptismal registers clearly shows. See Appendix.

8 Jean Coste, "A Few References About St. Michael, Sydney", three page monograph,
copy in Australian Marist Provincial Archives (hereafter AMPA), C225.10.

9 FJ, 28 January 1882; Coste, "A Few References".

10 1892 Society of Mary Index; Poupinel to Forestier, 20 January 1884, Marist Fathers
Archives, Rome OP613.1 (hereafter APM); A coadjutor brother, Peter Jeanneau, also
lived at St Michael’s at this time.

11 Elie Bergeron, "The Centenary of the Marist Missions Procure, Sydney", 15 April, 1945,
copy at APM OP452

12 Between 1844-1879 11 Marists only were sent to Australia from Europe. In the same
period, 36 Marists were sent to New Zealand, and 63 to the South Pacific. Of the 11 sent,
5 were specifically designated for procure work. See Nino Cacace, "Peres Missionnaires
See Joly to Superior General, 29 May 1877, copy AMPA B120; Minutes des Proces Verbaux des Conseils, 7 January 1885 and 6 May 1885 (hereafter MPV), uncatologued minute books APM; Joly to Martin, 17 November 1885, copy AMPA B120.

A thorough, balanced, and illuminating account of relations between Polding and the Marists is found in Hosie, "French Mission", Chapter 2, pp. 38-85.


Joly to Martin, 18 January, 1888: "The Cardinal always shows himself very kind, at least superficially"; Joly to Nicolet, 2 February, 1888: "... his Eminence is far from ill-disposed towards us"; Joly to Forestier, 22 March, 1888: "The Cardinal is always kind ...", copies AMPA B120; Le Rennetel to Martin, 15 June 1892: "The Cardinal is always very friendly. He talked to me again yesterday of his wish to see us established in Queensland ...", copy AMPA C215.05.

Leterrier to Martin, 16 August 1892, APM Z418.

Leterrier to Martin, 25 October, 1892, copy AMPA B170.05.

Ibid. In 1895, the Marists achieved Canonical Institution of St Patrick’s parish and the parish of Hunters Hill from the Vatican Congregation of Propaganda Fidei and the Archbishop of Sydney, whereby the Society of Mary was granted the right to administer both parishes in perpetuity. The rescript from Propaganda (No. 10241) was signed and sealed in Sydney by Cardinal Moran on 17 March, 1895. Official copy in AMPA C215.02.01.

Leterrier to Martin, 16 August, 1892, APM Z418

MPV, 8 November, 1892.
CHAPTER 2

A BRIEF FLOWERING

Augustine Aubry arrived in Sydney to take up his new posting early in February, 1893. He was welcomed with enthusiasm by the Sydney Marists, who were pleased with the appointment. In December of the previous year, Zephirin Muraire had written to Marist superior general Martin:

We are all satisfied with the choice you have made to replace Rev. Fr. Joly as visitor and superior, besides most of us suggested this choice to Rev. Fr. Leterrier at the time of his visit. Fr. Aubry is not without experience because he has been Provincial in Ireland, and we believe he has the necessary qualities ...

Aubry's initial stay in Sydney was brief, for he was in Lyon early in August, 1893, to attend a Marist general chapter, an international gathering of Marist leaders, held approximately every six or seven years. Aubry's participation in the chapter as visitor of the Pacific Missions was a first, since previously the Marists working in Oceania and Australia had not been represented at a general chapter. He seems to have played a significant role in the chapter's vote to request the general administration to group the Marist Oceania Mission territories (including Australia) into a Province within the Society, thereby giving them the right to send elected delegates to future general chapters. Before returning to Australia in May, 1894, Aubry attended a number of meetings of the Marist general council to discuss issues relevant to his new posting in Sydney.

Problems at the Mission Procure

Once back in Australia, Aubry became progressively more alarmed at Muraire's performance as Mission procurator during the period since Joly's death. Muraire had been formally appointed to the position with the transfer of Louis Hurlin to New Zealand as a direct swap for Aubry. On 15 July Aubry wrote to superior general Martin:

I cannot prevent myself from making clear to you my very serious worries about the state of the procure and the finances of Sydney ... I have been asking for eighteen months, and the accounts are never ready!

As a consequence of his grave doubts about Muraire's competency, Aubry announced in the same letter that he was taking over as procurator and moving to St. Michael's until he could make some sense of the figures. The minutes of Aubry's Provincial council put a charitable slant on Muraire's retirement:

It was decided that Rev. Fr. Muraire should give up the procure so as to take complete care of the people of Villa Maria.
At the end of August Aubry believed he was making progress. He feared there would be a "serious difference between the books and the cash", due to unsystematic accounting, and the failure to invest large sums of money given the Society by benefactors in return for an annual income for life. Finally by 30 September, Aubry thought he was in a position to give superior general Martin a reasonably accurate assessment. He had uncovered a cash deficit of £3,372/7/10, due mainly to the use of procure funds to build St. Michael's church at Dawes Point, and the first stage of the church at Woolwich, and to the poor investment practices he had alluded to in August.

Having, he believed, finally sorted out the procure finances, Aubry began looking for a new procurator. On 10 February, 1895, he wrote to Martin suggesting Auguste Guillemin, a French Marist who had spent ten years in America prior to being appointed to New Caledonia in 1886. Guillemin had worked as local Mission procurator in Noumea, but his position was now impossible, having antagonised his own confreres as well as the French colonial administration. While admitting that Guillemin's hard, uncompromising character might cause problems, Aubry was attracted by his "exactitude and well-known order" in keeping accounts. On 21 March, the general council appointed Guillemin as procurator of the Missions at Sydney, and on 1 May Aubry was able to inform Lyon that he was "at last installed on the procure". Aubry himself continued to use St. Michael's as his headquarters when he was in Sydney, although he also kept a room at Villa Maria.

St Patrick's, Church Hill

If the Marists were having problems accounting for their francs, they were at the same time running a very successful parish at St. Patrick's in the city. In the 14 years between 1890-1904 the French Marists, through their three representatives at St. Patrick's, Frs. Le Rennetel, Ginisty and Piquet, probably achieved the high point of their contribution to the Catholic Church in Sydney. Through the personal charm, zeal, and broad humanity of these three men, St. Patrick's church became a spiritual and pastoral gathering-point for Sydney Catholics, and St. Patrick's parish was characterised by an extraordinarily warm bond between the three French Marists and their predominantly Irish flock. Despite the reservations of Marist superiors about the worldliness and lack of religious discipline of the Marists working at St. Patrick's, the Catholics of Sydney voted with their hearts and their feet. At St. Patrick's in the 1890's, Catholicism, the Catholic priesthood, and the Society of Mary, all wore a warm, human and sympathetic face.

The parish priest of St. Patrick's from 1883 until his death in 1904 was Peter Francis Le Rennetel. Only 32 years old at the time of his appointment, Le Rennetel arrived in Australia late in 1879. He had originally applied for a posting to the Pacific Missions, but quickly settled into St. Patrick's parish; two years spent teaching in Ireland at the time of his ordination gave him a head start with his predominantly Irish parishioners in The Rocks. A portrait of Le Rennetel taken perhaps in his late thirties shows a smiling, welcoming face, the eyes suggesting both inner strength and gentle humour.

Le Rennetel's talents and capacities were wide ranging: an astute financial manager, he oversaw and financed three major parish building projects and the replacement of the church organ in a decade of severe financial depression. A charming, witty, and daring speaker, he was able to attract and hold an audience whether speaking on secular or religious topics; his concern
for the poor was expressed not only in a close involvement with the recently established St. Vincent de Paul Society, but through personal contact and assistance, and apparently no-one in his audience scoffed when in 1898 he made the extraordinary and brave statement that "there was not a poor man or woman in the parish he did not know". He was active in both French and Irish national associations, was highly regarded by Cardinal Moran, and was broad minded and flexible in his approach to life. Finally, together with his assistant priests Augustin Ginisty and Peter Piquet, he created a climate at St. Patrick's which was attractive to Sydney Catholics as a centre of religious devotion and spiritual nourishment, and where a perhaps unique bond of warmth and affection existed between priests and parishioners.

Le Rennetel's first major building project was an elaborate, three storey, brick presbytery fronting Harrington Street and backing to the rear of the church. The building cost £5,446, and was blessed and opened by Cardinal Moran on Sunday, 16 March, 1890. The commodious basement of the building was set aside for "requirements in connection with the South Sea Island Missions", an anticipation on Le Rennetel's part of the recommendation of Leterrier in 1892 that the procure operation be moved from St. Michael's to St. Patrick's, and of the eventual adoption of that proposal in 1901. Le Rennetel also planned the building to cater for missionaries stopping over in Sydney on their way to the Pacific from Europe. The opening ceremony was held on the open, flat roof of the new building, Le Rennetel announcing that only £618 remained for the building to be completely free of debt, and receiving that afternoon a further £253 towards liquidation of that sum.

With the presbytery completed and all but paid for, Le Rennetel was immediately off and running on his next project, a parish hall to be erected on the opposite side of Harrington Street, at the intersection with Grosvenor Street. He announced the new building on the day of the presbytery opening, indicating a cost of £11,000. A fortnight over 12 months later, on the evening of Tuesday, 31 March, 1891, everyone assembled again for the official opening of the new building. Hoping to benefit from the presence and patronage of delegates to the Federation Convention, then meeting in Sydney, Le Rennetel called his new building the "Catholic Federation Hall", and organised a "concert of the best kind", to coincide with the opening. In the event only two delegates took the bait: Sir Patrick Jennings (New South Wales), and W.E. Marmion from Western Australia. The Freeman's Journal speculated that the untimely death of the Queensland delegate, John Macrossan, at the nearby Grosvenor Hotel the previous evening, and preparations for his funeral on the Wednesday, had undoubtedly interfered with the attendance of the Federation delegates.

The new building was an impressive structure in neo-classical style, having six small shops for lease on street level, with the actual hall occupying the first floor. While it provided a useful facility for the parish, Federation Hall was to be Le Rennetel's least successful project. With the onset of severe economic depression in the 1890's, he found the debt on the building extremely difficult to pay off, and his successors were to find that the rent from the ground level shops barely covered the rates.

After a respite of 15 months, Le Rennetel was ready to begin his third major parish building project, and called his parishioners together after Sunday devotions on the evening of 12 June, 1892. The convent of the Sisters of Mercy, a stone and wooden building in Harrington Street, originally designed and used as a shop, was falling into disrepair:
The Very Rev. Father Le Rennetel in opening the meeting humorously explained that he was there that night as an advocate of eviction. Certain tenants who, besides paying no rent, did a great deal of damage to the property, had installed themselves in the convent, and it had come to this, that these objectionable tenants would have to be cleared out bag and baggage, or the convent would have to be handed over to them. For fear he should be misunderstood, he desired to make it clear that he did not refer to the Good Sisters, but to the wicked white ants. [Laughter.]

A motion was quickly passed "that prompt steps should be taken to have the convent properly repaired or rebuilt". Le Rennetel expressed confidence that despite the hard times, the generosity of the St Patrick's parishioners would see the project through. But the times were in fact harder than Le Rennetel may have realised, and would become increasingly so; the Australian colonies were in the grip of a severe economic downturn. Banks and financial institutions collapsed and closed their doors. Manning Clarke describes the developing economic melt-down in his History of Australia:

At the beginning of 1892 the tumult continued. In February a run started upon the Savings Bank of New South Wales. For two days a howling mob raged round the doors, climbing over each other in a frantic endeavour to get their money or die in the attempt.... In Melbourne commotion and anxiety prevailed in the business world.... The number of unemployed grew suddenly. In the middle classes retribution was a loss of savings: for the workers there was the loss of employment and with it even the means of support.

Not surprisingly, the nation's economic ills were reflected on parish collection plates. In the latter months of 1894 Aubry told superior general Martin:

... the financial crisis has diminished the receipts of the Church by 50 per cent, as is proved by the synodal report: St. Michael's, for example, of which the receipts for the last four years reached £540 has only brought in £240 this year. Many curates have received no salary and have to be content with their keep and clothing.

In October, 1892, the convent project was in suspension, presumably because of a shortage of funds, and a meeting was held to organise a pre-Christmas "Celtic Fair" to raise some cash. Premises were hired in George Street, opposite the General Post Office and adjoining David Jones, and the fair ran for four weeks over the Christmas period, beginning on 10 December. The fair was not as financially successful as had been hoped, but demolition of sections of the old convent nevertheless began in mid January, 1893, and the new building on the corner of Grosvenor and Harrington Streets, opposite Federation Hall, was commenced immediately. In order to cut costs, sections of the earlier structure were incorporated in the new building.

Le Rennetel was soon in financial bother. On 1 May, 1893, John Doyle, parish priest of Macdonaldtown, wrote to Cardinal Moran in Europe, advising him that Le Rennetel had been refused a bank loan for the project, and had to float a private loan using parish buildings as security. On 3 June the Freeman's Journal announced that "rapid progress" had been made with the new convent, and that, "it will soon be out of the contractor's hands". The Sisters of Mercy,
who had been living in temporary accommodation elsewhere in the parish, moved into their new three-storey residence early in October. The official opening and blessing was postponed until Cardinal Moran's return from Europe, and took place on Sunday, 10 December, 1893. Le Rennetel, described by the Freeman's reporter as having "the Gladstonian faculty of investing figures with poetry, and even romance" told the gathering that the building had cost £1,830 and that a little under £1,000 was still outstanding. A further £765 was collected that day, and by means of an art union, a concert, and a public lecture by Le Rennetel on "The Devil in Australia", the debt was finally cleared in October, 1894.

Le Rennetel's final major financial undertaking during the 1890's was the provision of a new organ for the church, described as "the largest church organ in this colony, if not in Australia". The organ was built by the French-Belgian firm of Anneessens and Sons, and ordered in May, 1893. It arrived in two shipments, the first being landed in December, 1894 and the second arriving in June of the following year. The instrument, containing three manual keyboards and 42 stops, was reconstructed by Auguste Wiegand, Sydney town hall and St. Patrick's organist, and appears to have been given its first public airing on 22 August, 1895. A more elaborate "opening" ceremony, in the presence of a number of the bishops assembled in Sydney for the Second Plenary Synod, and probably with the organ in a more complete state, was held on the evening of 2 December of the same year.

Le Rennetel's building projects were impressive; so was his ability to speak with eloquence, charm, and power in a language other than his native French. He seems to have been equally successful whether speaking from the pulpit or lecturing publicly on secular subjects in the form of fund-raising entertainments. Despite his busy parish life he somehow found time to travel widely giving missions and retreats. In January and February of 1892 he was in New Zealand; later that year he preached a post-Christmas retreat of eight days to the Patrician brothers at Ryde, and in April, 1893, preached an Easter mission at St. Stephen's cathedral in Brisbane. The following June found him conducting a mission at Moree; in March, 1894, he was in Mudgee, where the Mudgee Independent reported he was "drawing large congregations, all denominations being represented by those who attended to hear the wonderful oratory of this talented preacher"; and in November he was again in western New South Wales, being "stirring and eloquent" at Narrabri. In June, 1895, he returned to Mudgee, and to New Zealand early in 1896 for a series of four retreats. Tamworth heard him in October, the Freeman's correspondent avowing that "The sermons preached by the eloquent priest were most powerful, impressive and clear, and must ever remain stamped on the hearts and minds of those who listened". In June, July, and August of 1897 he conducted retreats and missions in Glen Innes, Sydney and Hamilton. At the time of Augustine Aubry's departure for the 1900 general chapter in France, he arranged with Le Rennetel that on his return he would move to St. Patrick's to allow Le Rennetel to accept more of the missions and retreats he was constantly offered.

Only a handful of Le Rennetel's sermons and lectures have been recorded, but they give a glimpse of some of the qualities of his public speaking. He was, firstly, genuinely witty, as in his remarks on the white ants in the convent, or in a lecture he gave in December, 1890, entitled "Denominational Physiology", where in a clever, inoffensive way he invited his listeners to stand with him at the General Post Office and pick the religious affiliation of the passers-by through observing their faces and manner of behaviour. Le Rennetel was also an engaging speaker, often communicating great warmth of feeling for those he addressed; the speech he made on returning to St. Patrick's parish after an overseas trip was special, but it was not atypical:
While in Europe, he had, so to speak, found his level - he had grown smaller and smaller even in his own estimation [laughter], and it was quite a relief to find on coming back to Sydney that he was - at least in the extravagantly generous opinion of his friends - a really great man. [Renewed laughter.] This was worth coming back for. [More laughter.] He would like very much to convince himself that all the kind things in the address and in the speeches were true.... Now that he had come back, what could he say? - simply this: he would devote the rest of his life, the whole of his time, to the service of St. Patrick's parishioners, and, if the Almighty so willed it, he would die in the service of those who were bound to him by every bond of love and duty.60

A third characteristic in Le Rennetel's speaking is his use of a certain charm-coated daring, as in this address to Cardinal Moran's coadjutor, Bishop Higgins:

He (Fr. Le Rennetel) did not hesitate to say that His Lordship was the most popular bishop among both clergy and laity in the colony. [Applause.] Of course he did not intend to set up any kind of rivalry between His Lordship and His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop [laughter]; for the simple reason that the Cardinal's high position and great accomplishments placed him quite outside the range of competition. [Applause] This, however, he (Fr. Le Rennetel) could say without fear of giving any offence, that any diocese in the world would be proud to have Doctor Higgins at its head. [Applause. His Lordship, “No! No!”]61

A man of action as well as skilful with words, Le Rennetel had a reputation for caring a great deal about the poor, the unemployed, and those in trouble. His involvement with the St. Vincent de Paul Society is easy to establish, but evidence for his personal dealings with the poor rests basically on his own words and the testimony of others; the poor, unfortunately, made few speeches, and were rarely quoted in newspapers. Le Rennetel commented on his attitude to the poor on one occasion in particular, when he was being farewelled prior to a trip to Europe in May, 1898. He said that he had sometimes been reproached for exhausting his purse in helping the poor.62 Most of the speakers on this occasion alluded to his concern for the poor. He was described as "a good adviser to those in trouble or sorrow", and it was said that "the poor had never appealed to him in vain";63 he was "preeminent" in his kindness to the poor and the unfortunate, and "only those who knew of his work in the slums and in the haunts of vice could fully appreciate his character as a priest and as a citizen".64 At the time of his death in July, 1904, further mention was made of his compassionate qualities. Cardinal Moran said that "he loved the poor and lived for them ... everything he could command belonged to the poor",65 while The Catholic Press noted that "Dozens of the poor were fed by him at his presbytery every day".66

While making his own the causes and preoccupations of his predominantly Irish flock, Le Rennetel continued to identify with his native France and his fellow countrymen. He was active among the Sydney French community,67 a fact borne out by the French names in the official list at a farewell in 1898, prior to his trip to Europe: M. Biard D'Aunet (Consul General for France), M. Rigoreau (French Vice Consul), M. Bovin (Consulate General) and A.W. Puget (Courier Australien).68 His strait-laced confrere Zephirin Muraire thought he was too involved in French affairs, delating him to the superior general in 1892 for taking an active role as vice president of
a committee organising 14 July celebrations for the French community in Sydney and attending
the 14 July banquet. At the time of his death he was vice president of the French Benevolent
Society.

Le Rennetel's patriotism had an unfortunate underbelly however, and led him to an
attitude which was not conducive to implanting and integrating the Society of Mary in Australia.
Le Rennetel seems to have believed that the Marist presence in Sydney should remain an
exclusively French presence. In a letter to superior general Martin urging the preparing and
sending of more French Marists to Sydney, Le Rennetel wrote:

If we were caught unprepared and had to call on Irish Fathers, the Sydney Mission would
lose its French characteristics, and it would soon have just Irishmen.

As will be shown later, this viewpoint did not prevent Le Rennetel from attempting to
recruit Australian members for the order, but it may explain, however, why Matthew O'Sullivan,
ordained in 1893 as the first Australian Marist priest and born in St. Patrick's parish, was not
appointed there, and spent the first 30 years of his priesthood working in Marist parishes in New
Zealand.

Le Rennetel also identified strongly with Ireland and with the movement for Home Rule,
the Catholic Press commenting that "while he remained a patriotic Frenchman he became as Irish
as the Irish themselves". So, for example, he was present on the platform at large meetings in
the Sydney Town Hall in June and July of 1902 to launch a formal Home Rule movement in
Sydney, and was appointed a member of an executive to organise a Home Rule fund. Commenting on his involvement in Irish causes, Le Rennetel took a certain pride that he had
been involved right from the start:

I came here with strong Irish feelings, and people need not be surprised that at a public
meeting I would have been called the Franco-Irishman. I can recollect the time when in
Sydney Home Rule was not in favour, and no hall could be had for the Irish delegates.
Their first meeting was held in St. Patrick's Hall, and when later on they held a meeting
in the Opera House it required a certain amount of courage to attend it. Happily, I had a
shillelagh [laughter], and I went, and when they saw the bit of blackthorn in my hand
they kept a safe distance, and they did well.

Le Rennetel was particularly close to Cardinal Moran, who valued his advice, respected
his judgement, and was unusually expressive in speaking publicly of his affection for him. For
the whole of the 1890's, until his resignation in 1898, Le Rennetel was a member of the
Cardinal's council of advice, a hand-picked group of half a dozen influential clerics who assisted
Moran in running the archdiocese. Speaking at Le Rennetel's requiem, Moran, an unusually
private man, revealed his affection and respect for the deceased:

I speak these words from my heart. I loved your pastor, for he was a councillor whom no
one could know and not love; his counsel was wise and prudent, and those lessons which
he extended to all the clergy could not be but fruitful on account of the blessed example
he gave.
A further indication of Moran's respect for Le Rennetel's prudence and judgment was that he used to refer individuals who came to him with difficult moral cases to Le Rennetel. Writing to the superior general in his 1892 report, Leterrier ventured the opinion that, "He is the most influential man in the episcopal council ... The cardinal is very favourable towards him". Le Rennetel himself believed that his influence with the Cardinal was a protection for the Marists against the malevolence of Moran's secretary, Monsignor Denis O'Haran:

His secretary does not like us very much (he does not like any of the religious) but if I do not deceive myself he is frightened of me, and for this reason he will not speak against us to the Cardinal.... He believes what is probably true, that I am the only priest who is able to do him damage in the mind of his Eminence.

Over and above his influence with Cardinal Moran, Le Rennetel is supposed to have had influence with the highest levels of power in the Government and in the Police Department. Writing to the superior general in 1899, Augustin Aubry claimed that "he is consulted by the Cardinal and the Premier as well as by poor women and unemployed workers". In 1916, Aubry also suggested that Le Rennetel was at one time on good terms with the Queensland Premier: "The Premier, a friend of Le Rennetel, had promised that at his death a property of his was to be bequeathed to us ..."

With one exception no concrete evidence of Le Rennetel's alleged influence in circles of power has come to light. From newspaper lists and accounts of speeches made in his honour on various occasions, it would appear that his closest friends among high-ranking politicians were B.R. Wise and E.W. O'Sullivan, respectively attorney-general and minister for public works in the Lyne-See Government of 1899-1904; T.M. Slattery, M.L.A., one-time minister for mines and agriculture; and Daniel O'Connor, M.L.A., a former postmaster general. His principal contact in the Police Department was an inspector by the name of Anderson who in 1904 "went to the bedside of the dying priest, and wept like a child. He and Father Le Rennetel had been close friends for years."

The only documented example of Le Rennetel successfully using influence in Government and Police circles is the Prin affair. In the later months of 1899, John Baptist Prin, a Marist priest who had been working as a missionary in Fiji, was taken from a Europe-bound steamer at Albany, Western Australia, and held at Perth pending the arrival of a warrant issued at Suva, charging Prin with the rape of a native Fijian girl, and the sexual assault of two others. Prin was taken back to Fiji, and stood trial at Savu Savu on 30 November and 1 December. All charges were dismissed or withdrawn, a handwritten transcript of the evidence of the three principal witnesses suggesting a conspiracy against Prin motivated by denominational rivalry. Le Rennetel was instrumental in ensuring that only a minimum of information was given by police to the Australian press about the affair, and in Prin receiving sympathetic treatment from the police. Following the trial, Prin was brought secretly to Villa Maria monastery, Hunters Hill, where the Marists were tipped off by contacts in the Police Department that further charges might be brought against him. He was quickly shipped off to New Caledonia under an assumed name.

Le Rennetel's personal qualities and achievements were a significant contributory factor in the success story of the Marists at St. Patrick's in the final decade of the nineteenth century.
The parish of St. Patrick's for which he was responsible had as its boundaries the harbour foreshore on the north and west, and on the south and east was enclosed by a line running from Darling Harbour along King Street to George Street, from George Street to Hunter Street, along Hunter Street to Macquarie Street, and down Macquarie Street to Bennelong Point. It therefore included the areas of Darling Harbour, Wynyard, Circular Quay, The Rocks, Dawes Point and Millers Point. Large sections of the parish consisted of overcrowded slums, with sub-standard accommodation and poor sanitary facilities. Most of the Catholics in the area were Irish or of Irish descent.

St. Patrick's was a parish like any other parish, with territorial boundaries, but in another sense it had no boundaries: St. Patrick's church was frequented by Catholics from all over Sydney. Reporting to the Marist general administration in 1886, Claude Joly wrote:

St Patrick's is dear to the Irish, is quite central and people come there from other parishes which have a population out of proportion to their churches. Also it must be said that Catholics are attracted by the devotions which take place there, and by the confidence which is given them by the zeal of our confreres ...

St Patrick's was a particularly popular church for baptisms. Around 75 per cent of the 350-400 baptisms conducted annually at St. Patrick's over the period 1890-1904 were for people from outside the parish boundaries. The French Marists at St. Patrick's were also popular with Sydney Catholics as confessors. In a report he sent to France, probably in 1886, Claude Joly noted that:

Confessions are heard there almost every day of the week, but on Fridays and Saturdays, and on the evenings before feasts, our confreres are in the holy tribunal from three o'clock in the afternoon until ten or eleven at night.

The situation was exactly the same 13 years later, in 1899, when Aubry reported to headquarters:

Penitents come from all over: and every Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and every day before feasts or before sodality meetings, the three confreres are in the confessional from three in the afternoon until half past ten or eleven. I have a confessional there myself, and on more than one occasion I have seen the work lasting until midnight with four confessors - and you need to work fast.

St. Patrick's was also a popular devotional centre, with a strong tradition of sacred music and an involvement of musicians of high calibre. The organist and choirmaster in 1890 was Herr Hugo Alpen, who was also conductor of the Sydney University Musical Society. Alpen was replaced in June, 1892. The organist at St. Patrick's for most of the 1890's was Auguste Wiegand, a Belgian, who was also official organist for the city of Sydney. Wiegand oversaw the purchase and construction of St. Patrick's new organ before returning to Europe in 1900.
Music at St. Patrick's was elaborately presented, with orchestral accompaniment and an emphasis on solo performers, as the priest continued silently with the ritual of the Mass. Professional musicians and singers visiting Sydney often performed there during the Sunday morning High Mass, or at Sunday evening vespers. Descriptions of the choir's work often read like concert advertisements:

Last Sunday at St. Patrick's, at eleven o'clock Mass, the solo was sung by the new tenor appointed to St. Patrick's choir, Mr. Lyding, who has just arrived from New York. The Mass performed was Gounod's "Mass of the Guardian Angel". At the Offertory Mr. Hoben played Rubenstein's Melody in F. ¹⁰¹

Mr. Ernest Toy, the Victorian violinist, will play a solo at St. Patrick's Church on Sunday next at eleven o'clock Mass. ¹⁰²

Miss Delia Mason, the sweet-voiced soprano of the "Kitty Greg" Company, now appearing at Her Majesty's Theatre, will sing Sydney Hoben's "Tantum Ergo" at eleven o'clock Mass at St. Patrick's on next Sunday. ¹⁰³

Every Sunday evening one can be certain of hearing one or two of our leading Sydney artists. ¹⁰⁴

St. Patrick's had a number of religious confraternities or sodalities for those parishioners who wanted to do more than simply attend Sunday Mass. The Apostleship of Prayer was one such group. Organised in the parish into separate male and female divisions, members gathered monthly in the church for a sermon and benediction. ¹⁰⁵ They committed themselves to daily prayers of petition for specified intentions, as outlined on monthly prayer leaflets distributed Australia-wide to members. ¹⁰⁶

The members of the Christian Doctrine Confraternity taught catechism to children at the church on Sundays, and organised an annual ferry picnic to Chowder Bay or Cabarita for upwards of 1,500 children and a similar number of adults. ¹⁰⁷

The Children of Mary, a sodality for older children and teenagers, was active in the parish from the latter years of the 1890's. Members gathered for special church services, practised devotion to Our Lady, and were exhorted to imitate her purity. There were 25 members only in 1897, but by early 1898 this had increased to 38, and by September, 1898 to "close on one hundred". ¹⁰⁸

The first branch or conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in New South Wales was established at St. Patrick's in July, 1881, ¹⁰⁹ and was active in works of charity in the 1890's. As well as carrying out traditional Vincentian works of providing food, clothing, and lodging for the poor, the St. Patrick's conference ran a highly successful Penny Savings Bank as a service to poor families in the area. A report given in 1894 stated that between 1889, when the bank began, and 1893, over 600 accounts had been opened, and that £3,771/15/9 had been lodged with the branch. ¹¹⁰

As well as the various parish sodalities and groups, popular devotion was also catered for
with special Feast days in the parish, and regular parish missions. St. Patrick's Day, 17 March, was always celebrated with great liturgical solemnity, and the church was invariably packed.\textsuperscript{111} The Feast of the Marist martyr Peter Chanel was likewise a popular day,\textsuperscript{112} as was 12 September, the Holy Name of Mary, patronal Feast day of the Marist order.\textsuperscript{113}

Every couple of years there was a parish mission to urge the faithful to greater efforts. The missioners, normally members of a religious order, would aim at a thorough visitation of the parish, especially urging those who had become slack in their religious practices to attend the mission. Special sermons and devotions aimed at renewing the spiritual commitment of the parishioners would be held each evening in the church. In 1892, the Vincentian fathers conducted a four-week-long mission at St. Patrick's;\textsuperscript{114} in 1894 the Redemptorists attracted "immense crowds" who packed the church in the morning and evening.\textsuperscript{115} The Redemptorists returned again in 1898\textsuperscript{116} and in 1901.\textsuperscript{117}

Fairs, parish balls, and picnics raised revenue and gave parishioners the experience of working together for a common goal. A French Fair, held in January, 1890, to raise money for the new presbytery, took £1,700;\textsuperscript{118} in 1892 it was a Gaelic fair at Christmas time, running over four weeks, with most of the stall-holders appearing in the "picturesque dress of the Irish peasantry";\textsuperscript{119} and in 1899 the parish ran a three week long Japanese Fair in rented premises in George Street.

Le Rennetel was active in fostering a Young Men's Association in his parish, initially for his own parishioners, and from 1893 open to all Catholic young men in Sydney.\textsuperscript{120} He made available Federation Hall for the use of the club, which had 200 members in May, 1893.\textsuperscript{121} Activities included "smoke concerts", debating, gymnastics, and sport.

The Marists at St. Patrick's were active visitors of their flock, and attracted a steady stream of visitors themselves:

Visiting the sick in their own homes or in hospital takes up almost all the time left from people coming to the presbytery. On Sundays the parlours are hardly ever empty: and almost every evening when people finish work the Fathers are busy instructing Protestants, of whom a large number are converted every year at St. Patrick's.\textsuperscript{122}

Under Le Rennetel's leadership St. Patrick's parish was indeed a success story for the Marists in the years 1890-1904, the high point of French Marist presence in Australia. The highlighting of these years is not meant to imply that French Marists did not do outstanding work at St. Patrick's after these years: they did. Nor is it meant to suggest that St. Patrick's ceased to be a focus of devotion and spiritual consolation for Sydney Catholics after this time: again, the contrary is true. However, never again would there be that special harmony between priests and parishioners, between the Marists at St. Patrick's and the archdiocesan administration, and among the Marists themselves.

Le Rennetel, Ginisty and Piquet were deeply bonded to the people they lived with and ministered to. In 1898 Le Rennetel told his parishioners:

It would be impossible for a priest to live for nineteen years in a parish like St. Patrick's
without the relations between him and his parishioners leading to mutual trust, mutual esteem, and mutual love ... he would not exchange his parish and his people for any in the world ... there was no priest in Australia more proud of his people.\textsuperscript{123}

Speaking of the harmony and affection which existed in the 1890's between the priests at St. Patrick's, Le Rennetel said in 1902, shortly after Ginisty's transfer from the parish:

I can say that we had a happy home. We never had any difference, except, perhaps when Fr. Ginisty and Fr. Piquet wanted too much money for the poor. [Laughter.] But we were of one heart and one soul.... We lived happily and therefore we could do good.\textsuperscript{124}

John Leterrier spent only a few weeks in Sydney in 1892 prior to reporting to the general administration on the Sydney Marist communities, but the specialness of St. Patrick's did not escape him:

What is special about this House is the goodwill and devotion in the work of sacred ministry, the team spirit and mutual understanding shown by the three confreres; and the success of the work they do.\textsuperscript{125}

Le Rennetel died of a cerebral haemorrhage on 25 July, 1904, at the comparatively early age of fifty-three.\textsuperscript{126} His last years were not the happiest of his life. In June, 1897, Augustin Aubry wrote to the superior general to warn him that Le Rennetel's health had been causing concern for some time: "excessive nervous irritation", and behaviour at times bordering on hysteria. His doctors advised a long sea voyage,\textsuperscript{127} and in May, 1898, Le Rennetel was sent on a nine months' trip to Europe.\textsuperscript{128} On his return he appeared at first to have improved,\textsuperscript{129} but the condition, probably the onset of disseminated sclerosis,\textsuperscript{130} reasserted itself and became worse. Le Rennetel blamed it on sunstroke and took to wearing a pith helmet, but his strait-laced confrere Zephirin Muraire suggested to the superior general that some of Le Rennetel's problems at least, could be attributed to other causes:

He has contracted the habit of drinking whiskey ... At the present time Father can't do without it. Father Provincial and the other Fathers have spoken to him about it, but he gets angry and won't listen to anyone ... last week, the good Father was forced to leave the altar, fortunately before the consecration - not that he was under the influence, but as a result of sleepless nights which he has regularly and which are obviously caused by what he calls sunstrokes - or glass strokes.\textsuperscript{131}

The superior general ordered that Le Rennetel be given a canonical monition, informing Aubry that he would soon have to be replaced as parish priest, but death intervened before any action could be taken.\textsuperscript{132} It was a sad ending to an outstanding life. Following his death on 25 July, 1904, incredible scenes accompanied his funeral as an estimated 40,000 people blocked Sydney's streets to pay their last respects.\textsuperscript{133}

Neil Vaney, writing about French Marists working in New Zealand in the nineteenth century, states that "one cannot help but be struck by two qualities: their broad humanity and their love of learning".\textsuperscript{134} The phrase "broad humanity" seems to sum up well Le Rennetel and
the spirit he and his brother priests engendered at St. Patrick's in the last decade of the nineteenth century. At a meeting of citizens to erect a memorial to Le Rennetel, B.R. Wise pinpointed this as Le Rennetel's outstanding quality: “He was a man before he was a priest; and while doing his duty as a faithful priest he never forgot humanity”.\(^{135}\)

The success of St. Patrick's under Le Rennetel's leadership as a parish, and as a centre of worship for Catholics from all over suburban Sydney, was paralleled by city churches of other denominations. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, population movements from the city to the suburbs, and the beginnings of a modern Central Business District in the centre of Sydney, meant that inner-city churches had to either find a new role, or disappear. In fact, St. Patrick's did not really have to face the dilemma of a shrinking resident parish population until after the first world war, but already at the turn of the century it exhibited features common to city churches of other denominations which had successfully made the transition from traditional parish to city-church.

Typically, those church congregations which survived and flourished were led by men of vision and initiative; there was generally emphasis on innovative forms of worship, more elaborate liturgies, or an outreach to the unchurched; and usually there was a heightened awareness of the need to assist the poor and those in special difficulties.

In the early 1880's the congregation of the York Street Methodist church had fallen to 17 formal members, with a maximum of only four times that number attending weekend services. The future was bleak, and proposals were made to close the church. In a last ditch attempt to resuscitate the corpse, William George Taylor was appointed as superintendent minister in April, 1884. Strong organisation, innovative worship services, and an outreach programme directed towards the unchurched, combined with Taylor's personal magnetism, saw the decline reversed, so much so that the church became too small. It was demolished, and a new complex opened in April, 1889. So was born the Sydney Central Methodist Mission; in April, 1908, a further move was necessitated to larger premises, this time to the Lyceum Theatre in Pitt Street. More than 5000 regularly attended weekend services, many of whom apparently had no previous church affiliation.\(^{136}\)

St. James' Anglican church, a gracious survivor from colonial days, was another to make a successful transition from parish to city-church. Originally serving inner-city residents, and being the church for Sydney society and official Government functions, St. James' had fallen on hard times by the early 1880's. In 1896 William Isaac Carr-Smith was appointed rector; by the time he retired in 1909, St. James' too had successfully adapted to a new role. It became a centre for Anglo-catholic and sacramental worship in Sydney, offered weekday services for those working in the city, and developed a new social outreach.\(^{137}\)

A similar development occurred at Christ Church St. Lawrence, near Central railway station, from the 1920's, following the appointment of John Hope as rector in 1926. Hope's unique personality, coupled with his attraction to Anglo-catholic ritual and his warm humanity, brought the church a new congregation:

The residential section of his parish dwindled rapidly though in fact it covered the whole city and suburbs, his congregation coming Sunday by Sunday from within a radius of thirty-five miles.\(^{138}\)
St. Patrick's popularity as a centre of devotion and its use for baptisms and weddings by people from the suburbs of Sydney, together with its elaborate worship, assistance to the poor, and charismatic leadership, places it comfortably in the fold of other city churches adapting to changing circumstances. However, as will be shown later with regard to St. Patrick's, the success of a city-church can bring its own problems in terms of jealousy on the part of other parishes. In the first decade of the century, St. Patrick's would incur the anger of the dean of St. Mary's cathedral and of other parish priests. While the issue was canonical jurisdiction in the administration of the sacraments, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the root of the problem was jealousy.

Le Rennetel had come to Australia in 1879, Piquet in 1880, Ginisty in 1881. For the next twenty years the Marist general administration sent no young French priests direct to Sydney from France. The tragedy of Le Rennetel's death for the Society of Mary in Australia was that there were no new Peter Le Rennetels to replace him. The "French Mission" would henceforth reap the whirlwind of the inability of the Marist general administration after 1881 to send young Marists of the calibre of Le Rennetel, Ginisty and Piquet to Sydney.

St Michael's Church and Procure

In the Dawes Point section of St. Patrick's parish, towards the intersection of Cumberland Street with Lower Fort Street, Claude Joly had purchased an old colonial mansion in May, 1872, because of its potential as a city-base for the Marists in the event of their losing St. Patrick's. Known as Cumberland House, it had been the residence early in the century of Archdeacon (later Bishop) Broughton, and also at one time of Doctor James Mitchell, father of the donor of the core collection of the Mitchell Library. Joly had rented out the house until July, 1879, when the Marists began using it for their Missions procure, calling it St. Michael's. The Josephite sisters established a "providence" on adjoining property in May, 1881, which served as a soup kitchen for the destitute, a nursing home for elderly and infirm women, and as an orphanage. In 1882 the Marists built a church, also called St. Michael's, on part of the Josephite property facing Lower Fort Street, and began stationing priests there to care for the Catholic population in the vicinity. Although still part of St. Patrick's parish, the area around St. Michael's was operated as a de facto parish within a parish.

Living there in 1890 were John O'Dwyer and Charles Murlay, both originally secular priests who had become members of the Society of Mary. O'Dwyer, a bird of passage, had been ordained priest in his native Ireland. He worked in the diocese of Auckland for nine years prior to 1882, when he went to Tonga; there he joined the Society of Mary, and was professed in May, 1885. He came to Sydney early in 1888, and was appointed to St. Michael's.

Charles Murlay, a Frenchman, had been the pioneer priest in the Rockhampton district, where he laboured from 1862 until the arrival of the first bishop, John Cani, in 1882. A stern aloof personality with a strong sense of duty and definite ideas, Murlay was remembered in the northern city for roaming the streets of Rockhampton on a white Arab stallion, armed with a horse-whip, in search of truants from his parish school. He had been trying to join the Marists from at least as early as 1867, and was finally able to leave Rockhampton with the arrival of Bishop Cani in 1882. T.P. Boland claims that he was "piqued at not being nominated for
bishop”; an equally unsubstantiated tradition among the Marists has it that "when the diocese of Rockhampton was erected, he was chosen to be its bishop; but declined the episcopate and entered the Society of Mary". He was professed a Marist in 1884 and sent to St. Michael's.

If the Marists were running a successful operation at St. Patrick's in the 1890's, they were presiding over an unmitigated disaster at St. Michael's. Murlay had been less than a success in his first Marist appointment: in 1888 Joly was complaining that he was "hard and cold" with his parishioners in the parlour and in the confessional; his sermons were "lengthy, monotonous, and tiring"; he was attempting to exclude those who drank to excess and those who kept taverns from even entering the church. The congregation quickly dwindled, the contest between gospel and grog clearly being one sided. Murlay took the rejection hard; by 1890 he was a recluse, "afraid to leave his room, to write letters, or to talk to anyone". He performed a solitary baptism in 1890, two in 1891, and two in 1892.

In contrast, O'Dwyer had initially been successful at St. Michael's. In May, 1888, Joly was writing to Martin:

Since Fr. O'Dwyer has been in charge there it has filled up again: the fact that he is Irish and his friendliness have brought back the parishioners.

But within twelve months O'Dwyer had fallen foul of the parishioners because of his laziness and his propensity to run up debts. Murlay was finally taken out of his misery in 1892 when he was transferred to St. Patrick's, and from there to Villa Maria in July, 1894. O'Dwyer lingered on at St. Michael's until the latter half of 1895, despite a firm decision of the Provincial council in November, 1893, to transfer him to Villa Maria as chaplain to St. Joseph's college. Eventually his wanderlust got the better of him and he applied successfully to join the Trappists. Aubry thought it was good riddance, lamenting that O'Dwyer had left with £50 from parish funds, and informing the superior general that it had only just been discovered that O'Dwyer had been regularly using Sunday collections to buy beer and cigars.

By May, 1895, Auguste Guillemin had been installed at St. Michael's as the new procurator of the Missions, and in July Francis Huault, a repatriated missionary from New Caledonia, was sent there to assist with parish work and keep Guillemin company. Unfortunately for the long suffering Catholics of Dawes Point it was an explosive mix: Guillemin was "unbelievably rigid ... inclined to cut up his inferiors unmercifully", and Francis Huault was gloomy, sullen, and "somewhat fond of drink".

Before long they were at each other's throats, and only spoke to each other when one thought of something to say which would make the other more miserable. Aubry seemed to be understating things when he observed that "charity and good feeling are conspicuous by their absence". Huault was sent elsewhere and Aubry gave up looking for a compatible confrere for Guillemin:

Except by giving that man a companion direct from the seminary who knows how to practice complete abnegation, there is no real way of establishing a permanent community there.
In his 1892 report, Leterrier had recommended that St. Michael's be closed down, but urged that this not be done until Cardinal Moran had fulfilled his promise to grant the Marists the care of St. Patrick's parish in perpetuity.168 Moran signed the appropriate documents in 1895, but at the turn of the century the Marists had still not disposed of the St. Michael's property. To their immense relief that problem was taken out of their hands in most dramatic circumstances.

On 19 January, 1900, Arthur Payne, a resident in a house near the intersection of Windmill Street, Ferry Lane and Lower Fort Street, just a stone's throw from St. Michael's church, was diagnosed as having the bubonic plague.169 The threat lasted until early August, and was at its severest in the autumn months of April and May. In the period between 19 January and 9 August, 303 Sydneysiders caught the plague, and 103 of these died.170 Thirty-eight per cent of reported cases occurred in the Darling Harbour area of Sydney, easily the worst affected part of the city. The remainder were spread throughout other sections of the city and suburbs: Redfern had 24, Paddington 19, Glebe 10, Manly 9. The Rocks area, despite registering the first reported case of plague, was only moderately affected, with 12 cases.171

On 26 June, 1900, the Government gave notice of a Darling Harbour Wharves Resumption Bill, which received its first reading on 28 June, and was debated at the second reading stage on 5 July. The bill was promoted as a means to empower the Government to take action to redevelop the Darling Harbour area, the part of Sydney most affected by the plague, but as several speakers pointed out, the wording was sufficiently vague to enable the Government to also resume the adjoining Rocks area. It seems likely that this was no accident and that the Government had in fact hoped to use the hysteria of the plague outbreak to gain legislative sanction for a wholesale redevelopment of The Rocks. In the event it was forced to come clean, and agreed to incorporate three schedules in the bill, specifying in precise detail, street by street, those sections of the city which it wished to resume. Schedule 1 would outline the Government's intentions with regard to The Rocks, and the Government agreed to incorporate a proviso in the bill, prohibiting it from acting on Schedule 1 without the further "approval of Parliament expressed by resolution".172 The bill was sent to the Legislative Council on 18 July, received back with amendments on 22 August, and passed by the Assembly on 28 August.

One who spoke strongly in favour of the bill was W.J. Spruson, the young, newly elected member for Gipps Ward, who represented The Rocks area. Spruson had lived in The Rocks all his life, was a parishioner of St. Patrick's and was actively involved with parish affairs. There is good reason to believe that Spruson played a major role in formulating the Darling Harbour Wharves Resumption Bill, and fostering the Government's resolve to redevelop The Rocks.

On 24 March, 1900, he had written to Cardinal Moran describing conditions in some of the worst slum areas in The Rocks and asking Moran to speak out publicly on the issue in order to generate public pressure for a redevelopment of the area. It is clear from Spruson's letter that he was interested in more than sanitation; his reforming zeal was primarily motivated by moral outrage and a strong anti-Chinese bent. In one slum arrangement of 15 houses grouped around a common yard,173

The residents and habitues are black, yellow and white - mostly Chinamen and white women - and at least four of the houses are brothels. There are opium dens in several of the houses.174
In another place,

We found two filthy Chinamen lying on one bed smoking opium, whilst on the other bed, a few inches from the first one, there lay a young woman asleep; she was eighteen or nineteen years old, and wore neither boots or stockings; she woke upon our entering, lit a cigarette and conversed in a manner which proved that no womanly reserve was left in her ...175

Spruson quoted Moran a third example:

A young fellow of sixteen or seventeen smoking opium with a well known white woman who has lived freely with Chinamen for years.176

He concluded by suggesting to Moran that "such facts make one feel that there is something more to correct than sanitary conditions", and that "whilst we have slums in which white children are brought up in full view of such sights we must expect to find newcomers in crime and degradation".

Spruson wrote again on 11 April, informing Moran that events were moving in a promising direction, and detailing his involvement:

My reply to your letter has been purposely delayed pending the result of a Slum Inquiry in Gipps Electorate ordered by Mr. Lyne. This Inquiry so far has proved very satisfactory for the officers charged with the Inquiry seem to think that a comprehensive scheme of effacement and remodelling must be adopted to obtain beneficial sanitary results. I am now preparing a scheme of considerable proportions for submission to the Government, and am very hopeful that it may be endorsed by the Inquiry Officers.177

The Darling Harbour Wharves Resumption Bill, which included in Schedule 1 the Government's proposal to resume the entire Rock's area, represented the fulfilment of Spruson's hopes. On 29 November the Government moved in the Legislative Assembly for the resumption of The Rocks, Schedule 1 now including an exemption of "all buildings erected for religious and scholastic purposes". But not everyone wanted to be exempted; the Marists were happy to be rid of St. Michael's, and Spruson, who spoke about the redevelopment proposal on the floor of the House with familiarity and enthusiasm, told Parliament that the Rev. Mr. Taylor of the Wesleyan church in Princes Street was also desirous of selling out to the Government.178 In the early hours of 30 November John See moved an amendment specifically mentioning those religious and scholastic properties which would be exempted: St. Patrick's church and surrounding buildings, St. Bridget's church-school in Kent Street, and Holy Trinity Anglican church and school in Argyle Place. St. Michael's, and the Princes Street Wesleyan church were happily ceded by their owners to the Government,179 which formally became the new landlord of The Rocks on 31 December, 1900.180

In March, 1901, the Government appointed a City Improvement Advisory Board to prepare proposals and plans for the redevelopment of The Rocks. Its suggestions were
breathtaking, involving nothing less than the demolition of the entire area, and the reconstruction of a model suburb. In the meantime, the worst of the slum dwellings were demolished, and at the end of 1903 the Public Works Department reported that "upwards of 1,000 homes ... have been altered and repaired, especially in regard to their sanitary arrangements". In addition, a limited number of new workers' cottages were built, although some cynics had the bad grace to suggest that these were more slum-like than the buildings they replaced. In the end the ambitious plans for The Rocks were never realised, the Government having enough difficulty paying for the resumed properties, let alone building anything new on them. Spruson became a victim of his own enthusiasm, the ultimate kamikaze politician who promoted a measure which disrupted and alienated most of his electors:

This resumption business was largely Spruson's little scheme, and Mr. Spruson, M.P., who hoped to make a great political home and fame by it, is surely finding now that he has taken charge of a most troublesome white elephant ... It is not healthy, therefore, politically speaking, for a resuming politician to wander about "The Rocks" just now.

The anonymous journalist had his finger on the pulse. Spruson was destined to serve just the one parliamentary term, being soundly defeated the first time he faced the electors. A royal commission tried to sort out the mess in 1909, and eventually settled for a relatively modest scheme of street widening and straightening; the redevelopment of The Rocks was left on the shelf for a later era.

At the 1900 general chapter of the Marist congregation held at Lyon in October, Aubry had successfully moved for the suppression of St. Michael's procure and residence, but the general council postponed carrying out the recommendation on the assumption that the Government would resume the property. The last baptism was performed in St. Michael's church on 20 February, 1901, and the Marists were initially told to quit the property by 19 March. In fact, Guillemin was able to remain there until 4 July, when he finally moved the operations of the procure to St. Patrick's.

The buildings vacated by the Josephite sisters and the Marist fathers were not demolished for many years. The Josephite providence served as the Public Works Department Cement Testing Branch in 1902-1903, and became afterwards the premises of the State Labour Bureau; St. Michael's church was occupied by the Government Night Refuge for Destitute Men during 1903-1904, and from 1904 became the Sydney City Mission Hall; and St. Michael's residence played host to the Gipps Working Men's Club until 1907, and afterwards to C.J. Ohler, coffee roaster. As compensation for St. Michael's church and residence, and several smaller properties in the resumed area, the Marists received £8,800. Interestingly, the disruption caused by the Government resumptions seems to have had no discernible effect on numbers attending St. Patrick's church.

Villa Maria Monastery, Hunters Hill

The third Marist house in Sydney was Villa Maria monastery at Hunters Hill. In his report to the 1893 Marist general chapter in Lyon, Augustine Aubry described the function and atmosphere of Villa Maria with a certain poetic charm:
Situated on a hill, about five kilometres from the centre of Sydney, Villa Maria is currently the residence of the Rev. Father Visitor General and of Father Procurator. The missionaries who leave Europe to go to the various Missions find there the warmest of welcomes, and a much appreciated resting place for several days after the rigours of the passage from Europe, which takes over a month. At Villa Maria they draw new strength to complete the voyage to that Mission station which has been entrusted to their care.

Because it is situated in a pleasant and temperate climate, palpably similar to that of Algiers, Villa Maria is also a sanatorium for our dear confreres who are obliged through sickness, disease, or the advance of old age, to retire from the Missions and live a more settled existence.

Furthermore it is a house of formation where our young fathers come when they are called by our superiors to follow the exercises of the second novitiate...

Rev. Father Joly, whose premature death we lament so deeply, had the foresight to combine beauty and utility. As well as embellishing the beautiful grounds, where our coadjutor brothers have the skill to acclimatise and combine trees and flowers from Europe with those of the tropics, he established vines which thrive in Sydney and produce excellent fruit. The appearance of phylloxera in Europe encouraged him to complete the plantings which he had commenced and thanks to that act of prudence, our fathers in the Mission have an assured supply of pure wine for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass...

Although primarily a service institution for the needs of the Marist congregation, Villa Maria monastery nevertheless cared for the local parish and provided a chaplain for nearby St. Joseph's college. It had a further apostolic outreach of some significance in that the superior, Zephirin Muraire, was Australian promoter of the Apostleship of Prayer. Less an organisation than a way of life, the Apostleship of Prayer was founded in France in 1844. Muraire introduced it to Australia in December, 1865. Members committed themselves to special daily prayers, and were supported by receiving a monthly prayer leaflet. The Apostleship of Prayer probably had particular appeal for Catholics in Australia who were sometimes separated by distance from the consolations of a neighbourhood church and the opportunity of receiving the sacraments. By the early 1870's Muraire was mailing to Sydney suburbs, far-flung New South Wales' towns like Bathurst, Mudgee, Coonabarabran and Gunnedah, and as far afield as New Zealand. It is impossible to be certain how large the enrolled membership was; a register containing about 9000 names is preserved in the Marist archives in Sydney, and one account of Muraire's life states that he had six such ledgers. Membership, therefore, could have been as high as 50,000. The work involved Muraire in much correspondence: the editing and sending of a monthly bulletin, answering enquiries, encouraging local promoters to recruit additional members.

Zephirin Muraire continued as parish priest of Hunters Hill for the entire final decade of the century, as well as being superior of the Villa Maria community. Although "devout, active, regular", "a holy man", "a real saint", Muraire had considerable limitations as a superior. Essentially authoritarian, he refused to consult his confreres or listen to their requests. He was
also unable to share responsibility, having a tendency to try to do everything himself. Leterrier noted in 1892 that both the procure and the parish were suffering because Muraire was unwilling to give Hurlin and Coue respectively sufficient freedom to do their jobs properly. Aubry summed up the position in May, 1896:

If only he would give each one his own job to do, and not take on everything himself; if only, when a respectful comment is made, he would not send you off, saying "I am the Superior".200

Muraire was also consistently unwell, suffering from dyspeptic ulcers, but having, it seems, the constitution of an India-rubber-man:

Sometimes he is sentenced to complete rest by the doctor; at other times he is strong and full of energy; he collapses and recovers three or four times a year, and each time he collapses it seems like being for the last time.201

Muraire was assisted with the work of Hunters Hill parish until 1897 by John Baptist Coue, and after 1894 by Charles Murlay, who joined the Villa Maria community that year.

Villa Maria experienced a second bereavement two years after Claude Joly’s death when Maurice Tresallet died on 14 July 1894. Tresallet had been ill for a number of years, but continued until his death as chaplain to the Marist brothers at St. Joseph's college, and during 1893-1894 acted as novice master for Didier Gallais, Francis Huault, and Louis Rigard, Marist priests recalled from the Missions to undertake a period of second novitiate.202 These three were to remain in Sydney and not return to the islands; Huault for reasons of health, and Rigard and Gallais probably because of personality difficulties which made them unsuitable for the Missions. Rigard became Tresallet's replacement at St. Joseph's, Huault was sent to keep Guillemin company at St. Michael's, and Gallais transferred to New Zealand in 1897.

Death knocked again at Villa Maria in 1894, when Br. Matthew Howard, the only active member among the group of eight coadjutor brothers, was called to his reward on 14 November. One of two Irish brothers in the community, Matthew looked after the vineyards. Aubry described him as "an excellent religious, very devoted and very useful. He had some skill in all trades: mason, carpenter, vintner, gardener ... 203

Matthew's death highlighted a severe shortage of physical manpower at Villa Maria. In 1893 Aubry had reminded the general administration that "Our community of coadjutor brothers is very edifying but very much patriarchs".204 When reporting Matthew's death he asked for two strong, young brothers because "the others are old and infirm ... There is no longer a single brother who is able to work at the vines or in the garden".205 Towards the end of the decade the general administration eventually agreed to send two young coadjutor brothers, Alexander and Casimir,206 and later sent a third, confusingly also named Alexander.207

In 1892 Leterrier had noted the presence at Villa Maria of "half a dozen young Samoans or Wallisians, who take turns in three in looking after the kitchen and refectory, and doing manual work with the brothers".208 These had all departed by 1896. In 1899 the only Pacific islander remaining at Villa Maria was an elderly Futunian, Abel, for whom Aubry asked
permission to be professed as a coadjutor brother as a reward for "all the years he has helped us".  

The Villa Maria monastery community in the second half of the 1890's was not a happy community: Zephirin Muraire, despite enjoying the respect and esteem of most of his confreres, was an authoritarian and narrow-minded superior: John Baptist Coue was "well-known for finding nothing good anywhere and especially in his own home"; Louis Rigard showed a lack of frankness and "evaded the instructions of superiors with continual shrewdness"; and Didier Gallais, at Villa Maria from late 1893 until mid-1897, was susceptible to "fits of bad humour and public outbursts". Finally, Charles Murlay, whom Claude Joly thought would have made an excellent Carthusian, had an austere and unsociable nature. Laughter was apparently a scarce commodity; Aubry was anxious to retain the jovial Francis Jaboulay, who arrived in disgrace at Villa Maria in 1897 after allegations of misconduct with a nun: "His good humour would do something to improve the life of this community in which cordial mutual relations are rather scarce".

Friction in community relationships was not a male monopoly at Villa Maria. A two-storey sandstone cottage, about 50 metres from the main monastery building served as convent for the sisters of the Third Order of Mary Regular. While essentially indistinguishable from other groups of women within the Catholic Church structure, in that they wore a religious habit and followed a religious rule, the Third Order sisters were in fact different, lacking the formal status of a religious congregation. They worked with the Marist priests and coadjutor brothers in the Pacific Missions, and their convent in Sydney served as a half-way house for sisters travelling from Europe through Sydney on their way to the Pacific, and as a temporary home for convalescing sisters. The sisters permanently stationed at Hunters Hill generally assisted with domestic chores in the monastery.

At the beginning of 1892 the sole occupant of the convent was Sister Delphine. Delphine's reputation had apparently spread back to Europe; writing towards the end of 1891, Claude Joly speculated on the non-arrival of two new sisters designated for the convent and surmised that they had been warned off living at Villa Maria with Delphine. What it was which made Delphine not nice to be near is unclear, but Joly argued for her retention at Villa Maria. Her experience and her knowledge of the languages of Central Oceania enabled her to be a very effective overseer of the four Samoans and two Wallisians whom he had recently acquired for the monastery. With something bordering on admiration, Joly explained that:

She makes use of them as if they were women: to do the ironing and often most of the washing; the care of the poultry; seeing to and keeping tidy the rooms of the Fathers, the house in general, the sacristy and church.

A companion for Delphine arrived sometime in 1892 in the person of Sister St John Baptist (Keegan), the first Australian recruit to the Third Order of Mary sisters, who had left a school posting in Fiji after receiving an unacceptable ultimatum from the local bishop. John Baptist put her talents as a seamstress at the service of the monastery community until her departure for Tonga early in 1894.

Alone again, Delphine asked Aubry if she might have some young native sisters from the islands to help her, but Aubry assured superior general Martin that no island sisters would be
coming to Villa Maria while the young Samoans and Wallisians were still around. The following year Delphine's social graces were still undeveloped; Aubry told Martin: "Everywhere the sisters, even the best disposed of them, complain of the conduct of Sister Delphine towards them as they passed through or stayed at Villa Maria". Consequently, in 1896, Delphine was shipped to New Caledonia on a trial basis, and Sisters Germain and Chantal were resident at Villa Maria. She was soon back in Sydney. The sorry saga finally came to an end in August, 1897. Delphine began leaving the convent without permission, broadcasting her grievances to families in the parish, and making public scenes. Aubry decided to send her back to France: "The ship which brings this letter will also bring the sister, whose religious life I, with everyone else, believe is finished".

By 1899 a happier atmosphere prevailed in the little convent, which had three permanent residents: Sister Chantal and Sister Rene were making good recoveries after illnesses, and Sister Germain, "in good health and with a good character", was functioning successfully as overseer of the kitchen.

The melancholy aspects of life at Villa Maria in the last decade of the nineteenth century were destined to be repeated again in the first three decades of the new century: difficult superiors; a community composed essentially of elderly, sick or disenchanted members; disharmony in the Third Order sisters' convent. There would be some sunlight, but many clouds; individuals with heroic commitment to duty, and some with great personal limitations. It would be a period of survival for the Marist community at Hunters Hill, not one of great achievement.

Creation of an Oceania Province

On 28 October, 1898, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith issued a decree in Rome erecting the Marist Mission territories in Oceania as a Province of the Society of Mary. On that day Augustine Aubry ceased to be visitor of the Marist Missions, and became instead Provincial of the Marist Province of Oceania. The adjustment would have changed Aubry's life little, its main purpose being to enable Marist missionaries in Oceania to send delegates to the general chapter of the congregation, held every seven years. Aubry's role remained essentially the same: to visit regularly the various Marist Mission territories in Oceania, to interview the men in the field, to report back to the Marist general administration, to recommend individuals for positions of authority, and to govern the Society's modest operations in Australia. Ordinarily, within the Marist administrative structure, a Provincial would have power to move personnel within his Province, but Aubry's capacity to do this was severely limited by the unique structure of the new Province. It was composed of four vicariates (the Mission-territory equivalent of a diocese), each under the control of a Marist bishop: Amand Lamaze (Central Oceania), Hilary Fraysse (New Caledonia), Peter Broyer (Navigator Islands, Samoa) and Julien Vidal (Fiji). New missionaries arriving from Europe were designated for a specific vicariate; personnel were appointed to areas within the vicariates by the appropriate bishop, and could only be transferred between vicariates by the mutual consent of the bishops concerned.

In 1898 there were about 130 Marist priests working in the Oceania Missions (excluding Marists in Australia), together with Marist coadjutor brothers and Third Order of Mary Regular sisters. In order to attempt to visit and interview each individual every three years, Aubry and
his successors needed to be absent from Sydney for long periods of the year, undertaking hazardous and physically taxing journeys through tropical regions where facilities and means of transport and communication were often extremely primitive. While these journeys, and the overall role of the Provincial in Oceania are outside the scope of this book, they need to be borne in mind.

Although primarily preoccupied with the Society's activities in Oceania, Aubry did address himself to the question of the expansion of the Marist congregation in Australia, a charge he had been specifically given by the superior general and his council during the meetings of 1893. The final section of this chapter looks at Aubry's attempts to increase Marist manpower in Australia by local recruitment and pleas to Lyon for reinforcements and at four proposals for the extension of the Society's operations in Australia, only one of which came to realisation.

Two days before Christmas, 1895, Aubry discussed the question of local vocations with his council. The discussion was triggered by three applications to join the Society: two from young men who had not completed their secondary studies, and a third from an older candidate, Francis Quirk, who had already completed some ecclesiastical studies at St. Patrick's seminary, Manly. The councillors were unanimous that the recruitment of new members was an important responsibility resting on all Sydney Marists, and believed also that something should be begun at Villa Maria so that new recruits could be accepted into the congregation. On 28 April, 1896, the minutes of the Marist general council meeting in Lyon recorded the receipt of a letter from Aubry announcing the commencement of an apostolic school at Villa Maria. The description was perhaps a little grandiose. It would seem that several applicants were invited to become house guests at Villa Maria, and the community shared responsibility for tutoring them in their studies and initiating them into the practices of religious life. Aubry noted in May, 1896, that he was going to ask Didier Gallais "to teach a few young men who have been received as postulants in Villa Maria", and further that he had given John Baptist Coue "the spiritual care of the young men". Midway through 1897 Gallais left Sydney to work in New Zealand and Aubry cancelled his annual visitation to the island Missions; the Provincial council minutes note that "he is going to fix himself at Villa Maria to take charge of the apostolics in place of Father Gallais, who is on the point of leaving for New Zealand".

Presuming there were no other reasons behind Aubry's decision to remain in Sydney, it was an extraordinary commitment on his part to the fostering of local vocations. No further reference to the young postulants at Villa Maria has survived, but there is a strong possibility that some of them were eventually sent to the Marist seminary at Meaneen, near Hawkes Bay (New Zealand), which had opened in 1890. One was probably Emile Talon, a young applicant from New Caledonia who applied to join the Marists in 1895, and was sent direct to Meaneen. He was sent back to Sydney in August of that year, the seminary register stating that "Secondary studies in French, Latin, etc. have all been neglected, and are very incomplete". He spent the rest of 1895 being coached by Francis Huault at St. Michael's, and could well have been one of the postulants who started at Villa Maria in 1896. Talon returned to Meaneen in 1898, and was ordained in November, 1902. After a holiday in New Caledonia he took up an appointment at Villa Maria early in 1903.

Two other students with Australian links who entered Meaneen seminary around this time, and who may have lived as aspirants at Villa Maria prior to commencing their seminary studies were Thomas Byrne (born Ballarat [Vic] 7/2/1872; entered Meaneen 2/2/1899; departed during
1901), and Frank Eliot, an Australian student at Meanee in the 1890s who was send back to Sydney in August, 1899, because of poor health and homesickness, after only a brief stay at Meanee. Like Thomas Byrne, he did not proceed to ordination.231

Meanwhile, Francis Quirk, who had been recruited by Peter Le Rennetel, was sent direct to Meanee at the beginning of 1896; he was soon causing disquiet and was dismissed in July of that year.232 The failure of the Sydney Marists to provide proper documentation and background information on Quirk annoyed the New Zealand Provincial, John Pestre, who also insisted that candidates coming to New Zealand from Australia for seminary studies should pay an annual stipend. Aubry regarded this attitude as niggardly, and stopped recruiting Australian candidates, claiming he could not afford to pay for their keep at Meanee.233 The Marist general administration however backed Pestre, decreeing that "an annual contribution of £25 will be paid by Sydney to Meanee for each apostolic".234

The modest attempts by the Sydney Marists to recruit local vocations in the 1890's and provide some sort of formation structure were therefore short-lived and unproductive. The ordination of Talon did result from their effort, but he was not, strictly speaking, a local vocation; to the extent that they tried to foster Australian vocations, they failed.

Aubry was no more successful in his attempts to coax the Marist general administration to send reinforcements direct from France. In July, 1893, he wrote to superior general Martin:

Villa Maria has need of more men. Father Tresallet is finished for ministry work ... Fathers Muraire and Coue do not really fill the requirement. Also there is no sympathy between the two fathers ...235

The following year, with the arrival of Rigard, Huault and Gallais, the situation had changed dramatically: "... We are not lacking men here at present, and it is no easy job to find work for them all to do. I find it difficult to find work for myself".236 But what Aubry eventually came to realise was that while he might have acquired increased numbers, the quality left something to be desired. Therefore he became more specific in future appeals for reinforcements, insisting again and again on the necessity of "young Fathers" rather than the elderly, sick, or disaffected clerics who were tending to gravitate to Sydney. In August, 1898, he asked "Where are the administrators and superiors of the future?", and told Lyon:

We need new blood - two young Fathers who are quite new, so that they can train themselves for the needs of this country; and have been chosen from among those who have a good spirit and judgment so as to make superiors later.237

The Marist administrators in France were unable to accede to Aubry's request, nor would they be able to comply with the persistent pleas of his successors. The reality was that Australia had a low priority compared to the Oceanian Missions, where the Marist congregation had the primary responsibility for evangelisation; the Marists were the sole clerical presence in the Mission territories allotted to their care, whereas in Australia there were plenty of diocesan priests and plenty of other religious orders to shoulder the burden. As in the last decade of the nineteenth century, so in the first quarter of the twentieth century: the men at the disposal of the Oceania Provincial for work in Australia would be essentially castoffs from the Mission fields:
the sick, the disenchanted, and those who for reasons of personality, temperament, or human weakness, could no longer be kept in the front lines. While they could often do good work as chaplains or curates, they were generally unsatisfactory in leadership roles and positions of authority.

New Apostolic Ventures

Despite the uneven quality of the human resources available for work in Australia, the Marists did investigate increasing their communities and works in the latter years of the nineteenth century. In the early 1890's, with the support of Cardinal Moran, they were hopeful of being the first religious order to break the "closed-shop" approach of Brisbane's Archbishop Robert Dunne, who allowed only secular clergy to work in his diocese. Apparently certain influential Brisbane Catholics approached Le Rennetel on two occasions in the late 1880's and early 1890's "offering a very advantageous suggestion of installing us in the suburbs", and at the same time asked Cardinal Moran to try to persuade Dunne to allow the Marists into Brisbane. When Le Rennetel went to Brisbane for Easter, 1893, Dunne offered the Society of Mary the opportunity to open a secondary school; Aubry responded with a request for a parish instead, but Dunne demurred. When the Australian bishops gathered in Sydney in 1895 for the Secondary Plenary Council, Aubry tested the water elsewhere, but without success:

I tested the feelings of most of the bishops with regard to the possibility of offering us positions here and there. I received little encouragement; each important diocese has its own communities and there is no lack of priests.

In 1895 and again in 1900, the Society was offered Australian aboriginal Missions. Vicar-apostolic John Hutchinson of Cairns wanted three priests and some brothers in 1895 to begin a Mission in his diocese. Cardinal Moran asked the Marists if they would be able to undertake the project. Aubry was doubtful about it in reporting to Lyon, and the Marist general administration showed no enthusiasm for the venture. Again, in 1900, the Trappists asked the Marist general administration if the Society would be willing to take over the Trappist Aboriginal Mission at Beagle Bay in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Aubry, to whom the Trappist request was forwarded for comment, pointed out the difficulties the Society was experiencing in providing sufficient men for recently opened Missions in the New Hebrides and the Solomon Islands. He also warned the general administration that other religious orders had found aboriginal Missions a difficult proposition. The Trappist offer was not taken up.

Sometime in 1897 John Baptist Coue was sent to the parish of Emmaville in the diocese of Armidale as a temporary replacement for the retired pastor. He found that the parish had been badly neglected but, by April, 1898, was reporting a full church at each of the two Sunday Masses and a hefty increase in the collections. The parishioners had actually oversubscribed an appeal for £18 to buy Coue a horse and sulky. The bishop of Armidale, Eugene Torreggiani offered the parish to the Marists on a permanent basis, but Le Rennetel, who was sent to assess and report, was not enthusiastic, and the general administration declined the offer. Coue left the parish in August, 1898.

The Society received one further offer of a parish in the latter years of the nineteenth
century, and after initial hesitation, finally accepted it. In October, 1899, Charles Murlay had been given a trip to Rockhampton for the blessing and opening of the partially completed cathedral. "Dean" Murlay, as he was known north of the Tropic of Capricorn, received the warmest of welcomes from his former parishioners, being feted at dinners and receptions where misty-eyed Hibernians rose to recount stories of the old days and of the Dean's prowess as a horseman. The new bishop, Joseph Higgins, was short of priests and took the opportunity of Murlay's return to offer the Society of Mary care of the parish of Gladstone or the parish of Longreach, or both if the Marists were really keen. Aubry went to Rockhampton in March, 1900, to talk to Higgins but on his return to Sydney the Provincial council decided to defer a decision "for want of men and money". However, in December of the same year the council decided that "all possible efforts should be made to get into the diocese of Rockhampton where the bishop seems sympathetic", and sent a favourable recommendation to the general administration, which endorsed the venture on 2 February, 1901. Murlay was appointed as the first Marist parish priest, and Augustin Ginisty was sent soon afterwards as his assistant. On 5 April Cardinal Moran wrote in his diary:

The Marist FF. are to take up the mission at Gladstone (Q.) on next Sunday Week. Thanks be to God that this business has had a successful issue. It will be a great blessing not for Gladstone alone but for all Queensland.

And so the Marists accepted a new work in Australia, 1,600 long kilometres from Sydney: the care of the parish of Gladstone, a sleepy backwater with 3000 inhabitants, a magnificent harbour, and little else to commend it. Apart from a vague feeling that the Society needed to "get in somewhere", and Charles Murlay's links with the region, the decision seemed to have little logic behind it. Armand Olier thought it would be a "magnificently healthy place for our Fathers from the Solomons who could come and rest there when they became sick". Perhaps the decision was also partly motivated by the increasing possibility of religious persecution in France. A French Marist told Auguste Guillemin in April 1901:

We are all very glad to hear you were about making a new foundation in Queensland. It may be an opening for some of our French Fathers, who by all account, are soon to find themselves without hope of employment in their own country.

End of Aubry’s Provincialate

Augustin Aubry was becoming tired of being Provincial. In November, 1899, in a lengthy report for the general administration on Marist personnel and communities in Australia, he wrote:

... if God is pleased to give me the pleasure of seeing you at the General Chapter, I shall probably ask you to let me take advantage of the article in the Constitutions which reduces the officers to the rank of privates. The more I see, the less confidence I have in my ability as an administrator. I fail in what is needed, and I fail myself. I believe that I have never done as much good as I did when I was the teacher of the Fifth Class.

God and a Messageries Maritimes steamship got Aubry to the Marist general chapter in
Lyon in October, 1900, where he was relieved of his Provincialship. He was not, however, allowed to return to teaching school, being selected an assistant general of the congregation. On 10 November he participated in the general council meeting which nominated Armand Olier as his successor in Oceania.

The period of Augustine Aubry's administration was a mixture of success and failure for the Marists in Australia. St. Patrick's continued to thrive under the leadership of Peter Le Rennetel, and The Rocks' resumption had finally rid the group of the troublesome St. Michael's complex. A new parish had been acquired, though its location in Central Queensland raised questions about its long-term suitability. Villa Maria community and Hunters Hill parish had been problem areas right through the decade, the elderly Zephirin Muraire refusing to resign from his twin-role of superior and parish priest, and alienating his religious subjects and his parishioners. Finally, despite some positive attempts to do so, the Society had been generally unsuccessful in recruiting Australians to its ranks, or acquiring further parishes and apostolic ventures in Australia. In this regard, it was already falling behind other clerical religious orders in Australia, who had arrived much later than the Marists.
END NOTES CHAPTER 2

1 In a letter from Sydney dated 26 February, Aubry states that he arrived in Sydney "a fortnight ago". Aubry to Martin, 26 February, 1893, APM OP418.

2 Muraire to Martin, 28 December, 1892, APM OP458. Muraire is technically incorrect when he says that Aubry was Provincial in Ireland. A circular letter of superior general Martin (n.76, 14 November 1886) lists Aubry as "Vice-Provincial of England and Ireland". England and Ireland remained a vice-Province of the Society of Mary until 1889, at which time Aubry departed for New Zealand.

3 Aubry to Muraire (?) 8 August, 1893, Marist Oceania archives (hereafter OMPA), reference D10.1

4 Circular letter of superior general Antoine Martin n.87, 25 September, 1893. Delegates to the general chapter represented the various Provinces of the Society. Australia and the Pacific Missions were not constituted as an official Province of the Society at this time, being under the direct control of the superior general. Hence, until Aubry's admission in 1893, they had no representation at the general chapter.

5 The submission to the general chapter that the Marist houses in Sydney and the Mission vicariates of Oceania be grouped as a separate Province is written in Aubry's handwriting. See "Rapport de la Commission des Missions d'Oceanie", 1893 general chapter, APM 322.8.

6 Aubry's ship reached Albany, Western Australia, at the end of April, and he arrived in Sydney on 7 May. See Aubry to Martin, 29 April, 1894, 10 May, 1894, APM OP418

7 MPV, 2 November, 1893, 9 January, 1894, 11 January, 1894, 28 March, 1894, 31 March, 1894. The general council consisted of the superior general and his four assistant generals. The superior general governed the congregation in consultation with his assistants.

8 Muraire to Martin, 28 December, 1892, APM 418. "I received before Christmas the letter by which you have announced that you have chosen Rev. Fr. Aubry as the replacement for Rev. Fr. Joly as visitor and superior and that you have named me procurator at Sydney in place of Rev. Fr. Hurlin".
Aubry to Martin, 15 July, 1894, APM OP418.

Oceania Provincial council minutes (hereafter PCM), 6 July, 1894, OMPA C1. Although the Marist Mission areas were not yet grouped together as a formal Province of the Society, and although Aubry was visitor of the Missions rather than Provincial superior, he had been given a council of advisors similar to that which any Marist Provincial would have. His council met for the first time on 13 February, 1893, and the members were Aubry, Muraire, Tresallet, Le Rennetel and Murlay.

Aubry to Martin, 26 August, 1894, APM OP418

Aubry to Martin, 30 September, 1894, APM OP418. Aubry was later to revise this assessment, saying simply, in 1895, that "the suspected deficit will be much less". Aubry to Hervier (?), 1 April, 1895, APM OP418.

Phillip Callaghan, Alive in Memory, ND, privately printed, p.217 (copy AMPA).

Aubry to Martin, 10 February, 1895, APM OP418.

MPV, 21 March, 1895.

Aubry to Hervier, 1 May, 1895, APM OP418.

A constant complaint over several decades, this issue is discussed in Chapter 4.


FJ, 21 May, 1898, p.18.

FJ, 22 March, 1890, p.19.

Ibid.

See below p.28.

FJ, 22 March, 1890, p.19

Ibid.

FJ, 4 April, 1891, p.15.

The phrase comes from the Freeman's Journal report, FJ, 4 April, 1891, p.15.

FJ, 4 April, 1891, p.15. See also, p.16 of this issue for an account of Macrossan's death and funeral, the body subsequently being taken by train to Nudgee cemetery, Brisbane, for burial.

See below, Chapter 6
39

29 FJ, 18 June, 1892, p.15.
30 Ibid., p.15.
32 Aubry to Martin, 30 September, 1894, APM OP418.
33 Aubry to Martin, 26 November, 1894, APM OP418.
34 FJ, 10 December, 1892, p.15; 17 December, 1892, p.15.
36 Doyle to Moran, 1 January, 1893, Moran Papers, Sydney Archdiocesan Archives (hereafter SAA).
37 FJ, 3 June, 1893, p.15
38 FJ, 31 January, 1893, p.14
39 FJ, 30 September, 1893, p.15.
40 FJ, 16 December, 1893, p.17
41 FJ, 3 February, 1894, p.15; FJ, 10 March, 1895, p.15; FJ, 13 October, 1894, p.15. The presbytery, hall, and convent built by Le Rennetel are all still standing and are heritage-listed. The Federation Hall building had a second storey added when the building passed from parish ownership in 1921; it was renovated and restored in 1988.
42 CP, 7 December, 1895, p.5.
43 FJ, 20 May, 1893, p.15.
44 FJ, 22 December, 1894, p.15; FJ, 8 June, 1895, p.15.
45 FJ, 17 August, 1895, p.11.
46 CP, 7 December, 1895, p.5.
47 A mission was a popular Catholic devotional exercise of the 19th and early 20th century; an imported preacher or preachers would descend on a parish at the invitation of the parish priest, visit the faithful in their homes, and exhort them to attend the exercises of the mission. Often the special sermons given would have the flavour of a revivalist meeting, with a strong emphasis on sin and hell. A retreat was a similar period of spiritual renewal, but generally participated in by religious brothers and nuns within their monasteries and convents, again with a special preacher, and often in part at least emphasising eternal damnation as the consequence of sinful living.
48 FJ, 9 January, 1892, p.15; FJ 30 January, 1892, p.15.
49 FJ, 14 January, 1893, p.15.
50 FJ, 3 June, 1893, p.15
51 Quoted in FJ, 17 March, 1894, p.16.
52 FJ, 3 November, 1894, p.15
53 FJ, 22 June, 1895, p.16.
54 FJ, 7 March, 1896, p.16.
55 FJ, 17 October, 1896, p.15.
56 FJ, 19 June, 1897, p.16; 17 July, 1897, p.15; 21 August, 1897, p.15.
58 See above, p.13
59 FJ, 6 December, 1890, p.15.
60 FJ, 11 February, 1899, p.17.
61 FJ, 30 September, 1893, pp.18-19.
62 FJ, 21 May, 1898, pp.18-19
63 FJ, 21 May, 1898, p.18.
64 Ibid
65 CP, 4 August, 1904, p.13.
66 CP, 28 July, 1904, p.22.
67 CP, 21 July, 1904.
68 FJ, 21 May, 1898, p.18.
69 Muraire to Martin, 18 July, 1892, APM OP458. Muraire was prepared to concede that these functions did not have quite the same meaning in Australia as they would have in France, but nevertheless thought Le Rennetel to be "extraordinarily brazen".
70 DT, 29 July, 1904, p.4.
71 Le Rennetel to Martin, no date, but early or mid 1890's, APM S61.418.2.

The members of the council in 1890 were Rev. Dr. Carroll (Darlinghurst). Archpriest Sheehy (Ryde), Monsignor Rigney (Prospect), Rev. Callaghan M'Carthy (Concord), Rev. P. Healy (Bega) and Rev. P. Le Rennetel (St. Patrick's). FJ, 8 November, 1890, p.8.

CP, 4 August, 1904, p.13. The novelist Alistair Maclean once wrote of James Cook: "We know all about Cook and we know nothing about him. We know that he was courageous, prudent, wise, indefatigable, adventurous, a born leader of men: but what he was like, what kind of individual he was personally, we have but the most remote of conceptions.... To have maintained so inviolate a privacy is indeed a feat, but to have done so in spite of the fact that he left us over one million words minutely recording his day-to-day activities over many years amounts to an accomplishment so staggering as to defy rational comprehension" (quoted in Gordon McLaughlan, The Passionless People, Auckland, 1976, p.27). These words could have been written about Moran. After reading his historical writings, his speeches, his personal correspondence, the fragments of his diary which survive, one feels no closer to the inner person. His affectionate words about Le Rennetel are special, since Moran rarely spoke this way in public.

86 Slattery and O'Connor were likewise present at Le Rennetel's funeral, and were frequent attenders at parish functions throughout the 1890's: CP, 4 August, 1904, p.14; FJ, 18 June, 1892, p.15; FJ, 21 May, 1898, p.18.

87 CP, 28 July, 1904, p.22. See also FJ, 2 November 1889, for an account of a public controversy involving Anderson, when he was officially reprimanded for allowing a crippled woman to sell newspapers from a pram in King Street.

88 See FJ, 30 December, 1899, p.15; FJ, 20 January, 1900, p.18. Also press clipping from the New Zealand Tablet and handwritten transcript of trial, SAA Marist Box; handwritten extract from Sydney Sunday Times, 1 October, 1899, AMPA D17.14.

89 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy and English translation, AMPA B130.

90 Aubry to Martin, 10 February, 1900, APM OP418; Aubry to Martin, 22 February, 1900, APM OP418.

91 Boundaries as defined in documents prepared for Archbishop Vaughan and Cardinal Moran, AMPA B215.02.01.

92 Max Kelly, A Certain Sydney, 1900, Sydney, 1977 (no pagination).

93 In his report on the Marist communities in Australia to the 1893 general chapter in Lyon, Aubry described St. Patrick's as "an ardent centre of parish zeal in the middle of a considerable Irish population": Aubry, "Rapport sur le Personnel et les Oeuvres des Missions de l'Oceanie", APM 322.865.

94 Joly to General Administration, undated, but most likely 1886, copy AMPA B120.

95 See Appendix.

96 Joly to General Administration, undated, but most likely 1886, copy AMPA B120.

97 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

98 FJ, 18 June, 1892, p.14; Banks, Australian Musical Album.


100 FJ, 2 March, 1901, p.13. For a full biographical sketch see FJ, 16 June, 1904, p.15.


102 FJ, 7 May, 1904, p.23.

103 FJ, 20 August, 1904, p.22.
Benediction was a popular Catholic devotional service during the nineteenth century, and for the first half of the twentieth century. Its popularity has declined in recent years. To the accompaniment of hymns and incense, the consecrated host was placed in a glass display case (called a monstrance) and venerated by the faithful. The service takes its name from the final action of the ceremony, when the priest blesses the congregation with the monstrance.

See reports of monthly meetings in the Freeman's Journal, 14 October, 1893, p.15; 8 September, 1894, p.18; 6 October, 1894, p.15.

See, for example, the report of the 1890 annual meeting of members, FJ, 31 May, 1890, p.18. Further reports of annual meetings, FJ, 3 June, 1893, p.14; FJ, 15 June, 1896, p.14.

FJ, 25 September, 1897, p.17; FJ, 1 January, 1898, p.16; FJ, 24 September, 1898, p.15.

FJ, 28 July, 1894, p.17. A second conference was established at Haymarket later that same day.

FJ, 28 July, 1894, p.15.


FJ, 4 May, 1895.


FJ, 26 March, 1892, p.16; FJ, 16 April, 1892, p.14.

FJ, 19 May, 1894, p.15; FJ, 2 June, 1894, p.15.


FJ, 20 April, 1901, p.12.

FJ, 1 February, 1890, p.15.

FJ, 17 December, 1892, p.15.

FJ, 29 April, 1893, p.14.

FJ, 22 July, 1893, p.15.

Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

FJ, 21 May, 1898, p.19.

FJ, 13 August, 1902, p.19.
Leterrier to Martin, 25 October, 1892, copy AMPA B170.05.

CP, 28 July, 1904, p.22.

Aubry to Martin, 10 June, 1897, APM OP418.


Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

Hosie, "Le Rennetel", ADB, Vol. 10, p.77

Muraire to Martin, 18 November, 1902, AMP OP600.418.

MPV, 31 March, 1903. A canonical monition was a formal dressing down given a religious subject for unacceptable behaviour. If it was not heeded, the ultimate penalty was expulsion from the religious congregation.

FJ, 6 August, 1904, pp.14-15


FJ, 15 October, 1904, p.34.

See Don Wright, Mantle of Christ, Brisbane, 1984.


Coste, "A Few References".

Joly to Poupinel, 16 May, 1872, AMPA B120.


William Brown, M.L.A., was living there in 1877. See Sands N.S.W. Directory, 1877, p.50

Coste, "A Few References"; Joly to Poupinel, 3 August, 1879, copy AMPA B120.
The foundation stone of St. Michael's church was laid in January, 1882, and the church was officially opened on 22 October, 1882.

Curriculum Vitae of John O'Dwyer, OMPA, O'Dwyer personal file.

Joly to Martin, 15 May, 1888, copy AMPA B120.


FJ, 2 December, 1899, p.7.

See the letters from Murlay to Poupinel beginning 27 February, 1867, APM VM221.3


Marion to Regis, 8 October, 1908, copy AMPA B140/3.

Curriculum Vitae, APM Murlay personal file.

Joly to Martin, 18 January, 1888, copy AMPA B120

Ibid

Joly to Martin, 15 May, 1888, copy AMPA B120.

Joly to Raffin, 16 May, 1889, copy AMPA B120.

Leterrier to Martin, 25 October, 1892, copy AMPA B170.05

PCM, 6 July, 1894, OMPA C1.

PCM, 16 November, 1893.

Aubry to Martin, 11 November, 1895, APM OP418. O'Dwyer did not make profession as a Trappist, and rejoined the Society of Mary in New Zealand in 1903.

See page 11.

Aubry to (?), 9 May, 1896, APM OP418. Huault performed his first baptism at St. Michael's on 26 July, 1895.

Aubry to Martin, 3 December, 1896, APM OP418.

Aubry to (?), 9 May, 1896, APM OP418.
Aubry to Martin, 9 August, 1897, APM OP418.

Aubry to Martin, 15 April, 1899, APM OP418.

Leterrier to Martin, 25 October, 1892, copy AMPA B170.05

Kelly, Certain Sydney (no pagination).


Ibid. See maps following p.1317.


Probably "Frog Hollow" on the corner of Essex and Gloucester Streets, A Health Department photograph held by the Mitchell Library corresponds almost exactly to Spruson's description.

Spruson to Moran, 24 March, 1900, SAA Moran Papers.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Spruson to Moran, 11 April, 1900, SAA Moran Papers.

N.S.W. Parliamentary Debates, 1900, p.6046.

Votes and Proceedings, 1900, Vol. 1, p.580 It is interesting to note that in all the debates on The Rocks' resumption, the Government made no reference to the Harbour Bridge, apart from an oblique comment by Sir William Lyne about a remodelled street which would be "an off take for an approach to North Sydney at some time". The bridge was nevertheless at the forefront of the Government's thinking, a design competition being held in 1900 (Government Gazette, 19 January, 1900, p.474). See also Shirley Fitzgerald and Christopher Keating, Millers Point: the Urban Village, Sydney, 1991, pp.70-73.


Ibid., pp.717 ff. The members of the Advisory Board were F.A. Franklin, J.R. Carey, John Barlow, Varney Parks, and George McCredie; see also Votes and Proceedings, 1901, Vol. 6, maps following p.16, prepared soon after the resumption, by Norman Selfe and F.A. Franklin.

Votes and Proceedings, 1903, Vol. 6, p.672.

FJ, 23 February, 1911, p.16.


1900 general chapter, 14th Seance and 21st Seance, APM 322.952; MPV 28 December, 1900.

Coste, "A Few References", p.2. This date tallies with a reference in a letter of Mother Mary MacKillop, MacKillop to Gonzaga, 11 March, 1901, Mary MacKillop Letters, JA.

Guillemin to Vidal, 18 July, 1901, Roman Catholic Archives of Fiji (hereafter RCAF), 14/12/2.

See Sands N.S.W. Directory, 1900-1913; see also Public Works Department Board of Reference Minutes, 7 September, 1899 to 30 October, 1902, pp.264-5 and p.462; N.S.W. Public Service Board, "Report on the State Labour Bureau", Sydney, 1905, ML Q331.061/N.

Olier to Regis, 16 August, 1903, APM OP418.

APM, 322.8.


Leterrier to Martin, 25 October, 1892, copy AMPA B170.05.

Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

Aubry to Hervier (?) 9 May, 1896, APM OP418.

Ibid.

Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

A second novitiate was a period of spiritual renewal for priests belonging to a religious
order, to which they were called after some years in the apostolate (usually ten years). At the conclusion of the novitiate, they could be invited to take a vow of stability.

203 Aubry to Martin, 19 November, 1894, APM OP418.

204 Aubry to Martin, 6 July, 1892, copy AMPA B130.

205 Aubry to Martin, 19 November, 1894, APM OP418.

206 Aubry to Hervier (?), 9 May, 1896, APM OP418; Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

207 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130. One of the Alexanders was Alexander Carron who was professed at Villa Maria in 1907 as Br Theodore; he lived at Villa Maria until his death in 1941. The other was most probably Alexander Joseph Combet (see below, footnote 231).

208 Leterrier to Martin, 25 October, 1892, copy and English translation AMPA B170.05.

209 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130. The permission appears not to have been given, as Abel was simply enrolled as a member of the Marist third order.

210 Ibid.

211 PCM, 21 August, 1895.

212 Aubry to Martin, 29 December, 1894, APM OP418.

213 Aubry to Martin, 10 June, 1897, APM OP418.

214 Joly to Raffin, 13 December, 1891, copy and English translation AMPA B120.

215 Ibid.

216 The bishop was insisting that she cut her ties with the Third Order of Mary sisters and join an associated group, the Marist sisters. See Marie Cecile de Mijolla, Origins in Oceania, Rome, 1984, p.234.

217 Aubry to Martin, 20 February, 1895, APM OP418.

218 Aubry to Martin, 17 October, 1896, APM OP418.

219 Aubry to Martin, 9 August, 1897, APM OP418.

220 Aubry to Martin, 12 December, 1899, copy and English translation, AMPA B130.

221 Decree n.30699, 28 October, 1898. Copy at AMPA B100.2

222 See above, p.10.
By 1905, the number was around 150, in 1910 around 170, and in 1920 about the same.

MPV, 28 April, 1896. An apostolic school or minor seminary prepared boys at secondary level for entry to the seminary. Most minor seminarians were therefore adolescents, although the term could also cover a person of more mature age who was completing his secondary qualifications prior to being admitted to study theology.

Aubry to (?), 9 May, 1896, APM OP418.

PCM, 14 June, 1897.

PCM, 18 September, 1895.

Notes du Scholasticat, NZMPA uncatalogued register.

FJ, 7 March, 1903, p.23.

Goutenoire to Guillemin, 25 August, 1899, 22 September, 1899, OMPA D10.3. One further name which has surfaced from this period is that of Alexander Joseph Combet. His family maintains that he came from France in 1896 to study for the priesthood at Villa Maria; again according to family tradition, he subsequently married a Third Order of Mary Regular sister, Marie Antoinette Klein, and settled in Australia. More likely he came as a candidate for the coadjutor brotherhood (see above p.30, and footnotes 206 & 207)

Pestre to Guillemin, 4 July, 1896, OMPA D10.3; Notes du Scholasticat, NZMPA.

Aubry to Martin, 14 August, 1898, APM OP418.

MPV, 5 July, 1898.

Aubry to Martin, 6 July, 1893, APM OP418.

Aubry to Martin, 6 August, 1894, APM OP418.

Aubry to Martin, 14 August, 1898, APM OP418.

Boland, James Duhig, p.108.

Le Rennetel to Martin, 15 March, 1892, AMPA C215.05.

Aubry to Martin, 6 July, 1892, copy and English translation, AMPA B130.

Aubry to Martin, 10 December, 1895, APM OP418.

Ibid.
243 Abbot of Saint-Lieu-Sept-Fons to Martin, 5 June, 1900, APM S380.

244 Aubry to Martin, 31 July, 1900, APM OP418.

245 Coue to Aubry, 11 April, 1898, APM S990.

246 MPV, 5 July, 1898.

247 FJ, 27 August, 1898, p.20

248 FJ, 2 December, 1899, p.7.

249 PCM, 20 April, 1900.

250 PCM, 17 December, 1900.

251 MPV, 2 February, 1901.

252 Moran Papers, SAA MP124.

253 Olier to Martin, 20 February, 1901, APM OP418.

254 Goutenoire to Guillemin, 30 April, 1901, OMPA D10.3.

255 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

256 Minutes of the 1900 General Chapter, APM 322.952.
A missionary in Tonga since 1881, 49 year old Armand Olier was one of the elected delegates from the Province of Oceania to the 1900 Marist general chapter. He was in Europe, therefore, when he was appointed as Provincial of Oceania, and did not arrive at Hunters Hill to take up his new position until 3 February, 1901.

Olier was unimpressed with what he found at Villa Maria, both in the Marist community and with the running of the parish. He was waiting impatiently for the arrival of John Pestre, most recently Provincial of New Zealand, and before that successively theology professor at Dundalk and Maynooth in Ireland, several French seminaries, and Meanee in New Zealand. Pestre, a man of talent and capacity, had been appointed to Sydney to improve the tone and quality of the Marist presence there, and to run spiritual renewal programmes, called second novitiates, for Marist missionaries in Oceania. Olier had no doubt that Villa Maria was where Pestre was most needed:

It is the unanimous wish of all the Fathers that he will come to us with the title of superior of Villa Maria. Rev. Fr. Muraire, who has been superior for so long, has rather wearied his confreres with the way he operates. A change would do a great deal of good: the parish needs renewing and to have serious work done on it.

Olier was destined to be disappointed: at the last moment Pestre’s appointment was changed and he was sent to America, to the Marist seminary at Washington. In fact, Olier had simply saved himself the cost of a funeral; Pestre died on 3 August, 1901, having barely taken up his new posting.

So Muraire continued as superior and parish priest for the immediate future. While clearly still admired and respected by his religious community and his parishioners, both groups were losing patience with his leadership. Aware of this dissatisfaction, and aware too that indifferent health and advancing years made his grip on life increasingly tenuous, Muraire would have realised that his term as parish priest at Hunters Hill might soon come to an end. He decided to initiate an important building project while there was still time. In the Woolwich-peninsula section of the parish there was an impressive sandstone church waiting to be built. Cardinal Moran had laid the foundation stone back in October, 1890, and the first stage of the church, dedicated to the Marist martyr, Peter Chanel, was blessed and opened on 11 December, 1892. The structure probably looked somewhat odd, since what was built was simply the church sanctuary and sacristy; the transepts and nave were left for a later time. Claude Joly apologised at the time to his superiors in France for beginning the project without their permission; he blamed Cardinal Moran, hinting that his Eminence may have taken that section of the parish from Marist control had the church not been begun. Joly assured the general administration that Woolwich was worth having: "Keeping this area is all to our advantage ... [it] has the greater number of richer Catholics".
In 1899 Muraire decided to complete Blessed Peter Chanel's church, and wrote to the general administration on 13 July with a proposal to modify the original plan by shortening the transepts, and reducing the length of the nave from 108 to 55 feet.\(^5\) Cardinal Moran laid a foundation stone for the second stage on 3 December, 1899, and blessed and opened the truncated church on 2 June, 1901.\(^6\)

With Muraire's building project completed, Olier returned to the problem of finding someone to replace him as superior and parish priest. Writing to Lyon in December, 1901, he quoted a threat from parishioners to petition the Cardinal for "a priest who speaks English", a not too kind allusion by the parishioners to Muraire's heavily accented sermons. Moran himself had mentioned to Olier that he thought Muraire a little too old for the job. Olier concluded: "The parish of Villa Maria needs to be smartened up, and this will only happen with a new parish priest".\(^7\) He suggested recalling Augustin Ginisty from Gladstone to take on the job: "Zealous, lives simply, excellent preacher, experienced in parish work, he would make Villa Maria one of the best parishes in Sydney".\(^8\)

Early in 1902 Muraire agreed to stand down as parish priest, but refused to be replaced as superior by Ginisty:

If Father Ginisty became superior here, the house of Villa Maria would become the most worldly house in Sydney. There would be invitation after invitation, and especially on Sundays.\(^9\)

Muraire had already been scandalised by Olier's relaxed observance of the religious rule at Villa Maria, and was soon complaining to the authorities in France:

Reverend Father Olier ... with due respect is not what the English call a disciplinarian. *Timor Domini*, the fear of the Lord, is not part of his equipment. He has brought with him to Villa Maria the ways they have of behaving in the Islands.\(^10\)

Muraire was particularly incensed by Olier's liking for late-night kava parties, where he would "laugh and chat to the Fathers and to the two young Brother novices".\(^11\) In addition, the monthly retreat days were no longer observed, and there was excessive talking at almost every meal.

When a response came back from the general administration to Muraire's complaints, there were no clear winners: Muraire was to be replaced as superior of Villa Maria by Ginisty; liquor and kava were forbidden except on special occasions; and evening gatherings at the monastery were not to be prolonged beyond 10.00 p.m.\(^12\) Muraire was, in any case, beyond caring, having died on 31 January, 1903, following an unsuccessful operation for stomach cancer. In the latter years of his life, his less attractive features seemed to predominate: his strait-laced narrowness, and his uncompromising approach to the exercise of authority. But clearly there were other dimensions to Zephirin Muraire, and it was these which people preferred to remember. Presumably because of his work with the Apostleship of Prayer, the Freeman's Journal called him "one of the best known and most widely respected priests in the Australian Commonwealth",\(^13\) pointing out that his greatest talents were in the largely hidden area of directing individuals in their spiritual lives.
Augustin Ginisty had taken over from Muraire as parish priest on Easter Sunday, 1902; he now became superior of the community as well. Ginisty had come to Australia in 1881, and apart from his recent and brief interlude in Gladstone, had worked exclusively in St. Patrick's parish. In two portraits of Ginisty which survive, an ordination snap and a photograph taken at a much later date, the most striking features are his eyes, which give him a startled, timid appearance. He was something of an enigma to his superiors, Aubry describing him as "a mass of contradictions" and despairing of ever understanding him. Regarded by the Marists as their most competent English speaker and best preacher, Ginisty was also "zealous" and "earnest" in exercising his priestly ministry. Le Rennetel found him somewhat temperamental, with a deficient sense of obedience, but acknowledged that "he does as he is told provided one tells him clearly and positively what he is to do". Aubry thought him "imprudent in word and action", with an "obvious prejudice in helping his superior only in things which he likes"; he was "cold" towards the Society of Mary, avoiding the company of his confreres, and not visiting other Marist houses in Sydney for months or even a year at a time.

Ginisty was destined to be parish priest of Hunters Hill for a little over two years and superior of the Villa Maria community for only 18 months. He would soon be recalled to St. Patrick's to fill the gap left by the death of Le Rennetel in July, 1904. Although he worked in Hunters Hill parish for only a brief time he endeared himself to the parishioners and quickly retrieved the ground lost in the latter years of Muraire's stewardship. In November, 1902, Olier reported to headquarters that Ginisty was making good progress: "By reason of his zeal and his eloquence, our church is beginning to meet the needs; there has already been a great change since he took charge". Several new parish groups were soon active under Ginisty's leadership, including a club for young men and a branch of the Hibernian Benefit Society, and the almost defunct Sacred Heart Sodality was soon flourishing. The church was often crowded, even for Sunday night devotions, and Ginisty's departure from the parish generated, according to the Freeman's Journal, "shock" and "much regret".
Between 1899 and 1906 the Marists also cared for the adjoining parish of St. Charles, Ryde. Originally given to the Society of Mary by Archbishop Polding in 1856, and at that time covering an area from Rydalmere to Woolwich, the parish had been divided in 1889, the Marists receiving the Hunters Hill end, and the last of the Sydney Benedictines, Archpriest Austin Sheehy, becoming parish priest of Ryde. Sheehy fell out of a carriage midway through 1899, and never regained his health. He lived in the presbytery at Ryde until 1906, when Cardinal Moran relieved him of his charge. The Marists cared for Sheehy's parish throughout the period, Francis Huault working there initially, and in later years his brother Julien, who had come to Villa Maria in 1903 from Fiji, where poor health and an erratic temperament had rendered him unsuitable for the Mission. In assisting Sheehy the Marists were repaying a long-standing debt, for he was, according to Aubry, "one who has always shown himself our best friend since we came to Sydney, and whom we needed to thank several times at St. Patrick's when everyone except he was pushing the Archbishop to send us away".

Sheehy was to die in 1910, but in 1907, as we shall see, he would render the Marists one further and significant good turn.

During Ginisty's time at Villa Maria the monastery community underwent considerable change through the death and departure of some, and the arrival of others. Muraire died in January, 1903, John Baptist Coue followed him 12 months later, and death also made claims on the group of patriarchal coadjutor brothers who had grown old with the monastery several of them had helped to build.

Two important new members joined the Villa Maria community in the early years of the century. The first was Placid Huault, the third of three brothers ordained Marist priests. Placid had taught in Marist seminaries in Europe, and from 1891 was a staff member at the new Marist seminary at Meanee, in Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand. Following the designation of John Pestre for Washington, Placid Huault was appointed to Sydney early in 1901, but at the request of the New Zealand Provincial, Thomas Devoy, stayed on at Meanee until the end of the 1901 academic year. Arriving in Sydney early in 1902 to take up his appointment, he was handed a letter from Devoy informing him that the general administration had agreed to his remaining in New Zealand. Reluctantly, Huault returned to Meanee, issuing a gentle ultimatum to Devoy midway through 1902, and a less gentle ultimatum early in 1903, that he was unwilling to remain there. He worked as a curate in Wellington for most of 1904 until he was finally reappointed to Sydney in August, where he assumed the positions of superior and parish priest at Villa Maria, left vacant by Ginisty's appointment to St. Patrick’s.

A further addition to the Villa Maria community in these years was Dominic Duclos, who was appointed direct from France. Forty-eight years old, Duclos had worked primarily as a master of novices and spiritual director. The general administration had been concerned for some time that no real opportunity existed for Marist missionaries in Oceania to make a second novitiate, a prescribed period of spiritual renewal undertaken after 10 years in the field. Only a small number of Marists had been sent to Villa Maria over the years to make their second novitiate, and by the turn of the century many missionaries in Oceania were long overdue. The general administration therefore decided to appoint a permanent master of novices to Villa Maria, who would carry through a programme of regular novitiates until the backlog had been cleared. John Pestre and Placid Huault were each designated for this role, but Pestre never got to Sydney, and Huault was asked to return to New Zealand. In July, 1902, the experienced Duclos
agreed to go to Sydney, arriving on 5 January of the following year. He began his first second novitiate with six novices towards the end of May, 1903. For many years to come Villa Maria would play host to six or eight second novices each year, who would arrive from the islands in May and depart towards the end of November. During their stay they would be given lectures on religious life, spirituality, and the spirit of the congregation, and spend extended periods in prayer. While Placid Huault was destined to have some considerable involvement in the wider Catholic community, Duclos would have virtually none. His apostolate was carried out exclusively within the monastery, and in any case he spoke no English when he arrived, a situation he hardly bothered to rectify.

As well as significant changes in the composition of the Villa Maria community, the years 1900-1904 saw several major building projects. Following the death of Muraire, parishioners and friends were anxious to erect some monument to his memory. In October, 1903, the Freeman's Journal announced that "After much consideration" it had been decided by a committee to enlarge the Hunters Hill church as a memorial to Muraire: the church facade would be removed, the nave lengthened by about a third, and then the facade would be reconstructed with a new rose-window and belfry. It seems likely that the Marists simply used the occasion of Muraire's death to gain funds for a project which had been under consideration for some time. An elaborate scale-model of the extended church can still be seen at Villa Maria; it bears the date 1902, and therefore was prepared before Muraire's death, presumably to give an indication of how the church would look following an extension. With what was apparently a typical display of independence, Ginisty signed the contract without the requisite permission from the Marist general administration. The official opening and blessing of the extended church was performed by Cardinal Moran on 24 April, 1904, although the builder, James Park, and the joiner, Joseph Azzopardi, did not complete their work until July.

At the time of the church extension, a sandstone annex dating from 1883 and running at right angles to the church sanctuary was walled off and fitted out to provide accommodation for six second novices, and the building of a Lourdes shrine was approved by the Provincial council on 30 May, 1904, "in front of the new wall which separates the Villa Maria church from the adjacent building intended for the second novitiate."

Meanwhile, the monastery buildings were also augmented during Ginisty's superiorship: in 1902-3, a new two-level sandstone building was constructed between the sisters' convent and the main monastery building. The ground floor became the new kitchen for the monastery and a dining room for the sisters, and the first storey provided sewing and ironing rooms and additional accommodation for sisters passing through Sydney.

Gladstone, and New Ventures

In April, 1901, at the age of 69, Charles Murlay made a fresh beginning in Central Queensland, at Gladstone, and Augustin Ginisty joined him in July. Olier paid them a visit towards the end of the year, and reported to the superior general that they were both happy and healthy. Governments everywhere, it seems were resuming things in 1901; Murlay had to sell his church soon after arriving to make way for the railway, and with the proceeds had purchased three acres on a rise closer to the town centre. He had begun construction of a church-school, and also had a presbytery on the drawing board. Ginisty, meanwhile, motivated perhaps by zeal
(or possibly by the Dean's chilly demeanour), had adopted a pattern which saw him away from Gladstone three weeks in four. At the invitation of Bishop Higgins he began preaching missions in the diocese and helping out at the cathedral; once a month he would travel south by bicycle and train to visit Murlay, spending time with the railway construction gangs along the way. Olier reported that "This Father does immense good among these neglected people who love and esteem him greatly".36

Bishop Higgins came to bless the new church-school on 19 January, 1902, and before the year was out a new convent and presbytery had joined it on the site: large two-storey weatherboards with open verandahs on both levels. Murlay had funded the church-school and the presbytery from his own resources, having brought a "little fortune" with him when he joined the Marists in 1883.37

Meanwhile, Ginisty had been recalled to Sydney in March, 1902, to become parish priest of Hunters Hill; John Baptist Coue replaced him, and like Ginisty, was easily coaxed to Rockhampton, where he lived for most of the time he was in Central Queensland.

Having successfully established a new Australian foundation after a gap of 33 years (St. Patrick's was the last, in 1868), the Marists went looking for further openings. In October, 1901, the Provincial council discussed an invitation from Bishop James Maher of Port Augusta to provide two priests to care for the parish of Carrieton for a period of two years.38 Writing to the superior general, Olier mentioned that Cardinal Moran had encouraged Maher to write to the Marists, was anxious that they should accept the offer, and believed that Maher would give them the parish permanently when the two years had elapsed.39

Francis Huault was subsequently despatched on 7 December, 1901, and penned a letter to Olier on 14 December, beginning with the words, "I am at Carrieton".40 Zephirin Muraire for one was not particularly enamoured of Huault's selection for the post:

If it had been possible I would have preferred another Father had been sent there, for instance Father Piquet. I don't believe he is the man for the job if what we are after is getting established in the place.41

Huault was forced to take a room at the local hotel on arrival because of the rundown condition of the presbytery,42 but he was soon reporting himself well satisfied with the parish and his flock, who were "very generous and full of affection for him", having given him "horses, a carriage, poultry, and funds to repair the church and presbytery".43 But Huault was soon faced with the harsh realities of the Australian climate: the district was in the grip of a serious drought, and people began walking off their farms. By October, 1902, Huault was reporting small collections and a declining congregation; when he first came to the parish there were 800 Catholics, but now the number had dropped to 300.44 Olier recalled him early in the new year, and was pleasantly surprised. Huault returned with the hefty sum of £625 for his 13 months' work.45

Towards the end of 1902, Jeremiah Doyle, the bishop of Lismore, offered the Marists permanent care of the parish of Cowper, with 1,200 Catholics and a church and presbytery already provided. Having promised the residents of Cowper they could have a priest as soon as
they built him a presbytery. Doyle needed a cleric quickly, for the parishioners had speedily erected their part of the bargain. Olier and his council were unanimous that "they should not let slip so good an occasion for establishing themselves in this beautiful diocese on the way to Brisbane and Gladstone", and cast around for someone to send. They decided on Auguste Guillemin, who had recently resigned as procurator because of his disappointment at not being elected to the 1900 Provincial chapter, taking his non-election as a vote of no-confidence. Olier farewelled Guillemin on 19 November, hopeful that things would work out but apprehensive that they might not. He wrote to Martin:

No doubt you know of his easily-upset character, which makes it sometimes difficult for his confreres to live with him. Apart from that he is good, religious, steady and charming with those who are willing to accept his direction.

The Marists accepted the parish on the understanding that it would be large enough to support two priests, and with the proviso that final acceptance of the offer lay with the general administration. By July, 1903, Olier was warning assistant general Aubry that the parish would have to be abandoned because of Doyle's refusal to extend the parish boundaries to make it viable for two priests. The bishop brought matters to a head that same month by forbidding Guillemin to exercise any ministry in the parish, and even to celebrate Mass. Doyle claimed that Guillemin had stirred up the people against him and that he could no longer tolerate his disloyalty; Guillemin for his part claimed that the bishop had acted while he was drunk and that he, Guillemin, had nothing to reproach himself for. Bearing in mind Guillemin's past record, Olier was reluctant to attribute all the blame to the bishop:

I cannot judge his lordship; I am only stating the facts; and I should not be surprised if there had been some imprudence of language committed by our dear confrere, because he often cannot contain his bitterness.

Deprived of the priest they had been promised, 136 Cowper parishioners signed a petition to Michael Kelly, coadjutor archbishop of Sydney, dated 22 August, appealing for justice. They accused Doyle of breach of promise in not extending the parish boundaries, and of dismissing Guillemin without warning or reason; further, they noted that when a deputation of parishioners interviewed the bishop on 17 July he told them they would never get a priest while he was bishop, and angrily dissolved the church committee. Guillemin had returned to Sydney by this time and on 6 October wrote a long letter to the Marist procurator to the Holy See giving his side of the conflict and asking that the matter be taken up in Rome. There is no evidence that anything was done, the Marist administration being perhaps wary of Guillemin's reputation within the order. However, on 21 May, 1904, the Freeman's Journal announced that the Rev. C. Callahan would be parish priest of the enlarged parish of Cowper; either Doyle had a change of heart, or higher authority had intervened.

When Guillemin arrived back in Sydney he had some explaining to do, and not just about his difficulties with Bishop Doyle. Originally appointed in 1895 as Mission procurator because of the financial incompetence of Zephirin Muraire, Guillemin had apparently taken a leaf out of his predecessor's book. When Olier inspected the accounts after Guillemin's departure for Cowper he uncovered an imbalance of £6,083; the £8,800 which the Marists received that year as compensation for St. Michael's all but disappearing in making good the deficit.
promised to keep a tighter rein in the years to come: "In future I will give special care to our finances; I am complaining to Fr. Guillemin, and I recognise rather late that he has been too negligent".58

But Olier's immediate problem was to find a procurator, at least until the general administration appointed someone to the position. On 28 January, 1903, he informed the superior general that he had installed Francis Huault pro tem on the basis of the latter's financial prowess in the parish of Carrieton. Olier concluded, "... if you wish to leave him there, I think he will do well and will be conscientious in doing the job ..."59 The general administration had no better ideas, and Francis Huault was confirmed as procurator.

On 4 August, 1903, the Conclave of Cardinals assembled in Rome elected Giuseppe Melchiore Sarto to succeed Leo XIII as pope of the Catholic Church. One of the first episcopal nominations the new pope would have dealt with was to have implications for the Sydney Marists. On 15 August, Marist superior general Antoine Martin wrote to Cardinal Gotti, Prefect of Propaganda, proposing Armand Olier as coadjutor bishop to the ailing Marist bishop of Tonga, Amand Lamaze.60 The nomination was finally approved in Rome in January, 1904, and announced in Sydney early in February. Olier wondered if he was perhaps already too old for the post: "I am no longer young and the snow which covers my head proves that there is only ice in my veins".61

His episcopal ordination was fixed for the morning of 17 April. Perhaps the gentle autumn sun thawed him slightly as he waited to enter St. Mary's cathedral in the company of his consecrators: Cardinal Moran, Bishop Gallagher of Goulburn, and Bishop Julian Vidal from Suva. At the conclusion of the long ceremony the choir sang a Te Deum, and the preacher, Monsignor O'Brien, told the new bishop to go forth and teach all nations. Olier lost little time in doing so, departing Sydney on 3 May.62

New Arrivals, and the Quest for Vocations
Between the years 1901-1904 the number of Marist priests in Australia increased overall by six, with nine new arrivals and three deaths. But while it was numerically stronger, the Society was still not well placed to implant itself in Australia. The new arrivals were of uneven quality: some loomed as definite liabilities. Placid Huault and Dominic Duclos were experienced and competent men, but Duclos would have little involvement with the local Church; Emile Talon was newly ordained and, having been trained in New Zealand, promised much by way of adaptability to the Australian context; five of the remaining six newcomers had proved themselves unsuitable in the Missions or had developed health problems there: Louis Menard, Julien Huault, Eugene Englert, Francis Laurent, and Peter Rouillac; the final recruit was Victor Suleau, a newly ordained Belgian Marist sent to Sydney in 1900, who within 12 months of his arrival was causing his superiors considerable anxiety.

During Olier's period as Provincial little progress appears to have been made in recruiting Australians to the Society, or in setting up a formation structure to train them. The Provincial council minutes record that on 10 January, 1902, Olier raised the question of establishing a minor seminary or juniorate in Sydney to receive applicants who wished to join the order; no decision was taken, the councillors believing that there was insufficient manpower available to staff the
venture. The issue was not raised again during Olier's Provincialate. According to available records only one Australian commenced training for the Marist priesthood under the sponsorship of the Sydney Marists during Olier’s Provincialate. Early in 1902 John James Monaghan, a big-boned 18 year old from Sydney's Rocks area was sent to St. Patrick's Marist college, Wellington, to complete his secondary studies; Monaghan subsequently commenced his seminary course at Meanee in 1905. The only other record of an Australian applicant concerns a coadjutor brother postulant who was at Villa Maria in 1904: the Provincial council decided in August that he had no vocation to the religious life, and sent him away.

Overall, although the Sydney Marists attracted few applicants to send to Meanee Marist seminary in the period 1890-1904, seven Australians were actually ordained from there during these years. The first two, Matthew O'Sullivan (ordained 1893) and Joseph Herbert (ordained 1894), were both Sydneysiders who had definitely had contact with the Sydney Marists prior to going to Meanee. However, they proceeded through their seminary course as de facto New Zealanders, and they remained in New Zealand after ordination and did not return to Australia to work. The most likely hypothesis is that the Marists in Sydney regarded St. Patrick's and Villa Maria as being exclusively for Frenchmen, and were not enthusiastic about receiving other nationalities. A further three, James Hickson (ordained 1893), Nicolas Maloney (ordained 1898), and Alfred Herring (ordained 1905) were born in Australia but moved to New Zealand with their families while still children; despite their country of birth, they were practically speaking, New Zealanders. Francis Kerley (ordained 1900) was born in Geelong (Vic), but had no contact with the Sydney Marists; his vocation arose from a visit to Christchurch, where he stayed with his Marist uncle. Francis Bartley (ordained 1904) was born in Bendigo (Vic) and grew up in Melbourne; he entered Meanee after a brief period at Cardinal Moran’s seminary at Manly, and it is not known whether he had any contact with the Sydney communities. While three of the above eventually worked in Australia after 1925, none returned in the early years of the century to give the Society of Mary in Australia a less French image.

Writing in June, 1904, Augustin Ginisty thought that the lack of adaptability of his French confreres to a new land was the nub of the vocations problem:

... the people and the clergy are less and less disposed to put up with the sort of gibbering English the French carry on with, even with a somewhat condescending manner. This unfortunate approach has been adopted for too long now in Sydney. It is mainly because of it that we Marists for more than forty years have been marking time - we have not had vocations.

Ginisty had detected a stagnant odour in the Society of Mary in Australia; the next few years would be crucial in determining whether there would be new life, or whether stagnation would turn inexorably to death and decay.
ENDNOTES CHAPTER 3

1 Marist Fathers' Year Book 1927, p.183.

2 Olier to Martin, 20 February, 1901, APM OP418.

3 FJ, 1 November, 1890, p.15; FJ, 17 December, 1892, p.15.

4 Joly to Martin, 21 December, 1890, copy AMPA B120; also Joly to Martin, 29 September, 1890, AMPA B120.

5 Muraire to Martin, 13 July, 1899, AMPA C35.05.

6 FJ, 9 December, 1899, p.20; FJ, 8 June, 1901, p.21.
Olier to Martin, 16 December, 1901. APM OP331.

Ibid.

Muraire to Martin, 18 November, 1902, APM OP600.418

Muraire to Martin, 4 March, 1902, APM OP600.418.

Muraire to Martin, 18 November, 1902, APM OP600.418.

PCM, 20 February, 1903.

FJ, 7 February, 1903, p.16.

Olier to Martin, 4 May, 1902, APM OP418.

Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

Le Rennetel to Martin, 29 November, 1891, copy AMPA C215.05.

Aubry to Martin, 13 June, 1899, APM OP418.

Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.

Olier to Martin, 22 November, 1902, APM OP418.

FJ, 27 August, 1904, p.23.

Joly to Carroll, 28 December, 1888, SAA Marist Box.

Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B120; Marion to Raffin, 1 May, 1906, OMPA B1.

Olier to Martin, 19 May, 1903, APM OP418; Olier to Martin, 22 October, 1903, APM OP418.

Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B120.

MPV, 20 January, 1902.

MPV, 8 September, 1902, 7 April, 1903; Devoy to Aubry, 2 April, 1902, APM Z418; Devoy to Martin, 3 March, 1903, APM Z418.

MPV, 26 April, 1904, 3 August, 1904; Marion to Martin, 29 August, 1904, OMPA B1.

Curriculum Vitae of Dominic Duclos, APM personal file.

30 FJ, 24 October, 1903, p.22.
31 Olier to Martin, 22 October, 1903, APM OP418.
32 See work lists and receipts in connection with church extension, AMPA C30.03.
33 FJ, 16 June, 1883; PCM, 9 May, 1904, OMPA C1.
34 PCM, 30 May, 1904.
35 Aubry to Olier, 12 January, 1902, APM OP418; Olier to Aubry, 2 March, 1902, APM OP418; Olier to Aubry, 19 August, 1903, APM OP418.
36 Olier to Martin, 16 December, 1901, APM OP331.
37 Roger Burke, One Hundred Years of Faith, Gladstone, 1985, pp.28-31; see also Olier to Martin, 16 December, 1901, APM OP331; Olier to Martin, 4 May, 1902, APM OP418.
38 PCM, 24 October, 1901.
39 Olier to Martin, 16 December, 1901, APM OP331.
40 Huault to Olier, 14 December, 1901, copy AMPA C290.03.
41 Muraire to Aubry, 4 March, 1902, APM OP600.418.
42 Huault to Olier, 14 December, 1901, copy AMPA C290.03.
43 Olier to Martin, 4 May, 1902, APM OP418.
44 Huault to Olier, 28 October, 1902, OMPA A.2.
45 Olier to Martin, 28 January, 1903, APM OP418. The figure is based on an exchange rate of four francs to the pound. Just four years later, in 1907, Justice Higgins estimated that a worker with spouse and three children could get by on £2/2/- per week.
46 Chisholm (and others) to Kelly, 22 August, 1903, APM S61 000 6.
47 Olier to Martin, 22 November, 1902, APM OP418.
48 PCM, 11 February, 1901. Provincial chapters were held immediately prior to the general chapter. All members of the Province had the right to elect delegates. The Provincial chapter in turn selected delegates to represent the Province at the general chapter of the order, and also formulated proposals and regulations relating to the life of the Province.
49 Olier to Martin, 22 November, 1902, APM OP418.
50 Ibid. also Olier to Martin, 1 February, 1903, APM OP418.
Kelly was in charge of Sydney archdiocese, and acting metropolitan bishop, during Moran's absence overseas.

Chisholm (and others) to Kelly, 22 August, 1903, copy APM S61 0006.

Guillemin to Forestier, 6 October, 1903, APM S61 0006.

FJ, 21 May, 1904, p.22. See also the account of the dispute presented in Eileen Kelly, My Cause is Just, Lismore, 1999, pp.147-49. The author is not without sympathy for the bishop’s position in the Cowper dispute, and treats the dispute in the context of a wider lay revolt against the bishop in the southern section of the diocese. For all that, Doyle still emerges as a particularly prickly customer.

Olier to Regis, 16 August, 1903, APM OP418.

Ibid.

Olier to Martin, 28 January, 1903, APM OP418.

Martin to Gotti, 15 August, 1903, copy APM 401.1.230

Olier to Regis, 1 February, 1904, APM OP418.

FJ, 23 April, 1904, p.14; FJ, 7 May, 1904, p.23.

PCM, 10 January, 1902.

PCM, 24 February, 1902.

PCM, 22 August, 1904.

CHAPTER 4

DIFFIDENCE AND DISPUTE (1905-1910)

The first document in the various correspondence files of Marist Provincials in the Marist archives in Rome is often a letter from the newly-elected Provincial to the general administration, expressing surprise at the appointment, and doubt about having the requisite talents and capacities for the job. The writers of some of these letters may not have been completely sincere in their expressions of humility; the letter Andrew Marion wrote from Fiji on 13 July, 1904, displays no such ambiguity: "I am confused, surprised, dumbfounded ... How is it that you have considered a poor person like me for such a posting?"1

At the time of writing this letter, Marion was based on a Mission station called Loretto, three miles from the old Fijian capital, Levuka. He had been in Fiji since 1881; he had gained a reputation as a builder and administrator, a man of initiative; he was well liked.2 The letter from superior general Martin informing him that he was the new Provincial of Oceania had been written on 6 June, and in the middle of August he found himself a passenger on the Manapourī, a few days out of Sydney.3 Perhaps he was still pinching himself; certainly he was having trouble coming to terms with his new appointment. In October, assistant general Augustine Aubry thought it worthwhile sending a further note of consolation and encouragement: he assured Marion that the general administration had consulted widely and considered carefully before making the appointment.4

On arrival in Sydney Marion took a deep breath and began the job of making himself known. In October he was in Melbourne at the Catholic Congress "in order to get to know the ecclesiastical authorities of Australia".5 Back in Sydney he was still homesick for Fiji; to his predecessor, Armand Olier, he wrote:

I am still not used to Sydney; I am always dreaming of Fiji. Yesterday there was a grand ceremony in the Cathedral, followed by dinner at Manly. In these situations, I find myself like a fish out of water: I have not enough "pluck". Sometimes I try to take a billiard cue; but I am still far from being good. They often speak of you.6
However, Marion soon had other things to occupy him apart from his social awkwardness. Less than a fortnight after arriving he was beginning to suspect that all might not be well with the procure: "Fr. Francis Huault seems to me full of goodwill, but he seems to have little understanding of financial matters or titles to property". Six weeks later the extent of Huault's incompetence was becoming clear: "... of the five or six hundred pages of accounts which the dear Father has written up in the past eighteen months, there are not ten on which the additions are correct". Further, rents and interest payments had gone unrecorded, there were large imbalances in the accounts of the Mission vicariates, and 22,568 Masses which had been paid for by the faithful had not been said. Huault was more than happy to resign, and on the 17 November the general council accepted his resignation and resolved to ask Marion to suggest a replacement and present the nomination to the superior general. Marion's suggestion was Francis Laurent, a 28 year old Belgian who had been sent to Sydney from the Solomon Islands late in 1903 with severe fever. Medical advice was against Laurent's return to the tropics, and the general administration agreed to his remaining in Sydney. While still not fully recovered, Laurent agreed to become procurator, commencing early in 1905.

St Patrick's Parish

Peter Le Rennetel died at St. Patrick's on 25 July, 1904; on 30 July the Marist general council met and appointed Augustin Ginisty the new superior and parish priest. He was farewelled by the parishioners of Hunters Hill on 7 August and took charge of the parish of St. Patrick's the following Thursday. As assistant priests he inherited Peter Piquet, Victor Suleau and Eugene Englert; towards the end of 1906 Englert would be replaced by Maurice Chatelet.

Piquet had already clocked up 24 continuous years at St. Patrick's parish, having arrived in Sydney towards the end of 1880. He had become a celebrity way beyond the boundaries of his own parish, and was already regarded by many Sydney Catholics as a living saint. To those who heard him preach, or sought his counsel and encouragement in the confessional, he projected warm humanity, deep sincerity and a special something which people confidently attributed to familiarity with the ways of God. He was renowned as a friend of the poor, and had been closely linked with the St Vincent de Paul Society since its inception in Sydney in 1881. His extraordinary popularity as a confessor was evidenced by the long queues which formed outside his confessional, and the constant summonses from dying Catholics wanting him to come and help them make their peace with God. A short, intense, bearded little man, Piquet was most typically observed darting through the streets of Sydney in response to some urgent call. Augustin Aubry remarked in 1899 that he was "the universal confessor in Sydney: he is called everywhere", and summed him up with great accuracy and economy - "Father Piquet: health good; activity insatiable".

By 1904 his health was not so good. In May the Freeman's Journal told its readers that Piquet had left with Olier for Tonga "to endeavour to regain health and strength, used up in overwork". Piquet was still absent from Sydney when Le Rennetel died, and eventually returned on the Manapouri with Andrew Marion towards the end of August. His health was still causing concern, but gradually improved after his tonsils were removed in September.

While his superiors acknowledged his sincerity and zeal, and did not hesitate to aver that he was a genuinely holy man, they were uneasy about a tendency towards grandstanding. In 1891 Le Rennetel had described him privately as "a bit of an exhibitionist", while Aubry
would have preferred to see "less singularity in the way he acts ... less trouble and fuss".19

The first of Piquet's fellow curates was Victor Suleau, who had been ordained in July, 1900, and was sent immediately to Sydney; he commenced work at St. Patrick's in October. Suleau knew English, having spent two years of his theology course at the Marist seminary at Paignton (UK). Gaston Regis, the Marist general procurator in Lyon told Auguste Guillemin, in a letter written in July, 1900: "He is said to be very intelligent. I hope he will give you good and long service".20

Suleau quickly developed health problems and in January, 1902, Le Rennetel asked Olier to write to Lyon for a replacement because of his "shaky state of health".21 Suleau's illnesses may have been symptomatic of inner turmoil. In April, 1902, the general council noted a complaint from Le Rennetel that Suleau was lacking in "religious docility",22 but Le Rennetel advised a gentle approach. Olier explained to Aubry:

He is afraid that a monition coming from the top would discourage him and make him decide to leave the Society. It is better to be gentle than violent; he thinks he can get to the bottom of a character which is a bit difficult and proud.23

Eugene Englert was the third assistant priest at St. Patrick's when Ginisty became parish priest. German by birth and ordained in June, 1895, Englert went straight to the Pacific, working first in Samoa before going to the North Solomons in 1899.24 Following a breakdown in health and conflicts with fellow missionaries, Englert was sent to Sydney midway through 1902; in March, 1903, he was appointed as curate to St. Patrick's, but after three years his continuing poor health necessitated a transfer to the warmer climate of Gladstone.25

Englert's replacement, Maurice Chatelet, had a similar background to the man he replaced. Following ordination in June, 1897, he went to the New Hebrides. In 1903 his vicar apostolic, Bishop Fraysse, sent him to do a second novitiate at Villa Maria with the injunction not to return.26 He was accepted by the superior of the South Solomons' Mission, but arrived back in Sydney in July, 1905, following a physical breakdown.27 Cautioned against returning to the Solomons by his doctors, Chatelet asked the superior general for permission to remain in Sydney.28 Marion advised against this, and the general administration was also initially reluctant, apparently out of fear of encouraging faint-hearted missionaries to apply for an easier posting in Sydney.29 However, he was finally allowed to stay, and at Ginisty's request was sent to St. Patrick's late in 1906.30

For most of his Provinciate Andrew Marion had two major concerns about the St. Patrick's community. The first had been shared by his predecessors and would continue to be a preoccupation of the Provincials who followed him: it was a belief that the Marists at St. Patrick's were too "worldly", were careless and neglectful in following their religious rule, were insufficiently attached to the Society. Marist superiors in Sydney had been playing this theme for years. Back in 1892 John Leterrier had reported a belief that at St. Patrick's there was "too much rushing around and failing in regularity in community exercises";31 and in 1899 Augustin Aubry thought that among the fathers at St. Patrick's there was "hardly more than theoretical consideration for the Society" and that "Religious spirit leaves much to be desired, at least in external observance".33 Marion agreed. Early in 1905, Marion told the new superior general
John Claude Raffin, that he wanted to "re-establish some community-life practices at St. Patrick's, where they do not even have morning prayers in common". For Marion the problem was heightened by Ginisty's tendency to operate independently of the channels of religious authority: in December he gently admonished Ginisty for undertaking "several things which I knew nothing of before they happened", and in May, 1906, complained to the superior general that without consulting the Provincial, Ginisty had proposed to Cardinal Moran that the parish sisters be given St. Patrick's presbytery in exchange for their convent so that they could have more accommodation. In June, referring to St. Patrick's, he told general mission procurator Gaston Regis that "the authority and influence of the Provincial does not go far".

As regards the anxieties which Marion and other Provincials had about the state of religious observance by the community at St. Patrick's, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that they were at least partly due to a failure to grasp the inherent conflict involved in running a large city parish in a modern city and attempting to live a rule of life which was essentially monastic. While the latter pattern might work reasonably well at Villa Maria, the demands placed on the priests at St. Patrick's in the early years of the century would have been difficult to reconcile with a daily round of quasi-monastic observances. As for Marion's problem with Ginisty over authority, this raised the question of the difficulty for a priest belonging to a religious order remaining faithful to his vow of obedience in particular, while living the lifestyle and performing the duties of a diocesan priest. The Marist general administration would become increasingly uneasy about a conflict which it would come to perceive between adherence to religious vows and loyalty to the Society on the one hand, and identification with a particular parish and the pull of an independent lifestyle on the other. Its anxieties would be greatly heightened by developments at St. Patrick's during the reign of Ginisty's successor.

Marion's other concern about St. Patrick's related to the health of the men stationed there, all of whom experienced persistent sickness during the period of Marion's Provincialate. On 13 March, 1906, he informed Raffin that he had just sent Englert to Queensland for the sake of his health, and that the three who remained at St. Patrick's were far from well: "Fr Ginisty has a very bad stomach; Fr. Piquet does his job, but is always in pain with his throat; Fr. Suleau is perhaps the worst of the three - with a bad liver he has little energy and cannot stay long in the confessional". Marion asked for a new priest from France for St. Patrick's. His request highlighted again the problem created for the Society in Australia by the influx of sick and disaffected priests from the island Missions:

We would prefer one who came direct from France rather than one more or less depressed and more or less unaccustomed to keeping the Rule through being in the Islands. It must be too a man of devotion well versed in the Marist spirit.

In the second half of 1907 Marion took ship for Europe to attend a general chapter at Differt, Belgium, where the Marist administration had moved as a result of the suppression of the religious orders in France. During his absence an extraordinary series of events was to occur at St. Patrick's which would create serious tensions between the Marists and Cardinal Moran.

On 24 September, 1907, Dean Denis O'Haran, Cardinal Moran's private secretary, wrote Moran a seven page memo complaining about "outside clerical interference" by the Marist fathers within the boundaries of St. Mary's cathedral parish. He was not, he explained, writing through prejudice or impulse: the matter had been on his mind for some months. He had
complained personally to Ginisty and Piquet but without result; and finally the priests on the cathedral staff and many other priests in the archdiocese had urged him to put the facts before the Cardinal. It was Piquet who had incurred O'Haran's wrath: firstly, by celebrating a mixed marriage at St. Patrick's after permission had been refused, but principally by administering the last sacraments on three occasions within St Mary's cathedral parish without permission from the cathedral staff, or without informing them after the event. O'Haran told Moran that the cathedral priests were threatening to resign and had urged him to do the same unless "punishment is metered out to flagrant offenders". He then moved to a bitter attack on Piquet, accusing him of attending the dying in order to benefit financially: Piquet indulged in "scandalous grab and grasp under the pretext of piety"; he was a "marauding priest [who] attempted to exploit all the parishes in the city and suburbs"; he was "constantly hanging on to the coat-tails of the rich in every instance, whilst we know the poor people of The Rocks are not cared for, nor even looked after". Following a neat little disclaimer about "not wishing to press any of these views on your Eminence's better judgement", O'Haran came to his conclusion. He suggested to Moran that the only way to stop Piquet "exploiting all the parishes" was to suspend him from his priestly duties. Finally he thought Moran should know that the cathedral priests were of the opinion that Piquet had, by his actions, automatically excommunicated himself from the Catholic Church, quoting a canon law text which stated that a priest belonging to a religious order who administered the last sacraments without the permission of the appropriate pastor was *ipso facto* excommunicated.40

O'Haran's complaints about Piquet's carelessness in observing the archdiocesan marriage regulations and failing to observe the conventions relating to the administration of the last sacraments may well have been justified. A dying Catholic was at liberty to choose any priest to hear his confession and prepare him for death, but it was expected that if a priest did so in another parish he obtained the consent of the appropriate parish priest or at least informed him afterwards. Thus far O'Haran may well have been on reasonable ground; Piquet exhibited a compulsive zeal which seems to have made him oblivious at times to regulations or conventions. But what of O'Haran's accusations that Piquet ministered to people with the motive of benefiting financially, and that he neglected the poor of his own parish in order to go chasing after the rich? Despite O'Haran's assurance to Moran that he was motivated by "no sentiment of resentment", no "prejudice or impulse", it is difficult to see O'Haran's memo as anything else but a vindictive, unfair and unwarranted attack on the integrity of a fellow priest. Piquet's own confreres admitted his predilection for grandstanding and his casualness with regard to rules, but they would have been horrified and outraged had they known of O'Haran's accusations. So would a great many Sydney Catholics. In 1893 Peter Le Rennetel had commented on O'Haran's dislike for the Marists; in 1907 it appears that the bitterness and jealousy that had been welling up inside Denis O'Haran for many years was finally unleashed.

To Moran's discredit he acted speedily and decisively on O'Haran's complaints. The following day, without any attempt to discover Piquet's side of the story, he called a meeting of his diocesan consultors to discuss the matter, and afterwards wrote to Piquet:

I regret to learn from unquestionable sources that you have been administering the Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction to patients not of your parish and without the approval or knowledge of the respective clergy. Under these circumstances I have to intimate to you that you have incurred Excommunication reserved to the Pope, and in consequence I suspend you from the exercise of any and all the faculties which you have hitherto enjoyed in the Diocese. Praying that God may grant you the grace to set all matters
One of Moran's consultors was Augustin Sheehy, who left the meeting with a feeling of unease and a nagging doubt. A friend of the Marists, he had listened to Moran read the passage from O'Haran's canon law text, heard his fellow consultors agree that Piquet had indeed incurred excommunication, and looked on helplessly as Piquet's fate was discussed. But somehow the whole business did not sit right. At 79, Sheehy's memory for canon law was not what it used to be; he needed to go home and look something up. Later that night or early the next day a smile crossed Sheehy's face: O'Haran had got it wrong. The text he had quoted had no application whatsoever to Piquet's situation and there was absolutely no question of Piquet having incurred ipso facto excommunication. He wrote to Moran, explaining why, and concluding with gentle understatement: "I thought it advisable to call attention to this lest what was decided at our meeting might be called in question".

Moran moved immediately to rectify his mistake but without admitting it. On 25 September he wrote to Placid Huault, acting Marist Provincial in Marion's absence:

I daresay that my letter to Father Piquet has produced sufficient effect for the present. I will require him however to send me in writing a promise to observe in future the general law of the Church ... and further that he will be faithful in the observance of the Diocesan laws ... On his sending me such a document duly signed by him, you may allow him to resume all his former faculties on Tuesday the 1st of October next.

Piquet sent his promise on 29 September, gave thanks that "on the third day, most unexpected, the two dreadful sentences were quashed by the very same hand that had written them", and resumed his ministrations as before. But O'Haran, beaten once, decided to try again.

On 30 October Fr. Edward O'Brien of Mosman complained to O'Haran that Piquet had married one of his parishioners, Miss Annie Pigott, at St. Patrick's on 11 September even though O'Brien had refused permission for the marriage two days before the ceremony. Armed with O'Brien's Letter, O'Haran penned another memo and saw Moran on 12 November. He also accused Piquet of that day administering the last sacraments to a Miss Byrne within St. Mary's parish boundaries: "Whether he is moved by bravado, or craze, or fatality I do not pretend to suggest - We are only acting for your Eminence and we will not offer advice". While O'Haran's memo of 12 November was shorter than his previous one, and less vicious in its denunciation of Piquet, he nevertheless took the opportunity to feed Moran a little gossip associated with Piquet's suspension in September. O'Haran wrote:

I am told by the priests and it is just as well to advert that very tall talk was indulged in by some outsiders at St. Patrick's on the previous occasion when it was mooted that the right thing would be to proceed to St. Mary's and pull down the Cathedral the people had built, and assault the Cardinal as Merry del Val had been treated a few weeks previously. We understood that Mr. Spruson was a leader of [?] and one of the loudest in such tall talk.
Letters in the Sydney Archdiocesan archives indicate that Spruson had been acting as an adviser on property to Cardinal Moran. One suspects it would not be doing O'Haran too much of a disservice to speculate that he was jealous of Spruson and was trying to discredit him.

Two days later, on 14 November, O'Haran wrote a further memo informing Moran that "another case of flagrant and stupid interference occurred at St. Kilda hospital in Cathedral Street practically under your Eminence's windows". O'Haran alleged that Piquet had been called to hear the confession of a Mrs. Seymour, that having heard her confession and pleaded inability to anoint her and give her communion he had not taken sufficient care to alert the cathedral staff that they were required to do this, and that the woman would have died without the last sacraments had not O'Haran heard of her plight from another source and despatched Fr. Rohan of the cathedral staff. He told Moran:

We do not dispute the perfect right of every penitent to choose her own confessor. Nor are we desirous of dethroning Fr. Piquet from the position of city confessor which he has usurped ... All we demand is that Fr. Piquet and the French Fathers act honourably by us: that they honestly warn us when a call to our district and parish is made to them.

In concluding, O'Haran could not resist a final salvo, begging Moran to protect the cathedral priests "from being constantly harassed by persistent and unscrupulous intrusions for which the clergy are now tracing not pietistic but mercenary motives".

Having been bitten once, Moran was inclined to act more circumspectly. After reading statements from Piquet and a cathedral priest, John Rohan, Moran apparently concluded that it was by no means certain that Piquet had acted improperly in the cases most recently cited by O'Haran: Piquet claimed he had made reasonable attempts to alert the cathedral staff, and Rohan's version was less damning towards Piquet than O'Haran's, allowing at least the possibility that Piquet had acted in good faith. Moran therefore seems to have taken no action against Piquet over the cases cited in O'Haran's memos of 12 and 14 November.

But Moran did act with considerable severity on Fr Edward O'Brien's complaint of 30 October about Piquet marrying a Mosman parishioner in apparent defiance of an explicit prohibition. After enquiring into the incident, Moran confronted Piquet at Manly on 11 December, charging him with a "grave dereliction of duty". On 20 December he wrote to Ginisty, placing strict limits on the performing of marriages at St. Patrick's:

In consequence of the many irregularities that have been reported to me, I deem it a duty to require that no marriages be solemnised in St. Patrick's parochial church except those in which at least one of the contracting parties may have a domicile in your parish.

The prohibition had a dramatic effect on the number of weddings performed at St. Patrick's. In 1905 there had been 150 weddings, 1906 brought 188, and in 1907 there were 149: the figure for 1908 was a mere 65, a drop to less than half the normal number. It remained similarly low - 66 in 1907, 68 in 1910 - until 1911, the year of Moran's death, when 93 weddings were performed.

Andrew Marion arrived back in Sydney from the Marist general chapter in the last days
of December, 1907, and interviewed Moran regarding the Piquet affair a fortnight later. He reported to superior general Raffin that Moran "believed that Father was always more or less pushing himself", whereas he, Marion, was certain the Piquet "acted purely from zeal; I am quite convinced of this, he only lives for souls". He promised Moran that he would do his best to ensure that the Sydney Marists conformed to Moran's wishes. Marion was later to express a view to Louis Copere, Marist procurator to the Holy See, that the whole incident had been prompted by "jealousy".

Marion's assessment seems to be borne out by the excessive language and unfair judgments contained in O'Haran's memos to Moran. The Piquet affair points to an over-reliance by Moran on the viewpoints fed to him by O'Haran, a strange and ambiguous individual, who served Moran faithfully but not always well.

Jealousy may not have been the only factor at work: there is a strong likelihood that the Piquet affair also reflected a conflict between two different ways of ministering to the Catholic faithful, the one strict, legalistic, and in this context Irish; the other more broadly human, more tolerant of human weakness, and expressed for Sydney Catholics in the French Marists at St. Patrick's. St. Patrick's was a church that certainly attracted people from all parts of Sydney for baptisms, weddings, and especially confessions. It does not seem too far wide of the mark to speculate that part of the attraction lay in the pastoral approach of the French Marists. In his first memo of 24 September against Piquet, O'Haran accused him of "abusing without even understanding the confessional", perhaps suggesting that Piquet's popularity as a confessor and the general popularity of the French Marists at St. Patrick's with penitents, was partly attributable to their willingness to adopt a more human, less severe approach. Neil Vaney, in analysing the ministry of Marists on the West Coast of New Zealand, 1865-1910, was particularly struck by what he calls their "broad humanity", a greater openness to the human condition which was much less obvious in the secular Irish priests who worked alongside them. Vaney notes that the difference cannot be traced to more liberal seminary training, since in France as in Ireland, the teaching of moral theology was characterised by "puritanical attitudes to sexuality and a heavy emphasis on the sinful tendencies of human nature". He concludes that the crucial difference was the attitude of the founder of the Marists, John Claude Colin, and the experiences of the first Marists while trying to encourage the peasants of post-Revolution France to return to the practice of their faith:

Many of the positions were modified through the personal experience and insights of John Claude Colin and the early Marists ... they quickly learned that in winning back the people rigorist positions were out of the question.

Colin, in 1843, had thrown the full weight of his authority behind a moral theologian who taught a more merciful perspective and whom Colin engaged to instruct his priests:

The elder Father Epalle was appointed to give theological conferences on the sixth commandment, during the summer, to the Marist Fathers of the Mother House. He had the greatest difficulty in gaining acceptance for a theology favourable to the salvation of souls at the expense of the older, severe moral theology generally taught in France at the end of the great revolution of 1793.
There is no absolutely conclusive evidence for attributing some of O'Haran's anger at Piquet's alleged misdemeanours to a conflict of pastoral approaches, but it is a fact that the Marists did have a tradition of adopting a more merciful, flexible, tolerant approach to penitents in particular and people in general, and this may well have been a significant contributor to the dispute.

As a result of O'Haran's vendetta, relations between Moran and the Marists were severely undermined. Marion summed up the mood in June, 1908, in a letter to assistant general Aubry:

The Cardinal is rather cool towards us; he has arranged for Bishop O'Connor of Armidale to replace him for confirmation at St. Patrick's. At every Conference [of clergy] one of our confreres is questioned and criticised; at the last one he criticised severely a sermon of Fr. Suleau which many of the clergy admired.60

The years following 1907 must have been difficult for the priests at St. Patrick's, and for Piquet in particular. Caught between the need to stay out of trouble on the one hand, and his almost compulsive zeal to respond to a cry for help on the other, Piquet tried to meet the first without compromising the second. In a style which might be best described as saccharine-deferential, he continued to pester Moran for mixed marriage dispensations and indults to rectify invalidly contracted marital unions:

I am not worthy to express my welcome greetings to you and suite, back again to us. Nevertheless I venture to do so, and very heartily, in the sincere hope that you have greatly benefited by your trip to Maori-Land, and by the Eclat which your Presence and Preaching have imparted to the Auckland Catholic Celebrations.61

Something of the pressure Piquet felt himself under in the years 1908-1911 can be gauged from the St. Patrick's baptismal registers; whenever he baptised a child from another parish he was careful to inscribe a word of explanation alongside, presumably for Moran's benefit when he next came on episcopal visitation to inspect the church registers: "urgent"; "child sickly"; "very sick"; "on a/c of difficulties"; "unavoidable"; "propter periculum"/[on account of danger]; "parents with their business in the parish"; and lastly, the mysteriously cryptic notation, "A kidnapped nigger from the New Hebrides into New Caledonia".

Overall, baptisms dropped about half, from 373 in 1907 down to 155 by 1910, reflecting a more cautious approach by the priests at St. Patrick's to requests from parents outside the parish.

When Andrew Marion arrived back in Sydney from the Marist general chapter at the end of 1907, he was hoping to find the Cardinal in a good mood, for he had been entrusted with a mission of some significance on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. He could not have picked a worse time to arrive, and the Society for the Propagation of the Faith could hardly have selected a less favourable ambassador than the Provincial of the Marist Fathers.

The Society was a France-based lay organisation which collected and distributed vast amounts of money for Catholic foreign Missions throughout the world. It had made large annual grants to the Australian and Oceanic bishops for most of the nineteenth century, and was now looking to develop its revenue collection in Australia, where it was not organisationally strong.62
On 3 March, 1907, the President of the Society's central council of Paris wrote to Marist superior general Raffin asking if the Marists could assist in the development of the Society in Australia. He detailed the paltry amounts the Society had been receiving from the Australian dioceses, noting that the lowly parish of Noumea in the New Hebrides had consistently sent more money each year than the "large and rich diocese of Sydney". The Marist general administration decided to raise the matter with Marion when he arrived for the general chapter later in the year, and subsequently Marion himself was given the task of approaching the bishops on his return to Australia and urging them to establish regular collections for the Propagation of the Faith in their dioceses. He arrived in Australia with a letter from the Paris council of the Society to the Australian bishops and a letter or recommendation from Cardinal Merry del Val, Pius X's secretary of state.

Marion presented the letters to Moran early in January, 1908, and reported to the superior general on January 13 that his representations had been completely unsuccessful. While Moran claimed he was anxious to do something for the foreign Missions, he did not want the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in his diocese, not wishing to send to France money which had been collected in Australia. He told Marion he intended to set up an organisation of his own to raise money for the Missions. Already discouraged, the diffident Marion wrote next to Archbishop Carr of Melbourne, but received no acknowledgement. Finally, he circularised the entire Australian episcopate, receiving only four replies: Bishops Higgins of Ballarat and Corbett of Sale had already decided to initiate the Propagation of the Faith in their dioceses; Bishop Norton of Port Augusta thought it a great idea and would encourage it as soon as he had paid off his debts; and Bishop Dunne of Wilcannia was willing to welcome collectors with open arms, but added helpfully that in his vast diocese they would probably spend more on travelling and living expenses than they would be able to collect.

The Marist general administration was surprised and disappointed by Moran's attitude, especially in view of his prominent and influential position within the Australian hierarchy. Patrick O'Farrell has pointed to Moran's vision of Australia as a great Catholic missionary nation in Asia. Moran also had a real interest in the work of the Pacific Missions, speaking about them often, sometimes controversially; and he planned several trips to the Pacific, none of which eventuated. In view of this background, Marion may have anticipated a better reception than the one he received, even allowing for the difficulties over Piquet.

Meanwhile, despite the turmoil of 1907, St. Patrick's continued to function as a busy spiritual and devotional centre, popular with Sydney Catholics and with visitors as well. Early in 1909 the Brisbane Australian printed a description of St. Patrick's, written by a visitor to Sydney. He noted that "Few Catholics from Queensland ever visit Sydney without praying for a short time in the church of St. Patrick's on Church-hill". It is a church which "reflects a fine concentration of devotion, piety, taste, art, and refinement ... Its doors are open at all hours, and its confessionals are rarely, if ever, empty".

In 1905 Sydney Hoben resigned from the positions of choir conductor and organist prior to going overseas, and was replaced as conductor by G.E. Boyle and as organist by Mollie Fitzpatrick. Several years later Ernest Truman, who was also city organist, took over from Miss Fitzpatrick. Boyle reconstructed the choir, whose membership stood at 46 in March, 1905 and Ginisty ventured the opinion shortly afterwards that "the choir had been brought to such a state of proficiency that its singing would compare favourably with any heard in
A Freeman's Journal writer tempered his appreciation with a little more realism six months later, describing it as "one of the finest to be heard in the city".

Professional musicians and singers who were visiting Sydney on concert tours often found their way to St. Patrick's. Blanche Arral, described as a "French prima donna", who was touring Australian capitals, sang there in September, 1906; and on 8 August, 1912, the 160-strong Quinlan Grand Opera Company, touring for J.C. Williamson's sang at the 11 a.m. Mass. The director, Thomas Quinlan, sang solos in the church the following year when the company returned to Australia.

Villa Maria Monastery, Hunters Hill

With the transfer of Augustin Ginisty to St. Patrick's, Placid Huault became superior and parish priest at Villa Maria. Writing to the general administration a few days after Huault's arrival in Sydney, Marion was hoping to find in him a superior who would uphold the religious discipline of the monastery: "I hope with his help to see that the Rule and discipline are well kept at Villa Maria". Marion got more than he bargained for; so did Huault's community and parishioners. The first to experience problems with Huault's style of authority was Louis Menard, who had rejoined the Villa Maria community in February, 1903, as chaplain to the Marist brothers at St. Joseph's college. Ordained in 1896 in Europe, Menard had completed his theological studies in New Zealand at Meanee prior to being appointed to the re-established Marist Mission in the Solomons in 1898. Following a breakdown in health he was sent to Villa Maria in the middle of 1900, where he began to question his Marist vocation, and asked to be allowed to join a diocese. He finally decided to remain a Marist, and worked as a curate at St. Patrick's in 1901 and 1902. Back at Villa Maria in 1903 he settled into the chaplaincy job, Ginisty noting in 1904 that "he does an enormous amount of good at the Brothers' College". Exactly twelve months after Placid Huault became superior of Villa Maria, Menard wrote to the general administration asking for a transfer and complaining about Huault's superiorship. The letter was sent to Marion for comment; he admitted that Placid Huault was "perhaps a little too strict", but thought the problem was essentially with Menard who "left much to be desired with regard to Religious spirit". Menard was given a transfer to New Zealand in December, 1905, and for a time complaints about Huault ceased.

They were to surface again in 1907 in the wider context of the parish. The Marist brothers and the Sisters of St. Joseph conducted the parish primary schools which were situated on the corner of Gladesville Road and Mary Street, Hunters Hill. Although sharing the same site, there were separate boys' and girls' schools, dating from the 1880's or earlier, and constructed in timber. The brothers lived at nearby St. Joseph's college and had 48 pupils in 1907; the Josephite establishment was a convent-school, with five sisters, eight boarders, and an assistant-teacher, all living on the premises, and a school roll of 66. Two of the sisters travelled to Woolwich each day to conduct a small school at Blessed Peter Chanel's church.

In the early hours of Saturday, 20 April, 1907, the Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, the convent and school were destroyed by fire. A meeting of parishioners was held in Villa Maria church on Sunday, 20 May, to raise money by donation for new buildings, but only £83 was subscribed. Meanwhile the Josephites purchased a large house and property, "Toronto", in Gladesville Road, for use as a convent and boarding school, and moved there late in June. They had continued to teach school after the fire in temporary premises, two living with the
Third Order Regular sisters at Villa Maria, with the remaining three nuns and boarders commuting daily from North Sydney for most of the time, although they lived locally in a loaned cottage for part of the period.92

As a site for the new parish schools the Josephites offered a section of their newly acquired property to Huault for £600, the current market value. He offered £500 which they accepted, and Moran approved the arrangement on 6 June.93 On 19 June, Huault wrote to Moran suggesting a change of plan; he now wanted to give the Josephites £250 for half their land, which would be used for the girls' school, and to buy another property elsewhere in the parish for the boys' school.94 It is not sufficiently clear from the correspondence exactly why Huault wanted to build separate schools, but he appears to have been intent on making life difficult for the Josephites. Moran wrote an impatient reply, telling him that he was "not pleased with the pettiness that is being manifested in regard to the new schools", and suggesting to Huault that he was acting out of "hostility to the Sisters".95 Huault replied on 29 June accepting Moran's direction to purchase the Josephite land for £500 and build both schools on the same site.96 Despite this agreement the parish schools were eventually built separately, the girls' school on a block purchased by Huault from the Josephites for £250 and the boys' school in Mark Street opposite St. Joseph's college on a property acquired for £310.97 Moran blessed and opened both buildings on the same day in March, 1908.98

While the precise nature of the dispute between Huault and the Josephites is not known, it was sufficiently serious and sufficiently public to alienate him from some of his parishioners. Marion referred to the conflict in a letter to the superior general in October, 1908; it is not clear whether he is talking of an incident which had occurred recently, or the difficulties associated with the land purchase the previous year:

He has chilled the feelings of some by his turning away from the Sisters of St. Joseph. A letter of blame, lacking completely in tact, sent by him to the Superior has caused a lot of talk. It was brought to me by the Sister: I tried to cure the wound a little, and get it forgotten, but I did not succeed. I spoke about it to Fr. Huault, but did not succeed in getting him to see how foolish he was in the circumstances. The letter has since been shown to the Cardinal, to those around him, and even to Bishop Olier.99

Marion had been coming to realise for some time that Huault lacked the capacity to exercise authority wisely. Early in 1908 he had been toying with the idea of swapping Huault with Ginisty at St. Patrick's so that Huault could keep Piquet under a tighter reign, but decided not to proceed because he realised that Huault "had not a sufficient broad outlook to govern the parish of St. Patrick's".100 In September, while relaying Huault's request for a trip to Europe, he commented to Raffin: "From all I hear, I think that the parish would gain from his absence".101 Finally, in October, 1908, he expressed his considerable misgivings to the superior general: he was constantly hearing complaints about the superior and parish priest of Villa Maria; he had so far refrained from alerting headquarters because Huault was "good and zealous", but the situation was getting out of hand:

As Superior he is, I think, respected because of his ability, but how little he is liked by his confreres: too rough, too authoritative, he regulates everything himself without consulting the other Fathers; these things are not accepted happily. In spite of the advice
I gave him from the beginning when I appointed the House Council, and after my return from the General Chapter, he has never held a House Council meeting ... While I was in France, he took on himself one evening to close the house-doors before the eight-thirty curfew; they had to get a ladder to mount over the verandah to the first floor. I didn't want to excuse those who were late from keeping the Rule, but all the same this leaves a bad impression.102

Apart from his limitations as a superior, Huault was "lacking somewhat in experience in running a parish".103

Huault was clearly being asked to fill a position for which he was basically unsuitable, a victim of the shortage among the Sydney Marists of personnel competent to assume leadership functions. Marion was to describe him after his death as "a hard worker, careful of his time and never willing to waste it; he loved study and his desk".104 These were not qualities, apparently, which fitted him especially well for the roles of superior and parish priest. Placid Huault was comfortable at his desk and pre-dieu, but much less so in personal relationships. In fact, he gained a name in the limited intellectual arena of Australian Catholicism as a scholar and theologian. He was an inaugural member and secretary of the Sydney archdiocesan council of vigilance, a watchdog group set up by Moran in November, 1907, under Roman direction. Duplicated in Catholic dioceses throughout the world, the council of vigilance was supposed to sniff out any traces of Modernism in the Sydney archdiocese. Despite meeting on the second Monday of every alternative month for many years, the council found little heresy in Sydney. Placid Huault resigned in March, 1909 because of poor health.105

Huault won his place on the council of vigilance and his name as a theologian by publishing two works of spiritual theology, Mother of Jesus in 1906, and The Queen of May in 1907. A third work, The Son of Man, was published after his death. Essentially derivative compilations of secondary material rather than the product of an original mind, the books at least demonstrate Huault's facility with the English language. Ironically, given Huault's position as a flag-bearer of Catholic orthodoxy, Archbishop Carr of Melbourne found the first work to be at odds with Catholic teaching; he informed Huault that a recent convert from Anglicanism had assured him that "if he had read the book before he became a Catholic, he would never have become one".106

Placid Huault died a painful but edifying death on 25 April, 1909, after twelve months of poor health, enduring successively acute diarrhoea, gallstones, bilious fever, hepatitis and finally peritonitis.107 In May of 1908 he had suggested that a little cemetery be built in a leafy glade in the grounds of Villa Maria;108 the project was completed by April, 1909, and Placid Huault was the first to be buried there. The Josephite sisters had either forgiven or forgotten, or were being downright sassy: an obituary in their magazine The Garland of St. Joseph noted that Huault was "a sound theologian, possessed great literary abilities, and had a most lovable nature".109 Barely a week after Huault's death Marion wrote to Raffin proposing Dominic Duclos as the new superior of Villa Maria, and Peter Piquet as parish priest.110 Duclos' appointment was subsequently confirmed by the general administration, but Cardinal Moran refused to countenance Piquet's appointment and the latter remained at St. Patrick's.111 Since his arrival in Sydney early in 1903, Duclos had been conducting second novitiates annually at Villa Maria and had also made trips to the Mission territories for the same purpose.112
The community which Duclos took charge of in May, 1909, had eleven permanent residents: six priests and five coadjutor brothers. The clerical members, besides Duclos and Marion, were Louis Rigard, Julien Huault, Emile Talon and Francis Laurent. Rigard had been at Villa Maria since 1893. In 1894 he had been appointed chaplain at St. Joseph's Marist brothers' college, a position which he held until the end of 1902, when he became a curate in Hunters Hill parish. He also inherited the position of monastery bursar with the departure of Murlay for Gladstone in 1901. This latter function enabled him to indulge a certain interest in the monastery grounds and vegetable gardens. Zephirin Muraire had referred sneeringly in a letter to the superior general in December, 1900, regarding Rigard's passion for planting and tending "artichokes and onions", but Olier was more tolerant, noting two years later that, "He occupies himself very actively in improving our little property, while at the same time not neglecting his job as chaplain to the Brothers".

Julien Huault had been a member of the community since 1903. Initially he had assisted in the neighbouring parish of Ryde until 1906, after which time he functioned as part-time curate in Hunters Hill parish, part-time chaplain at Mount St. Margaret's convent at Ryde, and occasional *locum tenens* in bush parishes. In May, 1909, he had just learnt of the refusal of the general administration to allow him to accompany the parish priest of Ryde, Edward Gell, on a Pacific cruise. He was not especially pleased, and had made enquiries of Moran about leaving the Society of Mary and joining the archdiocese of Sydney. Marion noted in a letter to the superior general, on 23 May, that "any little vexation causes him to lose his head", although he had been more settled and conscientious since the death of his brother, Placid.

Also at Villa Maria in 1909 was Emile Talon, who had returned to Sydney in May, 1906, after a little over two years in Gladstone and Rockhampton. Talon, who had joined the Society from New Caledonia and was ordained from Meanee in 1902, was causing his superiors considerable disquiet. Appointed as chaplain to St. Joseph's college on his return to Sydney, he was soon the subject of complaints from the Marist brothers, who told Marion that Talon had delivered only two sermons over a four month period. Towards the end of 1907 he had left for New Caledonia to visit his sick sister without the superior general's permission, and was only coaxed back with considerable difficulty by Marion. Raffin indicated that he was "upset" by Talon's behaviour, and imposed a penitential retreat when the latter returned in February, 1908.

Villa Maria's youngest and most recently arrived cleric was Francis Laurent, who became parish priest of Hunters Hill in May, 1909, following Placid Huault's death. Appointed Mission procurator at the beginning of 1905 after the disastrous regime of Francis Huault, Laurent was "conscientious" and "devoted" in his work, but as early as July, 1906, had indicated his willingness to give up the job as soon as someone else could be found to do it. Initially Laurent had resided at Villa Maria and commuted each day to St. Patrick's to work in the procure office, but he had moved there permanently in 1908 because of Placid Huault's severe regime. Marion had originally hoped to install Piquet as parish priest at Hunter's Hill but Moran's response was entirely negative: "When I mentioned Fr. Piquet for parish priest he actually shook his head in disapproval, saying: 'He has shown so little tact, of late ... it would not do". Believing that he finally had a candidate to take charge of the procure, Marion next suggested Laurent, and the Cardinal expressed enthusiastic approval. Despite occasional poor health, Laurent would serve the parish of Hunter's Hill in the following years with charm, zeal and
competence. Marion's new procurator was John Baptist Chevreuil who was no stranger to Sydney, having worked briefly at the Sydney procure in 1891, and come to Villa Maria in 1904 to make his second novitiate. Chevreuil, an impulsive, strong-willed, but sometimes charming and engaging individual, had been brought to Sydney early in 1909 following a dispute with the Government Resident on the island of Rotuma, and a subsequent disagreement with his bishop, Julien Vidal. He accepted the procure job, though with a certain reluctance, having been given to understand that he was quickly running out of options within the Society.

Two deaths only, apart from Placid Huault's, had occurred at Villa Maria in recent years. Auguste Guillemin, after six months in hospital with heart disease, died on 9 November, 1905: Marion described him as "very devoted" with "much talent and ability"; tragically, a stern and rigid exterior had undermined whatever work Guillemin had put his hand to. In April, 1908, Augule, the last but two of the group of patriarchal coadjutor brothers, died in his 87th year, after almost 50 years at Villa Maria. Eighty-eight year old Brother John Rodier would meet his maker on 30 September, 1914, while the group's last representative, the Irishman, Patrick Collins, was destined to live until September, 1916, when he died in his 77th year.

Several Third Order of Mary Regular sisters continued to live in their cottage-convent in the monastery grounds, helping with domestic chores and accommodating sisters on their way to the islands from Europe or visiting Sydney temporarily for medical treatment. Three sisters, including the superior, Sr. Chantel, were in residence in 1902, but there was only one other sister with Chantel by June, 1904. Outside help was needed for cooking and cleaning, with the monastery employing a cook, two 14 year old girls who helped with the kitchen and with mending, and two older women who undertook general domestic chores.

December, 1904, saw two temporary residents at the convent, typical of sisters passing through Sydney on their way to the Islands: Sr. Aloysia, who was due to leave before Christmas for the Tongan Mission, and Sr. Philomene who was returning to France from Samoa, and was staying in Sydney for a time to learn English.

Early in the new year the sisters were having their problems with Placid Huault. Marion reported to headquarters:

Our poor sisters at Villa Maria have some pigeons which give them some recreation; and in spite of my objections. Fr. Superior has just condemned them to death.

Writing to Lyon in February, 1906, Marion longed for a competent sister who could take over as superior and domestic supervisor from Sr. Chantel:

What we need is someone at the head who will control the sisters' house a little, as well as the kitchen staff. Sr. M. Chantel is worse than useless: very sensitive and sickly, and very hard on her companion to whom Fr. Huault has given a separate house: she only spends the night in the sisters' house.

Apart from the tensions in the convent, the domestic arrangements left something to be desired:
As well as the two sisters we have three young girls as maids; in spite of that, the kitchen is in a disgusting state. While I was in Lewisham, I heard it said there isn't a dirtier kitchen in Australia. And the linen is no better.\textsuperscript{132}

Towards the end of 1906 a young sister, Exupere, was sent to join the community from Europe. Marion was initially pleased: "Sr. M. Exupere is very good in the linen-room. She is always full of spirit and good humour, and has even pleased Sr. M. Chantel - a thing not easy to do".\textsuperscript{133} By the end of March, 1907, his enthusiasm was beginning to wane: "She is not such a good character as she seemed to promise. She is rather thoughtless, and does not take enough notice of Sr. Chantel. There have been several little fights".\textsuperscript{134} By April, 1908, he was expressing serious reservations, noting that despite warnings Sr. Exupere had been making coffee for a hired groundsman in the kitchen and "had made propositions to him".\textsuperscript{135} Sr. Exupere finally left the convent in the second half of 1908; whether she was sent back to Europe or whether she remained in Australia is unknown.\textsuperscript{136}

In the latter months of 1908 the convent community was augmented with the arrival of Sr. Theophane from Fiji. Theophane had been at Rotuma with John Baptist Chevreuil, and had been sent to Villa Maria following a disagreement with Bishop Julien Vidal and a breakdown of health.\textsuperscript{137} Her stay at Villa Maria coincided with that of sisters Mathias and Beatrice, who were passing through Sydney on their way to the Solomons. Marion finally found some occupants in the convent who were worthy of praise:

Our dear Sisters Mathias and Beatrice are still here and will not leave until 13 March. They astonish everyone by their goodwill, their piety, their unobtrusiveness and modesty.\textsuperscript{138}

During the first decade of the twentieth century the tiny convent at Villa Maria continued to experience tensions and difficulties in much the same way as it had suffered in the 1890's. In this it was simply a microcosm of the major problem facing the French Marists in Sydney; like Villa Maria monastery itself, it tended to attract and become a haven for those who had difficulty surviving in the harsh Mission environment. Marion hoped for a competent person to act as superior, but he recognised that neither the vicariate bishops nor the superiors in Europe would 'waste' a valuable subject in Sydney.\textsuperscript{139}

\textit{Arrival of Marist Sisters}

The Sisters of the Third Order Regular were a group of religious women specifically constituted for work in the foreign Missions. A second group having links with the Marist fathers, of earlier origin and with a wider apostolic focus, were the Marist sisters, who found their way to Australia in the first decade of the twentieth century.

On 23 February, 1907, three Marist sisters, including their superior, Sr. Cyrille, arrived in Sydney on their way to Fiji, in the company of Bishop Olier and several priests.\textsuperscript{140} During their stay, Olier presented them to Cardinal Moran, who agreed to their request that they be allowed to open a convent at Woolwich at a later date.\textsuperscript{141} On 8 March Marion wrote to the mother general of the congregation informing her of the permission and encouraging her to send three sisters to
begin a foundation as soon as possible. He suggested that the sisters might like to return with him from Europe after the Marist general chapter at the end of the year.\textsuperscript{142}

The \textit{Freeman's Journal} of 9 January, 1908, announced that three Marist sisters were preparing to open a high school at Woolwich and that "their number will be augmented as soon as their work becomes known".\textsuperscript{143} Marion had returned from Europe on 28 December, the \textit{Freeman's Journal} noting that he was accompanied by "several Marist Sisters".\textsuperscript{144} In fact, only two sisters began the new foundation in Sydney: Mother Melanie, the superior, and Sr. Cyrille, both of whom had come from Fiji. The sisters accompanying Marion went to Fiji to replace them. Writing to Bishop Vidal on 20 January, Marion observed:

The ones in Woolwich have installed themselves in a small cottage, and are beginning classes today. They have had the best welcome from the population except for one or two people. Only the Sisters of St. Joseph have shown a jealousy and intolerance which does little honour to them or to Catholicism.\textsuperscript{145}

The alleged Josephite anger perhaps resulted from the Marist sisters taking over their small school at Blessed Chanel's church.

Problems soon developed for the new enterprise; in late February Sr. Cyrille was confined to bed with sickness, and the additional load was taking its toll on Mother Melanie's aging frame. Marion thought there were tensions between the two: "I suspect that Sr. Cyrille's illness is somewhat caused by some antipathy towards Mother Melanie". He told the mother superior in France that a third sister was urgently needed.\textsuperscript{146} Cyrille went to hospital in March with acute gastritis and heart trouble, and a lay teacher was engaged for the school, which numbered 34 pupils.\textsuperscript{147} In the second half of 1908, with the promise of two new recruits from Europe, and with the assistance of Placid Huault, the sisters purchased a large house in Woolwich overlooking the Lane Cove river.\textsuperscript{148} Huault described the property to Moran in November, 1908:

I have just purchased a beautiful property on the Lane Cove side of Hunters Hill, in the Woolwich district, about the same distance from the little church as the Sisters of St. Joseph are from Villa Maria. There is a spacious new brick-house, with a large strip of land (about five acres) running down, 700 feet, from the main road to the sea. The place will be called "Mount Maria". The vendor paid £7,000 for it, and we secured it for £3,500. Needless to say that the Sisters have taken upon themselves the whole responsibility; hence the parish will not be burdened by their purchase. They will take possession on the 5th of January.\textsuperscript{149}

The sisters lost no time in putting their new home to practical use. On 14 January, 1909, the \textit{Freeman's Journal} announced their entry into secondary education:

The Marist Sisters are opening a boarding and high-class day school at Mount St. Mary's, Woolwich Road, Woolwich, after the summer vacation. The course of studies comprises every branch of education as well as a special commercial class to equip students in the business world.\textsuperscript{150}
Tensions between Mother Melanie and Sr. Cyrille persisted through 1909; in 1910 Cyrille was sent back to Fiji and Sr. Marthe joined the community from the Fiji Mission, functioning as *de facto* superior owing to the increasing incapacity of Mother Melanie. Marion thought the change would be beneficial: "I have confidence that peace will reign at Mount St. Mary's" and noted further that the financial security of the convent and school had been improved by an increase in boarders, and two £500 benefactions.

**Gladstone Parish**

Andrew Marion first saw the new Marist venture at Gladstone in January, 1905. He was impressed with the parish facilities Murlay had established, and wrote down his impressions for assistant general Aubry:

> I write to you from the episcopal suite in the handsome presbytery of Fr. Murlay, which is big, severe and clean just like the worthy parish priest. The church also is well designed, very airy, lacking only a little painting inside. The convent, to the right of the presbytery, a little too near, is also a beautiful building, where five sisters give instruction to one hundred children. In summary, it is a very beautiful plant for the short time that the Society has had charge of this place.

Marion noted that the town of Gladstone had not developed since the Marists took over the parish in 1901 and that there was insufficient work for two priests. He found Murlay still robust and carrying his 74 years very well. The other Marist in the diocese was Emile Talon who, like previous assistant priests at Gladstone, was actually based in Rockhampton and acting as *locum tenens* in priestless parishes. Talon was recalled in May, 1906, and replaced by Eugene Englert whose poor health necessitated a warmer climate. Englert, too, lived away from Gladstone, working at the cathedral in Rockhampton until the new bishop, James Duhig, decided to dispense with his services in 1911, and he was recalled to Sydney.

Another Marist who found his way to Rockhampton diocese in these years was Victor Thierry, a man of some charm and capacity, but a troubled spirit who would henceforth exasperate generations of Marist superiors in Australia with his changing moods and erratic behaviour. Thierry worked as a missionary in Fiji from 1894 until 1905, when he was called to Villa Maria for second novitiate. After medical treatment which included shock therapy for nerves, he returned to the Missions in November, 1905, but was ordered back to Sydney on the boat that brought him by his bishop, Julien Vidal, who claimed Thierry had insulted him and refused to accept the posting he was given. Thierry was back in Sydney only a couple of months when orders arrived from Marist superior general Raffin telling him to return to Fiji and make his peace with Vidal. He went back with great reluctance in May, 1906, but could not settle down, and was back in Sydney the following March, having exhausted the patience of Vidal and a number of his fellow missionaries. Sent to Gladstone in April, 1907, to escape the Sydney winter, he was soon acting as *locum tenens* in various Central Queensland parishes: Mount Morgan in May, 1907; North Rockhampton in August; Townsville early in 1908. At the end of May, 1908, Marion ordered him to Gladstone to assist the aging Murlay. He was there on 6 October when Murlay died in his 77th year.
“The Dean” had lived an extraordinary life as a priest: 20 years as the pioneer Catholic clergyman in Rockhampton; 20 years as a Marist in Sydney, reclusive and morose in the autumn of his life; and then a new beginning in Gladstone, where once more he came alive among people who seemed to understand him and who once more called forth his dormant humanity and zeal. He died of pneumonia and heart failure,\(^{161}\) and the day after his death he was buried at a sensible four o'clock on a hot October day.\(^{162}\) An anonymous tribute appeared in the **Freeman's Journal** of 5 November; the writer recalled the pioneer days in Rockhampton and wrestled with the mystery of Dean Charles Murlay:

> It is almost unaccountable how a man of his retiring nature, reticent manner, and natural ascetic disposition could immediately and almost intuitively adapt himself to the work of a mission requiring so much physical exertion, and uncertainty of time and place ...\(^{163}\)

In returning to the diocese of Rockhampton, Murlay had taken the Society of Mary with him, and in 1905 the Marist presence in Central Queensland was cemented by a contract between Bishop Higgins and the Society giving it care of the parish of Gladstone in perpetuity.\(^{164}\) So Andrew Marion needed to find a new parish priest. He began the long train journey to Gladstone on 19 October, stayed there a week, and before leaving exercised his only option, asking Thierry to take over the parish, at least for the time being. He left with his fingers crossed:

> Provisionally I have left Fr. Thierry in charge at Gladstone, but I am not very happy about it. He is always the same: continually changing and never satisfied. The Lord is giving him another chance: may he profit by it.\(^{165}\)

Murlay in Gladstone; and successively Ginisty, Coue, Talon, Englert, and Thierry working elsewhere in the Rockhampton diocese: that was basically the Marist story in Central Queensland in the first decade of the century. There was one further representative in Queensland, Peter Rouillac, who began work at Hughenden some time in 1904, and shortly afterwards transferred to Bowen. Rouillac had served as a missionary in Fiji, and then in the South Solomons, where he skippered the Mission boat, *Eclipse*. He had caused a minor sensation in Sydney in 1901 when he brought the *Eclipse* to Sydney for repairs, a 1700 mile sea voyage undertaken in a 19 ton boat with a crew of teenage Solomon islanders. Rouillac had come back to Sydney from the Solomons Mission in March, 1903, following the wreck of the *Eclipse* the previous year.\(^{166}\) He began fund-raising for a new boat but his plans come to nothing when the new regional superior of the Mission, John Bertreux, refused to receive him back because of the unsettling and demoralising effect he was having on the other missionaries.\(^{167}\) While still a member of the Society of Mary during his period in Northern Queensland (1904-1913), he had little contact with his fellow Marists, believing himself badly treated in an earlier quarrel with Bishop Vidal of Fiji, and in his more recent banishment from the Solomons Mission.\(^{168}\)

**Marion's Difficulties**

Andrew Marion was Provincial of Oceania from June, 1904, until the end of 1910. In concluding the story of the Society of Mary in Australia during his Provincialship, it is worth noting some of his heroic struggles with poor health, failing eyesight and a crippling lack of self-acceptance, all of which made his six years in Australia a time of great personal trial; and
finally, to detail his essentially unsuccessful attempts to coax more recruits for the Australian Mission from the Marist general administration, and his abortive efforts to establish a juniorate for young Australians wishing to become Marist priests.

Marion made his first tour of the Marist Mission areas between April and August, 1905, visiting the New Hebrides, Samoa and Tonga, and returning to Sydney by way of New Zealand. On his very first visitation as Provincial he contracted malaria, and would henceforth have to endure long, painful, and debilitating periods of fever. Even when the malaria was at bay, Marion still found desk work difficult because of declining eyesight and sore eyes. As early as February, 1905, he had encouraged a confrere to write to him in ink rather than in pencil: "My eyes are failing, and I have trouble reading pencil letters". His eyesight continued to deteriorate, and in January, 1909, he informed Bishop Julien Vidal that he could no longer read under artificial light.

Marion's health was a considerable obstacle to him in the performance of his duties as Provincial; so was his self-doubt and lack of confidence in his abilities. Totally surprised by his nomination, he never ceased to believe that he was absolutely inadequate for the position. He always felt uncomfortable at social gatherings; on 9 December, 1904, he described his unease at a clerical dinner at Manly:

It was a great day, and very interesting. But I always find myself like a fish out of water; although I was very close to the Cardinal, even at his own table at which there were only nine of us. I was even invited to sing, but I could not even remember a Fijian song.

In June, 1907, with the Provincial chapter of the Oceania Province assembled in Sydney, Moran invited the capitulants to his palace at Manly. Marion was dreading the occasion: "I am almost the only one who does not really look forward to going, while not refusing to recognise the great friendship of His Eminence in inviting me so kindly". His letters to the general administration are liberally sprinkled with expressions of inadequacy and a longing to return to the simple life of a missionary: "I have not the qualities to fill the job to which I have been called", "I should be the first to admit that I am not really fit for the position", "I am tired of Sydney; I don't feel at home here, and I am sure that I ought to be somewhere else"; "I am now finishing my fifth year, could you not kindly bring forward by a year my successor who by his decisions and more strictness would do the work better".

In the face of Marion's constant expressions of tortured self-doubt, and the very real limitations his poor health placed on his performance as Provincial, a question worth asking is why the general administration did not relieve him of his responsibility before the expiry of his six year term. It is a question that is not easy to answer; clearly, however, despite Marion's lack of self-confidence, his actual performance must not have been so poor that the general administration felt obliged to replace him. However, even allowing for Marion's excessive humility and, while not wanting to minimise his heroism in seeing through a job which he found uncongenial and physically injurious, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that a healthier and more confident man may have achieved more for the Society of Mary in Oceania and Australia.

Attempts at Expansion
Despite his poor health, and the added pressures which this placed on his energy and time, Marion did put considerable effort into trying to improve the Marist position in Australia. He wrote frequently and insistently to the general administration, begging for more men; he attempted to get assistance from the New Zealand Province of the Society; and he genuinely tried within the serious limitations of his manpower resources, to set up a juniorate to prepare boys and young men for entry to the Marist seminary at Meanee in New Zealand.

Marion's requests to headquarters for fresh reinforcements from France involved a great deal of effort for a very small result. In March, 1906, he asked for a new priest for St. Patrick's direct from France rather than one "more or less unaccustomed to keeping the Rule through being in the Islands". Superior general Raffin was unable to oblige. He was sympathetic ("Certainly, I understand well your reasons for wanting to have a new, solid, serious priest to reinforce St. Patrick's"), and assured Marion that if he had one such in hand he would send him immediately. In fact, the situation was desperate; the disruption caused in France by the separation of Church and State the previous year, combined with various anti-clerical measures enacted by successive republican governments, had seriously affected recruitment to the Society. According to Raffin, there were no spare priests to send. In fact, "new, solid, serious French priests" continued to pass through Sydney on their way to the Marist Pacific Missions: 11 arrived in November, 1905, and five in the same month of 1906. It was really a question of priorities: in the eyes of the general administration, for reasons which have already been explained, Australia was at the bottom of the list. As the number of available French Marists continued to shrink, the likelihood of the Society of Mary developing in Australia though an influx of new members from France became more and more remote.

Nevertheless, Marion kept trying. In May, 1908, he reminded Raffin that "with the personnel we have there are hardly enough to maintain our existing works". Marion's appeals finally had a solitary success in the person of Leopold Carcenac, who was appointed to Sydney in June, 1909, a month before his ordination to the priesthood. A 28 year old Frenchman, Carcenac left Europe for his Australian posting on 22 September, 1909; he seemed to fit perfectly Marion's order for a "new, solid, serious priest". He was initially sent to St. Patrick's to improve his English, and in the second half of 1910 was posted to Gladstone as a temporary replacement for the hospitalised Thierry. He was back at St. Patrick's early in 1911.

Marion also approached the New Zealand Marist Provincial on several occasions, but his attempts to get help from New Zealand were even less successful than his pleas to the general administration. When Louis Menard was transferred to New Zealand in December, 1905, following a dispute with Placid Huault, Marion requested a Marist from the New Zealand Province in return. Specifically he asked for Auguste Galerne, a 39 year old Frenchman who had completed his theology studies at Meanee with a view to working in the Pacific Missions, but who was now back in New Zealand after a brief period of service in Fiji. The New Zealand Provincial, Peter Regnault, was unable to comply with Marion's request. Marion tried again when visiting New Zealand in October, 1909, but was equally unsuccessful: "I tried hard to get someone from Fr. Regnault, but without result: they are short too".

During Marion's Provincialate no progress was made with regard to establishing a training house for Australians wanting to join the Society; yet Marion was extremely aware of the urgency of doing so, and made several unsuccessful attempts. Early in January, 1905, he wrote to assistant general Aubry:
If a chance comes up, should we do something about getting a site for a house of formation? Isn't it time we expanded a bit in Australia by getting Australian candidates? Everybody here is pushing for this.\textsuperscript{188}

Aubry replied that he thought it premature to be thinking of a seminary as such, since Meenee would be able to meet any needs for the foreseeable future. However, he encouraged Marion to consider establishing something at Villa Maria so that candidates could be assessed before being sent to New Zealand.\textsuperscript{189}

In June, 1907, the Oceania Provincial chapter met at Villa Maria in preparation for the general chapter of the congregation, to be held at Differt, Belgium, later that year. The chapter's "Commission for Works" recommended the setting up of a juniorate, novitiate, and scholasticate in Australia "for the recruitment of priests of English origin".\textsuperscript{190} The chapter finally accepted a diluted version of the recommendation, calling on the Marist general administration to "study the question of establishing a juniorate in Australia for the Province of Oceania".\textsuperscript{191} Marion presented the proposal to the general chapter later in the year, and it received unanimous endorsement;\textsuperscript{192} the general administration of the Society also formally approved the project, and Marion announced the authorisation in a circular to the members of his Province early in 1908.\textsuperscript{193} But as Marion was to realise during the remaining years of his Provincialate, it was one thing to have approval of the project; it was quite another thing to actually bring it to fruition.

Marion's first thought was to make use of Peter Bouillon, a missionary from the Solomons who was recovering his health at Villa Maria early in 1908. Bouillon was an ex-seminary professor with doctorates in theology and civil law.\textsuperscript{194} Marion hoped he could be induced to take up the chalk again: "I am encouraging him to learn English; if, according to the wishes of the Provincial Chapter, we could found a juniorate here, this dear Father could be very useful to us".\textsuperscript{195} But Bouillon elected to return to his Mission, and Marion's plan came to nothing.

In April, 1908, superior general Raffin wrote in case Marion's interest was flagging: "I hope you are not losing sight of the plan for establishing an apostolic school".\textsuperscript{196} Marion replied late in May that the matter had been discussed at several Provincial council meetings since the beginning of the year, "but we cannot go forward because we have no-one to take charge of that work".\textsuperscript{197} By the end of the year Raffin was clearly becoming impatient: in a long letter to Marion he gave his assessment of the Australian situation. He believed that "the men in Sydney have expected too much from Europe and on the other hand they have not shown enough initiative to use the means needed for recruitment on the spot". Even though Marion did not have the ideal man to begin the juniorate, it was preferable to make a start with whatever human resources were at hand:

I have no illusions concerning the mediocrity of the men back from the Islands and grouped in Sydney, but I find it hard to believe that among them there could not be found one or two capable of starting kids off with a basic knowledge of Latin, of supervising them and of starting off their formation.\textsuperscript{198}

Raffin's letter arrived in the middle of January, 1909. In reply Marion explained that the
problem was not so much teaching Latin as having no-one available whose English was sufficiently good to teach English-speaking students. He had certainly been doing his best to begin the juniorate: he had recently approached the New Zealand Provincial, Peter Regnault, for the loan of Fr. Francis Bartley, an Australian-born Marist working in New Zealand; Bartley had been willing to come, but Regnault was unable or unwilling to release him. But now there was a new possibility: Marion had recently called John Baptist Chevreuil to Sydney following the latter's disagreement with his bishop, Julien Vidal. The Provincial council was thinking of beginning the juniorate with Francis Laurent and replacing him as procurator with Chevreuil; Marion asked Raffin to write to Chevreuil with a strong request that he accept the position.\textsuperscript{199} Chevreuil assented in March with the encouragement of the superior general,\textsuperscript{200} but Marion's plans were again to be thwarted. With the death of Placid Huault on 25 April, 1909, Laurent was needed as parish priest of Hunters Hill, and the juniorate project again languished. In fact, it would finally become a reality early in 1911; before completing his term as Provincial at the end of 1910, Marion appointed Alphonse Ginsbach, a returned missionary from Samoa as the first superior. It would be left to the new Provincial, Charles Nicolas, to finally open Montbel apostolic school.

Given the absence of formation structures for candidates wishing to become Marists, the low profile of the Society in Australia, the doubtful quality of many of its members and the completely French character of the group, it is perhaps not surprising that there were few recruits to the congregation during Marion's period as Provincial. Of the dozen or so men who made contact with the Marists between 1904-1910, only three appear to have been sent to New Zealand. In 1905 and 1906, the Sydney Marists were paying for the education of one John O'Brien at St. Patrick's Marist college, Wellington, presumably as a prelude to his entering Meanee seminary. There is no indication that he did so, and the presumption is that he was found to be unsuitable.\textsuperscript{201} In February, 1906, Marion sent a candidate by the name of Aidran Furey direct to Meanee. Marion had met the 36 year old Furey at the Catholic Congress in Melbourne towards the end of 1904; he was a convert from Anglicanism and had spent some time as a monk at Cowley. He lasted only three weeks in New Zealand before being sent back to Villa Maria because of his unsatisfactory standard in Latin. At the end of April he left for the island of Rotuma to work as a teacher in the Catholic Mission.\textsuperscript{202} The final applicant sent to New Zealand was James Joseph Dunne, who was recruited by Victor Thierry in Gladstone. Writing to his opposite number, Peter Regnault, on 24 February, 1910, Marion asked if Dunne could go to Meanee to train as a coadjutor brother:

James Joseph Dunne is a good and strong Christian of good Irish parentage. He is twenty-three, of good will and good character. Everything makes me hopeful that the vocation is genuine.\textsuperscript{203}

Dunne lasted at Meanee only a few months. In July Regnault wrote to vicar Provincial Dominic Duclos at Villa Maria to tell him that although Dunne was "willing, obedient and pious", he was an epileptic and was "not likely to be ever successful as a brother".\textsuperscript{204} He was sent back to Australia at the end of July.\textsuperscript{205}

Several others applied to become coadjutor brothers in the years 1904-10, but after brief periods of probation at Villa Maria they were sent away.\textsuperscript{206} There were also applicants for the priesthood whose names appear briefly in correspondence: a Percy Flynn asked to join in
November, 1904, but Marion doubted that the Province could afford his fees at Meanee. In December, 1904, there was an enquiry from a Francis T. Goffrey of Brisbane, and in June, 1906, a student at Manly Seminary, William Berntson, expressed interest in transferring to the Marists; Marion wrote encouraging letters to each of them, but apparently none of these enquiries came to anything. Finally, in 1909-1910, two young men lived at Villa Maria and studied with the Marist brothers at nearby St. Joseph's college. One was a Frenchman, Alexander Vermoral; he and his companion (name unknown) were destined to be the first pupils at Montbel apostolic school when it opened early in 1911.

The period of Marion's Provincialate was unproductive in terms of the recruitment and formation of Australian candidates. While Marion and many of his fellow Marists in Australia appeared to be receptive to local applicants and realised the importance of establishing a house of formation, the reality was that between 1904-1910 not a single applicant was accepted who ultimately persevered to religious profession or ordination in the Society.

Assessment

Marion learnt in a letter from the general administration in October, 1910, that his purgatorial Provincialate had finally come to an end. He was a kind, gentle, and sensible man, qualities which emerge again and again in the letters of encouragement and consolation he wrote to his missionaries. If he allowed himself to believe that his Provincialate had achieved anything at all, it was that his men perhaps felt cared about:

I have done all I could to encourage our confreres, to lessen their small discomforts, and to give them some advice as well. Perhaps these things will bear some fruit.

Through no fault of Marion's, his Provincialate was marked by cool relations between Cardinal Moran and the Society, but by the time Marion departed from Sydney there had been a reconciliation. It was consummated on 4 July, 1909, when Moran processed onto No.4 jetty at Woolloomooloo to bless a 30 ton ketch, the Joan of Arc, for the Marist Solomons Mission. It was a thoroughly jolly occasion; Moran spoke glowingly of the great work of the Marists in the Pacific Missions, and the Marists read out testimonials in French and English in praise of Moran. Everyone seemed friends again. Even the Freeman’s Journal reporter was caught up in the euphoria, and indulged himself in some particularly ripe prose:

At three o'clock, the Cardinal stepped aboard the vessel and was accommodated with a seat down aft beside the wheel - a happy situation for one who has steered the spiritual barque of faith for so many years in this country.

The following day Moran sent a cheque for £50 to Augustin Ginisty towards the cost of the boat; Ginisty wrote a grateful letter in reply. One suspects that he was grateful not just for the donation.

The Provincialate of Andrew Marion was not a productive period for the Society of Mary in Australia. It had been characterised by tensions between members of the Society and Cardinal Moran, and no headway had been made in attracting local vocations. But as Marion's period in
office came to an end, there were hopeful signs: the dispute with Moran had been patched up, and at long last the juniorate was to become a reality. Perhaps the Provincialate of Marion's successor held better things in store for the Society of Mary in Australia.

ENDNOTES CHAPTER 4

1 Marion to Martin, 13 July, 1904, APM OP418.
2 FJ, 27 August, 1904, p.23.
3 Marion to Martin, 15 August, 1904, APM OP418.
4 Aubry to Marion, 2 October, 1904, AMPA B140.
5 Marion to Martin, 3 November, 1904, copy AMPA B140/1.
6 Marion to Olier, 9 December, 1904, AMPA B140/2.
7 Marion to Martin, 29 August, 1904, AMPA B140/1.
8 Marion to Regis, 17 October, 1904, AMPA B140/2.
9 Ibid. Strictly speaking, it is not possible to pay for the saying of a Mass. When a person asks a priest to offer a Mass for a particular favour, a "donation" normally accompanies the request. Some priests receive more requests than they can personally accommodate, and transfer the Mass request and donation elsewhere. Hence, the procurator at Sydney would frequently receive amounts of money tied to a particular number of Masses. For example, a cheque for £5 tied to twenty Masses; in order to "earn" the £5 the priest receiving the amount had to say twenty Masses for the donor's intention.
10 MPV, 17 November, 1904.
11 MPV, 16 August, 1904.
12 Marion to Martin, 7 February, 1905, AMPA B140/1.
13 MPV, 30 July, 1904.
14 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.
15 FJ, 7 May, 1904, p.23.
16 FJ, 3 September, 1904, p.22.
17 FJ, 24 September, 1904, p.22.
18 Le Rennetel to Martin, 29 November, 1891, copy AMPA B215.05.
19 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.
20 Regis to Guillemin, 12 July, 1900, OMPA D1.3.
21 PCM, 10 January, 1902.
22 MPV, 1 April, 1902.
23 Olier to Aubry, 3 March, 1902, APM OP418.
24 Curriculum Vitae of Eugene Englert, APM personal files.
25 Marion to Raffin, 16 April, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1.
26 Olier to Martin, 19 May, 1903, 22 October, 1903, APM OP418. Chatelet was accused of making amorous advances to nuns (Nicolas to Ceretti, 16 March, 1916, OMPA D4.44).
28 MPV, 20 April, 1906.
29 Raffin to Marion, 23 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.
30 Chatelet performed his first baptism at St. Patrick’s on 28 October.
31 Leterrier to Martin, 25 October, 1892, copy AMPA B170.05.
32 Aubry to Martin, 12 November, 1899, copy AMPA B130.
33 Ibid.
34 Marion to Raffin, 5 September, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.
35 Marion to Ginisty, 26 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/2.
36 Marion to Raffin, 21 May, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1
37 Marion to Regis, 11 June, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2
38 Marion to Raffin, 13 May, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1.
39 Ibid.
40 O’Haran to Moran, 24 September, 1907, SAA Marist Box.
O'Haran had quoted from P. Gury, *Compendium Theologiae Moralis* (Ratisbon, 1874), that if a clerical religious administered the sacrament of Extreme Unction without the permission of the local parish priest, he was *ipso facto* excommunicated. Sheehy discovered that the word "religious" was meant to be interpreted strictly, i.e., a person who had taken solemn vows. The Marists took simple vows.

Sheehy to Moran, 26 September, 1907, SAA Marist Box.

Moran to Huault, 28 September, 1907, copy SAA Marist Box.

Piquet to Cribben, 8 October, 1907, AMPA D17.1.

O'Brien to O'Haran, 30 October, 1907, SAA Marist Box.

O'Haran to Moran, 12 November, 1907, SAA Moran Papers. Cardinal Merry del Val was Pius X’s Secretary of State.

See, for example, Spruson to Moran, 21 January, 1906, SAA Moran Papers.

O'Haran to Moran, 14 November, 1907, SAA Moran Papers.

Ibid

Piquet to Moran, 12 November, 1907, SAA Marist Box; John Rohan, "Statement of Facts", 14 November, 1907, SAA Marist Box.

Piquet to Moran, 12 December, 1907, SAA Marist Box.

Moran to Ginisty, 20 December, 1907, SAA Marist Box.

Marion to Raffin, 13 January, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Copere, 15 November, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.


O'Haran to Moran, 24 September, 1907, SAA Marist Box.

Vaney, "Dual Tradition", p.162.


Marion to Aubry, 4 June, 1906, copy AMPA B140/3.
Piquet to Moran, 28 February, 1908, SAA Marist Box; see also Piquet to Moran, 17 February, 1908, 28 February, 1908 (further letter of same date), SAA Marist Box.


Mamel to Raffin, 5 March, 1908, APM 503.26.

MPV, 8 March, 1907.

Marion to Raffin, 13 January, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1

Marion to Raffin, 11 February, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1

Marion To Guasco, 25 May, 1908, copy AMPA B140/3.

Raffin to Marion, 21 February, 1908, 11 April, 1908, copy AMPA 140/1.


For example, Moran promoted, and planned to join, a chartered Pacific cruise in 1903, visiting various Catholic missions. The venture was cancelled, supposedly because of a plague-related health scare. In fact, it was under-subscribed, and would have been a financial disaster had it gone ahead.


FJ, 18 February, 1905, p.22. Hoben who was music critic for the *Sydney Mail* later settled in Pasadena, California (see FJ, 13 February, 1913, p.22).


FJ, 4 March, 1905, p.22.

FJ, 24 June, 1905, p.22.


FJ, 8 August, 1912, p.24.

FJ, 30 October, 1913, p.21.

Marion to Martin, 29 August, 1904, copy AMPA B140/1.
82 MPV, 29 August, 1900, 9 October, 1900.
83 Ginisty to Martin, 13 June, 1904, APM 561.200.5.
84 MPV, 25 September, 1905.
85 Marion to Raffin, 13 November, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.
86 Marion to Raffin, 9 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.
87 See Australasian Catholic Directory 1907, p.8; also John Hall, "A Glimpse of History, with Special Reference to Mount Saint Joseph", typed monograph, 1947, JA; also ground-plan of convent and schools, AMPA C25.06.
88 Marion to Vidal, 21 November, 1905, copy AMPA B140/2.
89 "History of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Hunters Hill", typed monograph, JA.
90 FJ, 16 May, 1907, p.26; Marion to de Marzan, 10 May, 1907, copy AMPA B140/2.
91 Huault to Moran, 29 June, 1907, SAA Villa Maria File.
93 Moran to Huault, 22 June, 1907, copy AMPA C25.05; also fragment of Moran's diary, SAA Moran Papers, 1907.
94 Huault to Moran, 19 June, 1907, SAA Marist Box.
95 Moran to Huault, 22 June, 1907, copy AMPA C25.05.
96 Huault to Moran, 29 June, 1907, SAA Villa Maria File.
97 Cash Book, 1907-1908, AMPA C25.03.
98 FJ, 2 April, 1908, p.25.
99 Marion to Raffin, 29 September, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.
100 Marion to Raffin, 11 February, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.
101 Marion to Raffin, 26 September, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.
102 Marion to Raffin, 18 October, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.
103 Ibid.
104 Marion to Raffin, 3 May, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.
Modernism, perceived by the Vatican as an international conspiracy of theological heresy within the Catholic Church, was condemned by Pius X in 1907. Recent scholarship would suggest that Modernism, as portrayed in the encyclical, was invented by the papal documents which condemned it, and that the drastic measures adopted to eliminate it were a tragic exercise in anti-intellectual overkill. See, for example, John Rate, Three Modernists, London, 1968.

Carr to Huault, 10 June, 1907, AMPA D9.23.

Marion to Raffin, 7 February, 1909, 1 March, 1903, 3 May, 1909, copies AMPA B140/1; Laurent to Vidal, 27 April, 1909, RCAF 14.3.2.

PCM, 12 May, 1908.


Marion to Raffin, 3 May, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Raffin, 10 May, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.

MPV, 26 June, 1903.

PCM, 1 March, 1903.

Muraire to Martin, 4 December, 1900, APM OP 600.418.

Olier to Martin, 22 November, 1902, APM OP 418.

Marion to Raffin, 23 May, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Channion, 14 January, 1902, copy AMPA B140/2.

Ibid.

Raffin to Marion, 21 February, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Raffin, 18 October, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Raffin, 10 May, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Vidal, 9 September, 1908, 24 September, 1908, copies AMPA B140/3; Marion to Chevreuil, 24 September, 1908, copy AMPA B140/3.

Raffin to Chevreuil, 31 March, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Regis, 18 November, 1905, copy AMPA B140/2; FJ, 18 November, 1905, p.17. Note that the Freeman's Journal gives the date of Guillemin's death as 10 November.
FJ, 11 April, 1907. Augule's date of death is given as 7 April: the Marist Memoriale gives 9 April.

Chevreuil to Hequel, 28 September, 1916, OMPA E1.1.

Muraire to Martin, 8 November, 1902, OP 600.418.

Ginisty to Martin, 13 June, 1904, S61.200.5.

Marion to Broyer, 9 December, 1904, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Regis, 24 January, 1905, copy AMPa B140/1.

Marion to Regis, 26 February, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2.

Ibid.

Marion to Regis, 14 January, 1907, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Regis, 25 March, 1907, Copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Raffin, 27 April, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Louise, 29 January, 1909, copy AMPA B140/2.

Raffin to Marion, 14 March, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1; Marion to Louise, 29 January, 1909, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Louise, 29 January, 1909, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Regis, 11 June, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2.

FJ, 28 February, 1907, p.19; FJ, 7 March, 1907, p.22.

Marion to Vidal, 4 March, 1907, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to "Rev. Mother", 8 March, 1907, copy AMPA B140/2.

FJ, 9 January, 1908, p.15.

FJ, 2 January, 1908, p.23.

Marion to Vidal, 20 January, 1908, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Mother St. Joseph, 24 February, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Vidal, 15 March, 1908, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Vidal, 9 November, 1908, copy AMPA B140/2.
Huault to Moran, 27 November, 1908, SAA Moran Papers.

FJ, 14 January, 1909, p.16.


Marion to Mother St. Joseph, 29 September, 1910, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Aubry, 9 January, 1905, APM OP 418.

Marion to Thierry, 12 June, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2; PCM, 6 March, 1906.

Marion to Englert, 19 November, 1910 copy AMPA B140/3.

Marion to Raffin, 9 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Raffin, 13 March, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1; PCM, 6 March, 1906.

Marion to Raffin, 3 March, 1907, copy AMPA B140/1.

FJ, 22 August, 1907; Marion to Thierry, 26 May, 1907, copy AMPA B140/2; Marion to Thierry, 12 January, 1908, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Thierry, 31 May, 1908, copy AMPA B140/3.


Clipping from Gladstone Observer, 7 October, 1908, account of death and obituary notice, at AMPA B140/3.

FJ, 5 November, 1908, p.8. The tribute’s author was probably Rev James Comerford, who had lived with Murlay in Rockhampton.

See Forestier to Raffin, 6 July, 1903, 18 December, 1903, APM 615.1; Copere to Raffin, 23 June, 1905, APM 616.1; Marion to Murlay, 5 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Vidal, 9 November, 1908, copy AMPA B140/3.

FJ, 5 July, 1902, p.20; FJ, 25 October, 1902, p.20; MPV, 3 February, 1903.

See "Responses of Fr. Bertreux to the Questionnaire of His Lordship Bishop Vidal Following His Visit to the Solomons", 31 March, 1903, RCAF PMB 444; Olier to Martin, 5 January, 1904, APM OP418.

Olier to Martin, 6 July, 1903, APM OP 418; Marion to Raffin, 9 July, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1.

FJ, 2 September, 1905, p21.
170 Marion to Dupont, 21 February, 1905, copy AMPA B140/2.
171 Marion to Vidal, 1 March, 1909, copy AMPA B140/3.
172 Marion to Nicolas, 9 December, 1904, copy AMPA B140/2.
173 Marion to Chaurion, 10 June, 1907, copy AMPA B140/2.
174 Marion to Aubry, 28 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.
175 Marion to Raffin, 21 May, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1.
176 Marion to Lamaze, 22 June, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2.
177 Marion to Raffin, 18 October, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.
178 Marion to Raffin, 13 March, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1.
181 Marion to Raffin, 28 May, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.
182 MPV, 8 June, 1909.
183 Marion to Raffin, 18 September, 1910, copy AMPA B140/1.
184 His name begins appearing in the baptismal register from 5 February.
186 Marion to Raffin, 9 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.
187 Marion to Raffin, 15 November, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.
188 Marion to Aubry, 9 January, 1905, APM OP 418.
189 Aubry to Marion, 17 March, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.
190 1907 Provincial Chapter, "Commission for Works", OMPA C3.
192 "1907 General Chapter", APM 323.252.
194 For Bouillon see Callaghan, Alive in Memory, p.30.
Marion to Chaurion, 14 January, 1908, copy AMPA B140/2.

Raffin to Marion, 11 April, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Raffin, 28 May, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Raffin to Marion, 18 December, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Raffin, 31 January, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.


Marion to Keogh, 8 February, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Vidal, 5 March, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2; Marion to Raffin, 13 January, 1907, AMPA B140/1; Marion to Trouillet, 14 June, 1906, AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Regnault, 24 February, 1910, copy AMPA B140/3.

Regnault to Duclos, 15 July, 1910, NZMPA IPC 2 F10.

Regnault to Smyth, 15 July, 1910, NZMPA SCH 2 F68.

See PCM, 22 August, 1904, 9 November, 1905, 25 May, 1907.

Marion to Ginisty, 17 November, 1904, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Goffrey, 7 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/2.

Marion to Berntson, 13 June, 1906, copy AMPA B140/2.


Marion to Thierry, 6 October, 1910, copy AMPA B140/3.

See for example Marion to Nicolas, 6 December, 1909; Marion to Dupont, 7 December, 1909; Marion to Schneider, 20 February, 1910; all in AMPA B140/3.

Marion to Regis, 17 October, 1910, copy AMPA B140/3.

FJ, 8 July, 1909, p.25.

A SYSTEM IN CRISIS (1911-1918)

In January, 1910, Andrew Marion wrote to the superior general to remind him that the general administration needed to appoint a new Provincial of Oceania; he suggested three names: Dominic Duclos, Charles Nicolas, and Antonin Moussey. Duclos was already at Villa Maria as master of the second novitiate; Moussey was a missionary in Tonga with a background in European and American seminaries; and Charles Nicolas was administrator of the cathedral parish in Suva. On 24 August, superior general Raffin wrote to Nicolas to inform him that he had been chosen as the new Provincial of Oceania. The general council had selected him, Raffin said, because he was familiar with the Pacific Missions, he was an experienced administrator, he knew English, and finally, because he was devoted to the Society of Mary and its works. Raffin asked Nicolas to pay particular and immediate attention when he got to Sydney to re-establishing observance of the religious rule at St. Patrick's and to opening the juniorate.

Nicolas was 50 years of age when he was appointed Provincial, and had been in Fiji since 1889. The list of notables who turned out to farewell him on a warm Suva night in December, 1910, indicates that he was well thought of in the Fijian capital: present were the acting-Governor, the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, the Collector of Customs, the Receiver-General, and local Wesleyan, Presbyterian and Anglican clergymen.

Nicolas arrived in Sydney sometime in January, 1911, and lost no time in following Raffin's directive to commence the juniorate. On 31 January he wrote to Moran asking permission to commence the school:

...the Marist Fathers are going to resume in Villa Maria a work begun formerly under Father Aubry and which produced Father Talon and was discontinued for a time, viz. the teaching of Latin to a few children in view of preparing them for the priesthood and an apostolic life.

Nicolas told Moran he had two young men to commence with, the two ‘postulants’ who had been living at Villa Maria since 1909. The director of the school would be Alphonse Ginsbach, a Luxembourger, newly arrived in Sydney after 15 years in Samoa.

The school was to be accommodated in a split-level sandstone house built on sloping land in Gladesville Road, opposite the St. Joseph's college gates. Originally constructed by J.K. Heydon, a prominent lay Catholic and publicist, in the middle of the 19th century, the house had served as a Carmelite convent in the early 1880's and since that time had been rented out to tenants by the Marists. Moran gave his approval for the apostolic school on 1 February, and Ginsbach and his two pupils took up residence that same evening.

Expansion from New Zealand
In February, 1911, 66 years after the first Marists came to Australia, the Society of Mary was an insignificant group in the context of the Australian Church. Not so across the Tasman in New Zealand, where the first Catholic missionaries had been Marists and where the Society of Mary had developed and prospered. The Marists were particularly strong in the dioceses of Wellington and Christchurch, which had Marist bishops and where Marist priests considerably outnumbered secular priests. In 1900 there were 40 Marist priests in the archdiocese of Wellington and only 14 secular priests; in Christchurch there were 18 secular priests and twice as many Marists. Because the Society of Mary had primary responsibility for the evangelisation of New Zealand, the Marist general administration sent men to New Zealand right through the nineteenth century; in particular it sent teachers to open secondary schools and a seminary, and it sent Irish Marists as well as Frenchmen, so that the Society in New Zealand did not have a totally French image. Neil Vaney attributes the success of the Marists in attracting local vocations to two factors: firstly, the prominence of Francis Redwood, a New Zealand Marist who was ordained in 1865 and who became bishop of Wellington (later archbishop) in 1874; and secondly, the founding by the Society of St. Patrick's college, Wellington in 1885, and the opening of a seminary at Meanee in 1890:

By the time that the first class to pass right through the College's ranks had graduated, the first seminary in New Zealand was ready to accept those who wished to study for the Marist priesthood ... the national seminary at Mossgiel was not established until 1900.

By 1908 the New Zealand Province of the Society of Mary was strong and vibrant; in that year it began to flex its muscles in a most unusual way.

Thomas O'Shea was a Marist priest who had come to New Zealand from America as a child; he attended St. Patrick's college, Wellington, and later the Marist seminary at Meanee, where he taught for some years after ordination. He was destined to succeed Francis Redwood to the see of Wellington. In 1908 he was administrator of the cathedral parish in Wellington. He had been to Australia on several occasions, most recently at the end of 1904, when he attended the Melbourne Catholic Congress; at this gathering, if not previously, he would have made the acquaintance of Denis O'Haran. On 20 March, 1908, six months after the excommunication of Peter Piquet, and three months after Moran's restrictions on marriages at St. Patrick's, he wrote a letter to O'Haran marked "Private and Confidential". He had heard, he told O'Haran, that the state of affairs at St. Patrick's, in Sydney, was not "altogether satisfactory":

I refer especially to the staffing of the Parish with suitable men. Of course we in New Zealand belong to quite a distinct Province as far as the Marist Fathers are concerned and it is no business of ours to interfere or to make suggestions. But on account of the good of religion, as well as our Society in Sydney, prompted by the kindly relations existing between us, I talked the matter over with our Provincial here, with the result that I resolved to write to you. You know that the New Zealand Province of our Society is composed of men of quite a different kind from those of the Sydney Province, and it goes without saying that they are more suited to countries like Australia, and this country. Now our Father General is going to visit us next summer, and if His Eminence and yourself put the matter to him, I think you would find him quite ready to bring about an improvement. My own opinion is that it would be better for a time at any rate, to detach St. Patrick's from the Australian Province, and hand it over to New Zealand.
Wisely, O'Shea told O'Haran to proceed with prudence: "We would not like it to become known to anyone in Sydney, as naturally they might resent our interference". And with some reason, for New Zealand Provincial Peter Regnault had recently told Andrew Marion, and would do so again later in the year, that he had no spare men to loan to Australia. The New Zealand Provincial was clearly not interested in bailing the Sydney Marists out of their difficulties; he was, however, very interested in gaining a toehold for the New Zealand Province in Australia. Regnault was coming to believe that the numerical strength of the Marists in the context of a small, isolated country like New Zealand could have undesirable results. He feared his priests could become too parochial, too closed in on themselves, with too few opportunities to mix with other Marists and drink anew of the authentic spirit and ethos of the order. In a word, he was worried that the New Zealand Province might become a ghetto. In 1911 he expressed this view clearly to Charles Nicolas and to Dominic Duclos in separate letters on 27 June, in the specific context of an interchange of men between New Zealand and Australia. To Nicolas he wrote:

... it is not conducive to the preservation of the true religious spirit such as it existed in the first Fathers ‘at home’, to keep within the limits of a small Province, like New Zealand, men born and bred here and without experience or knowledge of other Marists. They get into a groove, into habits and ways which are not those of our Society.

He made a similar point to Duclos:

In a small Province like New Zealand, there must necessarily be a good deal of parochialism; little by little the members of a Society must imbibe a spirit of their own which is not exactly the true spirit of their Order, but if they mix up with Fathers of another Province and even of a different nationality, they will more easily preserve the true religious spirit ...

In encouraging O'Shea to write to O'Haran, proposing that New Zealand Marists take charge of St. Patrick's, Regnault may well have been motivated by a belief that the Sydney Marists were giving the Society a bad name, and that his men could run St. Patrick's more efficiently than their Sydney Marist confreres. But it also seems likely that in the forefront of his thinking was a belief that he needed a New Zealand Marist colony in Sydney, a place where his men could mix with other Marists, and where they could be cross-fertilised by influences and experiences different from those they encountered in New Zealand.

How O'Haran reacted to O'Shea's letter, and Moran if he saw it, is unknown. However it was not successful in bringing about the banishment of the Oceanian Marists from St. Patrick's and their replacement by New Zealand Marists.

The following year the New Zealand Provincial tried another tack. In the latter half of 1909 he asked the Rev. H.W. Cleary, then editor of the New Zealand Tablet and later bishop of Auckland, to do some lobbying on his behalf at the Australasian Catholic Congress, held in Sydney from 26 September to 3 October, 1909. Specifically he asked Cleary to try and talk some of the Australian bishops and priests into inviting New Zealand Marists to their dioceses to conduct missions and retreats. Cleary believed he had achieved only limited success:
I did as much as I prudently could at the Congress in the matter you were good enough to entrust to me... Some of the Bishops and priests simply swear by the Passionists, and think that at present their men are unsurpassable. Others would be willing to give a trial to your men, or recommend doing so. You may possibly hear from one or two of them in time.\textsuperscript{17}

Regnault did. In December, 1909, Archbishop Delaney of Hobart asked the New Zealand Marists, on the recommendation of Cleary, to send three men to begin in December, 1910, and spend twelve months giving missions throughout Tasmania.\textsuperscript{18} The invitation was accepted and early in 1911 John O'Connell and Thomas McCarthy began a series of missions which would take them into every Catholic parish in Tasmania: they were later joined by a third missioner, Eugene Kimbell. Delaney wanted them to search out the lost sheep, and even those which had never been branded:

We have in mind most particularly those numerous scattered homes away back in the folds of our mountain systems, homes where to our certain knowledge honest industry has already prepared a most fruitful soil for the spiritual seed of religious teaching.\textsuperscript{19}

John O'Connell began the missioners' daunting assignment at Gormanston, near Queenstown on Tasmania's west coast, on 5 February, 1911. Following a week at Gormanston O'Connell moved to Strahan, and then teamed with McCarthy for a mission at Queenstown in the last week of February. In March they were in Burnie, on the north-west coast, separating after the main mission in the town to cover smaller centres. They went everywhere, the pattern of the missions varying only slightly from place to place:

Each day Holy Mass was offered at 6.30 and nine o'clock and an instruction was given at the second Mass. Every afternoon at three o'clock the school children attended for devotions and an instruction in the catechism. In the evening at 7.30 the church was crowded, many non-Catholics attending. The devotions consisted of the Rosary, Mission Sermon, and Benediction.\textsuperscript{20}

The preaching was strong and emotional:

Father McCarthy proved himself a preacher of the first order, for he showed that if he could thunder against sin and depict the horror of death, judgment, hell and heaven [sic], and send through his hearers horrifying shudders, he could also most pathetically and with much emotion show forth the love and mercy of our dear Lord, and this in such an impressive manner as to cause the eyes of nearly all to glisten with tears.\textsuperscript{21}

As well as preaching and providing Mass and other devotional services, the missioners aimed at visiting as many homes as possible:

During each day the missioner was engaged in visiting and searching out careless and indifferent Catholics, and many of these were brought back to God.\textsuperscript{22}
The Tasmanian winter of 1911 was cold and bleak; perhaps not exceptionally so. The meteorological conditions for the mission at Longford seemed to be repeated just about every week: "In spite of the rain, the wind and the terrifying lightning and thunder, the mission at St. Augustine's was well attended". By the time the missioners had worked their way down to Launceston in August, the elements had taken their toll, and O'Connell was struck down with influenza. Eugene Kimbell was also finding the going tough; on 11 July he poured out his soul to Peter Regnault from a cold and lonely room in a hotel at Gladstone (Tas):

I'm afraid you'll have to get someone to take my place at this work ... I feel I'm rather not fit for it. The work is too hard for me.

Nevertheless he would not let the side down:

Of course I'll finish it. Don't be afraid I'll leave yourself and Fr. O'Connell "in a hole" as we say. I've had strange swooning attacks since Friday last ... Please don't say anything to Fr. O'Connell.

The three missioners joined forces for a fortnight's mission at St. Mary's cathedral, Hobart, in September, attracting "immense" congregations. Archbishop Delaney was impressed; on 19 September he wrote to Regnault:
I must write to congratulate you on the worth of the three members of your Society who have now proved themselves in the Mission field of Tasmania. Last Sunday we had the close of the fortnight's Mission in the Cathedral. It was a most pronounced success.

The missioners continued their wanderings until January, 1912. In June, after commitments in Fiji and New Zealand, they were invited to Sydney by their Marist confreres to conduct missions at St. Patrick's and Hunters Hill. Clearly there was no resentment on the part of the Sydney Marists that the New Zealand missioners had taken up work in Australia; the work of preaching missions and retreats was beyond the manpower resources of the Sydney Marists, and they rejoiced at the success that their confreres were having. They may have been somewhat less receptive had they known that their New Zealand confreres ambitioned for more than an opportunity to do casual work in Australia and that they had already tried unsuccessfully to replace the Oceania Province Marists at St. Patrick's.

St Patrick's Parish

On 8 May, 1912, Augustin Ginisty, the fourth Marist parish priest of St. Patrick's, died of perforation of the intestines at St. Vincent's hospital at the age of sixty. In writing to Charles Nicolas to offer his condolences, superior general Raffin gave a frank assessment of Ginisty's life: "despite defects of character, above all lack of regularity, discipline, and religious spirit, he was much respected for his capacity, dedication, and zeal ..." The grieving over, Nicolas began thinking of a successor. He was hoping to use the occasion of Ginisty's death to carry through the superior general's demand for stricter adherence to the religious rule at St. Patrick's. In fact he had taken up residence there to try to bring this about: "It is now or never. This is why I remain at St. Patrick's and take on the function of curate; my presence is necessary to put a little order and regularity into a house where each one has been in the habit, for a long time, of doing what he pleases". He was not keen on Piquet being given the job, but in case the superior general could find no one else, he had sounded out the new archbishop of Sydney, Michael Kelly, who had indicated that he would not block Piquet's appointment. Piquet was subsequently appointed parish priest and superior of St. Patrick's, and the appointment was announced in Sydney by the Freeman's Journal of 4 July. As assistant priests he inherited Victor Suleau and Maurice Chatelet, and Leopold Carcenac was sent to St. Patrick's as a third curate in August, 1912. John Baptist Chevreuil also lived at St. Patrick's in exercising his function as Missions procurator.

Victor Suleau had been at St. Patrick's for 12 years, the sum total of his time in Australia. In recent years he had continued to be plagued by poor health. In February, 1910, he was operated on for appendicitis and gall stones and early in 1911 he was in hospital for a number of weeks with sores on his toes. Later that year he had informed the superior general of his desire to leave the Society and join a diocese, and although he subsequently changed his mind, he was clearly in an unsettled state. He was called to second novitiate towards the end of 1911, and arrangements were made for him to live with Duclos (as novice master) and Laurent and Talon as fellow novices in a cottage at Cronulla from November, 1911, until May, 1912. Time would tell whether this opportunity to reflect on his Marist vocation had strengthened his commitment.
In July, 1912, Maurice Chatelet had been at St. Patrick's for a little under six years. In November, 1911, he had become chaplain to the Catholic Seamen's Mission, a work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Leopold Carcenac was appointed to St Patrick's in August, 1912, to provide a fourth priest on the staff. He had only been in Australia three years, but this was his fifth appointment, having been used as the organisation plug: originally sent to St. Patrick's when he arrived in Sydney in the latter part of 1909, he subsequently spent time at Gladstone, was back at St. Patrick's early in 1911, worked in Hunters Hill parish over Christmas, 1911, and during the first half of 1912, and had finally returned to St. Patrick's. He would remain there until early 1919, except for a period of two years from mid-1913 when he was briefly at Gladstone and afterwards at Villa Maria.

Until his appointment as parish priest of St. Patrick's, Peter Piquet had little involvement with the material side of parish life: managing finances, planning, building schools, buying land. He was known as a man of prayer, a spiritual guide, a consoler of the afflicted; but over the next eight years he was to reveal a great entrepreneurial talent, and would launch St. Patrick's parish on a building programme which would even rival Peter Le Rennetel's efforts in the early 1890's.

In October, 1912, Piquet called a meeting of parishioners with a view to liquidating the hefty debt of £13,500 left him by his predecessor. In August, 1909, the parish debt had stood at over £5,000 and Ginisty had increased this considerably in the years prior to his death. In 1910 a new girls' high school had been built in Harrington Street between the convent and the presbytery, on the site of the former presbytery; and later that year, or early in 1911, £4,000 had been spent on buying two parcels of land, one at the back of the presbytery, and the other on its northern side.

Piquet was soon in the spending business himself. In March, 1913, he had the previously free-standing confessional boxes built into the walls of the church, and in December was forced to announce a major reconstruction of the church roof, which had been eaten out by white ants. In January, 1914, a public meeting was held in the church to launch an appeal for £2,000 to cover the work; according to the Freeman's Journal, "Hundreds were not able to gain admission". Archbishop Kelly came to speak in favour of the appeal, a gesture which was always a mixed blessing for organisers. Kelly had a gift for expressing unsophisticated thoughts in a most convoluted and complicated manner; at other times he said things which were simply silly. With more originality than he normally mustered, Kelly took the opportunity to speak on his pet hate, mixed marriages:

They were there that night to preserve St. Patrick's. He did not care if all the white ants in Australia came there, for he would rather have them than mixed marriages any day. [Laughter.] A few thousand pounds would put a new roof on the edifice, but the mixed marriage would eat away the faith out of the hearts of future generations ... The appeal was moderately successful, bringing in £770. More interesting was Piquet's use during the appeal of a theme which he would exploit most successfully in the years ahead: St. Patrick's as the "Cradle of Catholicity" in Australia. There is a disputed tradition that Fr. Jeremiah O'Flynn, prior to being deported in 1818, had left behind the consecrated host in the cottage of one, William Davis, and that it remained there for two years, secretly venerated by Sydney's Catholics while they waited for another priest. Davis donated the land for St.
Patrick's church, which was built adjacent to his cottage. Piquet used the story of Jeremiah O'Flynn, with its alleged overtones of Government persecution and catacomb-style Catholicism, to create a sense among Sydney Catholics that St. Patrick's was the birthplace of Australian Catholicism, and to give them an incentive to donate to a whole series of appeals for building projects in his parish. Piquet was not being insincere in this; he believed in the tradition passionately; but he also used it from 1913 onwards as a very effective fund-raising tool.48

The church was officially reopened on Sunday, 25 October, with a new roof and a "Wunderlich" pressed-metal ceiling. Piquet had taken the opportunity to also renovate the interior, providing a new pulpit, new altar-rails,49 and a new set of stations of the cross.50

Even while the new roof was being built, Piquet launched a further project which he had been planning as early as May, 1913,51 a combination parish hall and girls' primary school to be constructed on land on the northern side of the presbytery. Authorisation for the project was cabled by the superior general in October, 1913, and the foundation stone blessed by Archbishop Kelly on 3 May, 1914. Originally costed at £6,679, the building featured a 90 foot by 40 foot hall at street level, a gallery and three classrooms on the first floor,52 and a rooftop playground. Kelly returned to St. Patrick's on 17 January, 1915, to bless and open the structure, finally erected for £7,500.53

In March, 1917, Piquet began working towards his next project, a new school and monastery for the Marist brothers, who conducted a parish boys' school to Intermediate standard, opposite the presbytery and convent in Harrington Street. Having approached Archbishop Kelly and obtained his approval for the buildings, Piquet conveniently confused his English verbs, telling Provincial Charles Nicolas that Kelly had commanded that the work be commenced. Nicolas wrote to Kelly in June to clarify the position; he pointed out that labour and materials would be expensive during the war years, and that he personally, his Provincial council, and the Marist brothers, were all reluctant to begin the project.54 Kelly replied on 20 June. He had not given Piquet a command to commence the project ("I do not command often, if at all"), but he was in favour of the work commencing. He was confident that Piquet would be able to raise the necessary money.55 The Oceania Provincial council finally accepted Piquet's plans on 2 October, and recommended to the general administration that they be formally approved.56

On the evening of Sunday, 27 January, 1918, Piquet called a meeting in the church to launch the work. The significance of the year was not lost on him: the new buildings would be erected as a memorial to the "centenary of the wonderful preservation of the Sacred Hosts in William Davis' cottage, Church-Hill, for two years, from 1818 till 1820".57 Further, the centenary would be marked in May by three days of ceremonies and solemn devotions and a "Eucharistic Centenary Fete".58 He began his fund-raising drive with a full page advertisement in the Freeman's Journal of 21 February. It announced the "First Centenary of the Foundation of Catholicity in Australia"; a century ago the blessed sacrament had been "wonderfully preserved for two years (1818-1820) in a little cottage standing on the site now occupied by St. Patrick's Church"; "The Catholic People of Australia" were invited to buy one or more of 20,000 bricks at a cost of ten shillings each.59 Piquet had sold his first 1,000 bricks by April, 1918.60 The cost of the building was eventually cleared in September, 1919.

Elaborate preparations were made to celebrate the centenary in May. Piquet had somehow managed to discover the actual dates: he proclaimed confidently that the blessed
sacrament had been preserved from 8 May, 1818 until 9 May, 1820. Five days of religious celebrations culminated in the blessing and laying of the foundation stone for the memorial buildings by Archbishop Kelly on 12 May. The work had been completed in April, 1919, but the official opening and blessing did not occur until Sunday, 21 September.

Like Le Rennetel's projects in the 1890's, Piquet's building programme coincided with a period of considerable social upheaval and financial restriction, in this case the war of 1914-1918. It is estimated that between 1912-1918 he raised something in the order of £30,000 to liquidate parish debts and construct the new buildings.

On the surface then, Piquet appears to have been a most successful parish administrator; in fact, by 1916 Charles Nicolas was so dissatisfied with his performance that he tried to edge him out of St. Patrick's. Apart from Nicolas' long-held belief that Piquet was lax in observing the religious rule and would have more time for his prayers in a quieter parish, he was becoming increasingly dismayed by what he saw as Piquet's absolute identification with the parish of St. Patrick's to the detriment of his commitment to the Society of Mary. In concrete terms it came down to money: Nicolas believed that Piquet was contributing a disproportionately small percentage of the monies he collected at St. Patrick's to Society funds. During these years Piquet was also at odds with his house-guest, the Mission procurator John Baptist Chevreuil, over Chevreuil's position in the community and his declared unavailability to help with church services and confessions.

In June, 1914, Piquet wrote a letter to superior general Raffin headed: "Request to the Very Rev. Father General to be so good as to regulate the relationship between the Procure in Sydney and the parish of St. Patrick's". Piquet's main grouch was that it was costing the parish £200 per year to feed and clothe Chevreuil; in addition, the procurator had declared himself unavailable to help in the church, "even refusing to hear confessions on the eve of the great Feasts, although there are very many of them ..." Chevreuil was asked for his version while he was in Europe for the general chapter of the Society in the latter half of 1914; he penned a four page statement at Nantes on 28 October. Le Rennetel had been happy, Chevreuil said, to have the procurator at St. Patrick's, but Ginisty and Piquet had regarded the presence of the procurator as an intrusion. Piquet delivered himself of "violent outbursts" against the role of procurator, claiming it to be a sordid occupation, incompatible with priestly dignity. Chevreuil claimed he gave Piquet 150 francs (£6) each month to cover his personal expenses, an amount he considered "more than sufficient"; as regards availability to help with church services, he had done this in the past, but now found it incompatible with his work as procurator: he nevertheless agreed to help with confessions on a limited basis.

Raffin wrote to Piquet on 3 January, 1915, with a three point peace plan: the procurator would continue to live and work at St. Patrick's; he was not to be considered a curate for carrying out parish ministry, but he would do what he could by way of saying Mass, hearing confessions, and preaching; he would pay 150 francs (£6) per month for his board. Raffin ended his letter with a plea for peace:

I hope that these conclusions will put an end to the misunderstandings which have been brought to our notice, and will be the foundation of a cordial and lasting understanding which will be religious and Marist.
But the misunderstandings were destined to continue, if no longer with Chevreuil, then henceforth between Piquet and Nicolas. In the middle of 1914, Francis Laurent had been transferred from Hunters Hill to become first assistant at St. Patrick's. He had been given the responsibility of keeping the financial accounts for the house and parish, although Piquet still signed the cheques. By 1916 it had become clear to him that the £200 Piquet paid annually to the Society was only one-fifth of the amount it should have been receiving according to an agreed formula for Marist parishes. Nicolas wrote a long letter to Raffin, proposing that Piquet be transferred and that Laurent become the new parish priest of St. Patrick's. Both Chevreuil and Laurent, and the newly-arrived Antonin Moussey, who along with Piquet constituted the Provincial Council, were in agreement. Nicolas acknowledged that the change would cause Piquet great hardship:

After thirty-five years at St. Patrick's he will suffer much from leaving this parish, and will not find sufficient work for his taste. This will be to uproot him, and very late, from a vineyard which he loves, to which he has given without taking account, and to which he consecrates himself more than ever ...

But Nicolas believed that the change, painful though it might be, was necessary for Piquet's spiritual welfare. Nicolas thought it most unlikely that Piquet ever had time at St. Patrick's for prayerful daily meditation, and "too preoccupied by confessions and questions of money, he no longer does much sermon preparation ..." There was also the financial question: despite persistent admonitions that he was cheating the Society in favour of the parish, Piquet still refused to give the Provincial more than £200 a year.

However, Chevreuil, who supported Nicolas' proposal in April, had changed his mind by mid-May. He cabled the general administration to postpone making a decision, and followed up with a letter on 16 May. He now thought that despite his outstanding qualities, Laurent was too young for the post, and lacked sufficient judgment. In addition, Piquet was too popular to be moved; any transfer would cause great anger among the parishioners. The general administration took notice of Chevreuil, and without mentioning Chevreuil's intervention, Raffin wrote to Nicolas on 21 July to tell him that while his proposal made sense, the time was not opportune to move Piquet. He advised Nicolas to try harder to make Piquet come into line. In October, 1916, the Provincial council made a formal demand to Piquet that he hand over £1,200; following his non-compliance, Piquet wrote to the superior general on 13 February to explain his position, while Laurent wrote on 19 February giving a breakdown of parish finances and demonstrating that the parish was financially stable and well able to afford the Marist levy. He was supported by letters from Chevreuil and Nicolas.

The superior general gave Piquet his ruling in a letter of 25 April, 1917. He dismissed Piquet's objections to paying the Marist levy, calculated by Laurent as being £973 for the current year; Piquet was to pay £500 into the Society's coffers immediately, and in future was to pay each year the amount determined by Laurent, who would continue to keep the parish accounts. It was all too much for Piquet, who claimed that the Society was "robbing the parish". In February, 1918, he offered to hand over all financial responsibility to Laurent provided he also took over the task of completing the Eucharistic Memorial school and raising and servicing the associated loans. The Provincial council accepted Piquet's offer, and the arrangement was
confirmed by the general council on 29 April, 1918. Piquet remained superior and parish priest, but no longer had any involvement with parish finances. 79

Piquet's reluctance to accept the right of the Society to a percentage of parish income, a standard practice within religious orders caring for parishes, was not unique. Already in New Zealand the Marist Provincial and the general administration had needed to fight long and hard to extract an annual levy from certain Marist parish priests who had come to identify so closely with their parishes over a period of long tenure, that they saw the Society's demands as an unjustified attack on their parishes. 80 This tendency may well have been a contributing factor to the development of an attitude within the Marist general administration by the 1920's that the parish ministry was not conducive to group harmony, and was at odds with the ideals and aims of the Society as expressed by its founder. 81 As for Piquet, given that the demanded levy was an accepted practice and indeed necessary for a religious congregation's functioning, he displayed an extraordinary stubbornness and downright unreasonableness in the matter. Everyone from the superior general down acknowledged that this was born of misguided zeal and an absolute identification with the needs of St. Patrick's parish over 35 years of loyal service. In the not too distant future his single-minded determination to follow through a further building project at St. Patrick's would once more find him at odds with Marist administrators.

Piquet's disputes with Chevreuil and Nicolas were of considerable concern to the Marist general administration; they were not, however, the most worrying events of the years 1912-1918 at St. Patrick's, for these years saw the departure of three Marists from the priesthood, two of them from St. Patrick's community.

On 17 June, 1914, Victor Suleau left behind his soutane and breviary and walked out of St. Patrick's presbytery. Suleau's 14 years as a priest, all of them spent at St. Patrick's, appear to have been an unmitigated misery. Consistently plagued with poor health, he seems never to have settled comfortably into religious life and priestly ministry. Le Rennetel had found him difficult to deal with as early as 1902, while Ginisty and Piquet had complained that he did the absolute minimum of work, especially with regard to taking his turn in the confessional. 82 In 1911 he had toyed with the idea of leaving the Society of Mary and joining a diocese; he changed his mind, probably realising that this was not really a solution to his difficulties. 83 By early 1914 he had developed a repugnance for his priestly functions; after Easter it was only with great difficulty that he made brief appearances in his confessional box, and he confided to his fellow curate, Louis Chatelet, that having to say Mass was a cause of great suffering. On 10 June, Nicolas learnt that Suleau was intending to leave, and confronted him the following day. Suleau told Nicolas that he had made up his mind, and that nothing Nicolas could do or say would make him change it. He had done everything possible to avoid a scandal, having told his friends he was about to go on a long holiday. When informed by Nicolas that his unauthorised departure would mean ipso facto suspension, Suleau replied that he was prepared to accept any consequences; it was a great trial for him now to say Mass, and if he continued to do so he would certainly go mad. He told Nicolas that he had not lost his faith and that "it is not a question of a woman in my case." 84 He told Nicolas he intended to return to Europe and live with his family in retirement. 85 Prior to his departure he was given £100 on condition that he signed a statement that the Society of Mary owed him nothing more. 86

On 9 April, 1915, the general council meeting in Lyons formally expelled Victor Suleau from the Society of Mary on the grounds of apostasy. 87 Despite keeping their ears to the ground
his former confreres heard nothing of his whereabouts; he was sighted in the streets of Sydney in February, 1915, and in June Nicolas informed Raffin that it was thought that he had spent time in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth before going to England. In January, 1916, Nicolas told Raffin: "We still do not have any news of Suleau". Victor Suleau's life became something private, no longer documented in the files of Marist administrators. Only two pieces from the jigsaw of his later life have found their way into Marist records. The poignant echo of a tortured spirit is captured in a letter from the Oceanian Provincial Joseph Bertin to Bishop Chanrion early in 1933:

Poor Suleau of whom you speak to me died almost two months ago at the "Mater" Hospital assisted in his last weeks by Fr. Rausch. He had very good dispositions, and longed to come back even before his sickness precipitated things. It would appear that he always preserved his devotion to Our Lady, and he was going often in recent times to spend long periods at St. Patrick's before the Blessed Sacrament: he made all the retractions demanded of him, and received the Sacraments and showed much contrition. The mercy of God is great ... Continue to pray for his soul.

Victor Suleau was, and apparently remained, a man of faith, who had made a mistaken choice in terms of a life commitment. In June, 1914, the only way out of an intolerable situation was the grim road of apostasy; in January, 1933, the only way back to reconciliation with the Church was an absolute renunciation of his former decision. Perhaps the mercy of God would have demanded something less; in any case on his deathbed Suleau was apparently willing to pay any price for a treasure he prized greatly.

The remaining piece in the puzzle of Suleau's story is of recent origin: in May, 1979, his granddaughter wrote to the Marist archives in Rome for any information which would help solve the mystery of her grandfather's past. Happily her request was answered with sensitivity and openness.

Since the 1960's the phenomenon of priests leaving the ministry has become a commonplace. It was not always so. Early this century it was something rarely discussed, and when it happened it was regarded as a grave scandal to be covered up at all costs. Victor Suleau's departure from St. Patrick's in 1914 was viewed by Marist administrators with great concern and distress; just 12 months later they were to have reason for further alarm.

Maurice Chatelet had been at St. Patrick's since the latter months of 1906. A man of more than average ability, he had left Europe for the New Caledonian Mission in October, 1897, and was soon appointed secretary to the vicar apostolic, Hilary Fraysse. Dismissed from the Missions for "speaking and acting too freely with persons of the opposite sex", Chatelet later worked in the Solomon Islands before ill health brought him to Sydney. Problems of a less medical nature had begun to surface by June, 1914. In that month Piquet informed the superior general that "Fr. Chatelet is too fond of whisky for his own comfort". In July the Provincial council sent him a written monition; Chatelet acknowledged his failings and promised to do better. In October Nicolas was negotiating with the Provincial of New Zealand to have Chatelet put away in the relative safety of a boarding school, but the deal fell through when the New Zealanders learnt of their potential recruit's previous history.
Chatelet continued to cause concern in the latter months of 1914. On 17 October Laurent informed the Provincial council that grave accusations had been made by a woman against Chatelet; in December Piquet felt obliged to inform Archbishop Kelly of Chatelet's continued excessive drinking. Finally, on 24 April, 1915, the Provincial council forwarded to Chatelet a formal canonical monition and ordered him to Villa Maria; he replied by letter that he did not want to go, and promised once more to lift his game. On 27 April the Council issued a second canonical monition and again ordered Chatelet to Villa Maria. Chatelet replied on 29 April:

I think we have come to the parting of the ways. I have never suited the Society of Mary, I suit her now less than ever, therefore it is better for both that I depart from it. I have made up my mind and it is irrevocable. I don't want to give any scandal. I never said a word to anybody.

He told Nicolas he intended to leave the following day, that he would "spend a few week's rest" on the way to Fremantle, and that he would take ship from there to France where he would join the army. He asked for some financial help: "I expect that you shall treat me as you have treated Father Suleau, and nothing else". Chatelet was given £80, and left St. Patrick's presbytery on 30 April. Nicholas noted in a report to Raffin that Chatelet departed without tidying his room: "Going into his bedroom, after his departure, we found ... in all the drawers, in all the cases, quantities of empty whisky bottles".

Despite his avowed intention of going to France, Chatelet established himself in Melbourne. At the end of June a New Zealand Marist and military chaplain, the Australian-born Francis Bartley, reported sighting Chatelet in the Victorian capital. Further sightings were not left to chance; early in August Chevreul informed Gaston Regis that "a detective, hired to search for him by two gentlemen friendly to us, has spoken to him and has sent his report". There was also the suggestion of a jilted femme fatale: "A woman from Sydney has gone to see him and has herself recounted to us her interview with him". Following the mandatory three month period of grace, the Oceanian Provincial council declared Chatelet expelled from the Society of Mary and suspended from all priestly functions on 4 January, 1916.

Chatelet landed a job with a Melbourne ironmonger and, not surprisingly, found the work demeaning. On 4 March, 1917, he wrote to the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Ceretti from an East Melbourne address, asking if he might resume his priesthood as a military chaplain. After checking with Nicolas, Ceretti replied to Chatelet on 12 March. He told him that before he would be allowed to exercise the ministry again, he would need to give "convincing proof" that he was sorry for his past and was determined to make reparation in the future; Ceretti suggested that Chatelet start by spending some time at New Norcia monastery in Western Australia, providing the abbot was willing to admit him. While it is certain that Chatelet did not return to his priestly functions following his correspondence with Ceretti, the details of his life from this point onwards are unknown. Only the final scene is documented. On 5 April, 1922, Chevreul wrote to superior general Raffin to inform him that Chatelet had died in Melbourne on 15 March of that year, consoled by a Jesuit. On his Curriculum Vitae in his file in the Marist archives in Rome, an unknown hand has noted that he died outside the Society, but "extremely repentant".

A third Marist to leave the priesthood in Sydney in the years 1912-1918 was not connected with St. Patrick's, nor did he have a direct connection with the Sydney Marists. Fr.
Jules Vigne commenced a second novitiate at Villa Maria early in 1913. Nicolas described him in a letter to Regnault in February, 1913: "He is a big quiet, unassuming kind of man, a hard smoker, with a smattering of English; there is no go in him". Apparently he had not been a success in his Solomon Island Mission: Nicolas confided to Peter Regnault that Vigne's vicar apostolic, John Bertreux, believed it had been a mistake to send him to the Missions, and wanted him to remain in Australia. Vigne returned to the Solomons, but came back to Sydney in the second half of 1914, escorting a sick confrere. In October of that year he informed the acting Provincial, Dominic Duclos, that he was leaving the Society and the priesthood and returning to the lay state; the general council minutes are decidedly melancholy: "This cold-blooded departure leaves no hope". Vigne apparently landed on his feet: in March, 1915, the Oceania provincial council considered an intriguing letter from a Lady Bradford, who was seeking reimbursement for the hospitality she had provided Vigne since October. The councillors thought the claim "ridiculous" and voted not to pay. Vigne was formally expelled from the Society of Mary by the general council on 9 April, 1915. Late in 1915 or early in 1916, the French consul informed Charles Nicolas that he was about to take Vigne back to France for enlistment in the French army. Whether Vigne in fact returned to France in 1916 is unknown. Nevertheless, he was certainly in Sydney in 1921, where he married Alice Robinson in a Methodist ceremony on the 4 August of that year. On 23 February, 1922, he renounced his French citizenship and became a citizen of Australia. He lists his occupation as “cook” on his wedding certificate and on his certificate of naturalisation. He died in Sydney in 1963, and there is no evidence to suggest that he had any further contact with the Society of Mary and/or the Catholic Church following his expulsion from the Marists and excommunication from the Church in 1915.

Despite the behind-the-scenes crises and internal bickering which occurred at St. Patrick's in the years 1912-1918, it was very much business as usual in the confessionals and pews, and despite a shrinking Rocks' population, parish groups and sodalities were still vibrant and strong.

Displaying a fine touch for choosing exactly the wrong place at the worst possible time, the Marist general administration had scheduled the 1914 general chapter for Belgium in August; unfortunately World War I took priority over the capitulants, who hastily withdrew beyond French lines and reconvened at Lyon. In his report to the chapter on St. Patrick's, Nicolas highlighted considerable population movement in The Rocks: he estimated that there was a Catholic population of 3,000 to 3,500, somewhat fluid, basically poor, composed substantially of wharf labourers and "coal lumpers". Because of street reconstruction and straightening, and other redevelopment, a large number of the "better Catholic families" had been forced to move to the suburbs.

Early in 1915 a parish stalwart, W. Owen Healy, estimated that the parish had lost about 50% of its population over recent years. Many of these former parishioners nevertheless retained links with St. Patrick's, continuing to belong to parish groups, or going regularly or occasionally to worship there. St. Patrick's continued to be a devotional centre for Sydney's Catholics, and during the war years especially, its French character came to the fore. In July, 1916, an annual requiem Mass for French nationals who had died in the war was inaugurated. The strong emotional tug of French patriotism in a time of national crisis was clearly compelling enough to draw even those who may not normally have frequented a Catholic church:
The Requiem Mass at St. Patrick's Church, Church-hill, was quite the most impressive and beautiful of all the celebrations of France's National Day in Sydney on Monday. The church was filled to overflowing by a congregation representing many denominations, who came to testify their sympathy for the relatives of the gallant heroes of France.

The time-honoured devotional practices of nineteenth and early twentieth century Catholicism continued to be standard fare at St. Patrick's, and an essential part of the church's character. The forty hours' adoration, an annual devotion in Catholic parishes where the consecrated host was publicly exposed for veneration day and night over a 40 hour period, was popular; so too was Rosary Sunday, where extra spiritual benefits were attached to the saying of the rosary in the church: "Each time a visit is made to this Church from Saturday next at noon till midnight on Sunday, a person may gain a Plenary Indulgence". November was the month for emphasising the Catholic tradition of prayer for deceased loved ones who may have been languishing in purgatory:

The devotions which are kept up most fervently in St. Patrick's Church, Church-hill, on behalf of the holy souls in Purgatory, will be carried out this coming month with wonted ardour and piety, enabling the faithful to alleviate the sufferings of their dear departed ones.

The constant, reassuring rhythm of the Catholic liturgical year found due expression at St. Patrick's: in addition to the major feasts of Christmas and Easter, large crowds continued to attend on the Feast of the Sacred Heart (a popular element in French and Irish devotion), and St. Patrick's day. A mission every two or three years to stir the faithful to better efforts and recall backsliders to their religious duties continued to be an important occasion on the St. Patrick's calendar. In 1912 the New Zealand Marist missioners, led by John O'Connell, drew "large crowds" and evoked "much enthusiasm". In 1913 and 1915 the parish missions were conducted by the Redemptorist Fathers. John Baptist Chevreuil highlighted both the decline of established Catholic families in The Rocks' area and the popularity of St. Patrick's church with non-parishioners when he indulged in an acerbic aside to a procure client in 1915:

"Fr. Piquet is proud to be Vice-Provincial; but he is not so proud to be informed that very few of his parishioners come to the mission which is presently being given at St. Patrick's. The church is full; but the greater part of the congregation is composed of strangers."

Music continued to play an important part in the devotional life of St. Patrick's. G.E. Boyle continued as choirmaster until 1912, when he was replaced by W.H. McCarthy. McCarthy was absent for most of the period 1914-1918 serving with the Australian Light Horse in Palestine and Syria; he eventually became bandmaster of the Fourth Brigade, Australian Light Horse band. During his absence the organist of St. Patrick's, W.J. Caspers, generally acted as choirmaster. Caspers, previously organist at the Catholic cathedral in Goulburn, had become organist in April 1915 following the retirement of Ernest Truman. The church organ was given a major overhaul in 1913.

The style of music and the form of choral presentation at St. Patrick's changed little during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In 1903 Pius X had issued a motu
which decreed that the music sung in churches should be Gregorian chant rather than the works of the classical composers, and that the organ alone should be used for accompaniment. At St. Patrick's the document was still being ignored up to 1918 and beyond. The choir had about 40 Masses in its repertoire, including compositions by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Mercadante, Weber and Gounod; there was often elaborate orchestral backing, and a strong emphasis on solo renditions, sometimes by professionals visiting Sydney on tour.

On 25 August, 1918, the Marist fathers celebrated the golden jubilee of their presence in the parish. Two weeks later the credulous saw the hand of God in the appearance of a mysterious light which shone brightly above the roof of the church. Thousands came night after night to see for themselves. The Freeman's Journal estimated that over a period of ten evenings an accumulated total of more than 40,000 had seen the light. Investigation by members of the church committee and the Rev. Edward Pigot S.J., resident astronomer at St. Ignatius' observatory, Riverview, showed that the light was caused by reflection from nearby city lights off the ventilators in the church roof. Many, however, preferred to talk of a miracle: a sign of God's favour on the Marist fathers and the saintly Father Piquet, a divine visitation in the centenary year of the preservation of the sacred host. What Piquet himself believed is unknown, but he was certainly not averse to taking advantage of a little free publicity. On a 1918 circular soliciting funds for the new Eucharistic Memorial school, a drawing in the top left hand corner shows William Davis' cottage and St. Patrick's church; over the church a nativity-scene star shines brightly.

St. Patrick's parish in these years continued to be characterised by a close and warm bond between the Marist priests and their parishioners. The relationship is well captured in a Freeman's Journal account of a function at St. Patrick's presbytery on 31 December, 1916, when the Marists played host to the church and parochial collectors. The occasion, an annual event in the parish, was unusual not only because it took place in an era when laymen were rarely admitted to the inner sanctuary of clerical presbyteries, but also because of the obvious familiarity between laymen and clerics. After sharing a meal together the five priests and 20 collectors settled down to some speech-making, and finally gathered around the piano for an afternoon's entertainment:

A special feature was the rendition of "Auld Lang Syne" in French by Fathers Laurent and Carcenac. The guests departed with lasting memories of a pleasant time spent beneath the roof of the hospitable Marist Fathers.

Despite the drift of parishioners from the parish, sodalities and church groups continued to be strong and active. The Sacred Heart confraternity, which had male and female sections, committed members to daily prayer and a monthly gathering for a sermon and benediction. In 1914 the women's branch had 350 members, and the men's 370. The Children of Mary, a pious sodality of adolescent girls, maintained a roll of 120 active members throughout the period. The parish St. Vincent de Paul Society branch had 28 active members in 1914; the Penny Savings Bank established 20 years earlier was still operated by the conference, with 1,206 depositors and a total of £1,085 invested. A Sewing Guild with 45 active members met weekly in the parish to make clothes for the poor, and also sew and repair church linen and vestments. Established in 1905 on the initiative of Augustin Ginisty, the group also raised revenue through an annual "sale of work" to buy food for destitute families.
St. Patrick's parish also had, from August, 1913, until 1923, a branch of the New South Wales Catholic Federation. The Federation movement within Australian Catholicism began in Victoria towards the end of 1911 and was launched in New South Wales in December of the following year; it later spread to Tasmania and South Australia. Catholic Federation sought to promote Catholic demands for state aid for Catholic schools and subsidies for Catholic charitable institutions: firstly by trying to harness the Catholic vote and channel it to politicians sympathetic to Catholic demands, and secondly by infiltrating the Labor Party and attempting to influence party policy. In New South Wales, after the war, Federation took its campaign a step further by launching a Catholic political party, the Democratic Party, which ran candidates in the 1920 and 1922 State elections. The strategy was to take advantage of the recently introduced proportional voting system and multiple electorates to try to gain the balance of power in parliament. The basic unit of the various State Federations was the parish branch, which was typically initiated at a parish meeting presided over by the parish priest and addressed by a couple of representatives from the State Executive. Out of this meeting a parish branch generally grew, with the local priest as patron or president, and drawing on existing parish groups and sodalities (choir, altar society, Children of Mary, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Sacred Heart Sodality) for its membership. Generally speaking, the Catholic Federation movement was counterproductive: it generated enormous sectarian animosity among certain paranoid Protestant groups and in the wider Protestant community, and won only minor concessions for church schools and charitable institutions.148

The St. Patrick's branch was initiated after Sunday night devotions on 24 August, 1913. During the service Victor Suleau preached on the benefits of Catholic Federation; at the conclusion of devotions Piquet introduced Federation Executive members Cleary and Waterford who outlined the aims of the movement. A resolution to form a branch was "carried with enthusiasm", and arrangements were made to enrol members at all Masses on the following Sunday.149 The branch had 300 members on its books by mid-September, 1913.150

In October, 1914, the Freeman's Journal reported with enthusiastic vagueness that at St. Patrick's "a fine spirit is being displayed and most successful work is being accomplished".151 However, no delegates from St. Patrick's attended the Federation State Convention in April, 1915, and the probability is that the branch was on its last legs by the end of the year. Presumably to resuscitate the corpse a "monster meeting" was advertised at St. Patrick's for Sunday, 13 February, 1916, to be addressed by P.S. Cleary and J. Hennessy from the State Executive.152 The following week the Freeman's Journal described the gathering as "one of the finest branch meetings yet held in Sydney". Piquet presided, showing "unbounded enthusiasm" for the movement, and 125 new members were signed up.153 The apparently tireless P.S. Cleary returned to address similar meetings at St. Patrick's in September, 1918, and January, 1920.154 The branch was represented at most annual State Conventions until 1923, when the entire movement collapsed, its leading light P.S. Cleary being finally overcome by discouragement and frustration.155

One further parish organisation worth commenting on was the Marist brothers' school old boys' association: Nicolas noted in his 1914 report that it was "very well organised" and had 122 active members.156 The Union had been founded in 1907,157 members gathered for half-yearly meetings and an annual communion breakfast, and participated in sporting competitions and social events. The president from the Union's inception in 1907 until 1932 was the popular and gregarious W.N. Bull, a Sydney undertaker.158 A smaller group of past pupils of the Mercy
Sisters' school, St. Patrick's young ladies' association, was also active in the parish in the years 1912-1918; there appears to have been considerable cross-membership with the Children of Mary Sodality.\textsuperscript{159}

Inaugurated in the 1890's, the annual parish ball was an important fixture on the St. Patrick's social calendar. It was always held at the Paddington town hall, with the French Consul-General frequently the guest of honour. In 1912 the attendance was described as "immense" and in 1914 "very large".\textsuperscript{160} The last parish ball was held early in 1916. Perhaps support had dropped because of the war, although the ball may have been a casualty of a letter written to Archbishop Kelly by Apostolic Delegate Ceretti on 17 April, 1916. Ceretti pointed out to Kelly that the Vatican had recently discouraged the American bishops from raising money by means of dances, and suggested he might like to apply the same edict in his diocese, especially during Lent.\textsuperscript{161}

In 1913 St. Patrick's held its first parish fair for 15 years.\textsuperscript{162} Preparations for the "Grand Gallic Fair" to be held at Easter, 1913, were underway by September, 1912,\textsuperscript{163} and early in 1913 a contract was let for the remodelling of the interior of Federation Hall to accommodate the fair.\textsuperscript{164} The newly arrived Governor of New South Wales, Sir Gerald Strickland, came to St. Patrick's parish in the afternoon of 26 March with his daughter, Edeline, to declare the fair open, and the Grand Gallic Fair closed its doors for the last time on 19 April.\textsuperscript{165}

St. Patrick's parish was still alive and well during the period 1912-1918, and St. Patrick's church remained a devotional centre and spiritual oasis for Catholics from all over Sydney. But it was clearly a period of transition. Major population shifts were occurring in The Rocks and had already halved the number of parishioners; in the next decade the construction of the harbour bridge and its approaches at Dawes Point would further decrease the flock. With its wide appeal among Sydney Catholics and its city location, St. Patrick's had never been just a traditional parish; but the challenge of the next ten years would be to find ways of broadening its appeal and developing new avenues of ministry to compensate for the population decline within the parish boundaries.

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\textit{Montbel Apostolic School}

Nicolas' first major initiative as Provincial had been to open an apostolic school or juniorate for candidates wishing to become Marist priests. On the evening of 1 February, 1911, Alphonsus Ginsbach and two students took up residence in a sandstone house in Gladesville Road which thereafter became Montbel apostolic school.\textsuperscript{166} A third student arrived later in the month, probably Aloysius Jeffcott from nearby Ryde.\textsuperscript{167} In June Nicolas informed Peter Regnault that a fourth student had entered; the group was certainly cosmopolitan: "We have four pupils in our apostolic school: a Frenchman, an Englishman, a Fijian, and an Australian".\textsuperscript{168}

Montbel ended its first year with five students.\textsuperscript{169} The most recent arrival was James Edward Hayes from Melbourne. Hayes had begun corresponding with Marion in July, 1910, and was advised to wait until the opening of the apostolic school before coming to Sydney.\textsuperscript{170} He entered Montbel in September, 1911.\textsuperscript{171}

Two further recruits arrived early in 1912 bringing the total to seven.\textsuperscript{172} No lists or
registers of students have survived from Montbel, but four of the 1912 students can be named with reasonable confidence: in addition to Jeffcott and Hayes, two other students were Alexander Vermoral and Harold Bede Fleming. At the beginning of the year Ginsbach was given an assistant in the person of John James Monaghan, an Australian Marist originally from St. Patrick's parish, Sydney, who had been ordained in New Zealand in December, 1911. Monaghan was the first Australian Marist to return to work in his homeland. He immediately made a good impression on his French confreres, though Nicolas was cautious:

So far we are very pleased with Father Monaghan; he is a favourite with everybody, and the boys like him well. I am of opinion [sic] that he will be the means of getting more pupils.\textsuperscript{173}

In August, 1912, Ginsbach wrote to his opposite number at the Marist juniorate at Differt, Belgium. He acknowledged that humble Montbel was a long way behind the Differt school in almost every aspect: numbers, staff, facilities, curriculum. But he liked to think Montbel was competitive in one area:

There is one thing which we should like to enter into competition with you in single combat: that is piety and supernatural spirit. Our young men are pious and we have complete confidence in them. Naturally from time to time I have to make an appearance in the study-hall; I can say with great satisfaction that always they are working studiously. I am persuaded that all those who know them would agree with me in expressing that conviction.\textsuperscript{174}

Ginsbach kept his charges busy. Rising time was 5.00 a.m., followed by morning prayers and meditation, and Mass at seven. Classes filled the day hours: the normal secondary-school subjects, with special emphasis on Latin, reading and elocution. The juniors said the rosary together daily at 2.15 p.m. and attended a talk by Ginsbach each evening at six on some aspect of the religious life; night prayers were at 8.30 p.m. and bed shortly afterwards. Leisure time was not wasted: "For recreation, our young men do gardening, and I can assure you that the Montbel garden has a very good reputation in the municipality of Hunters Hill".\textsuperscript{175}

At the beginning of 1913, Montbel sent its first students to the Marist seminary in New Zealand: James Hayes and Alexander Vermoral. One of the remaining five students departed, but a new recruit at the beginning of the year saw the 1913 roll stand at five. Ginsbach told the superior general in February that the pupils were divided into two grades: Aloysius Jeffcott, Harold Fleming and Willie Cleary in the First Division, and Tom O'Keefe and Anthony O'Loghlen in the Second Division. Monaghan taught English, History, Geography, Chemistry, Religious Knowledge and Church History, and took the debating class; Ginsbach took care of Latin, French and Mathematics. He assured Raffin that he was happy with the progress of the school:

I am certain that the work is going well: fraternal charity between the Fathers and pupils is perfect, the rule is observed, and the studies are taken seriously.\textsuperscript{176}

Some time before the middle of the year a 22 year old New Zealander, Thomas Boyle,
arrived at Montbel to lift the roll to six. The circumstances of Boyle's coming to Australia from his hometown of Wanganui are unclear: in the normal course of events he would have received all his formation in New Zealand. His status was initially as a candidate for the New Zealand Province of the Society, which paid his fees in 1913 and 1914. However towards the end of 1915 he transferred to the Oceania Province. There appears to have been some sort of scandal involving his sister which would have militated against him working as a priest in New Zealand. In November, 1915, Nicolas wrote to Patrick Smyth, rector of the Marist seminary, now situated at Greenmeadows:

I quite understand that this behaviour of his sister would be against him in any capacity in New Zealand. Consequently I am quite willing to consider him as belonging to this Province and to refund all the monies sent over here on his account.  

Alphonsus Ginsbach had begun the apostolic school and had seen it through its first years; he would not be its director for much longer. Ginsbach had spent time in Sydney on one previous occasion, prior to coming from Samoa to open the juniorate in 1911: he had made a second novitiate at Villa Maria from May to November, 1908. His previous record in the Missions had demonstrated a certain instability. Marion summarised his form in a report to the general administration at the conclusion of the novitiate:

He has shown much fickleness during the ten or twelve years in the mission; has a great attachment to his own ideas; has not always used the means demanded by our Rule to control himself sufficiently. It seemed to me too that towards the end of the novitiate he did not always show a very good spirit.

Twelve months later Marion submitted a report which was marginally more complimentary: "Piety and regularity, good; a little unreliable in character; intelligent and looks for ways of showing it; zealous, but a little lacking in judgment". Exactly why Marion chose Ginsbach to be the first director of Montbel is unknown, but by early 1913 Nicolas was coming to regret the choice. In March, he wrote to Gaston Regis: "Fr Ginsbach does not give satisfaction: inconstant, a performer, his heart isn't in his work". By September Ginsbach had made up his mind to return home to Europe at the end of the year, but a confrontation with Nicolas brought matters to a head. Ginsbach was accused of some sort of inappropriate conduct; the general tenor of Nicolas' complaint against him can be surmised from a letter written by Ginsbach on 15 September. Nicolas had told him that his conduct had "gravely imperilled" his position at Montbel, and that anybody could read on Ginsbach's face a "passionate longing for the other sex"; he was a constant anxiety to his superiors when he went out. Ginsbach informed Nicolas that not wishing to "give such mental trouble to my superiors", he had decided to leave the Society, and had already taken steps to be incardinated in the Belgian diocese of Malines. He bore no grudges:

I have no bitterness in my mind towards the Society which counts many good and devoted men. I wish all prosperity to a Congregation which bears the beautiful name of Mary. I hope a little share of its prayers will follow me ... thanks, Reverend Father, for the way you spoke. You did your duty, and you will have to suffer perhaps. I have no bitter feelings towards you. Only let us part good friends.
He offered to remain at his post until the Provincial council saw fit to relieve him.

Two days later Ginsbach wrote to the superior general, desiring to "open his heart" and "reveal thoughts which agitate the spirit". His thirteen years in the Missions were thirteen years of unceasing difficulties with superiors, confreres and indigenes; since coming to Sydney things had not improved, and at 42 he was turning prematurely grey. He believed he was suffering physically and morally through being out of his element. He wished therefore to leave the Society.  

Ginsbach did not receive the reply he might have hoped for. Raffin told him in a letter written on 15 November that he was "painfully surprised" by Ginsbach's communication, that the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines had turned him down, and that it was hoped Ginsbach would continue to make himself useful within the Society "either at the Apostolic School of Montbel, or in Samoa ... or in some other mission". 

Ginsbach left Montbel at the beginning of 1914 with Nicolas' permission and worked briefly in the parish of Chatswood (NSW). He wrote further letters to the superior general pleading for release from the Society and to bishops asking for incorporation in their dioceses. He hinted to Nicolas that if he did not receive satisfaction soon he might start living up to his reputation: "Of course there is always the temptation to do something wrong. but God forbid that I ever listen to any but holy advice". After his contract at Chatswood had expired he accepted Nicolas' offer of a twelve month supply at Hillston in Wilcannia-Forbes diocese, beginning there in March, 1914. Numerous letters to bishops finally brought a limited success in August, 1914, when the bishop of Bathurst agreed to accept him into his diocese on a trial basis. Raffin gave him permission to live in the diocese for two years; at the expiry of this time he was to return to the Society if he had not been accepted by the bishop of Bathurst or some other bishop. Ginsbach began working in the parish of Parkes towards mid year, 1915, and was at the cathedral parish in Bathurst in April, 1917. The bishop, John Dunne, eventually declined to accept him; Ginsbach returned to Villa Maria in October, 1917, still a reluctant Marist. After making a retreat with the Redemptorist Fathers at Maitland in order to consider his position, he agreed to the request of the Provincial council that he go to Gladstone. On 16 November he wrote to the superior general from Gladstone:

I do not wish to keep any longer trying to find a bishop, as unfortunately not being an Irishman they don't seem to want foreigners - I shall therefore stay here until it shall please you to either confirm my stay here or order me to some place.

Ginsbach's departure from Montbel left the youthful James Monaghan in charge at the beginning of 1914 while Nicolas looked around for a replacement superior. On 3 March the Provincial council appointed John Rausch as temporary superior of the juniorate; he was destined to retain the position for the next eight years. Rausch, a Luxembourger, had come to New Zealand in 1903 as a seminarian with the intention of going to the Missions after ordination. Receiving priesthood towards the end of 1904, he came to Sydney in December, and departed for the Solomons Mission on the last day of the year. He next saw Sydney late in August, 1913, when he was sent there with suspected stomach cancer; in fact his ailment was not serious, and he was restored to perfect health by mid-September. He stayed on at Villa Maria to make his second novitiate, and reluctantly agreed to Nicolas' request that he take charge of the juniorate, at least on a temporary basis.
The school commenced 1914 with six students, including two French boys from the New Hebrides; two of the previous year's group, Jeffcott and Fleming, had gone to the Marist seminary at Greenmeadows at the beginning of the year. In June Nicolas spoke about Montbel in his report to the 1914 Provincial chapter, held at Villa Maria: he was clearly responding to criticism of the school. Some in the Province considered Montbel a misuse of resources (it was costing £550 a year to run) because they believed that few of the Australians who passed through its doors would ever volunteer for work in the Missions. Nicolas stressed that Montbel had been established at the "pressing and persistent request of the Superior General"; he believed it was up to the missionaries who came to Villa Maria for second novitiate or medical treatment to visit the juniors and inspire them to opt for work in the Missions; finally, he told the chapter, three of the five students currently at Greenmeadows had indicated their desire to be missionaries, and he was hopeful that others would be similarly moved.

Towards the end of 1915, Nicolas expressed satisfaction with Montbel and its director:

...now that the juniorate goes very well from the point of view of discipline, piety and studies, now that Fr. Rausch puts all his heart into it and gives himself entirely to this work of the Province, I do not see anyone who is able to do better or as well as he.

By mid 1916 the school roll stood at nine, the maximum number able to be accommodated. The following year Thomas Boyle was despatched to Greenmeadows; there were six pupils at Montbel in September. On the 8th of that month Rausch wrote to the superior general to report progress and offer some suggestions. While everything was going well at Montbel the fact was that there were only nine students and no room for any more. The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart had 40 pupils in their juniorate because they were well known through publishing magazines and giving missions in parishes throughout Australia. Rausch suggested that the New Zealand Province be asked to give two priests to work exclusively in Australia giving missions, and that these should live at a new, much enlarged juniorate; their work would generate funds for the juniorate and recruits to fill it. Finally, Rausch reported a disquieting attitude among some of his Sydney confreres: they were unenthusiastic about Montbel because they doubted that Australian Marists could be accommodated within the French milieu of the Society in Australia. Rausch told the general he saw no problems in this: Villa Maria and St. Patrick's could remain as French communities, and new communities could be opened for Australian Marists.

By July of the following year Rausch had won Nicolas over to the view that something needed to be done about Montbel; at the Provincial's request he prepared a report for submission to the Provincial council. He took the liberty of forwarding a copy to the general administration, reasoning that a few allies in higher places would do him no harm. In his report Rausch first dwelt on the unsuitability of Montbel. It was too close to noisy Gladesville Road. It was too small and it was injurious to health, Rausch complaining that he had contracted rheumatism and sore eyes from the dank, dark room in which he was forced to live; in addition:

... the noiseome drainage from St. Joseph's College passes only some forty feet from the sleeping rooms of the boys, and at times the smell has been oppressive and dangerous to health.
Rausch told the Provincial councillors that he had just been shown a house and property, "Russel Lea", at Five Dock, which could be had for £9,000 to £10,000. There were ten acres of land, and accommodation for 40 boarders; it was conveniently placed to Villa Maria and Sydney University.

By November Rausch and Nicolas had won over the Provincial council, but "Russel Lea" had meantime been sold to a Government department. On 6 November Nicolas wrote to Raffin to ask permission to move the juniorate; they were considering two properties: one, a stone house on 110 acres, 34 miles from Sydney, asking price £4,000; the other a brick house near Mittagong (NSW) with a property of 60 acres, worth £5,000. The latter place could also be used as a house for parish missioners and as a vacation spot for Marists from Sydney. Raffin cabled his authorisation towards the end of December and the promise of £1,000 towards acquiring a property: on 30 January, 1919, the Provincial council agreed to buy the property at Mittagong, and the deal was closed for £3,766 on 8 February. A week later Rausch and Monaghan and their charges left Montbel and opened Blessed Peter Chanel's seminary, Mittagong. Early that year, Montbel sent its last student to Greenmeadows, a 19 year old Victorian, John Dynan.

Despite its humble beginnings and small student population, Montbel was the beginning of a Marist formation structure in Australia. In the eight years it functioned it sent six students to the Marist seminary at Meane/Greenmeadows; a further two Oceania Province students from Australia entered the seminary in the period 1911-1918, but not via Montbel. James Hayes and Alexander Vermoral went to Greenmeadows from Montbel in 1913; Aloysius Jeffcott and Harold Fleming in 1914; Thomas Boyle in 1917 and John Dynan in 1919. Fred Burke, a candidate from Australia, entered Greenmeadows in 1914 after studies at St. Patrick's college, Wellington. Finally, Thomas McBreen, an ex-Christian brother, was sent direct to Greenmeadows at the beginning of 1916 ad experimentum, and provided he agreed to pay his own expenses.

Vermoral and Fleming were both dismissed from Greenmeadows on 3 December, 1914, because of insufficient progress in studies. Aloysius Jeffcott, a committed but cryptic diarist, wrote the following: "Shock! Flem notice to return to Montbel, Vermoral told to quit". Hayes, Jeffcott and Burke, the remaining candidates, acquitted themselves well during 1915; Nicolas had the opportunity to visit them and gave his assessment to Patrick Smyth, the New Zealand Provincial, in November:

I am sure Bro. Hayes will be a good serious religious priest. Bro. Jeffcott, if slow and far less brilliant, is nevertheless solid and will become a splendid priest - I would have more doubt about Bro. Burke, who struck me as too sensitive, inconstant, girlish and in quest of sensible consolations and rarely satisfied with God or his own fate.

In March, after losing three stone in weight, Hayes was operated on for stomach poisoning resulting from a decaying nasal bone. On 12 June Smyth wrote to the superior general, informing him that Hayes was "very ill and causes much anxiety ... the Doctor thanks that with care he will get better". He died on 24 March, 1917, having been anointed, and professed as a Marist the previous day. Hayes' death was a considerable loss, for he seems to
have been an outstanding candidate. In 1914 Nicolas had described him at the Provincial chapter as "the cornerstone of the Apostolic School, an Australian of great quality".  

Jeffcott, Boyle, McBreen and Dynan eventually completed their seminary courses and were ordained; Fred Burke left the seminary in 1920 in circumstances which annoyed the general administration, and caused some coolness between the Oceanian and New Zealand Provincials.

**Hunters Hill Parish**

Francis Laurent had become parish priest of Hunters Hill in May, 1909, following the death of Placid Huault. The 33 year old Laurent was competent and well liked. Reporting to the 1914 general chapter of the Society, Nicolas stated that "the parish and all its operations are all that could be wished". In fact, at the time Nicolas delivered his complimentary assessment of Laurent's stewardship, the latter was already functioning as senior assistant priest at St. Patrick's, having gone there from Villa Maria at the end of June, 1914, to cover the departure of Victor Suleau. The Hunters Hill parishioners were less than happy about the loss of Laurent. Nicolas told Bishop Julien Vidal on 29 June that the transfer was considered a "public calamity"; he had received petitions and "desolate letters", but there would be no review of the decision: "It's all useless. It was at the request of Fr. Laurent and because of his love for the Society, that he was named assistant at St. Patrick's."

Laurent's replacement was Emile Talon, already a member of the Villa Maria community, and at the time of his appointment, chaplain to St. Joseph's College. Talon was soon disappointing his parishioners with his listless, do-nothing approach. In December, 1915, L.F. Heydon, a prominent parishioner and national president of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, wrote to Talon to express surprise that he had done nothing to prevent the loss to the parish of Herr Hugo Alpen, a former choirmaster at St. Patrick's:

I am rather surprised at your resignation as to Mr. Alpen leaving. I purposely told you a good while before the end of the year, as I assumed that you would like, as parish priest, to prevent your congregation losing the musical training.

That same month Alpen himself wrote to Talon pleading with him to have the Woolwich church organ repaired: the instrument had been "humbugged" by boys from the parish school, and nothing had been done to fix it. Alpen told Talon that it would soon be unplayable and begged him to do something: "Please try - and get it done; it must be done sooner or later."

By April, 1916 Nicolas was informing Raffin that he had received deputations of parishioners, complaining that Talon was letting the parish slip, that he showed no drive or energy, and that his sermons were quite incomprehensible. Talon bestirred himself sufficiently that year to supervise the construction of a brick school at Woolwich to replace the wooden structure being used by the Marist sisters and their 42 pupils. Archbishop Kelly opened the new school on 12 November, and heard Talon inform the modest crowd that it had cost £636. The new building consisted of two classrooms opening onto a twelve foot wide verandah, with additional rooms for teachers. On 19 December, little Mollie Cuneo wrote to Talon on behalf
of her fellow pupils thanking him for his largess:

We think we ought to wish you a better Happy Christmas this year than ever we did and you ought to have a nicer one too, since you gave us such a beautiful new school and let us have the desks we wanted and especially the beautiful statue of Our dear Lady. We are sure she will tell the Infant Jesus to give you something very nice for Christmas. The blinds are lovely and the wires will keep the stones away but we have not many boys in the school now and we are very pleased.229

Talon was apparently dedicated and full of good will, but lacked talent and savoir-faire; Chevreuil observed to superior general, Raffin, that "his timidity and faintheartedness prevents him developing the parish the way it needs to be".230 In August, 1917, he decided to have a parish mission, and wrote to Archbishop Kelly for permission to invite New Zealand Marist missioners James Taylor and Thomas McCarthy: "I thought it would be greatly beneficial to the parish to avail myself of the opportunity of having these men stirring up the flock confided to my care".231 During the mission, held in the last days of September and the first week of October, Taylor and McCarthy uncovered three cases of Catholics married outside the Church who wished to have their marriages validated according to Church law and return to the reception of the sacraments. They left it to Talon to apply to the diocesan authorities for the requisite validation papers; he did so on 4 October, but supplied insufficient information. The archbishop's secretary wrote seeking further details, but Talon did not respond.232 The following December Taylor wrote to Kelly, giving a report on the missions he and McCarthy had conducted in the archdiocese of Sydney that year, and complaining that in one parish they were unable to bring certain parties back to the practice of their faith because, in spite of the parish priest writing to the diocesan office, "such delays occurred, and such difficulties arose that we had to leave the parish without reconciling these people, and I doubt if they are or will be reconciled".233 Kelly initiated an enquiry, and was annoyed to find that any delay had resulted from Talon's indolence.234 Talon and Taylor were both summoned to the cathedral offices for a verbal dressing-down, and Talon was given a further "serious monition" by the acting Marist Provincial, Antonin Moussey, for his carelessness.235 Kelly terminated the affair on 16 January with a conciliatory letter, thanking Taylor for his zeal for "our stray, if not lost, sheep", and promising to pray for Talon their shepherd.236

Like its Marist sister-parish St. Patrick's, Hunters Hill gave birth to a branch of the Catholic Federation. It was inaugurated on 29 June, 1913, after addresses from Francis Laurent, and two parishioners who had links with the movement, L.F. Heydon and Bernard McBride, the latter a member of the Catholic Federation central committee.237 Later the branch received warm support from Emile Talon and Charles Nicolas: Talon was president, and was described in the Freeman's Journal as "a very keen Federationist", and Charles Nicolas addressed the branch on at least one occasion, expressing his "warmest appreciation of the Federation and the work it was doing".238 While reports of the branch appeared regularly in the Freeman's Journal, it is impossible to say how active it was; significantly, perhaps, no delegates from Hunters Hill attended the Federation annual congresses of 1916, 1917 and 1918, and in October, 1919, a meeting was held at Hunters Hill for the purpose of "reviving" local interest in Federation.239 Reports of the branch continued in the Freeman's Journal until 1923 when the entire Federation movement collapsed.
In February, 1919, the Freeman's Journal published an account of a unique occurrence at Blessed Peter Chanel's church, Woolwich, written by George Crowley, a company director and sometime journalist. Crowley had attended an open air Mass the previous Sunday, made necessary by Government regulations which closed churches and schools in the face of the serious influenza epidemic of that year. He described those assembled to pray outside the locked church:

Masked and silent and sombre. Not a whisper broke the silence of the early morning air. Some kneeling on the ground, some standing with an abstracted, far-off look; others sitting more or less uncomfortably on forms and benches and extempore seats.

The gathering had as its backdrop "fragrant peppermint gums", "pepper trees with red berries", "a barrage of cool, inviting camphor laurels", and "the glorious canopy of God's blue sky overhead".

The priest (it may have been Talon) implored his flock to make their peace with God while they were in good health; death was all about them, and they should be prepared to meet their Creator. If it was Talon the advice was particularly apposite, for he was to die on 22 November of that year from a brain haemorrhage. As one born of French parents in New Caledonia and who trained for the Marist priesthood in New Zealand, Talon offered the promise of a human bridge between the French Marists in Sydney and the Anglo-Irish environment in which they worked. The promise was never realised, held in check by inertia and timidity.

Villa Maria Monastery, Hunters Hill

Following the death of Placid Huault in April, 1909, Dominic Duclos had been appointed superior of the Villa Maria community. He continued his pattern of supervising second novitiates in Sydney and travelling to the Mission territories to preach retreats and visit his confreres in the field. In November, 1909, at the conclusion of that year’s second novitiate, he travelled to the North Solomons, requiring hospitalisation on his return to Sydney because of fever. The following year, 1910, after completing his novitiate commitments at Villa Maria, he journeyed to Samoa. He returned to Sydney early in 1911, accompanying Nicolas on a visit to New Zealand on the way back. There was a certain strictness and rigidity in Duclos that some of his confreres had difficulty coming to terms with. When in Auckland with Nicolas he refused to join his Provincial in accepting an invitation to lodge at the episcopal palace, preferring less pretentious lodgings. He was attacked by some delegates at the 1914 Provincial chapter for his severity and strictness as master of the second novitiate; Nicolas defended him strongly in a letter to the superior general: "If there is a true Marist in Oceania, pious, good, religious ... it is Fr. Duclos". Nicolas told the general that unfortunately some novices came to Villa Maria to do as little as possible, and took every opportunity to criticise the novice master.

Certainly, both Marion and Nicolas valued his advice and came to appreciate his supportive presence: Marion described him as a good counsellor, and Nicolas as "the man of good counsel and sound judgement". Further, he was apparently able to bring peace and harmony to the Villa Maria community after the difficult years of Placid Huault; Nicolas reported to the 1914 general chapter that "there is unity and good spirit among all the members of
the community, and great regularity".\footnote{252} In May, 1915, Duclos turned 61 while preaching a series of retreats in New Caledonia; it was to be his last birthday. Returning to Sydney he became ill with peritonitis towards the end of July, and died on the Feast of the Assumption (August 15), the day he had prayed to meet his Maker.\footnote{253}

Talon was appointed temporary superior of the Villa Maria community while Nicolas cast about for a new novice master and superior. On 15 September he wrote to the general administration suggesting five names: Binault, Courtais, Jourda, Moussey and Robert. He was least enthusiastic about Antonin Moussey, whose name he included only at the suggestion of John Baptist Chevreuil, and who was not supported by the two bishops he had worked under, Peter Broyer and Joseph Blanc, because of his failure to keep the rule and his disinclination for work.\footnote{254} Chevreuil, however, pressed the general administration to appoint Moussey, an old crony from seminary days in Barcelona.\footnote{255} How decisive his intervention was is impossible to say, but on 14 October the general council ignored Nicolas' reservations and appointed Moussey master of second novices at Villa Maria. The position of superior was left unfilled.\footnote{256} Moussey arrived in Sydney early in March, 1916, and prepared to receive his first novices in May. Meanwhile, Nicolas pressed the general administration to appoint a superior, but was adamant he did not want Moussey: "I am convinced that he is not the man ..."\footnote{257} While giving an impression of competence and sounding plausible, Moussey "doesn't move, does nothing, does not stir, doesn't go to any trouble".\footnote{258} Again the general council ignored Nicolas, and appointed Moussey superior of Villa Maria on 18 July, 1916.\footnote{259}

The community at Villa Maria was reasonably stable during the years 1912-1918, with Charles Nicolas, Louis Rigard, and Emile Talon residing there for the entire period. Francis Laurent was there until his transfer to St. Patrick's midway through 1914, and Eugene Englert spent his last days in the community, having been recalled from Gladstone in the second half of 1911 and dying of tuberculosis and cancer on 10 May, 1913.\footnote{260} Julien Huault was transferred from Villa Maria in June, 1911, working first as a chaplain to the Marist brothers at Mittagong before being appointed to Gladstone in December, 1912;\footnote{261} and Leopold Carcenac joined the community for 18 months from early 1914 until June, 1915, working for most of this time as chaplain at St. Joseph's college.\footnote{262}

Finally, two new Marist ex-missionaries took up permanent residence in Australia during the years 1912-1918 and joined the Villa Maria community. The first was Karl Flaus, a Metz-born Frenchman with particularly strong German sympathies. Flaus had first gone to the Missions in 1890, working initially in Fiji and Samoa and was then one of the first Marists to re-enter the Solomons in 1898-1899.\footnote{263} He returned to Europe in 1900 to set up a house of formation for the Society of Mary at Meppen in Germany; he passed through Sydney in November, 1905, on his way back to the Solomons.\footnote{264} An irascible and severe man, though also blessed with talent and capacity, Flaus was in dispute with the German Resident in 1909, and was taken to court and fined 50 marks, payable to the Kieta Hospital.\footnote{265} He resented being transferred to Buka by his superior, Joseph Forestier, the following year, seeing this as capitulation to the Government.\footnote{266} Early in 1915 Flaus arrived unannounced at Villa Maria, his position having become intolerable at Buka: he had alienated his confreres with his authoritarian manner, the local people with his brutality, and had hardly endeared himself to the British authorities by mouthing pro-German sentiments.\footnote{267} The superior general ordered him back to the Mission and reprimanded him for deserting his post, but a return was really out of the question.\footnote{268} After trying unsuccessfully to pass him off to Marist superiors in Fiji and New
Zealand, Nicolas reconciled himself to keeping Flaus at Villa Maria; in the second half of the year he began work as chaplain to St. Joseph's college. The Marist brothers tolerated him for two rather tense years during which time his authoritarian manner and pro-German sympathies were apparently well to the fore.

In November, 1915, John Baptist Chevreuil told a confrere: "Fr. Flaus is like a big Pasha at the College. He has been lucky to arrive here at a time when there has been a shortage of priests". Writing to Maurice Boch on 27 January, 1917, Chevreuil reported that "Fr. Flaus prospers, and still believes in the invincibility of the Germans". At the insistence of the brothers he was replaced as chaplain to the college in July, 1917; he subsequently looked after the spiritual needs of Mount St. Margaret's convent at Ryde, and was to be at the disposal of the parish priest of Hunters Hill for occasional help "but without having anything directly to do with the parishioners".

Flaus' replacement as chaplain at St Joseph's was Eugene Courtais, a 39 year old Frenchman, who had come to Sydney in the first half of 1914. Nicolas had specifically requested Courtais' transfer to Sydney from the New Hebrides where he was functioning as local procurator, and the general council agreed to ask Courtais' vicariate-head, Victor Doucere, to release him. On 10 October, 1913, Raffin wrote to Nicolas:

The desire you express to attach to Sydney Fr. Courtais, a prudent and well-read priest, an excellent religious, very capable of rendering important services in the ministry as well as in administration, would appear to me well justified.

Courtais' first job on arrival in Sydney was to take over the running of the Sydney procure from John Baptist Chevreuil to release the latter to attend the 1914 Marist general chapter. Courtais functioned as procurator from June, 1914, until early in March, 1915. He then came to Villa Maria in April to study English for six months, but a heart condition manifested itself in July and 12 months later he was still not physically strong.

Three French coadjutor brothers lived and worked at Villa Maria through the period 1912-1918: Theodore Carron, Medard Gross, and John-Mary Pelicot. The remaining two patriarchs from last century, John Rodier and Patrick Collins, died in 1914 and 1916 respectively. For a brief period during 1915, Villa Maria also had the assistance of a New Caledonian male named Alphonse, who had been brought to Sydney by Duclos, but the Marists soon learned that Australia's immigration laws had tightened somewhat since Claude Joly's blackbirding forays of the 1880's. When Chevreuil wrote to the Collector of Customs in November, 1915, for an extension of Alphonse's six month entry permit, he was refused, and Alphonse returned to New Caledonia on Christmas Eve.

The second decade of the century was a much happier one for the tiny community of Third Order Regular sisters at Villa Maria. The death of Sr. Chantel in August, 1914, enabled the convent to be reconstituted on a more harmonious plane. The two sisters living there at the end of 1915 had created a climate which drew grateful praise from Nicolas:

Sr. Monique and Sr. Radegonde are very good sisters, and the sisters passing through are only edified by the spirit and regularity which reigns at the convent of Villa Maria.
Early in 1917 the community stood at three, with the addition of Sr. Eustelle, who had been sent to Villa Maria in poor health. Nicolas again praised the spirit which he found among the sisters, while lamenting that they were incapable of carrying the full load of domestic chores:

The three sisters, Monique, Eustelle, Radegonde, get on marvellously, and are regular in an exemplary manner, despite the fact that circumstances have obliged Sr. Monique to accept the kitchen. As Sr. Eustelle is incapable of helping her there and Sr. Monique herself is far from being a cook, we have had to take on a woman from the parish, a good Catholic but an ordinary cook.283

Gladstone Parish

Victor Thierry remained in charge of the parish of Gladstone from October, 1908 until September, 1917. At some stage in his life he wrote a self-pitying account of these years entitled, "Principal Events in My Long and Painful Gladstone Career".284 For the first five years Thierry was on his own, and coped with the loneliness and boredom by assembling a private zoo and greening the barren knoll on which the presbytery was built:

A horse, a cow, a dog, and innumerable pet birds etc. were sent me from all sides to brighten up that lonely hill where the presbytery stands, until my place became a veritable garden of both zoological and botanic curios visited by hundreds of sightseers!

The barren hill upon which no one ever expected to see a blade of grass to grow was labouriously dug here and there with the aid of "dynamite" and other violent means, by my own exertions, with such success that I had 220 trees and shrubs growing there by the end of my stay in Gladstone, added to the five original mango trees planted by my predecessor.285

In December, 1913, Julien Huault was sent to Gladstone to provide company for Thierry and assist him in his ministrations.286 Charles Nicolas confided to Gaston Regis that he may have hit on the perfect combination: "They will be two neuropaths together, two unstable men, two malcontents, two convinced they were born for better things".287 Thierry's health was often poor, and he spent the early months of 1915 in St. Vincent's hospital, Sydney, returning to Gladstone in April.288 Eventually, in September, 1917, Bishop Shiel of Rockhampton suggested to the Marists that they should withdraw Thierry because with his poor health he was incapable of holding down the job; he arrived back in Sydney on 1 November, 1917.289

Huault took over as parish priest, and was soon joined by Alphonsus Ginsbach, who had just spent the last four years of his life trying to extricate himself from the Society of Mary. In the small-town environment of Gladstone and in comparison with the lacklustre Julien Huault, Ginsbach's acknowledged capacity and personal gifts quickly came to the fore and he was soon popular with local Catholics and with the wider community.290 Nicolas visited the parish in the middle of 1918; despite Ginsbach's popularity, Nicolas' report to Raffin was riddled with disquiet: disquiet about Ginsbach, disquiet about Huault, and disquiet about the desirability of a continued Marist presence in Gladstone.
Ginsbach was still "parading his dissatisfaction and his feeble attachment to the Society"; he had asked both Archbishop Duhig of Brisbane and Bishop Shiel of Rockhampton to accept him into their dioceses; his behaviour was erratic and gave grounds for serious concern:

... you can't tell what he'll do next, he is often in a foul mood and he has a contempt for everything and everybody, and the way he chases after the fair sex is so obvious, sisters, girls ... and he spends lengthy periods, even at night, with a female person (elderly, it is true, and a very devout woman) and there are all sorts of other things as well.291

Huault, too, was causing Nicolas concern, though for different reasons. While he managed reasonably well as an underling, Huault "absolutely lacks everything needed for taking over the management of an operation, whether material or spiritual".292 Huault was quite aware of his limitations, and had written numerous letters to Nicolas asking to be relieved of responsibility for the parish. Nicolas' problem was that he simply had no one to send in Huault's place.293

Gladstone was not a congenial environment for a priest working through a crisis of vocation; it was isolated, slow of pace, and situated in a barren landscape which some personalities might find destructive of the spirit. Ginsbach's period in Gladstone came to an abrupt end in February, 1919, when Bishop Shiel demanded his recall to Sydney.294 One evening a nun had been observed coming from the direction of the presbytery at a late hour wearing a shawl instead of her veil and wimple. There was no positive evidence linking Ginsbach with the incident, but when the nun was transferred to another convent her superior discovered she was collecting letters from Ginsbach addressed to a fictitious name at the local post office. Bishop Shiel considered the evidence sufficiently damning to request Ginsbach's removal from his diocese.295 The Catholics of Gladstone were greatly disappointed by Ginsbach's hurried departure and wrote to Sydney requesting his reinstatement.296 A remarkable coincidence prevented people wondering why Ginsbach had been recalled: only a few weeks before he had preached a widely reported sermon denouncing an attempt to set fire to the Gladstone meatworks, and blaming the attempt on extreme unionists.297 It was generally assumed in Gladstone that Ginsbach had been carpeted by his superiors for preaching political sermons; Julien Huault reported to Sydney that the local storekeeper, Mr. Friend, had been assuring his customers that Archbishop Mannix was definitely behind the recall, being greatly angered by Ginsbach's anti-Labor sentiments.298

Attempts at Expansion
Charles Nicolas' Provincialate ended late in 1918, his term eventually stretching for two additional years due to the disruption caused by the war. Like his predecessors Aubry, Olier and Marion, Nicolas found himself constantly short of men for the Society of Mary's modest Australian operations, or at least badly off for priests with sufficient capacity, personal integration and good health to undertake leadership positions. It is significant that at the end of his Provincialate not one of the Marist parishes was administered by a man who inspired Nicolas with any confidence: had it been possible to do so, he would gladly have relieved Julien Huault, Emile Talon and Peter Piquet of their respective parish responsibilities.

Like his predecessors, Nicolas looked for help from overseas to carry the Australian
operations of the Society of Mary until such time as local Australian vocations could fill the breach. However it was to New Zealand rather than to Europe that Nicolas looked for assistance. He eventually came to believe that the only way the Society of Mary could develop in Australia was through the establishment of a home mission band similar to that established in New Zealand in 1908, and sent to work in Tasmania during 1911. Writing to New Zealand Provincial, Peter Regnault, in June, 1911, Nicolas congratulated him on his initiative in fostering the home missioners and lamented the absence of such a group in Australia:

I am longing to be able to do the same over here; there is a vast amount of good to be done by preaching missions, much more than in carrying out parish work, but here in Sydney, we really are too few and too inferior, and have been constantly losing rather than gaining; now we are nowhere.299

Nicolas found it frustrating and galling that the Society had made no progress whatsoever in its 65 years in Australia, and that currently the situation was worse than it had ever been:

Being among the first religious that came to Sydney, we are just today what we were sixty years ago - only there were then men of good repute - at least for their holiness, among us, and now - well, it is not quite the same.300

He placed the blame for the Society's poor position in Australia on the type of Marists who had found their way to Sydney in recent years:

... after the death of Fr. Le Rennetel, Muraire, Pl. Huault, Ginisty and others who have given us a certain renown, we have now, thanks to these blots, fallen into a deplorable downturn, with no hope of emerging from it in the near future ... the reputation of the Society is on the line because of this.301

Although Regnault was keen to establish a beach head for the New Zealand Marists in Australia, and although Nicolas wanted to have in Australia a permanent group of Marist missioners, neither appears to have made any move towards formally discussing the possibility of the New Zealand missioners establishing a permanent base in Australia.

Regnault's successor, the Irishman Patrick Smyth, shared Regnault's desire to see New Zealand Marists permanently established in Australia. Like Regnault, he thought in terms of a New Zealand Marist colony in Australia rather than giving or lending men to the Province of Oceania. He believed that New Zealand was simply too small for the manpower resources of the Society of Mary: firstly, because an increase in diocesan clergy meant that in several dioceses the Marists were being forced to relinquish parishes they had founded, which raised the possibility of a pool of unemployed Marist priests in the very near future; and secondly, because the Catholic Church in New Zealand was so numerically small that the Marist missioners were simply running out of parishes to preach in.302 In February, 1916, Smyth explained his ideas to the superior general:

We are of opinion [sic] that it would be most advisable for us to try and extend our field of labours in the Mission Field in Australia ... Of course, we would not think of
interfering in any way with the Sydney Province, but we think that we could get a Missionary Home in another diocese of Australia, which would be subject to the New Zealand Province, so that there could be an exchange of men. On account of this want, our Missionaries are very hampered in their work and are becoming stale and are obliged to return to the same places too often. Besides later on we shall have to extend as the parishes will be closed to us.\textsuperscript{303}

But Smyth had insufficient time to fully execute his plans, dying in August, 1916, after only two years in office. Smyth's successor, the New Zealand born John Holley, was much less enthusiastic about the idea of an Australian foundation, especially in view of the increasing demands on him to provide priests to act as war chaplains. Smyth had sent his missioners to Australia in 1916 in the hope of establishing a foundation and had accepted bookings for missions into 1918, but Holley recalled his men as soon as these commitments were discharged. Holley, who had a curious writing style, explained to Raffin that he was running short of priests:

\begin{quote}
... owing to continued ill health of many, defection of one, death of another, incapacity of several, and several others to be expected at any time and last but not least seven of our most active and energetic Fathers had to be offered as a quota towards the military chaplains who have gone to Egypt and Europe with the New Zealand troops. Owing to all this it would be folly in the extreme to attempt the impossible in Australia however much we would like to help our confreres beyond and establish a missionary foundation there ...\textsuperscript{304}
\end{quote}

Nicolas, who had set his heart on a permanent band of New Zealand missioners in Australia as a means of making the Society better known and encouraging vocations, was bitterly disappointed. In July, 1918, he told Raffin:

\begin{quote}
I do regret very much that, war or no war - and the war is not an insurmountable obstacle - the Provincial of New Zealand is unwilling to do for this Province what the Provinces of Europe have so generously done for his, and that he is obstructing the founding of a house for missioners in Australia, his pretext being that he cannot supply any of his men because he has several chaplains at the front. He has a point, true, but some of his own men are of the opinion that it could be done all the same. The longer we wait, the more difficult the thing becomes, and then there is so much good we could do in this vast land of Australia - and it would be a valuable resource to add to our reputation and help in recruiting for the Society in these parts. Too many washouts have been allowed in here from our various Missions and they do such little credit to us.\textsuperscript{305}
\end{quote}

Ironically, at the very time that Charles Nicolas was desperately canvassing a permanent foundation of the New Zealand Province in Australia, the New Zealanders themselves, who for the previous ten years had been trying to engineer such a foundation, had gone cold on the idea.

\textit{Relations with Archbishop Kelly}

Nicolas' Provincialate coincided with the first seven years of Michael Kelly's 30 year
term as Catholic Archbishop of Sydney. While relations between Kelly and the Marists were cordial, and were not poisoned by any incident equivalent to the Piquet excommunication, there was certainly a disappointment on the part of the Marists with Kelly's attitude to religious orders. Prior to becoming archbishop, Kelly had been perceived to be well disposed towards religious. Andrew Marion had reflected this opinion to the general administration as early as May, 1908, informing superior general Raffin that Kelly "shows that he likes the religious". Towards the end of 1913 Nicolas, prompted by requests from the Propagation of the Faith in France, asked Kelly if he would agree to establish the Work in his archdiocese. Kelly's negative response disappointed Nicolas: "We were saying he was so saintly, so zealous, so favourable to the religious. With him you do not know where you stand". Nicolas also wondered whether Denis O'Haran was still doing the Marists some mischief: "It is well known that we particularly displease Monsignor O'Haran, who contrary to all expectations, has great influence on His Grace".

In 1913 Kelly generated a full-scale revolt by the clerical religious orders in Sydney through his attempts to increase the diocesan tax on parishes controlled by the orders, and because of his general attitude to religious. Towards the end of that year the Provincials of the Franciscans, Jesuits, Passionists and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart sent a formal petition of complaint to the Holy See; Nicolas declined to sign the document on behalf of the Marists, but agreed to forward a copy to the Marist general administration. In his covering letter to the superior general he insisted that the complaints in the letter were in no way exaggerated and if anything tended to understate the case.

The petition of complaint from the religious superiors cited six public occasions on which Kelly had made disparaging remarks about religious being in control of parishes; it also claimed that a recent judgment by the Congregation of Propaganda prohibiting Kelly from dividing the Franciscan parish at Waverley was being ignored by Kelly and that furthermore he was now preparing to subdivide a parish belonging to the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart at Kensington; finally, the writers claimed that Kelly was levying an excessive tax on parishes conducted by religious orders.

In replying to Nicolas, Raffin concurred with his decision not to sign the superiors' letter, and expressed surprise at Kelly's behaviour:

We have received with interest, but also with pain, the petition addressed to the Supreme Pontiff and signed by the Franciscans, Jesuits, Passionists and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart against the malevolent remarks and indelicate dealings of His Grace, the Archbishop of Sydney against these religious in particular and religious in general. Such an attitude is difficult to understand on the part of a Prelate who, during his coadjutorship, had shown himself completely different ... one can reasonably suppose that the non compliance by His Grace in a decision taken by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda will not go without a response.

The response was a dramatic one, for it seems likely that this dispute was directly responsible for the appointment in April, 1914, of Bonaventure Ceretti as the first apostolic delegate to Australia. Ceretti, who arrived in Sydney in February, 1915, set himself to sort out the dispute; he organised a peace conference between Kelly and the religious superiors and by
September, 1916 had succeeded in having Kelly accept a less severe taxing system for religious order parishes.\textsuperscript{313}

On 22 October, 1918, Charles Nicolas received a cable from Lyon informing him that he had been appointed coadjutor bishop of Fiji. The appointment was not a surprise, for Nicolas had known as early as February, 1917, that Bishop Julien Vidal had submitted his name as his successor. Nicolas was initially reluctant, telling Raffin that he believed himself to be too old and lacking the necessary qualities.\textsuperscript{314} He finally agreed to his name being submitted to Rome, but the appointment was delayed by the death of the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda.\textsuperscript{315} Nicolas was made a bishop at Hunters Hill in a low-key ceremony on 2 February, 1919; there was no congregation because of the Government's influenza regulations, and an episcopal mitre and crozier had to be borrowed from Archbishop Kelly. The motto of the Marist order is *Ignoti et quasi occulti* [unknown, and as it were, hidden]. Nicolas commented wryly to the Archbishop's secretary that his clandestine consecration was a truly Marist event.\textsuperscript{316}
ENDNOTES CHAPTER 5

1 Marion to Raffin, 24 January, 1910, copy AMPA B140.1.
2 Raffin to Nicolas, 24 August, 1910, OMPA A1.1.
3 FJ, 5 January, 1911, p.19.
4 Nicolas to Moran, 31 January, 1911, SAA Marist Box.
5 ibid.
6 CP, 15 April, 1937.
7 Ginsbach to ?, 20 August, 1912, copy AMPA C80.05.
8 E.R. Simmons, A Brief History of the Catholic Church in New Zealand, Auckland, 1978, pp.84 and 86.
9 Vaney, "Dual Tradition", pp.219-220.
10 Simmons, Brief History, p.95.
11 See PCM, 26 May, 1896; FJ, 15 October, 1904, p.16.
12 O'Shea to O'Haran, 20 March, 1908, SAA Marist Box.
13 See Marion to Raffin, 15 November, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1
14 Regnault to Nicolas, 27 June, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F24-25.
15 Regnault to Duclos, 27 June, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2.
16 See Proceedings of the Third Australasian Catholic Congress, Sydney, 1909; for Cleary see Simmons, Brief History, p.83.
17 Cleary to Regnault, 15 (?) October, 1909, NZMPA MH 1 F6.
18 Hickson to Regnault, 29 December, 1909, NZMPA MH 1 F143-145; W.T. Southerwood, "Ecumenism - Tasmanian Style in 1924" in Australasian Catholic Record (hereafter ACR), Vol 63 (1986), pp.195-198, notes that Cleary and Delaney were firm
friends.

19 Patrick Delaney, "Lenten Pastoral 1911" in Tasmania 1911 (album of press cuttings), AMPA, C350.10. This album of press clippings contains detailed accounts of the missioners’ activities in every town they visited. It is probable that the missioners actually wrote their own “reviews”; how else explain the presence of a literate reporter in every Tasmanian town with an intimate knowledge of the missioners’ comings and goings?

20 Press clipping, "Queenstown Mission Notes", ibid.


22 Ibid.


24 Kimbell to Regnault, 11 July, 1911, NZMPA MH1 F6-7.

25 Ibid.

26 Delaney to Regnault, 19 September, 1911, NZMPA PHL 2 F289.

27 Chevreuil to Regnault, 14 May, 1912, NZMPA IPC F48.

28 Raffin to Nicolas, 17 May, 1912, OMPA A1.1.

29 Nicolas to Vidal, 18 June, 1912, RCAF PMB 445(2).


31 Carcenac performed his first baptism for 1912 on 4 August.

32 Marion to Raffin, 22 February, 1910, copy AMPA B140/1.

33 Nicolas to Raffin, 6 March, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F16-17.

34 Raffin to Nicolas, 29 January, 1912, OMPA A1.1.

35 Duclos to Regnault, 15 September, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F30-34. In fact, Suleau may have made his second novitiate early in 1913 rather than with Duclos at Cronulla.

36 FJ, 30 November, 1911, p.21.


38 Ginisty to Moran, 14 August, 1909, SAA Marist Box.

40 FJ, 12 January, 1911, p.27.

41 FJ, 20 March, 1913, p.28.

42 FJ, 11 December, 1913, p.32. In April, 1909 Piquet's predecessor, Augustin Ginisty, had been forced to reconstruct the choir-loft because of white ants (FJ, 8 April, 1909, p.21.).


44 A bizarre example of Kelly-speak is the sermon reported in the Freeman's Journal of 20 April, 1916, p.25, under the heading "The Apostles were Total Abstainers".


48 For Piquet's first use of the theme see FJ, 8 January, 1914, pp.22-23; FJ, 15 January, 1914, p.18.


51 PCM, 6 May, 1913, 3 June, 1916.

52 FJ, 7 May, 1914, p.18.


54 Nicolas to Kelly, 19 June, 1917, SAA Marist Box.


56 PCM, 2 October, 1917.


58 Ibid.

59 FJ, 21 February, 1918, p.21.

60 FJ, 2 May, 1918, p.23; 9 May, 1918, p.27; 16 May, 1918, p.21.

61 FJ, 2 May, 1918, p.23; 9 May, 1918, p.27; 16 May, 1918, p.21.

62 FJ, 3 April, 1919, p.23.


65 Piquet to Raffin, 10 June, 1914, copy AMPA C220.05.

66 Chevreuil, "The Procurator Residing at St. Patrick's Presbytery", 28 October, 1914, APM OP 452

67 Raffin to Piquet, 3 January, 1915, AMPA C220.05.

68 Nicolas to Vidal, 29 June, 1914, RCAF PMB 445(2); Laurent performed his first baptism at St. Patrick's in 1914 on 14 July.

69 Raffin to Nicolas, 25 April, 1917, APM OP 418.

70 Nicolas to Raffin, 11 April, 1916, APM OP418.

71 Ibid.

72 Chevreuil to Raffin, 16 May, 1916, APM OP458.


74 PCM, 7 November, 1916, OMPA C1.

75 Piquet to Raffin, 13 February, 1917, copy AMPA C220.05.

76 Laurent to Raffin, 19 February, 1917, copy AMPA C220.05.

77 Nicolas to Raffin, 20 February, 1917, APM OP 418; Chevreuil to Raffin, 20 February, 1917, APM OP 418.

78 Raffin to Piquet, 25 April, 1917, AMPA C220.05.

79 See PCM, 9 February, 1918; MPV, 29 April, 1918; Piquet to Raffin, 4 March, 1918, copy AMPA C220.05.

80 See for example Renault to Ainsworth, 14 October, 1909 and 27 November, 1909, NZMPA MIS 4 FF191-200; and the very lengthy correspondence Regnault to Carew (and others), 22 November, 1909 to 25 March, 1911, NZMPA PHL 2 FF135-195; see also Regnault to Aubry, 3 November, 1910, copy AMPA B205.20.

81 See Jean Coste, Parishes and Marist Legislation, Rome, 1979, especially pp.33-38.

82 Undated document written by Nicolas, APM Suleau personal file.

83 Raffin to Nicolas, 27 January, 1912, OMPA A1.1.
Undated document written by Nicolas, APM Suleau personal file.

PCM 12-20 June, 1914.

Undated document written by Nicolas, APM Suleau personal file.

Decree of Expulsion, 9 April, 1915, APM Suleau personal file.

Nicolas to Raffin, 3 June, 1915, APM OP 418.


Bertin to Chanrion, 12 February, 1933, OMPA B4.

Mt. 13:44.

Coste to Suleau, 5 May, 1979, APM Suleau personal file.

Nicolas to Ceretti, 16 March, 1916, OMPA D4.44.

Piquet to Raffin, 10 June, 1914, copy AMPA C220.05.

PCM, 7 July, 1914, 23 July, 1914.

Nicolas to Raffin, 4 October, 1914, 13 October, 1914, 1 May, 1915, APM OP418; Nicolas to Smyth, 8 March, 1915, NZMPA PHL 1 F107.

PCM, 17 October, 1914, 17 December, 1914.

PCM, 24 April, 1915, 27 April, 1915.

Chatelet to Nicolas, 29 April, 1915, OMPA D4.44.

Ibid.

PCM, 29 April, 1915.

Nicolas to Raffin, 3 June, 1915, APM OP 418.

Chevreuil to Gonnet, 5 July, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

Chevreuil to Regis, 4 August, 1915, APM OP 418.

Ibid.

PCM, 4 January, 1916.

Ceretti, the first Vatican representative sent to Australia, arrived in Sydney in February, 1915.
I am grateful to Mrs Patricia Farrugia, the grand-daughter of Jules Vigne, for providing me with copies of these certificates, and details about her grandfather’s later life.

Germany invaded Belgium 3-4 August, 1914.

The movement of established Catholic families to the suburbs is borne out in the accounts of funerals conducted from St. Patrick's in the period 1915-1918 which appeared in the Freeman's Journal. For example, Mrs. Catherine Furlong, whose family had lived in The Rocks for thirty years: "Although the family ten years ago moved to Annandale, the deceased lady never severed her connection with the beloved parish of St. Patrick's ..." (FJ, 13 May, 1915, p.20); Mrs Ellen O'Loughlin, described as one of the best known and most energetic workers in the parish: "In the past five years with her family she was a resident of Catherine Street, Leichhardt ..." (FJ, 3 June, 1915, p.20); Mrs. Anastasia Murphy, who lived in St. Patrick's Parish for fifty years: "... altered conditions forced so many of the old residents to move elsewhere. Then Mr. and Mrs. Murphy made their home in Drummoyne" (FJ, 21 September, 1916, p.33); Mr. Daniel Spillane, a parishioner of St. Patrick's for almost fifty years: "... for the last fifteen years he has been attached to the Vincentian Fathers' Parish at Ashfield" (FJ, 11 April, 1918, p.23). Nicolas' report to the 1914 Marist general chapter is at APM 323.344.

126 Chevreuil to ?, 14 September, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

127 FJ, 1 December, 1927, p.19.

128 Ibid.

129 FJ, 29 August, 1918, p.18.

130 FJ, 22 April, 1915, p.28; FJ, 27 May, 1915, p.27.

131 FJ, 20 November, 1913, p.21.

132 Literally "on his own impulse": a document issued on the personal initiative of the Pope.


134 FJ, 6 April, 1916, p.21.

135 FJ, 29 August, 1918, p.18.

136 FJ, 12 September, 1918.

137 FJ, 5 September, 1918, p.22. For Edward Pigot, S.J. see Ursula M. Bygott, With Pen and Tongue, Melbourne, 1980, pp.43 and 149.

138 Copy at AMPA C220.11.

139 FJ, 4 January, 1917, p.17; see also FJ, 3 January, 1918, p.22; FJ, 12 September, 1918, p.22.

140 FJ, 11 April, 1912, p.29; FJ, 6 March, 1913, p.24.

141 Nicolas, "Report on the Oceania Missions Province", 1914 General Chapter, APM 323.344 There is a possibility that this sodality is a direct descendant of the Apostleship of Prayer Confraternity which existed in the parish in the 1890's. Devotion to the Sacred Heart was a strong component in the Apostleship of Prayer, which was sometimes referred to by the alternative title of "League of the Sacred Heart". Nicolas makes no mention of the Apostleship of Prayer in his report.

142 Ibid.

143 Ibid.


145 Nicolas, "Report", APM 323.344.
146 FJ, 8 August, 1912, p.13.

147 FJ, 16 October, 1913, p.29; FJ, 7 October, 1915, p.26; FJ, 15 August, 1918, p.19.


149 FJ, 28 August, 1913, p.21.

150 FJ, 18 September, 1913, p.15.

151 FJ, 1 October, 1914, p.9.

152 FJ, 10 February, 1916, p.36.


154 FJ, 19 September, 1918, p.15; FJ, 15 January, 1920, p.11.

155 FJ, 5 April, 1923, p.27.

156 Nicolas, "Report", APM 323.344.

157 FJ, 19 September, 1907, p.17.


160 FJ, 5 September, 1912, p.16; 13 August, 1914, p.29.

161 Ceretti to Kelly, 17 April, 1916, SAA Kelly Papers.

162 FJ, 26 September, 1912, p.17.

163 Ibid.


165 FJ, 17 April, 1913, p.21.

166 "Montbel" was the name of a Marist formation house in France.
PCM, 22 February, 1911.

Nicolas to Regnault, 2 June, 1911, NSMPA IPC 2 F20-22.

Nicolas to Regnault, 28 December, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F37-38.

Marion to Hayes, 29 October, 1910, AMPA B140/3.

Hayes to Kelly, 13 April, 1913, SAA Marist Box.

Nicolas to Regis, 10 April, 1912, APM OP 418.

Nicolas to Regnault, 24 February, 1912, IPC 2 F41.

Ginsbach to Director of Differt Juniorate, 20 August, 1912, copy AMPA C80.

Ibid.

Ginsbach to Raffín, 22 February, 1913, APM Ginsbach personal file.

Ginsbach to Regnault, 23 July, 1913, NZMPA PHL 1 F54.

Nicolas to Smyth, 5 November, 1915, NZMPA IPC 2 F64-68.

Marion to Raffín, 27 November, 1908, copy AMPA B 140/1.

Marion to Raffín, 15 November, 1909, copy AMPA B 140/1.

Nicolas to Regis, 13 March, 1913, APM OP 418.

Ginsbach to Nicolas, 15 September, 1913, OMPA A9.1.

Ginsbach to Raffín, 17 September, 1913, APM Ginsbach personal file.

Raffín to Nicolas, 15 November, 1913, OMPA A1.1.

Ginsbach to Raffín, 1 February, 1914, APM Ginsbach personal file.

Ginsbach to Nicolas, 11 February, 1914, OMPA A9.1.

Ginsbach to Nicolas, 21 February, 1914, OMPA A9.1.

Chevreuil to Bellwald, 6 March, 1914, OMPA E1.1.

Ginsbach to Raffín, 17 August, 1914, APM Ginsbach personal file.

Raffín to Nicolas, 4 November, 1915, OMPA A1.1; Ginsbach to Raffín, 1 April, 1917, APM personal file.

Nicolas to Raffín, 3 June, 1915, APM OP 418; FJ, 20 April, 1916, p.20.
Ginsbach to Raffin, 14 April, 1917, APM Ginsbach personal file.

PCM, 2 October, 1917.

PCM, 22 October, 1917.


PCM, 3 March, 1914.

See Notes du Scholasticat (bound register), 1903, NZMPA; Devoy to Martin, 3 March, 1903; Province: General Marist Matters 1901-1908 (letter-book), NZMPA.

Marion to Regis, 12 December, 1904, AMPA B140/2.

Chevreuil to Regis, 3 September, 1913, APM OP 458.

Chevreuil to Flaus, 20 September, 1913, OMPA E1.1.

Chevreuil to Forestier, 18 February, 1914, OMPA E1.1.

Nicolas to Vidal, 23 February, 1914, copy AMPA B150; Ginsbach to Nicolas, 24 November, 1913, OMPA A9.1; Nicholas, "Some Remarks to Present to the 1914 Provincial Chapter", ND, OMPA C3.

Ibid. It was apparently a widely held view among the French Marists in Sydney that Australian recruits would not volunteer to work in the Pacific Missions. Nicolas himself had expressed this opinion in 1911, and Eugene Courtais was still stating it in 1920. But this did not mean that either of them was unwilling to accept Australians into the order. Nicolas expressed both his opinion about Australians not wanting to go to the Missions and his desire for Australian vocations in a single sentence in 1911: "We all know our Australians too well: we shall not find many vocations for the Missions proper; but I do hope we shall find recruits good enough to imitate you in starting Home Missions" (Nicolas to Regnault, 2 June, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F20-22).

Nicolas to Raffin, 21 November, 1915, APM OP 418.

Rausch to Raffin, 2 July, 1916, copy AMPA C80.05.

Rausch to Raffin, 8 September, 1917, copy AMPA C80.05

Ibid.

Rausch to Raffin, 28 July, 1918, copy AMPA C80.05

Nicolas to Raffin, 6 November, 1918, APM OP 418.

Nicolas to Raffin, 30 December, 1918, APM OP 418.
"Extracts du Grand Livre", AMPA B100; PCM, 2 February, 1919.

Chevreuil to Marzan, 7 February, 1919, OMPA E1.1.

Regnault to Ginsbach, 16 September, 1913, NZMPA PHL 1 F53.

PCM, 28 February, 1916.

Jeffcott Diary, AMPA D11.3. Fleming returned to Montbel but left at some later date.

Nicolas to Smyth, 5 November, 1915, NZMPA IPC 2 F64.

Smyth to Raffin, 12 June, 1916, APM Z418.

Jeffcott Diary, 24 March, 1917, AMPA D11.3.


See below, Chapter 6.

Nicolas, "Rapport Sur La Province Des Missions D'Oceanie", 1914 General Chapter. APM 323.444.

PCM, 12 June, 1914.

Nicolas to Vidal, 29 June, 1914, RCAF PMB 445(2).

Courtais to Bellwald, 13 July, 1914, OMPA E1.1.

Heydon to Talon, 3 December, 1915, AMPA C25.05.01. For Alpen see above, Chapter 2, p.19; For Heydon see J.M. Bennett and Martha Rutledge, "Charles Gilbert Heydon and Louis Francis Heydon", ADB, Vol. 9, pp.277-278.

Alpen to Talon, 9 December, 1915, AMPA C25.05.01.

Nicolas to Raffin, 11 April, 1916 APM OP 418.


Cuneo to Talon, 19 December, 1916, AMPA C25.05.01.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 24 August, 1919, APM OP 418.

Talon to Kelly, 7 August, 1917, SAA Marist Box.

Talon to Coonan, 4 October, 1917, SAA Marist Box; Coonan Memo, 4 October, 1917, SAA Marist Box.

Taylor to Kelly, 6 December, 1917, SAA Marist Box.
Coonan memo, 4 October, 1917, SAA Marist Box.

Moussey to Kelly, 6 January, 1917, SAA Marist Box.

Kelly to Moussey, 16 January, 1918, Copy AMPA B151.

FJ, 3 July, 1913, p.25; 21 August, 1913.


FJ, 27 April, 1916, p.20; 5 April, 1917, p.15; 4 April, 1918, p.26.

In 1919 Crowley was chairman of City Mutual Life Insurance.


Ibid.

Courtais to Wache, 26 November, 1919, OMPA E1.28.

FJ, 6 May, 1909, p.21; Marion to Raffin, 3 May, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Raffin, 15 November, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1; Marion to Raffin, 22 February, 1910, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Thierry, 9 November, 1904, copy AMPA B140/3.

Nicolas to Regnault, 14 February, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F14.

Ibid.

Nicolas to Raffin, 16 June, 1914, APM OP 418.

Marion to Raffin, 13 March, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1.

Nicolas to Raffin, 1 September, 1915, APM OP 418.

Nicolas, "Rapport Sur la Province", APM 323.444.

Chevreuil to Young, 16 August, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

Chevreuil to Young, 16 August, 1915, OMPA E1.1.


MPV, 14 October, 1915.

Nicolas to Raffin, 11 April, 1916, APM OP 418.

Ibid.

PCM. 6 June, 1911 and 26 November, 1913, OMPA C1; Chevreuil to Gonnet, 17 December, 1913, OMPA E1.1.

PCM, 12-20 June, 1914 and 9 June, 1915.

Callaghan, Alive in Memory, pp.249-250.

MPV, 3 January, 1900; FJ, 25 November, 1905, p.22.

Marion to Raffin, 1 March, 1909, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Flaus, 16 April, 1909, copy AMPA B140/3.

Nicolas to Raffin, 3 June, 1915, APM OP 418; Courtais to Regis, 9 February, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

MPV, 27 March, 1915.

Nicolas to Raffin, 3 June, 1915, APM OP 418.

PCM, 9 June, 1915.

Pasha: Turkish title of high rank, especially for military commanders.

Chevreuil to Goedert, 22 November, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

Chevreuil to Boch, 27 January, 1917, OMPA E1.1.

PCM, 3 July, 1917; Chevreuil to Raffin, 24 August, 1919, APM OP 418.

MPV, 6 October, 1913 and 27 January, 1914.

Raffin to Nicolas, 10 October, 1913, OMPA A1.1.

Courtais to Collector of Customs, 22 June, 1914, OMPA E1.1.; Courtais to Aubin, 4 March, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

Chevreuil to Doucere, 13 April, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

Chevreuil to Lambotin, 2 August, 1915 and 4 August, 1916, OMPA E1.1.


Nicolas to Raffin, 13 October, 1914, APM OP 418.
Nicolas to Raffin, 21 November, 1915, APM OP 418.

Nicolas to Raffin, 26 February, 1917, APM OP 418.

Thierry Diary, APM Thierry personal file.

Ibid.

PCM, 17 December, 1913; Thierry Diary, APM Thierry personal file.

Nicolas to Regis, 17 December, 1913, APM OP 418.

Nicolas to Vidal, 28 March, 1915, copy AMPA B150; Nicolas to Raffin, 1 May, 1915, APM OP 418.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 31 October, 1917, APM OP 458.

Huault to Chevreuil, 17 March, 1919, OMPA A9.1.

Nicolas to Raffin, 5 July, 1918, APM OP 418.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Shiel to Chevreuil, 28 March, 1919, copy AMPA D8.23.

Ibid.

Nelson to Chevreuil, 31 March, 1919, OMPA 31.3.19.

FJ, 6 March, 1919, p.18.

Huault to Chevreuil, 17 March, 1919, OMPA A9.1.

Nicolas to Regnault, 2 June, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F20.

Nicolas to Regnault, 6 March, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F16.

Nicolas to Vidal, 30 July, 1912, RCAF PMB 445(1).

In 1920, at the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, there were still only 160,000 Catholics in the whole of New Zealand (Simmons, Brief History, p.100).

Smyth to Raffin, 4 February, 1916, APM Z418; see also Smyth to Raffin, 28 March, 1916 and 1 August, 1916, APM Z418.

Holley to Raffin, 23 February, 1918, APM Z418.

Nicolas to Raffin, 5 July, 1918, APM OP 418.
306 Marion to Raffin, 28 May, 1908, copy AMPA B140/1.

307 Nicolas to Vidal, 28 October, 1913, RCAF PMB 445(2).

308 Ibid.

309 MPV, 24 November, 1913.

310 Copy of letter, undated, in APM S110. See also Anthony Caruana, Monastery on the Hill, Sydney, 2000, for aspects of this dispute from the perspective of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, particularly pp.109-112 and p.154.

311 Raffin to Nicolas, 28 November, 1913, OMPA A1.1.

312 Writing in 1918 about Kelly's attempts to subdivide parishes, New Zealand Provincial, John Holley, told Raffin: "... it is commonly said that these difficulties are largely responsible for Rome appointing an Apostolic Delegate to these parts" (Holley to Raffin, 8 April, 1918, APM Z418). See also the sequence of the Marist General Council Minutes reporting comments from the Marist Procurator to the Holy See, Louis Copere: on 22 January, 1914, Copere reports that: "The Sacred Congregation inclines towards sending a visitor to Australia, following the arrival of complaints against Archbishop Kelly"; on 17 April, 1914, the Council Minutes note Copere's report that Ceretti has been named Apostolic Delegate to Australia.

313 Ceretti to Nicolas, 4 September, 1916, OMPA A12.2.

314 Nicolas to Raffin, 26 February, 1917, APM OP 418.

315 Regis to Chevreuil, 16 August, 1918, OMPA D1.3.

316 Nicolas to Murphy, 30 January, 1919, SAA Marist Box.
CHAPTER 6

FROM OBSTRUCTION TO CHANGE (1919-1924)

John Baptist Chevreuil was the fourth name on the list of possible successors which Nicolas sent to the general administration at the end of December, 1918; his first choice was Francis Laurent and his third suggestion was a recycled Andrew Marion. In fact, Nicolas’ thoughts were irrelevant, since the general council had already named Chevreuil to the post on 13 November, but the letter of appointment did not reach Sydney until February 24, 1919, taking more than three months in transit.

Chevreuil had been Mission procurator in Sydney since 1909, when he came to Australia following a conflict with the French Resident on the island of Rotuma and a subsequent disagreement with his bishop, Julien Vidal. He was not sorry to be finished with the procure; in March, 1919, he told Gaston Regis: "I am happy to be released from the procure which has been getting me down a great deal in recent years". At the beginning of his Provincialate Chevreuil was 53 years old with a rheumatic right knee. He was a man of strong opinions and forceful character: Andrew Marion had described him in 1909 as "unyielding and obstinate" and the following year as having a "very independent character and a habit of running things". His political outlook was conservative and he expressed his ideas with some feeling: in March, 1917, he rejoiced that the conservative Nationalists had won power in New South Wales ahead of the "socialists, internationalists and revolutionaries"; in December he told a confrere in Fiji that "Dr. Mannix instead of aiming for the glory of a popular tribune, would be better off teaching catechism to the good women of Melbourne"; and August, 1918, found him expressing the view that "Australia does much towards the war effort, but we have too many I.W.W.- and the imbecile Irish delegates. It has been necessary to intern several of these last ..."

Chevreuil had also developed some fairly strong views about the Marist situation in Australia, and lost little time in making them known to the superior general. In May, 1919, he expressed his frustration about the parish of Gladstone:

This poor parish of Gladstone never stops giving us headaches. It is almost as far from Sydney as is New Caledonia. It has around three hundred parishioners - there is little hope of this region developing.

Chevreuil followed up with a further letter in July suggesting that the Society withdraw from Gladstone: "Would it not be preferable to rid ourselves of this burden, and after arrangements with Bishop Shiel, to return the parish to him?" The general thought not: there was the difficulty of the Society having a contract in perpetuity to care for the parish and also Gladstone would be a good place to send Australian vocations once they were ordained.

Chevreuil also had some thoughts to offer on the new apostolic school at Mittagong and the suitability of the Australian character for the religious priesthood. He believed Australians needed to be captured young before their national characteristics led them astray: "In general it is difficult to form young Australians of sixteen and over ... I am inclined to fix fifteen as the age
The Australian character caused Chevreuil to have doubts about the future of the Society in Australia. Firstly, Australians were not "over scrupulous"; he cited a recent departure from Montbel who told Rausch he had never intended becoming a Marist, and had simply wanted to raise his educational level to a point where he could be accepted by the Jesuits. There was something even more disquieting about Australians:

... after having taken vows and been ordained, many of these colonial subjects have no religious spirit and live in the manner of secular priests ... the vows of obedience and poverty in particular are observed as if they did not exist. They are independent, frivolous, and out and about too much.

Chevreuil went on to quote an incident concerning the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. He claimed that recently, when a new Provincial was due to be appointed, the Australian members of the institute declared that if one of their number was not elected they would leave the congregation. Chevreuil acknowledged that the Australian MSCs were simply "shooting off their mouths", but still found their behaviour "very deplorable".

As well as having defects in their national character which were detrimental to religious spirit, Chevreuil believed that Australians also showed a marked disinclination to volunteer for the foreign Missions: "Experience shows that the Australians like the New Zealanders and Irish, have generally little attraction for Missions apud infideles. Chevreuil believed that to counter all these tendencies it was necessary to pay particular attention to the formation of Australian subjects, and that only a French Marist could do this adequately:

In my view it is of capital importance that our young Australians receive at the apostolic school a more careful education, a formation truly Marist, which inspires in them a great attachment to the Society. I am convinced that only a good French priest (having a knowledge of English) could carry out this programme.

Chevreuil was definite about one further matter in the early days of his Provincialate: he was not interested in any help from New Zealand, and in particular was not receptive to the idea of a house for parish missioners in Australia under New Zealand Provincial control. In July, 1919, he told Raffin: "I believe it is desirable that the New Zealand Fathers remain where they are, where, it would appear, they will not lack work." As an alternative to New Zealanders Chevreuil proposed that the general administration send two French Marists to Sydney, "capable men and good English speakers" who would be available for retreat work and parish missions.

Although he did not express it in letters to the general administration in the early days of his Provincialate, Chevreuil had already manifested one further attitude which was to loom large in his thinking in the next few years and which was to bring him into conflict with some Marists in Australia and eventually with the general administration. Chevreuil was strongly of the view that Villa Maria and St. Patrick's should always remain the exclusive preserve of French Marists. In 1912, when writing to New Zealand Provincial Peter Regnault in the context of the appointment of a new parish priest at St. Patrick's, Chevreuil wondered if the superior general might order that someone be sent from New Zealand; if so, Chevreuil was certain about one thing: "At all events, we want here a French Father." In 1915, when corresponding with the Collector of Customs in Sydney, he referred to Villa Maria as the "French Mission"; it had been
called such in the nineteenth century, but Chevreuil's use of the term in 1915 was unusual and revealing. During Chevreuil's Provincialate these indications of an underlying attitude were to be given full and unambiguous expression.

**Marists at Mittagong**

One of Chevreuil's first tasks as Provincial was to obtain authorisation from Archbishop Kelly to transfer the Marist apostolic school from Hunters Hill to Mittagong. Describing the negotiations with Kelly in a letter to Raffin of 8 July, 1919, Chevreuil wrote that he had presumed there would be little difficulty, since it was simply a matter of transferring an already approved foundation to another part of the archdiocese. But Kelly made considerable difficulties before finally consenting. Chevreuil's account of an interview with Kelly sheds some light on the archbishop's paranoid attitude to religious orders during these years. After telling Chevreuil of all the damage religious had done to him, how they had resisted his desires and refused to pay the cathedral levy, Kelly continued:

> But we are suffocated by the religious. The Franciscans have asked to found a novitiate - I have refused; the Dominicans have wanted to establish themselves here; I have refused. The Sisters of XX [sic] were wanting to found a house in my diocese, I have refused. It is necessary for us to defy the religious. It is necessary for us to be on guard against them.

Chevreuil reminded Kelly that his predecessor, Nicolas, had not signed the 1913 petition of religious superiors to the Holy See; the Archbishop acknowledged that he had nothing against the Marists and formal permission for the transfer of the juniorate to Mittagong was given by Kelly in a letter of 14 February.

When Monaghan and Rausch took their pupils to Mittagong in February, 1919, they were not the first Marist fathers to take up residence in the area; in fact, the order had been represented there since 1905. In that year the Marist brothers had purchased a property at Mittagong and established a novitiate; in November they requested a Marist priest to act as chaplain. Francis Huault was sent early in December, following his disastrous term as Mission procurator, and celebrated his first Mass for the brothers on 8 December, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. In January, 1906, Marion reported to Dominic Duclos that Huault was "delighted with his job".

Francis Huault died in June 1911 and was replaced by his brother Julien, the latter being sent to Gladstone in December, 1913. The new chaplain to the brothers was Peter Rouillac, recalled from Bowen in October at the request of Bishop Shiel of Rockhampton because of a drinking problem. Rouillac stayed at Mittagong until February, 1918, when ill health forced him to return to Sydney. His replacement was Victor Thierry, recently returned from Gladstone, and instrumental later in the year in alerting the provincial council to the existence of the house and property which they eventually purchased for the juniorate.

Blessed Peter Chanel's seminary, Mittagong, began with 11 pupils in February, 1919; it soon had one less. In March a young man named Cyril Johnson, in his third year with the Marists, admitted to Rausch that he was only there to improve his education standard to a level sufficient to enable him to join the Jesuits; not surprisingly Johnson was asked to leave. By
May the roll was down to nine, and Blessed Chanel's eventually finished the year with eight pupils: Austin Woodbury, Jack Dockar, Alfred Duggan, Alphonse Ryan, Cyril Riley, Steve McIsaac, Roger Murphy and Dave Murray. The regimen left little time for mischief: rising at 5.30 a.m., the students had morning prayers, an hour's study, and Mass, before breakfast at 7.45; classes filled the morning, and study occupied the afternoon; after an evening meal at 6.30 p.m. there was a short recreation period followed by evening prayers, more study, and lights out at 9.00 p.m.; a three hour walk on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons would have been a welcome diversion from the normal routine. No students were sent to Greenmeadows at the end of 1919, but James Monaghan had to be taken away to become parish priest of Gladstone, leaving Rausch to run the juniorate on his own. Chevreuil, who was not much taken with Monaghan's "unrestrained Australian character", was uneasy about the transfer:

I have done it with fear and against my feelings ... Fr. Monaghan is serious I believe, but exteriorly he does not have sufficient reserve and is too prone to act like a secular priest; and then he is inexperienced, and too far away to be looked after and guarded.

A change had also occurred in the Marist brothers' chaplaincy. By April, 1919, the enigmatic Thierry had tired of Mittagong and was longing for the faster pace of Sydney; his replacement was the troubled Alphonse Ginsbach. The brothers were not impressed with their new chaplain and in November asked that he be removed; Chevreuil explained to Raffin that "he has become cantankerous and is too familiar with the students". But Chevreuil had run out of options: where else could he send Ginsbach? He told Raffin he would try to get Ginsbach to change his ways, and in the meantime the latter would live at the apostolic school and go to the brothers' novitiate for Mass and confessions only. The new arrangements lasted only a few weeks. Early in December Bishop Shiel wrote from Rockhampton to inform Chevreuil that Ginsbach had been maintaining his correspondence with the nun who had been transferred from Gladstone: her new superior at Barcaldine had intercepted a letter purporting to be from her "Cousin Tom", but which had a Mittagong postmark, and was clearly from Ginsbach. Written according to a code, the letter was inappropriately amorous. Chevreuil gave Ginsbach a formal canonical monition on 12 January, 1920, and suspended him from his functions as chaplain; he urged him to "reflect seriously on the gravity of your situation before God, and also in view of your future".

Ginsbach left Mittagong the following morning after celebrating Mass at 5.00 a.m.; he wrote Rausch a note, asking that he inform the Provincial of his departure and requesting Rausch's prayers: "Thanking you for your every kindness, I will ask you to remember me in your prayers. I shall need them very much indeed".

Ginsbach made his way to Brisbane where he tried unsuccessfully to find employment as a teacher. In October, 1921, following "two long years of untold sorrow and tribulation" Ginsbach wrote to Chevreuil. He acknowledged that he had been unfaithful to his vows while functioning as a priest, expressed his belief that he should never have been ordained, but humbly asked to be allowed to return to the Society on the understanding that he would not resume priestly functions. Ginsbach's request to return seems to have been motivated less by the desperation of his circumstances than by a profound religious conversion: he believed that God had allowed him to experience the depths of despair so that he might come to his senses and for the first time in his life sincerely commit himself to the religious vows he had made 27 years before. His conversion had come about through meeting a Miss McMahon, an instrument of
God's mercy, who had befriended him, gently led him to return to daily prayer, and finally urged him to rejoin the Marists.41

Chevreuil arranged to meet Ginsbach in November, 1921: he realised he was speaking to a changed man, but explained that the way back would not be simple, as Ginsbach had been formally dismissed from the Society as an apostate. The case was submitted to the apostolic delegate, who arranged for Ginsbach to make a penitential retreat with the Jesuits at Seven Hills (S.A.) early in 1922 as an earnest of his change of heart.42 At the conclusion of his retreat Ginsbach petitioned the Marist superior general for readmission to the Society.43 His request was refused, perhaps fortunately, for Ginsbach would soon find another, more congenial path to God. On 21 November, 1923, he wrote to Chevreuil from Seven Hills to inform him that:

Our Lady has sent me today a gracious gift for which you will no doubt help me to express our thanks, for my conviction is that this kind Mother has shown me singular favour after the miserable and wretched way I have treated her whilst privileged to bear her name. The Most Reverend Lord Abbott Obrecht of Gethsemane (Kentucky) has accepted me as a postulant and choir oblate.44

Ginsbach entered Gethsemane monastery at Louisville, Kentucky (USA), early in 1924 and made perpetual profession as a Trappist monk on 8 December, 1928. He died at Gethsemane on 15 February, 1956.

Ginsbach's departure from Mittagong in January, 1920, had left Rausch responsible for providing the Marist brothers with Mass, as well as running the juniorate. As an interim measure a visiting missionary, Francis Rouge, was sent to Mittagong to assist Rausch, and in June the tragic Victor Couderc became his companion for a time. Couderc had come to Sydney towards the end of 1919 after exhibiting symptoms of delusive madness in Fiji.45 Only 33 years old, Couderc had been described by Nicolas three years earlier as an "excellent missionary, good religious, who promises much".46 The insidious illness asserted itself periodically and unpredictably; for months at a time Couderc would imagine himself to be Jesus Christ, or the pope, or a prophet with a divine mission to reform his confreres; at other times he would appear to be perfectly normal. His first stay at Mittagong lasted only two months; in the middle of August he had to be taken to Sydney and admitted to Gladesville hospital.47 Over the next few years Couderc would alternate between Mittagong, Villa Maria, and various psychiatric hospitals depending on the state of his mental health.

During 1920 Rausch appears to have had six pupils to care for: Austin Woodbury and Dave Murray, who were sent at the end of the year to Greenmeadows; Steve McIsaac and Alphonse Ryan, the latter dismissed at the end of the year because of insufficient mental capacity, and the former kept on for a further year; and two students from New Caledonia, Louis Meyer and Paul Bichon, who likewise continued at Mittagong in 1921.48 Also at Mittagong for most of 1920 was the unfortunate Fred Burke, who had been sent back to Australia from Greenmeadows in May when only months away from taking major orders, having taken perpetual vows as a Marist the year before. Burke had finally decided, in consultation with his spiritual director, that he was not cut out for religious life.49 He was sent to Mittagong while a dispensation from his vows was sought in Rome. Raffin was furious with the New Zealand Provincial and seminary staff: firstly, for allowing Burke, a palpably unsuitable candidate, to
remain so long in the seminary and for admitting him to final vows and, secondly, for initially applying for a dispensation to the apostolic delegate in Sydney when they should have realised such a dispensation could only be given in Rome. The incident did nothing to improve the already cool relations between Chevreuil and his opposite number, John Holley. The New Zealanders resented looking foolish in the eyes of the general administration through trying to be helpful to the Oceania Province, while Chevreuil shared the superior general's view that the New Zealanders have been clumsy and inept. Burke finally received his dispensation early in 1921; Chevreuil noted that his six years of theological studies had not been entirely wasted: "After several months of trying, he has ended by finding a position with a seller of church objects".

Rausch again constituted the entire staff of Blessed Chanel's in 1921, but the load would not have been onerous: there were no new recruits at the beginning of the year, so that his pupils were Steve McIsaac and the two French boys, Louis Meyer and Paul Bichon, all carry-overs from the previous year. A fourth student, Tony Bergin, took up residence in the second half of the year.

Early in 1922 James Monaghan returned to Mittagong as superior, and in February Rausch left on a trip to Europe, taking advantage of a resolution of the 1921 general chapter that long-serving missionaries in Oceania could return to their home country to visit their families. McIsaac was sent to Greenmeadows at the beginning of the year, and a new student, the relatively elderly Austin Roberts, was accepted *ad experimentum* because of his 21 years. The roll therefore remained at four. Since the departure of Ginsbach, early in 1920, no permanent chaplain had been provided for the Marist brothers, although Victor Couderc and Peter Rouillac were sent to Mittagong whenever they were in reasonable health; Rouillac died there on 21 October, 1922. At the end of the year Tony Bergin was sent to Greenmeadows; it was initially intended to send Meyer and Bichon there also, but they were eventually sent to France to continue their formation, since they would be returning to New Caledonia to work after ordination. Paul Bichon was ordained at Differt in 1930 and worked in New Caledonia until his death in 1976; Louis Meyer did not complete his seminary course.

Rausch returned from Europe at the end of 1922 and began the new year as assistant to Monaghan. There were seven pupils at the beginning of 1923, including two from Fiji, Philip Brailey and Hugh Ragg. Rausch was transferred to Sydney in May and was finally replaced in August by an alumnus of Montbel, Thomas Boyle, who had been ordained in New Zealand on 17 December, 1922. His stay was brief, being whisked back to Sydney in November to plug a gap in the Hunters Hill parish staff. No students were sent to Greenmeadows at the end of 1923.

The new year would be Monaghan's last at Mittagong. His superiors had long been concerned about his casual approach to keeping the rule. In November, 1915, Charles Nicolas had described him as "a very good fellow, and lovable" but "rather independent and fond of escaping religious restraint". By May, 1924, Chevreuil decided that for the sake of the juniorate and in Monaghan's own interests it was necessary to remove him from Mittagong and send him post haste to a second novitiate. He wrote to the new Marist general, Ernest Rieu:

Fr. Monaghan has many talents, but his lazy manner is injurious to him, he does not push himself enough, does everything without method and in a superficial manner - on the other hand he does not take religious life sufficiently seriously. His love of sports: golf, tennis, billiards etc. is excessive and takes up considerable time. Through running here
Complaints Against Chevreuil

On the surface, the apostolic school, established at Hunters Hill in 1911, and transferred to Mittagong in 1919, had made only a modest contribution by the end of 1924 to the growth of the Society of Mary in Australia. Between 1911-1924 only two Montbel students were ordained Marists (Aloysius Jefcott and Thomas Boyle). Thomas McBreen was also ordained during these years, but he had not attended the apostolic school; a further four Montbel seminarians were at Greenmeadows at the end of 1924. In fact, however, the teachers at the apostolic school, Rausch and Monaghan, were doing more to bring about the Australianisation of the order than simply presiding over a tiny trickle of students to the Marist seminary at Greenmeadows. They were also writing letters, letters which were extremely influential in contributing to a climate of opinion within the general administration that the French Marists in Sydney, and in particular the Provincial, John Baptist Chevreuil, were insufficiently committed to developing the order in Australia. As a result of the representations of Rausch and Monaghan, and reports from other sources, the general administration began a process of investigation and re-evaluation which would see control of Marist operations in Australia taken from the Province of Oceania and given to the New Zealand Province. By 1938, 13 years after this transfer was effected, the Society in Australia had developed to such a degree that the general administration constituted an Australian Province of the order, administratively separate from Oceania and New Zealand.

The first letter from Rausch in the Marist general archives complaining about the inertia of the Society in Australia is dated 8 September, 1917. He told the general that the Society was hardly known in Australia; he suggested that the New Zealand Province be asked to provide a group of parish missioners to work permanently in Australia and that these be based at a new, enlarged, juniorate: they would generate funds to run the juniorate and vocations to fill it. Rausch also complained that some French Marists in Sydney were not well disposed towards the juniorate; they wanted to preserve Villa Maria and St. Patrick's exclusively for their own nationality and could not see the point of recruiting Australians to the Society. Rausch was willing to accommodate national enclaves; the Frenchmen could keep control of Villa Maria and St. Patrick's and new communities and works could be established as the number of Australian priests increased.

Early in 1919 Rausch wrote again in a similar vein. He complained to Raffin that the Society in Australia was hamstrung by unimaginative thinking:
... when there is a question of starting or developing some work, it is said that we have no Fathers; and, with regard to the Apostolic School, they tell us we must not go too fast because we have not the work to be able to use all these young subjects. That is indeed a vicious circle.65

In July of that year, 1919, he wrote again. The themes had become perennial: the insignificance of the Society in Australia ("With the time we have been in Australia, we should be in the front; but we have strangely allowed a great number of religious who came long after us to be in front of us"); the inertia of the Sydney Marists with regard to recruiting Australian vocations ("I had the help of Fr. Nicolas from the beginning ... If he had behaved like the others, the project would have fallen through at once"); the need for a permanent group of parish missioners ("For the moment what I want to see brought about is the establishment of a house of missioners apud fideles").66

On 8 September, 1919, James Monaghan wrote to add his weight to Rausch's campaign. A permanent foundation of parish missioners from New Zealand was essential to generate vocations, yet he had "come to the conclusion that some of our Fathers are not in earnest about having missioners who are not French". There was an insidious attitude among some in the Society in Sydney which was completely at odds with the ideals of the order:

I have heard it said again and again: "Where can we put the young Australian Marists who will soon be coming from New Zealand: They cannot be put in Villa Maria or St. Patrick's because they are for the French Fathers". It was said to myself: "You need not expect ever to be in charge at St. Patrick's". Well! dear Father, I do not aspire to that honour; but I do not see why I should be kept from St. Patrick's, or any other House of the Society simply because I am Australian and am not French ... No doubt the war has accentuated this national spirit, which is a curse among confreres making them forget that they are brothers of the same sweet Mother.67

Monaghan was particularly riled by an assumption on the part of some French Marists that there was no point in recruiting Australians, since they would never volunteer for the foreign Missions. He asked to be allowed to personally debunk this myth and show the way to those who came after him:

I think that I should be the first to go and work for God and Mary in the South Seas ... I think it is my duty to be the first Australian to set the example to others. It would be a great honour given to me by Our Lady, and you dear Father.68

Rausch and Monaghan were by no means the only Sydney Marists concerned at the state of the Society in Australia. In July, 1920, Mission procurator Eugene Courtais wrote to the general administration to express his disquiet. The Society was not sufficiently developed in Australia and the obvious way to remedy this would be to get help from New Zealand, yet "it is not wanted at any price".69 He was a Frenchman, and naturally he preferred a French milieu, but certain facts had to be faced:

... we are here in an English country, and we cannot hope (even if it was desirable) to
impose our French mentality ... Our recruits here will be Australians; we can form them, I hope, in Catholic religious life; we will not make them Frenchmen.\textsuperscript{70}

Courtais suggested that the general administration send an official visitor to assess the situation and make recommendations for the advancement of the Society in Australia.

In June of the following year, immediately prior to the general chapter of the Society, Courtais wrote again. He had hoped to be able to speak to the general face to face, but missed election as a delegate to the chapter by a single vote. He was concerned that young Marists returning to Australia after their seminary course in New Zealand would not receive "sympathy and encouragement". There was a strong probability of a disastrous split developing between French Marists and young Australians because of Chevreuil's attitude to New Zealanders:

Rev. Fr. Provincial shows a marked antipathy for the New Zealand Fathers; now our scholastics are formed down there, and in addition there is a great affinity between Australians and New Zealanders.\textsuperscript{71}

Courtais pleaded with the general administration once more to send an official visitor to Australia, and also invited them to interview Joseph Jourda, an Oceanian Province delegate to the general chapter, who would give them insights into Chevreuil's attitudes. Finally, he warned his superiors in Europe that a proposal which Chevreuil was taking to the general chapter for approval, to erect a new building at Villa Maria to accommodate the second novices, did not have the approval of the recently concluded Oceania Provincial chapter and was purely an unsupported initiative of Chevreuil and his vice-Provincial Antonin Moussey.\textsuperscript{72}

Apart from the complaints of Courtais, Rausch and Monaghan about the attitudes of their French Marist confreres in Sydney, and the attitudes of Chevreuil in particular, there were other things to cause the general administration disquiet. One was Chevreuil's suggestion in June, 1920, that in order to save money, an Oceania Provincial chapter not be held in preparation for the 1921 general chapter.\textsuperscript{73} Chevreuil may have been quite sincere in saying that his motivation was to cut expenses, but unfortunately for him the general administration probably interpreted his suggestion as an attempt to circumvent established checks and balances on his exercise of authority as a Provincial; they quickly communicated to him that his proposal was unconstitutional.\textsuperscript{74} A further source of disquiet about Chevreuil was the arrival of reports at the general house in the middle of 1920 that he was mistreating the Third Order Regular sisters living at Villa Maria.\textsuperscript{75} The general administration would clearly have some questions to put to Chevreuil when he came to France in August to attend the 1921 general chapter.

By that time one further submission on the situation of the Society of Mary in Australia would have been received by the general administration. Its author was Bernard Quinn, an Irish born New Zealand Marist who had come to Australia in the second half of 1920 for health reasons; Quinn had tuberculosis and Bright's disease, and spent six months at Gladstone before returning to New Zealand in February, 1921.\textsuperscript{76} On 13 June, 1920, he sent a long submission to the superior general together with an accompanying letter. In his letter Quinn told the general that it was absolutely essential for the New Zealand Province to find avenues for expansion, for the Society had reached saturation point in New Zealand; he suggested Australia as the logical outlet because of its similarity to New Zealand. He believed that the Australian bishops would
give the Society work, and that there was great potential for the Marists in Australia.77

The submission was well written and persuasive. Quinn began by praising the great work of the Province of Oceania in the Pacific Missions; he likewise wished to place on record his gratitude for the "great kindness" and "generous hospitality" he had recently received from his Marist confreres in Australia. But he could not help but be struck by the contrast between "the evident progress of the Society in New Zealand and the want of progress in Australia itself".78 In Australia the Society had only "three parishes and an anaemic apostolic school"; it had come to Australia many years before the Redemptorists and the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, but these latter had developed rapidly, while the Society of Mary remained basically at a standstill. The time had surely come to rectify this situation. It was clearly asking too much of the Provincial of Oceania to charge him with responsibility for developing the Society in Australia when he had so much to occupy him in the Pacific Missions. Quinn proceeded to outline a concrete proposal:

What I humbly suggest is that Villa Maria, Hunters Hill, Sydney, be left to the Island Province of Oceania as headquarters for the Island Provincial, and as the second novitiate and health resort for invalided Fathers from the Islands, and that the other houses in Australia, namely St. Patrick's, Sydney, Mittagong and Gladstone, be erected, because of the exceptional circumstances, into a Vice-Province. In addition I would urge the establishment quam primum of a missionary band for Australia - two or three capable missionaries - to give missions throughout Australia.79

Quinn did not actually specify that his proposed vice-Province would be administered and manned, at least initially, by New Zealanders, but it is clear from his covering letter that this was what he envisaged.

In writing to the general administration only two months before the 1921 general chapter, Quinn clearly hoped that his ideas might somehow find expression in the Chapter's deliberations. His hopes were entirely realised. The superior general appears to have handed on Quinn's submission to the chapter's "Commission des Postulata", the body responsible for bringing proposals to the floor of the chapter to be debated and voted on. On 9 August the Commission's secretary, Joseph Sollier, introduced the following motion:

That it please the Chapter to decide that, without prejudice to the existing interests of the Oceania Province, the Province of New Zealand be authorised to establish houses in Australia.80

Sollier told the chapter that the motion was accompanied by a long submission (clearly Quinn's document) which demonstrated how the Society of Mary had fallen behind other religious orders in Australia, and urged that the New Zealand Province be allowed to establish itself there. The Postulata Commission's motion was obviously a great deal weaker than Quinn's proposal for a vice-Province under New Zealand management; but the motion was clearly inspired by Quinn's submission.

The report of the resulting debate in the official minutes of the chapter gives a summary of ideas presented for and against the motion. Individual speakers are not named, but internal
evidence enables most to be identified. The arguments against seem to have been presented by
one speaker only, and it seems reasonable to assume that this was Chevreuil. The Oceania
Provincial clearly believed himself to be under attack. It was true, he said, that the Oceania
Province had done little to develop the Society in Australia. But in the previous 41 years the
general administration had sent only five fathers to Australia,81 further, the Province of Oceania
had never received a mandate from the general administration to develop the Society in
Australia. The author of the submission was ignorant of the true position in Australia: the
archbishop of Sydney was hostile to all religious and to the establishment of religious houses in
his archdiocese. Australia was a poor recruiting ground for vocations, evidenced by the large
number of Irish priests there, and the recent closure by the Capuchins of their apostolic school for
want of candidates. The motion, if passed, would be a source of conflict between the Oceania
and New Zealand Provinces, for these would be in competition in Australia.

There appears to have been several speakers in favour of the motion. The first told the
chapter that the motion, if passed, would allow the New Zealand Province to take up a recent
offer from the bishop of Lismore to found a boys' college in his diocese. John Holley, the New
Zealand Provincial spoke next, assuring the chapter that neither he nor his fellow delegates from
New Zealand had anything to do with the motion under discussion. They had more than enough
work in New Zealand. They were not interested in usurping the position of the Oceania Province
in Australia; if they came there, their aim would be to work in "fraternal collaboration" with the
Oceania confreres until Australia had enough houses and personnel to become an autonomous
Province.

The third speaker in favour of the motion was the superior general himself, who
challenged Chevreuil's assertion that Australia was a barren land for religious vocations, and told
the chapter that the apostolic school had already furnished several priests. The motion, to allow
the New Zealand Province to establish houses and works in Australia, was approved
unanimously by the chapter.82

Chevreuil left the chapter a disappointed, perhaps bitter man. On his return to Australia
he poured out his hurt in a letter to Raffin.

Are you surprised, Reverend Father, if after the attacks of which I was the object at Lyon,
I have returned to Australia with a heavy heart. I believe I can say that in the exercise of
my functions I have always had the right intention, and have taken measures which
appeared to me to be the best. I have failed, I have displeased. How grateful I would be
if you discharged me from the Provincialate to place me in an unimportant little post,
where I would be able to make myself useful.83

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Chevreuil was made the scapegoat, at the 1921
general chapter and in private meetings with the general administration, for 75 years of non-
development of the Society of Mary in Australia. He was of course an excellent candidate; his
dislike of New Zealanders, his reservations about the suitability of Australians for the religious
life, and his narrow, almost offensive attachment to all things French, marked him out as
someone with the wrong attitudes in the wrong job. Yet his apologia on the floor of the chapter
was essentially valid: the Society of Mary had not developed in Australia simply because the
general administration had never committed itself to such a development and had never sent men
of sufficient quality in sufficient numbers to make such a development possible. Against this background, Chevreuil's manner of acting during his first two years as Provincial was relatively insignificant. Certainly he deserved to be censured for the way his attitude as Provincial and earlier as a Provincial councillor had contributed to the narrow, inward looking stance of the Oceania Provincial administration towards Australia in the immediate post-war years; one suspects, however, that he may have been blamed for a great deal more than this.

In his letters to the general administration in 1920 and 1921, Eugene Courtais had asked for two things: that the New Zealand Province be encouraged to send men to develop the Society in Australia, and that the general administration appoint an official visitor to assess the situation at first hand. Early in March, 1922, he received superior general Raffin's circular letter promulgating the declarations and decisions of the 1921 Chapter; he was delighted with what he read there, and wrote to John Holley on 8 March to tell him so:

We have just got Father General's letter. In regard to what concerns you, you well know that we are very glad to see you coming over to Australia and wish you every success and expansion.84

Courtais did not have to wait long for his second hope to be realised; on the last day of December, 1922, assistant general James Moran left London for an official visitation of Marist houses in New Zealand and Australia.85 He reached Wellington 38 days later, and completed his visitation of New Zealand towards the end of April, 1923. At a meeting with the New Zealand provincial council on the fourth of that month he told the councillors that the general administration was thinking seriously of asking New Zealand to take responsibility for the Society's Australian operations.86

Visitor Moran at Villa Maria Monastery

Moran left Wellington on the Manuka bound for Sydney on 27 April, and reached his destination on 1 May. It was a homecoming: Moran had been born in Beechworth (Victoria) in 1858, where his father was looking for gold. The family left Australia a few years later and Moran grew up in Ireland. Almost 60 years later he had returned to the country of his birth, a fact about which Moran is curiously silent in his correspondence; it appears to have made no impact on him whatsoever.

Moran first visited Villa Maria, perhaps with some trepidation, for it had been a most unhappy house in recent years. When Chevreuil began as Provincial early in 1919, Antonin Moussey was superior and master of second novices; Emile Talon was in his sixth year as parish priest; Louis Rigard, approaching 70, was a curate in the parish, but did not impress Chevreuil as to commitment or capacity:

He has little taste for the ministry, speaks horribly bad English, and is interested only in his animals - he is a farmer before everything. There is also in him intellectual and moral feebleness.87

Karl Flaus, at Villa Maria since leaving the Solomons in 1915, had had little to do since his removal from the St. Joseph's chaplaincy midway through 1917, although he sometimes
preached in the church and conducted the occasional funeral; Leopold Carcenac had only just rejoined the community after several years at St. Patrick’s, replacing Eugene Courtais as chaplain at St. Joseph’s college and house bursar; Peter Rouillac was sometimes at Mittagong, depending on his health; and in a similar position was the disturbed Victor Couderc, whose brooding presence and strange delusions created additional tensions for those who lived at Villa Maria. Three French coadjutor brothers completed the permanent community: Alexander Carron (Br Theodore); Medard Gross; and finally John Mary Pelicot.88

With the death of Talon in November, 1919, Chevreuil felt obliged to assume the mantle of parish priest of Hunters Hill, believing that he had no one at his disposal capable of taking the post. He recalled Julien Huault from Gladstone to be his assistant, and urged the general administration to send someone as soon as possible: "a Father who is pious, serious, whom we can count on absolutely".89 The request was more easily made than fulfilled; in June, 1920, superior general Raffin wrote to explain that the manpower cupboard was bare, and further to express his concern that Chevreuil was neglecting visitation of the island Missions because he was tied to the parish.90 Finally in July, Raffin's appeals to various Marist Provincials bought the semblance of an offer from the American Provincial: Lawrence Kelley, an English-born Marist attached to the American Province, was coming to Europe for a holiday; if Raffin could talk him into going to Australia, the American Provincial would be willing to release him.91 Kelley was interviewed by Raffin in December; the general council minutes indicate that he was willing but cautious, having heard somewhere that Marist houses in Sydney were a closed shop, reserved for Frenchmen.92

When Rieu offered him Kelledy for Sydney, Chevreuil responded positively to the offer. In December, 1920, against his better judgment, he had finally appointed Leopold Carcenac as parish priest, allocating Julien Huault to the chaplaincy at St. Joseph’s College.93 On 12 February, 1921, Chevreuil told Raffin:

We will receive Father Kelledy with gratitude ... His confreres in Novitiate, Bishop Raucaz and Father Laurent remember him fondly ... We know he is a good religious and sympathetic to France.94

One suspects that with Chevreuil, the latter quality may have counted for more than the former. Chevreuil also promised Raffin that Kelley would have full liberty to administer the parish "in the American style", noting that the parish had great need of a little shake-up.95 Kelley finally reached Sydney on 23 May, 1921. Chevreuil reported to Raffin that "we are delighted to have him - the first impressions have been, I believe, very good".96 Twelve months later Chevreuil was considerably less impressed. Writing in April, 1922, concerning a replacement as superior for Moussey, whose six year term expired in November and who was, in any case seriously ill, Chevreuil dismissed Kelley as a candidate. The latter had become "defiant and hostile"; he "loses his temper, is given to invectives, and forms a clique with Rigard and Carcenac, his two assistants".97 In September, Chevreuil was still adamant that Kelley was not a contender for the position: he had already announced that he was returning to America next year and, furthermore, he was not sufficiently committed to keeping the rule, and would contribute to a lessening of religious observance at Villa Maria were he made superior.98 Yet by November everything had changed: in a letter of 29 November, Chevreuil told the general
administration that Kelledy had come to realise the difficulties his departure would cause, and had agreed to stay on as parish priest; furthermore, Kelledy was no longer unacceptable to Chevreuil as superior:

I see with great pleasure that his dispositions have changed - he would be able to be superior, but I would have to make some comments to him on certain points concerning regularity. 99

Exactly what was behind Kelledy's change of mind, and why Chevreuil suddenly found him better disposed and now acceptable as superior are intriguing questions to which there seems no obvious answer. The contrast between Chevreuil's November letter, and the comments he made about Kelledy earlier in the year is, however, remarkable. The general administration named Kelledy to the post of superior in January, 1923, but asked the ailing Antonin Moussey to remain on as master of second novices for a further year. 100

Tensions between Kelledy and Chevreuil were not the only conflict at Villa Maria during these years. As early as mid-1920, reports had been filtering back to the general house that Chevreuil was mistreating the Third Order Regular sisters. Chevreuil defended himself against the allegations in a letter to Raffin on 1 September, 101 and returned to them again in February, 1921. He claimed the five sisters - Monique, Eustelle, Radegonde, Boniface, and Sebastian - were completely unreasonable and always complaining. He had engaged a girl to help them with the washing, and now they wanted an extra girl in the kitchen. The superior, St Monique, was "haughty, authoritarian, and always critical", while Sr. Eustelle had "the most detestable character you could find". 102

Chevreuil was clearly not a man to mince his words. The general administration was little reassured, and early in 1922 commissioned Eugene Courtais to investigate and report back on allegations that Chevreuil had treated the sisters harshly, and that he had also been guilty of improper conduct with certain sisters. Courtais wrote his report on 20 April. As regards the latter allegation he was certain that Chevreuil had not been guilty of any serious impropriety, although he had been indiscreet. He had taken over the role of overseer of the sisters, a function previously performed by the Villa Maria community superior, and insisted on having a long interview with every sister passing through Sydney. He had been imprudent in interviewing Sebastian in her bedroom on one occasion when she was sick, and seemed to make unnecessary visits to the kitchen and the sisters' dining room. Courtais found more substance in the allegations that the sisters had been badly treated under the Chevreuil-Moussey regime. Moussey heard their confessions, but gave them no spiritual direction; they had received no talks on spiritual matters since the death of Duclos. There was a tendency for the sisters to be treated as domestics, and certainly Chevreuil showed little empathy towards them (though Courtais hastened to add that this was not exclusive to the sisters; he seemed to have little empathy for anyone): Chevreuil gave the "impression of a man who despises those whom Divine Providence has less well endowed ... he talks too much, and often says in public things which a superior is not able to say without causing deep hurt". 103 Courtais reported that the sisters had been treated with great insensitivity and arrogance with regard to their mail:

The sisters no longer dare to write, because they fear that their letters may be read, or held back. I do not dispute the right of the Provincial to open letters; but there has been
a lack of discretion. As well, he will open letters and give them, for example, opened to a brother to deliver them, or leave them opened on the kitchen table, at the mercy of everyone passing by.\textsuperscript{104}

Courtais described two particularly distasteful episodes. On one occasion Chevreuil had opened a sister's letter in public, and after reading it, warned her not to denounce him in future correspondence. On another occasion Moussey had given an opened letter to one of the brothers to deliver to the convent and upon being informed by the brother that he did not deliver opened letters, ripped the letter up in a fit of rage.

Courtais concluded that Chevreuil and Moussey had a case to answer, although he acknowledged that the sisters had their limitations too: Sr. Monique, the superior, was "haughty and authoritative", called herself "Mother Monique", and delighted in "playing the Abbess"; Sr. Eustelle was "perhaps a little hysterical"; Sr. Boniface was "one of those persons who, by their difficult character, are the cross of a community"; Radegonde and Sebastian were "good girls, who would easily give satisfaction no matter where". Courtais was uncertain what steps could be taken to improve the sisters' lot, but was convinced that raising the matter with Chevreuil would simply be counterproductive for the sisters.\textsuperscript{105}

So nothing was done, and the relationship between Chevreuil and the sisters deteriorated even further early in 1923. Following news of the appointment of Kelledy to replace Moussey as superior of Villa Maria, Chevreuil, who was clearly incapable of acting rationally towards the sisters, greeted the announcement with the statement, "Father Moussey has been executed, I shall now have an execution of my own".\textsuperscript{106} Storming down to the convent, Chevreuil deposed Monique and installed Radegonde as the new superior. The nuns objected and went on strike; Chevreuil ordered them back to their Mission vicariates but they were still at Villa Maria in May when visitor Moran arrived. He felt powerless to intervene.

I found the situation very difficult: if I restored the sisters, it was a public blame on the Provincial who would probably resign at once: or he would persecute the sisters after my departure; he seems to be spiteful and vindictive. Finally I decided not to interfere but to let matters take their course...\textsuperscript{107}

There were other problems at Villa Maria. The general administration had hoped that despite his poor health, Antonin Moussey would be able to supervise the second novitiate in 1923 while a replacement novice master was found. But when Moran arrived in Sydney early in May, Moussey had been in hospital a month, and was hovering between life and death.\textsuperscript{108} He had endured four major operations in as many years, the most recent being for cancer of the intestines in June, 1921.\textsuperscript{109} Eugene Courtais was therefore installed as master of second novices, although he was himself just out of hospital following an operation for acute appendicitis made more dangerous by his weak heart; Rausch was brought from Mittagong to take over the Mission procure office.\textsuperscript{110}

Antonin Moussey returned to Villa Maria from hospital in June, his working days over, and on 3 July left for Tonga in search of a more congenial climate. He got no further than Fiji, dying in the Suva hospital on 15 August, the same date as his predecessor Dominic Duclos.\textsuperscript{111} During his six years as superior of Villa Maria it would appear that Antonin Moussey had
fulfilled all of Nicolas' worst fears. While Chevreuil regarded him as a "sure and clear guide" for the second novices, and a "man of good counsel", there were few others with a good word to say when Moussey died.\(^\text{112}\) Rausch had long been a critic of Moussey's regime at Villa Maria: in April, 1920, he had told the superior general:

If all those with difficult characters ought to be sent away from the Society, Father Moussey would certainly be the first to be sent - a man who cannot put up with the slightest contradiction even in ordinary conversation, or who is extremely hard on all those who don't agree with his ideas and those who don't like the same things as he does.\(^\text{113}\)

Rausch believed that Moussey exercised an undue influence on Chevreuil, writing in 1920 that, "It is not Father Chevreuil who is Provincial; it is Father Moussey,"\(^\text{114}\) and commenting on Chevreuil in 1923 that "he no longer has Father Moussey to make plans to reform everyone and to put everyone in their place".\(^\text{115}\) Charles Nicolas was struck by the irony of Moussey dying in Suva:

And speaking of Father Moussey, who, according to all his novices, never had a good feeling, a good word for Fiji and its bishop; he comes to ask hospitality from me ... dying in the Suva hospital, and leaving his bones in our cemetery .. what providence!\(^\text{116}\)

Eugene Courtais, a fair and balanced man not given to vindictiveness or spite, could find nothing praiseworthy in Moussey's life beyond a lesson to others against pharisaism:

He who was so harsh for everybody (not only for Fiji), died without anybody's regret. He prevented many from coming to Villa Maria, or (we might say) chased away some who had come, and finally he expelled himself from it. Had he scorn enough for Father Rouillac! and Father Rouillac works unto the end and leaves regret among those with whom he worked; whilst he, himself, spends the last period of his life in almost complete idleness and would have become a burden wherever he could have gone, if God had not mercifully recalled him! ... Is it not a great lesson for us all, to be meek and humble of heart.\(^\text{117}\)

Chevreuil's Provincialate still had two years to run, but Moran's visit had clearly signalled changes for the Society of Mary in Australia. Chevreuil accepted that the Oceania Province would soon be relieved of responsibility for the Society's Australian operations; he nevertheless fought a strong rear-guard action for Villa Maria and St. Patrick's to remain colonies of French Marist influence. On 6 May, 1923, he put his arguments to the superior general; speaking first of Villa Maria, he reminded the general that most of the missionaries coming to Villa Maria would be French:

Would it not be natural that the personnel of Villa Maria be French, at least the master of novices, the superior, and the parish priest? In a religious society, questions of nationality should not exist. But it is a fact of experience that the mixture is too often a source of dissatisfaction and above all quarrels, because of the divergence in temperaments, ideas and sympathies.\(^\text{118}\)
Moving on to St. Patrick's, Chevreuil argued that this house should also remain in the hands of French Marists. He claimed that St. Patrick's was popularly known as "the French Mission", and that people referred to priests there as "the French Priests of St. Patrick's". It was the French Marists who had given St. Patrick's its reputation and special character, and it should be preserved as a French church "for the general public and also for the French Colony of Sydney". Furthermore, the parish was essential to the work of the Oceania Province: it was the ideal place for the operations of the Mission procure, provided a city address for missionaries passing through Sydney, and contributed funds for the island Missions.\(^\text{119}\)

Indicative of Chevreuil's strong belief in the superiority of all things French was his preference, expressed as late as March, 1923, for all candidates joining the Society in Australia to be sent to France for their formation: "If it was possible to send to France all our young men to be formed, this would be, I am sure, a great benefit".\(^\text{120}\)

Chevreuil's world-view was essentially anachronistic, completely out of harmony with the reality of the Society of Mary as an international congregation, with developing foundations in the English speaking world: America, England, Ireland and New Zealand. He failed to grasp the need to adapt the Marist project to new countries and cultures; he continued to look to France as the sole repository of true Marist values. Such an outlook was no longer acceptable to the general administration and his pleas for the preservation of Villa Maria and St. Patrick's as French Marist colonies in Australia were to go unheeded.

After spending six days at Villa Maria, from 2 - 8 May, Moran travelled to Mittagong where he stayed with Monaghan and Rausch until 11 May. He regretted having to take Rausch away from the apostolic school to become procurator in Sydney since he found Monaghan to be a bad mentor for aspirants to the religious life; he foreshadowed a transfer for Monaghan as soon as possible:

Fr Monaghan is a charming confrere, like a big boy, but he has very little idea of the religious life, invites secular priests and even laymen to dinner and has sometimes a funny combination [at meals] for a presbytery to say nothing of a house where apostolics are supposed to be trained. For the moment however nothing can be done.\(^\text{121}\)

**Visitor Moran at St Patrick's**

Moran spent the remainder of his time in Sydney until his departure on 17 May, at St. Patrick's which, like Villa Maria, was a community in turmoil. The most significant thing which had happened there in recent years was the replacement of Piquet as parish priest. Chevreuil had recommended the change in a letter to the superior general on 5 March, 1919, less than a fortnight after becoming Provincial. He pointed out that Piquet had now been superior at St. Patrick's for seven years, one year longer than the period allowed by a new code of canon law promulgated by Benedict XV in June, 1917. It is clear from Chevreuil's letter that his primary motivation for asking for Piquet's removal was not respect for Church law. The law would provide an excuse for Piquet's replacement; as a reason, it trailed behind other considerations. More important for Chevreuil was Piquet's tendency to operate independently of his superiors, and to ignore his assistant priests in any decision-making:
As parish priest, with an all embracing zeal, he completely ignores his assistant priests ... he never consults, his principle is "act, and say nothing".122

Chevreuil suggested to the general administration that Francis Laurent be appointed superior and parish priest in place of Piquet, but that the latter be allowed to remain on as assistant because of his popularity with the parishioners. Before sending the letter, Chevreuil read part of it to Laurent, who was not enthusiastic about the proposal. He expressed his reservations to Raffin early in May; he and Piquet were now working well together following the tensions of earlier years, but he was certain that if he replaced Piquet as parish priest, the relations between them would be very strained because of Piquet's disappointment at being removed from office; further Piquet was extraordinarily popular with the parishioners, who would resent his demotion to such an extent that "his successor's position will be unenviable". Finally, Piquet was in excellent health and was coping well with his workload: "If Fr. Piquet was a worn-out and decrepit man, I could understand that a successor for him would be thought of; but he is stronger than I am and easily does the work of two men".123 Laurent's assessment of Piquet's popularity and his capacity to handle a large workload is borne out by the St. Patrick's wedding registers. In 1919, Piquet performed 104 weddings; his two assistants, Laurent and Carcenac, celebrated six between them; in 1920, Piquet celebrated 123 weddings, while Laurent, the sole curate that year, performed only seven.

Chevreuil was aware of Laurent's reservations, but continued to press the general administration for a decision. Finally, in December, 1919, Raffin wrote to Chevreuil to tell him that the general council had agreed to his request; he enclosed letters of appointment, and left it to Chevreuil to select the most opportune time for retiring Piquet.124 Ironically, by the time the general's letter arrived, Chevreuil was having second thoughts about Laurent's competency. In the latter months of 1919 Laurent had fallen victim to a confidence trick, advancing £715 in successive installments to a female parishioner who subsequently disappeared without trace and was eventually buried as a pauper.125 Chevreuil wrote to Raffin in March to inform him that due to Laurent's foolishness, he had decided to bide his time in replacing Piquet.126

Ultimately it was Piquet's health which forced Chevreuil's hand. In June, 1920, he became seriously ill with bronchitis and pneumonia; he was not expected to live. Towards the end of the month Chevreuil advised Raffin that he would probably have to replace Piquet: "It will possibly be necessary for us to name Fr. Laurent parish priest and superior, but I will wait a little while yet".127 Piquet gradually improved, but at 66 it was a reasonable assumption that his best days were behind him; just prior to Piquet's leaving hospital in the first week of August, Chevreuil appointed Laurent parish priest and superior of St. Patrick's.128

Even had Piquet not fallen ill, it is certain that he would not have survived as parish priest beyond 1920; in the latter months of that year Chevreuil discovered that prior to entering hospital in June, Piquet had been about to begin a further building project at St. Patrick's without the approval of the Provincial council.

On 2 December, 1919, Piquet had written to Archbishop Kelly, asking him to approve a plan to extend the sanctuary of St. Patrick's church and build a new sacristy. The appropriately initialled R.C. Peoples, Kelly's secretary, sent Piquet the archbishop's response the following day:
His Grace desires to state that on account of the declivity and the restricted space at your disposal, he considers that the extension of the sanctuary seems to be of little advantage and very costly.\textsuperscript{129}

But Piquet was not a man to take no for an answer; Kelly left for a visit to Rome in January, 1920, and by sheer persistence Piquet apparently badgered the archdiocesan administrator, Monsignor Moynagh, into granting permission for the project while the archbishop was absent. The reluctant architect, Austin McKay, would later explain how he and Moynagh had both been bulldozed by Piquet's determination:

I have fought against the ideas of Fr. Piquet as much as possible, but without getting him to change. As an architect I was ashamed by this plan drawn according to the directions of Fr. Piquet; as a Catholic I would consider the demolition of a part of the sanctuary as a sacrilege. The sketch of the new sanctuary was referred to the Archbishop who absolutely condemned it, as did his Council. After his departure, Fr. Piquet presented the same plan three times to Mgr. Moynagh, the Administrator of the diocese, who rejected it three times. Pushed by Fr. Piquet, who, if I refused, would have engaged another architect, I went to plead with the Administrator, who, for the sake of peace, gave his consent against his better judgment.\textsuperscript{130}

Meanwhile, Piquet had already obtained the consent of the Provincial council for the project by assuring his fellow councillors that the archbishop was in favour of the proposal; Chevreuil wrote to Raffin on 22 March asking him to endorse the council's approval of the renovations.\textsuperscript{131} However, the Provincial council's approval was for the concept only; Chevreuil and his councillors expected Piquet to submit detailed plans before a final authorisation was given. He neglected to do so: without further reference to the council he had plans drawn, got them approved by the archdiocesan building committee,\textsuperscript{132} and was about to embark on the project when illness intervened. Piquet, fired with compulsive zeal for his beloved St. Patrick's, obviously felt that he had asked for enough permissions; for Chevreuil, it was one further example of Piquet's neglect of consultation and circumventing of religious authority. The Provincial council decided to proceed only with the building of a new church sacristy, and to abandon Piquet's project of extending the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{133}

Already angry at being replaced as parish priest, Piquet reacted badly to curtailment of the sanctuary project. Chevreuil reported in November, 1920, that he had become moody and withdrawn and had begun complaining about his treatment to parishioners:

Disappointed, Fr. Piquet has been sulking for a long time, and speaks to no one, which is painful for his confreres ... He has already turned several people against Fr. Laurent.\textsuperscript{134}
Certainly Piquet was deeply hurt and confused by the twin blows of removal from office and rejection of his sanctuary extension. Because of his obsessive personality, once he set his mind on something, and decided it was necessary and good, he would allow himself no peace until it was accomplished. He sank into self-pity, telling Raffin in mid-November, 1920, that the months since August had been more painful for him than his excommunication by Cardinal Moran. In his own tortured mind Piquet constructed a fantasy version of the history of his defeated project: the archbishop, Chevreuil, Laurent, the architect, had all been enthusiastically in favour of the development; they had given him every encouragement, allowed him to collect money for the work, and then without warning and for no reason had stopped him from proceeding. Writing to Gaston Regis, in April, 1921, Eugene Courtais described Piquet's flight from reality: "I am unable to place any confidence in what he says; he has come to a state of mind which causes him to lie, without realising it perhaps, but it's a fact". Courtais thought that Piquet was under the delusion that he was a law unto himself; he was "a man who has been so often proclaimed a saint that he has ended up believing it and no longer wishes to submit to any authority".

In the years ahead, Piquet's obsession consumed him completely; he wrote an endless stream of letters to the superior general, to Archbishop Kelly, to religious and lay people, begging that his sanctuary extension be given the green light. He became impossible to live with, refusing to speak to his confreres, and criticising Laurent to parishioners, even from the pulpit. He implied that Laurent and Chevreuil were robbers, taking money he had collected for the sanctuary extension and diverting it to building a new church sacristy. Archbishop Kelly was a particular target for Piquet's pleading letters, receiving during 1921 and 1922, a monthly letter on the subject of the new sanctuary. Kelly played the deliveries with a straight bat, dispensing enigmatic platitudes in response to Piquet's increasingly desperate urgings: in December, 1920, he told Piquet "your present contradiction will yield precious spiritual fruits"; the following January his advice was "keep on planning good things for souls and for God's home"; in July, 1921, he suggested "conform to God's will, in all passing things". The superior general was much more direct. In May, 1925, he wrote Piquet a strong rebuke, accusing him of "shameful and intolerable" behaviour towards Laurent, and of persisting in his complaints about the sanctuary in defiance of his superior's decision. Raffin allowed that Piquet had the right to express his view that the decision to shelve the sanctuary project was misguided, but once he had communicated his misgivings to his superior, "your duty was, and is always, to shut up". But Piquet's obsession was not easily controlled; he would continue to work for the day when a more sympathetic superior at St. Patrick's would allow him to translate his dream into reality.

The saga of the sanctuary occupied much space in Moran's report on St. Patrick's to the general council, but he found other things to comment on. He noted that Federation Hall had been sold the previous year for £14,000. Built by Le Rennetel in 1891, the hall had never been a complete success; the rent from the ground-floor shops barely covered the rates on the building, and after the opening of the new school-hall in Harrington Street in 1915, the Federation Hall was no longer in demand for parish functions. Laurent began moves to sell the building in August, 1920, only weeks after becoming parish priest; a buyer finally surfaced in November, 1921, and the last instalment of the £14,000 was paid to the parish in August of the following year. Five thousand pounds was used to liquidate the remaining parish debts, and the balance was invested in mortgages.
Moran also made comments on the Marists serving at St. Patrick's. While noting Piquet's extraordinary stubbornness in the sanctuary affair, he also drew attention to his unbounded dedication to the poor and the dying, and his tireless commitment to the confessional. He thought Francis Laurent zealous, but also rather brusque and excessively attached to his own ideas. Victor Thierry, who had come to St. Patrick's in April, 1919, was "a charming confere when he is in a good mood", with great facility in English. Thomas McBreen, ordained in New Zealand the previous December, had made a good impression in the first months of his priesthood; "He works well - his sermons especially suggest that he will be a good preacher". Finally, Moran was clearly impressed with procurator Courtais: "Everything is perfectly ordered - his accounts are admirable, he would appear to have a lot of common sense".149

Gladstone Parish

The visitor left Sydney on 17 May, 1923, to return to Europe via New Zealand and America. He did not make the long journey to Gladstone. Had he done so he would have found Leopold Carcenac installed as parish priest, with Aloysius Jeffcott as assistant. There had been a considerable turnover of personnel in recent years. Following the recall of Alphonse Ginsbach early in 1919, Julien Huault cared for the parish on his own until December, when Karl Flaus travelled north to replace him.150 After only ten days at Gladstone Flaus suffered a severe heart attack, and Huault accompanied him to the Mater hospital in Brisbane. Returning to the parish, Huault waited until mid-January to pass the torch to the new parish priest, James Monaghan, while Courtais was sent hurriedly to Brisbane to care for Flaus; the latter had recovered sufficiently to make the trip to Sydney in the first week of January.151 Following medical advice that he could benefit from a warmer climate, Flaus was sent back to Gladstone in February to keep Monaghan company.152 He eventually died in Rockhampton on 29 December, 1920.153 For the latter months of the year Monaghan had a second convalescing confere in his presbytery, the Irish-born New Zealand Marist, Bernard Quinn; it is most likely that the inspiration and the ideas for Quinn's submission to the 1921 general chapter came from these months spent with Monaghan at Gladstone.154

In February, 1921, the newly ordained Aloysius Jeffcott was sent to work with Monaghan. Chevreuil visited Gladstone in March. He reported to the general administration that the parishioners were delighted with Monaghan, who was "dedicated, zealous and always in good humour". He had recently been awarded a Master of Arts degree from Sydney University, which "lifthed him up on a pedestal" in the eyes of his flock.155 But in the context of a beleaguered Provincial administration, under siege from the thwarted Peter Piquet, Monaghan pressed the wrong button in October, when he informed Chevreuil that he had commissioned plans for a new church. It would be built in stages, would cost £12,000, and would be dedicated to the Holy Spirit.156 Monaghan in fact had been seduced by Cardinal Moran's woolly claim that the Spanish explorer De Quiros had landed at Gladstone in 1606, and had consecrated the continent to the Holy Spirit.157 The church would be a fitting memorial to the celebration of the first Mass on Australian soil by De Quiros' chaplains. Exactly what Chevreuil thought of Moran's historical confection is not known; his concerns were more concrete: the figure of £12,000 terrified him. He told Raffin that Monaghan was "an impetuous young man who doubts nothing"; Chevreuil doubted a great deal, in particular the capacity of the 300 parishioners of Gladstone to pay for the church. He had no hesitation in smothering the idea as quickly as possible.158
Monaghan was moved back to Sydney at the end of 1921; with Rausch taking long-service leave in Europe in 1922, Monaghan was needed for the juniorate. His replacement was 53 year old Francis Dupont, lately arrived in Australia from Suva, where he had been acting as cathedral administrator. The details are obscure, but he seems to have had some sort of falling out with his bishop, the ex-Provincial Charles Nicolas, and found his way to Sydney. He came to Gladstone in the middle of 1921, was appointed parish priest at the beginning of 1922 and returned to Suva early in 1923 following a rapprochement with Nicolas.159

The new parish priest, Leopold Carcenac, was soon under pressure from Bishop Shiel to erect a new church; the church-school built by Charles Murlay early in the century had become riddled with white ants and wood-worm. The Provincial council gave Carcenac approval to proceed provided the Society of Mary was not liable for any debt, and that work on the church not begin until £1,000 of the estimated £2,000 costing was in hand.160 Construction commenced early in 1924, and the church was officially blessed and opened on 16 November.161

Carcenac and Jeffcott were destined to remain together for several years, bringing some stability to the parish staff at Gladstone, though the thought of their being effectively outside the orbit of his authority clearly kept Chevreuil awake at nights:

I am never at peace nor reassured on the question of the two Fathers who are at Gladstone, away from all possible control. Fr. Carcenac absolutely lacks judgement, his assistant is a lightweight sort, and seems to be ignorant of the obligations of religious life.162

The General Administration Acts

The general council considered Moran's report on Australia on 19 and 22 October, 1923. In view of Chevreuil's unsatisfactory attitudes and bizarre behaviour, some consideration was given to replacing him as Provincial before the expiry of his term at the end of 1924. It was finally decided not to do so, but the council firmly committed itself to detaching the houses of the Society in Australia from the Oceania Province and making them part of New Zealand. Villa Maria would be the sole exception.163

The council wasted little time in moving to translate its resolve into action. At its meeting of 23 April, 1924, the council briefed assistant general Dubois on the steps he should take on his forthcoming visitation of Australia and the Pacific Missions to bring the works of the Society in Australia under the ambit of the New Zealand Province.164 The tamer resolution of the 1921 general chapter that the New Zealand Province be authorised to establish communities in Australia, without prejudice to the works of the Province of Oceania, had been overtaken by the developing resolve of the general administration for a successful implantation of the Society in Australia.

Dubois arrived in Sydney early in June, 1924, in company with Charles O'Reilly, who had just replaced John Holley as New Zealand Provincial. He met on two occasions with Chevreuil, O'Reilly, Rausch, Laurent and Kelledy, and reported to the superior general in a letter of 12 June. The group had reached broad agreement that the houses of the Society in Australia
should be constituted a vice-Province under New Zealand tutelage; Villa Maria monastery and grounds would remain the property of the Oceania Province, and a new residence would be built at Hunters Hill to accommodate parish missioners and the priests caring for the parish, which would become part of the new vice-Province. Chevreuil and Laurent were still of the opinion that St. Patrick's should remain with Oceania. Laurent in particular seemed antagonistic to the vice-Province proposal and had about him an air of discouragement and defeat.165

Commenting on the same meetings in a letter to assistant general Moran, Charles O'Reilly also noted Laurent's lack of enthusiasm. He speculated that Laurent's opposition was based on a fear that a change of administration might result in Piquet being authorised to complete his sanctuary extension; having spent four traumatic years resisting Piquet's demands, the prospect of a change of policy was potentially soul-destroying for Laurent.166 According to O'Reilly, Laurent also believed that the New Zealanders had been trying to get their hands on St. Patrick's for a long time, and saw the vice-Province proposal as a triumph for New Zealand imperialism. Perhaps Laurent had somehow heard about the attempt of O'Shea and Regnault in 1908 to win St. Patrick's for the New Zealand Province;167 O'Reilly, clearly, remained blissfully ignorant:

I am certain that no New Zealander ever sighed for St. Patrick's. The argument that there is a "prise de possession" on the part of New Zealand is absurd.168

Having sent his report of 12 June to the general house, Dubois left Sydney on 19 June with Laurence Kelledy as his companion, for a visitation of the North Solomons.169 The report would cause considerable consternation at the general house, for Dubois had apparently misunderstood his mission. The general council minutes tell the story:

Unhappily an unconscious error has influenced all the discussion: they have spoken, and the report of Fr. Dubois speaks, of a Vice Province of Australia, more or less dependent, but also more or less independent of New Zealand; whereas the idea of the Superior General and the Council was for an attachment pure and simple of Australia to the Province of New Zealand.170

Marist secretary general Jules Grimal hastily prepared a six page memo for Dubois, explaining that there had been a misunderstanding, and commenting on concrete issues involved in the transfer of the Australian houses from Oceania to New Zealand. The general administration was adamant that St. Patrick's would not remain with the Oceania Province; to soften the blow it added riders that the Missions procurator would be allowed to remain there, and that travelling missionaries must always be welcome as guests.171 The document was waiting for Dubois when he returned from the Solomons in October.172 He quickly cabled O'Reilly, who responded that the amended proposal of incorporation of the Australian houses of the Society into the New Zealand Province was entirely acceptable.173

Superior general Rieu moved quickly to complete the transfer. On 13 November, 1924, he received final approval from the Vatican Congregation for Religious to proceed; an "Act of Transfer" was drawn up specifying in concrete detail the implications of the proposed changes, and on 25 January, 1925, Rieu affixed his signature and seal; the Marist Houses in Australia, excepting Villa Maria monastery, were to become part of the Province of New Zealand from 1 April.174
The transfer coincided with the end of the stormy Provincialate of John Baptist Chevreuil. His predecessor, Charles Nicolas, had come to realise by the end of his term that the growth of the Society in Australia could only come about through a transfusion of men from New Zealand. The lessons of the previous 70 years had finally been learned: that Europe would never be able to supply enough men to successfully implant the Society in Australia, and that the sick, disgruntled, or broken individuals who were at the disposal of the Oceania Provincial for work in Australia would always limit the effectiveness of the Society's efforts. Nicolas came to realise this; Chevreuil constantly denied it. He told the general administration that New Zealand Marists were not needed in Australia, that Villa Maria and St. Patrick's must ever remain colonies of French Marist culture, that the Australian character was poorly suited to priesthood and religious life. The challenging of Chevreuil's attitudes by other Sydney Marists, particularly Rausch, Monaghan and Courtais, alerted the general administration that all was not well in Australia; reports about Chevreuil's rough and uncompromising manner and his strange behaviour towards the Third Order sisters at Villa Maria, did nothing to allay their anxieties. Ironically, Chevreuil's disastrous Provincialate may have hastened the very thing he sought to prevent: a decline in French Marist influence in Sydney and the opportunity for the New Zealand Province to establish itself in Australia. The very inflexibility of his attitudes and the force of his convictions made them all the more obvious, and all the more unrealistic and unacceptable in the eyes of the general administration.

It was during Chevreuil's Provincialate, also, that the manpower limitations of the Oceania Province in Australia were most dramatically exposed. He spent his first 18 months in office as acting parish priest of Hunters Hill because there was no one in Sydney capable of taking the position. At St. Patrick's, Peter Piquet required long periods of hospitalisation from June to August, 1920; in January and February, 1923; and again in May, 1924. Francis Laurent required operations for hernia and gallstones towards the end of 1923. Eugene Courtais had chronic heart trouble, and was unwell in September-October, 1920, was hospitalised for eight days in July, 1922, and nearly died early in 1923 with an inflamed appendix and acute bronchitis; again Chevreuil had to step into the breach, acting as procurator for three months early in 1923, and having to curtail visitation of the island Missions. When staff members became sick at St. Patrick's there was literally no one to replace them. The medical record was equally grim at Villa Maria. Antonin Moussey was a frequent hospital patient in the years 1919-22, and was clearly unfit for work when he was asked at the beginning of 1923 to put in one more year as master of second novices. With the men at its disposal in Sydney the Oceania Province was hardly capable of handling existing works; there was no likelihood that it would ever be in a position to effectively develop the Society of Mary in Australia.

Chevreuil's unfortunate Provincialate came to a sad, almost pathetic conclusion early in 1925. He was a tired man, scarred and discouraged by conflict and dispute, physically weakened through a heart condition diagnosed the year before. He found it hard to climb stairs. He told Rieu in May, 1924: "I am a Chevreuil [French: male deer] who is no longer able to run, but I have run enough". He pleaded not to be sent back to the islands; he was too old, had been in Sydney since 1908, and would find it too difficult to begin again. He asked to be allowed to end his days at Villa Maria as house bursar. The general administration clearly thought his presence in Sydney would not be conducive to the smooth functioning of the new arrangements; he was told to report to the vicar apostolic of New Caledonia as soon as his replacement reached Sydney. He had one last desperate card to play; on 6 January, 1925,
wrote to Rieu to say that he had just heard that the Marist sisters at Woolwich needed a chaplain; might he be allowed to offer himself for the position? The general thought not; Chevreuil left Sydney for New Caledonia on 11 March. He died there on 29 December, 1943.

ENDNOTES CHAPTER 6

1 Nicolas to Raffin, 30 December, 1918, APM OP 418.
2 MPV, 13 November, 1918.
3 Chevreuil to Regis, 5 March, 1919, OMPA E1.1.
4 Ibid.
Chevreuil to Regis, 1 February, 1918, OMPA E1.1.

Marion to Raffin, 31 January, 1909, AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Regis, 27 January, 1910, AMPA B140/3.

Chevreuil to Gonnet, 26 March, 1917, OMPA E1.1.

Chevreuil to Dupont, 4 December, 1917, OMPA E1.1. Daniel Mannix was Catholic archbishop of Melbourne

Chevreuil to Thoral, 8 August, 1918, OMPA E1.1. International Workers of the World, a socialist-anarchist movement with an anti-war agenda. The Irish delegates were Home Rule advocates visiting Australia to shore up support after the 1916 Easter Uprising.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 5 May, 1919, APM OP418.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 8 July, 1919, APM OP418.

Raffin to Chevreuil, 15 July, 1919, OMPA A1.1.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 3 May, 1919, APM OP418.

Ibid.

"Among the unbaptised". ie. overseas missionary work

Chevreuil to Raffin, 3 May, 1919, APM OP418.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 8 July, 1919, APM OP418.

Chevreuil to Regnault, 14 May, 1912, NZMPA IPC 2 F48.

Chevreuil to Collector of Customs, 23 November, 1915, OMPA E1.1.

Quoted in Chevreuil to Raffin, 8 July, 1919, APM OP 418.

Kelly to Moussey, 14 February, 1919, AMPA C85.05

PCM, 9 November, 1905.

Marion to Raffin, 9 December, 1905, copy AMPA B140/1.

Marion to Duclos, 29 January, 1906, copy AMPA B140/1.

Chevreuil to Regis, 28 June, 1911, OMPA E1.1.

Nicolas to Vidal, 28 October, 1913, RCAF PMB 445(2).
28 Chevreuil to Regis, 22 March, 1918, OMPA E1.1.

29 Rausch to Chevreuil, 4 March, 1919, AMPA C85.05.

30 See Annual Reports (1919), AMPA C85.07.

31 "Rule of the House", AMPA C85.13.

32 Chevreuil to Raffin, 24 August, 1919, APM OP 418.


34 Chevreuil to Raffin, 11 November, 1919, APM OP 418.

35 Chevreuil to Raffin, 26 November, 1919, APM OP 418.

36 Shiel to Chevreuil, 4 December, 1919, OMPA A9.1.

37 Chevreuil to Ginsbach, 12 January, 1920, OMPA A9.1.


39 Ginsbach to Chevreuil, 7 March, 1920 and 28 October, 1921, OMPA A9.1.

40 Ginsbach to Chevreuil, 28 October, 1921, OMPA A9.1.

41 Ginsbach to Chevreuil, 8 November, 1921, OMPA A9.1.

42 Chevreuil to Raffin, 15 December, 1921 and 2 February, 1922, APM OP 418.


44 Ginsbach to Chevreuil, 21 November, 1923, OMPA A9.1.

45 Nicolas to Courtais, 22 September, 1919, OMPA D5.31.

46 Nicolas to Raffin, 12 July, 1917, APM OP 418.

47 Chevreuil to Raffin, 1 September, 1920, APM OP 418.

48 Rausch to Chevreuil, 7 December, 1920, AMPA C85.05; Courtais to Rausch, 21 December, 1920, OMPA E1.30.

49 Holley to Raffin, 9 August, 1920, APM 2418.

50 Raffin to Chevreuil, 10 June, 1920, copy AMPA B145; Holley to Raffin, 9 August, 1920, APM Z418.

51 Chevreuil to Raffin, 21 April, 1920, APM OP 418; Chevreuil to Raffin, 5 May, 1920,
Chevreuil to Raffin, 14 March, 1921, APM OP 418.

PCM, 8 February, 1921. Raffin was far from happy with the small number of pupils at Mittagong in 1921. On 15 April he wrote to Chevreuil to express "surprise and pain", and to indicate his belief that the Society's members in Sydney were insufficiently aware of the need to recruit locally. He was, in fact, incredulous at the lack of progress: "With the number of Catholic children who attend our schools at St. Patrick's, with one of our Fathers chaplain to the large and flourishing school of the Marist Brothers, we have only one pupil from Australia at the Apostolic School at Mittagong!" (Raffin to Chevreuil, 15 April, 1921, OMPA A1.1.)

Chevreuil to Raffin, 15 December, 1921, APM OP 418; Courtais to Dupont, 2 February, 1922, OMPA E1.32.

PCM, 3 January, 1922 and 20 November, 1922.

PCM, 2 January, 1923; Chevreuil to Rieu, 30 March, 1923, APM OP 418; Rausch to Lambotin, 3 June, 1923, OMPA E1.34; Callaghan, Alive in Memory, pp.154-155.

Oreve to Rausch (?), 29 December, 1922, AMPA C85.05; Courtais to Oreve, 10 February, 1923, OMPA E1.34.

PCM, 20 November, 1922 and 27 August, 1923.

PCM, 7 November, 1923.

Nicolas to Smyth, 5 November, 1915, NZMPA IPC 2 F64-68.

Chevreuil to Rieu, 27 May, 1924, APM OP 418.

The students at Greenmeadows at the end of 1924 were John Dynan, Austin Woodbury, David Murray and Tony Bergin; a fifth, Steve McIsaac, was dismissed at the end of 1924 or early in 1925 for unsatisfactory progress in studies.

Rausch to Raffin, 8 September, 1917, copy AMPA C80.05.

Rausch to Raffin, 2 February, 1919, copy AMPA C80.05.

Rausch to Raffin, 18 July, 1919, copy AMPA C85.05. *Apud fideles* = "among the faithful".

Monaghan to Raffin, 8 September, 1919, copy AMPA C85.05.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Courtais to Raffin, 14 June, 1921, APM OP 458.

Ibid

Chevreuil to Raffin, 10 June, 1920, APM OP 418.


Chevreuil to Raffin, 1 September, 1920, APM OP 418.

Holley to Raffin, 20 July, 1920, APM Z418; Courtais to Rausch, 19 January, 1921, OMPA E1.30.

Quinn to Raffin, 13 June, 1921, APM Z600/61.580.26.

B.L. Quinn, "Submission to 1921 General Chapter", APM 323.481. The submission is in French; an English text which differs slightly from the French version is in the New Zealand Marist Provincial archives: a copy of this is at AMPA B103. The quotations are from the English version.

Ibid.

"Neuvienne Seance du Chapitre General", 1921 General Chapter, APM 323.452.

Chevreuil is referring to newly-ordained priests sent directly to Australia from Europe, as opposed to those who came to Australia following periods in the Mission territories. The five priests referred to are probably Le Rennetel, Ginisty, Piquet, Suleau, and Carcenac.

"Commission des Postulata", 1921 General Chapter, APM 323.468. See also circular letter of Superior General Raffin, n.106 (27 December, 1921), copy AMPA A230.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 15 December, 1921, APM OP 418.

Courtais to Holley, 8 March, 1922, OMPA E1.32.

Moran to Rieu, 15 February, 1923, APM 351.5.

New Zealand Provincial council minutes, 4 April, 1923, NZMPA uncatalogued minute books.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 29 June, 1920, APM OP 418.

Br. Medard was not destined to stay at Villa Maria much longer. In 1920 he was shipped back to France for insubordination. (See Chevreuil-Raffin, 17 December, 1919, APM OP 418.)
PCM, 25 November, 1919; Chevreuil to Raffin, 26 November, 1919, APM OP 418.

Raffin to Chevreuil, 10 June, 1920, copy AMPA B145.

MPV, 5 December, 1920.

Ibid., MPV 29 March, 1921; PCM, 15 December, 1920.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 12 February, 1921, APM OP 418.

Ibid.

Ibid

Chevreuil to Raffin, 30 May, 1921, APM OP 418.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 5 April, 1922, APM OP 418.

Chevreuil to Rieu (?), 29 September, 1922, APM OP 418.

Chevreuil to Rieu, 29 November, 1922, APM OP 418.

Dubois to Chevreuil, 9 January, 1923, APM OP 418.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 1 September, 1920, APM OP 418.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 12 February, 1921, APM OP 418.

Courtais to Raffin, 20 April, 1922, APM OP 418.

Ibid. Religious superiors had the right to open their subjects’ incoming and outgoing mail.

Ibid.

Moran to Rieu, 8 May, 1923, APM 351.5.

Ibid.

Courtais to Boch, 10 May, 1923, E1.34; Courtais to Regis, 23 May, 1923, E1.34.

Courtais to Meyer, 17 June, 1921, E1.30.

Courtais to Suas, 1 May, 1923, OMPA E1.34; Courtais to Thoral, 16 May, 1923, E1.34.

Rausch to Regis, 2 August, 1923 and 27 August, 1923, OMPA E1.35.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 24 August, 1919, APM OP 418; Chevreuil to Rieu, 29 November, 1922, APM OP 418.
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113 Rausch to Raffin, 15 April, 1920, copy AMPA B85.05

114 Ibid.

115 Rausch to Nicolas, 20 November, 1923, OMPA E1.35.

116 Nicolas to Rausch, 19 August, 1923, OMPA D5.31.

117 Courtais to Nicolas, 10 September, 1923, RCAF PMB 438.

118 Chevreuil to Rieu, 6 May, 1923, APM OP 418.

119 Ibid. The underlinings are Chevreuil's.

120 Chevreuil to Rieu, 30 March, 1923, APM OP 418.

121 Moran to Rieu, 17 May, 1925, APM 351.5.

122 Chevreuil to Raffin, 5 March, 1919, APM OP 418.

123 Laurent to Raffin, 5 May, 1919, copy AMPA C215.05.

124 Raffin To Chevreuil, 28 December, 1919, OMPA D1.1.

125 Laurent to Raffin, 12 November, 1919, copy AMPA C215.05.

126 Chevreuil to Raffin, 22 March, 1930, APM OP 418.

127 Chevreuil to Raffin, 29 June, 1920, APM OP 418.

128 Chevreuil to Raffin, 4 August, 1920, APM OP 418.

129 Peoples to Piquet, 3 December, 1919, AMPA C220.05.5.

130 Quoted in Chevreuil to Raffin, 18 November, 1920, APM OP 418; see also Courtais to Regis, 1 April, 1921, OMPA E1.30.

131 Chevreuil to Raffin, 22 March, 1920, APM OP 418.

132 Peoples to Piquet, 26 April, 1920, AMPA C220.05.5.

133 Chevreuil to Raffin, 17 November, 1920, APM OP 418. The new sacristy seems to have been completed late in 1921, at which time some minor changes were made to the front section of the sanctuary. See Piquet to Raffin, 23 January, 1923, copy AMPA C220.05.5.

134 Ibid.

135 Piquet to Raffin, 9 November, 1920, copy AMPA C215.05.
183

136 Piquet to Raffin, 28 February, 1921, copy AMPA C215.05.

137 Courtais to Regis, 1 April, 1921, OMPA E1.30.

138 Ibid.

139 Chevreuil to Raffin, 12 February, 1921, APM OP 418; Moran Report, ND, APM S331; Rieu to Piquet, 22 May, 1925, copy AMPA 250.05.5.

140 Piquet to Raffin, 23 January, 1922, copy AMPA C215.05. In fairness to Piquet it should be stated that there was a genuine problem here. He had collected £5,000 for the twin projects of extending the sanctuary and building a new sacristy: would the intention of the donors be respected if the money was used exclusively for a new sacristy? Laurent discussed the matter with Archbishop Kelly, and it was eventually decided to use the bulk of the money for the sacristy, but to spend some of it on minor improvements to the sanctuary, including re-flooring. (See Laurent's notes following interview with Kelly, 16 December, 1920, SPA F210/D2.)

141 Piquet to Kelly, 14 December, 1920, SAA Marist Box.

142 Piquet to Kelly, 18 January, 1921, SAA Marist Box.

143 Piquet to Kelly, 26 July, 1921, SAA Marish Box.

144 Raffin to Piquet, 22 May, 1925, copy AMPA C220.05.01.

145 Moran Report, ND, APM S331.

146 Laurent to Cattaneo, 2 September, 1920, SPA F245/D1.

147 Moynagh to Laurent, 26 August, 1920, SPA F245/D2.

148 Laurent to Kelly, 18 May, 1922, SAA Marist Box.

149 Moran Report, ND, APM S331.

150 Chevreuil to Raffin, 26 November, 1919 and 17 December, 1919, APM OP 418.

151 PCM, 22 December, 1919, OMPA C1; Courtais to Holley, 13 January, 1920, OMPA E1.28.

152 Chevreuil to Raffin, 19 February, 1920, APM OP 418.

153 Courtais to Regnault, 11 January, 1921, OMPA E1.30.

154 For Quinn's submission to the 1921 chapter, see Chapter 5.

155 Chevreuil to Raffin, 14 March, 1921, APM OP 418.
156 MPV, 15 November, 1921.
157 See Patrick Francis Moran, History of the Catholic Church in Australasia, Sydney, ND [1895], pp.12-14; Monaghan to Raffin, 23 September, 1921, copy AMPA C245.05.
158 Chevreuil to Raffin, 5 March, 1922, APM OP 418.
159 PCM, 3 January, 1922; Dupont to Courtais, 3 July, 1921, copy AMPA C245.05; Dupont to Nicolas, 18 September, 1922, RCAF 14.3.3; Dupont to Nicolas, 12 December, 1922, RCAF 14.3.3A.
160 PCM, 29 August, 1923; Dubois to Chevreuil, 29 October, 1923, OMPA A1.2.
162 Chevreuil to Rieu, 26 June, 1924, APM OP 418.
163 MPV, 22 October, 1923.
164 MPV, 23 April, 1924.
165 Dubois to Rieu, 12 June, 1924, APM S203.2.
166 O'Reilly to Moran, 7 July, 1924, copy AMPA B216.50.
167 See above, Chapter 5.
168 O'Reilly to Moran, 7 July, 1924, copy AMPA B216.50
169 Rausch to Bergeron, 4 July, 1924, OMPA E1.35.
170 MPV, 29 July, 1924.
171 Grimal, "Plan of Transfer", ND (2 August, 1924), copy AMPA B211.
172 Dubois to Rieu, 28 October, 1924, copy AMPA B211.
173 Ibid.
174 "Actus Authenticus Translationis Quatuor Domuum Australiae a Provincia Missionum Oceaniae ad Provinciam Novae-Zealandiae", copy and English translation, AMPA B211.
175 FJ, 24 June, 1920, p.23; 5 August, 1920, p.21; Rausch to Gonnet, 28 May, 1924, OMPA E1.35.
176 Rausch to Nicolas, 20 November, 1923, OMPA E1.35.
177 Courtais to Aubin, 6 October, 1920, OMPA E1.29; Courtais to Bellwald, 11 July, 1922, OMPA E1.33; Courtais to Suas, 1 May, 1923, OMPA E1.34.
178 Chevreuil to Rieu, 27 May, 1924, APM OP 418.
179 Chevreuil to Rieu, 27 June, 1924, APM OP 418.
180 Rieu to Chevreuil, 12 October, 1924, OMPA A1.1.
181 Chevreuil to Rieu, 6 January, 1925, APM OP 418.
182 Rausch to Durand, 10 March, 1925, OMPA E1.35; Callaghan, *Alive in Memory*, p.250.
On 19 March, 1925, Eugene Courtais returned to Sydney after a trip to Europe to regain his health and visit his aging mother. He was, and he was not, the new Provincial of Oceania. In 1923 an extraordinary general chapter of the Marist congregation had been held to confirm the vicar-general, Ernest Rieu, as head of the Society following the death of John Claude Raffin the previous year. At this chapter, not attended by delegates from Oceania for reasons of distance and expense, a decision was taken to suppress the Province of Oceania, and attach the various Mission vicariates to existing Provinces of the Society; it was thought that this would ensure that the Mission territories would have an ongoing source of manpower and financial support. In anticipation of this vote being put into effect, the general council, on 11 October, 1924, appointed Courtais to the old post of visitor of the Missions, though with all the powers of a Provincial as exercised by his predecessors. The council also appointed Courtais to the positions of master of second novices and superior of Villa Maria, anticipating that his administrative workload would be considerably reduced once the allocation of Mission vicariates to ‘home’ Provinces was effected.

Despite being asked by the superior general to wait in Sydney until Courtais’ arrival, John Baptist Chevreuil had left for New Caledonia in the week prior to Courtais’ return. Courtais was disappointed with Chevreuil, but conciliatory:

Now, dear confrere, you have decided not to see me on my return: I sincerely regret this attitude. You have without doubt wished to avoid all explanation about what has gone before. Ah well! Know well concerning the past that everything is well and truly buried as far as I'm concerned.

The plan of transfer of the Australian Marist houses to the Province of New Zealand envisaged that an additional residence would be built at Hunters Hill, on land specially allocated on the Gladesville Road side of the church, to house the parish staff and a band of New Zealand parish missioners. Until this could be accomplished, the parish staff were to continue to live at Villa Maria. Therefore, when Courtais returned to Villa Maria early in 1925, Laurence Kelley and Thomas Boyle were still part of the monastery community, and would remain so for some time; Louis Rigard, Julien Huault, and Victor Couderc were also in residence, and also two coadjutor brothers, John Mary Pelicot, and Theodore (Alexander) Carron.

Courtais’ first task was to supervise the formal transfer of the Australian houses to New Zealand on 1 April, but this would have required little effort. The Oceania Province Marists working in Australia simply remained at their posts; they were now considered to be under the authority of the New Zealand Provincial unless they had specifically asked to stay with the Oceania Province; from 1 April, only Rigard, Huault, Couderc, Thierry, Rausch, and the two coadjutor brothers remained under the authority of Eugene Courtais.

A second novitiate commenced at Villa Maria in June, 1925, and Courtais was occupied
as master of novices until early in November. At the conclusion of the novitiate he left for an official visitation of Fiji. This would be Courtais' pattern for the next few years: a novitiate from May to November at Villa Maria, followed by visitation of one or more Mission vicariates, returning to Sydney in the early months of the new year. In 1928 there was no second novitiate, Courtais being required to attend the general chapter of the order in July, held for the first time in Rome, where the general administration had moved in 1925. Here he succeeded in reversing the decision of the 1923 chapter to suppress the Province of Oceania; the plan to allocate the various Marist Mission vicariates to ‘home’ Provinces was abandoned, and Courtais regained the former title of Provincial of Oceania. With the decision to retain the Oceania Province as a separate entity, Courtais was relieved of the responsibility of supervising second novitiates; none was held in 1929, and at the end of that year Joseph Bertin, a 50 year old French-born missionary sent to Villa Maria in August, 1927, because of a health breakdown in the Solomons, was appointed novice master.

When Courtais left Sydney in May, 1928 for the general chapter, he took the demented Victor Couderc with him. It had been decided to place Couderc in a psychiatric hospital conducted by the St. John of God brothers in Lyon. Courtais had a difficult voyage: between Sydney and Fremantle Couderc behaved so badly that he alarmed other passengers and Courtais was fearful that the captain might off-load him before leaving Australia. Having survived this threat, he later had to contend with an earnest ship's doctor who insisted that Couderc be given the freedom of the ship; the doctor assessed Couderc as perfectly normal, and saw no need to keep him locked in his cabin. However Couderc eventually became violent and "the Doctor had to shut him up, to his great mortification and humiliation". To Courtais' relief, Couderc walked peacefully down the gangway when the ship berthed at Marseilles; he was taken by train to Lyon and "quietly entered the St. John of God hospital, where he is now for the term of his natural life".

In the first half of 1929 Courtais initiated a major building project at Villa Maria, adding an additional wing at right angles to the original sandstone monastery, and replacing a set of antiquated wooden outhouses with internal bathrooms and toilets. He had applied to the general administration in August, 1927, for permission to begin the work and, before doing so, to demolish a sandstone "gatehouse" which had fallen into disrepair. His proposal was to use the stone from the gatehouse in the construction of the new wing, to provide a matching facing with the stone of the original monastery. He told the superior general that the new wing would incorporate a modern kitchen on the ground floor and accommodation for domestics and Third Order sisters upstairs. The existing kitchen, built by Armand Olier in 1903 and, according to the practice of the time, constructed at a distance from the main building to minimise the risk of fire, was antiquated and inconvenient.

Early in 1928 Courtais received permission to proceed, but before doing so wrote to the New Zealand Provincial, the recently-appointed David Kennedy. A suggestion had been floated, initially it would seem in a letter of 21 April, 1928, from procurator John Rausch to assistant general Dubois, that the Oceania Province sell Villa Maria monastery to the New Zealanders for use as a parish presbytery and as a base for parish missioners, and that the Missions Province establish itself elsewhere in Sydney. Courtais wanted to sort the matter out with Kennedy before commencing his extensions. He was definite that the Oceania Province would not be leaving Hunters Hill:
I am not considering moving from Villa Maria; we have here an ideal place for the Missionary Fathers and Sisters, a place such as could not be found anywhere around Sydney nowadays; we shall not leave it.\textsuperscript{11}

However, Courtais' commitment was to the site, not so much to the monastery buildings themselves. If Kennedy wanted to buy the old buildings at a price sufficient to allow the Oceania Province to build new quarters elsewhere in the grounds, he could have them.\textsuperscript{12} Kennedy decided to let the offer pass, and encouraged Courtais to proceed with the new wing: "I think you are quite right to remain at Villa Maria, and that it would be better for us to build our own house. So you may as well go on with your improvements".\textsuperscript{13} By May, 1929, the work was well under way, although Courtais was lamenting that a timber strike was slowing the project down; he nevertheless hoped that the building would be finished by the end of June.\textsuperscript{14}

During the years of Courtais' Provincialate the Third Order sisters' convent in the grounds of Villa Maria continued its long history of strife and division. When Courtais arrived at Villa Maria early in 1925 as visitor of the Missions and superior of the community he found only two sisters in residence: Sr. Boniface, whom he described as an "impossible character", and Sr. Brigitte. A third sister was in hospital in Sydney, but Courtais was not overly optimistic about ever seeing her back at Villa Maria: "I do not mention Sr. Robert who is in hospital and will only come out to go to the cemetery".\textsuperscript{15}

Courtais hoped to entice Monique and Eustelle back from Fiji, where they had taken refuge following their conflict with Chevreuil early in 1923. Writing to Rieu in November, 1925, just prior to leaving for a visitation of Fiji, Courtais was adamant that they would only return under certain terms: "Sr. Monique, for example, will have to understand that, if she returned, it is not on condition that she remain superior here, superior \textit{ad infinitum}".\textsuperscript{16} Furthermore, Monique would have to learn to curb her tongue:

\begin{quote}
I believe she has lacked sometimes discretion in regard to the young sisters passing through, complaining too much of the situation of the sisters at Villa Maria, reporting gossip from the Islands, and painting too darkly the difficulties of the missions, in a way perhaps discouraging a little to young ladies.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

By the middle of 1926 a reconstituted community was in residence at Villa Maria: Boniface, who looked after the church and sacristy; Robert, ill, but nevertheless at Villa Maria rather than in a cemetery; Monique and Eustelle, newly returned, and in charge of the laundry and general care of the house; and Brigitte, ever anxious to return to the Solomons, and even more so since the return of Monique. A visiting sister, Constantia, was also at Villa Maria from mid-1926 until mid-1927, having treatment for her eyes.\textsuperscript{18} Courtais asked Rieu in June, 1926, for two young sisters to look after the kitchen, since the monastery had been forced in recent years to employ a cook and kitchen-aide "from outside".
Courtais left Sydney on 13 November, 1926, for a visitation of the Solomons;\(^{19}\) when he returned early in the new year he found the convent "more or less in revolution".\(^{20}\) The visiting sister, Constantia, made a formal complaint to Courtais that Sr. Monique had spoken in such a manner as to discourage a Sr. Edouard, who had passed through Sydney the previous November.\(^{21}\) Courtais conducted a canonical enquiry into the incident: he found no substance to the allegations,\(^{22}\) and sent Constantia back to the New Hebrides;\(^{23}\) at the same time he took the opportunity to deliver a "good monition" to Monique whom he found to be overly suspicious and "unthinkingly lacking [in] sympathy for the sick, and above all for the morally sick".\(^{24}\) Courtais expressed the pious hope that "the Convent will go better now",\(^{25}\) but difficulties persisted: Rausch noted in 1930 that "the Villa Maria sisters are a problem and I am glad that I have nothing to do with them this year".\(^{26}\) Sr. Boniface had to be committed to a psychiatric hospital towards the end of 1932, Bertin commenting that "she has had several previous attacks, but lately she has completely lost her head".\(^{27}\)

On 30 December, 1931, the sisters of the Third Order of Mary Regular became a fully-fledged religious congregation in their own right, with the new title of Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary.\(^{28}\) As a result of this change they became administratively independent of the Marist fathers, with their own structure of government and their own superior general. On 2 February, 1932, Mother Mary Rose Decker was appointed first head of the congregation,\(^{29}\) and undertook a visitation of her sisters in the Pacific in the years 1932-1934. At this time the situation of the sisters at Villa Maria was regularised and clarified by the drawing up of a contract between the sisters and the Marist fathers; previously in the situation of mendicants, totally dependent on the priests for food, clothing and lodging, the sisters would now be paid an annual salary for each nun engaged in domestic chores at Villa Maria. If the absence of comment in Provincial correspondence is any indication, the convent developed a more harmonious air in the late 1930's.

Nineteen thirty-two was Courtais' last year as Provincial; it was probably his busiest and most stressful. In October, 1931, John Rausch became unwell and was diagnosed as having a heart condition. Following a heart attack on 8 December, he spent 10 weeks in hospital, and a further six weeks convalescing at Villa Maria; early in April, 1932, though still unwell, he began insisting that he be allowed to resume work at the procure.\(^{30}\) To keep Rausch occupied Courtais sent him on a holiday to Lismore and Brisbane, but he suffered a further attack and returned to Sydney.\(^{31}\)

Meanwhile, Courtais had been holding down the dual posts of Provincial and acting-procurator. In March, 1932, he wrote to the superior general suggesting that Rausch not be allowed to resume as procurator: the question of health aside, Courtais had discovered errors in Rausch's accounting and the adoption of "dangerous practices in caring for investments and accounts"; further, Rausch was incapable of listening to advice, always believing himself to be more competent than anyone else.\(^{32}\)

The general council considered Courtais' letter on 26 April; it decided that Rausch should return to the procure as soon as he was well. While noting Courtais' objections, the councillors believed that "it would be difficult to find a replacement, and the Missionaries are happy with his performance".\(^{33}\) Rieu's letter conveying this decision reached Sydney in the last days of May, a week after Rausch's second attack. A few days later Courtais received a further letter from Rieu. Due to the declining health of Gaston Regis, the Marist Mission procurator at Lyon, Courtais was
to return to Europe and take over the post, and Joseph Bertin was named Provincial of Oceania: "I want you to leave Sydney as soon as possible. Hand over all the archives and everything concerning the Province of Oceania to Father Bertin". Courtais was stunned. He immediately wrote a frank appraisal of the man who had been chosen to succeed him. He told Rieu that the appointment of Bertin was hopelessly misguided:

Fragile in health, timid to excess, knowing English only imperfectly, and because of his timidity, not able to profit from his knowledge, which, otherwise would be sufficient at a pinch.

The following day, 9 June, Courtais received a cable from Rome, informing him that in view of Rausch's relapse his recall to Lyon was suspended. Attempts by both Courtais and Rieu to find a replacement for Rausch in New Zealand came to nothing. In the meantime Courtais reiterated his opposition to Bertin as Provincial and suggested instead Elie Bergeron, a 51 year old American Marist working in Tonga. On 3 August the general administration cabled Courtais to inform him that Bertin would still be his successor, and that Bergeron had been appointed Mission procurator. The latter reached Sydney on 10 September and commenced work immediately. Courtais finally left Sydney on 17 October, 1932, and began work at the procure office in Lyon just before Christmas.

A few months prior to leaving Australia Courtais wrote an article for the Freeman's Journal addressed to "My dear Australian fellowman", and entitled "Blacks and Whites: The Average Australian's Attitude". It was a challenge to racist and superior attitudes in Australia which had long disturbed Courtais. He began with a statement and a question:

Speaking in a general way, we, white men, consider ourselves as fundamentally and intrinsically superior to those poor fellows for whom many have no other name but "the niggers", and for whom many, far too many, have an utter contempt. Are we justified in this?

Basically, Courtais argued from his own life experience that no race was superior to any other; racist attitudes were born of ignorance; all human persons shared a common spirit "revealing itself the very same all over the world". Like all of us, Courtais was a prisoner of his times; his article itself is not entirely free from a subtle patronising of the races and cultures he is defending. Despite that, it is still a worthy plea for tolerance and the basic equality of all persons at a time when such notions were frequently neglected.

For the next decade Villa Maria would continue in its time-honoured role as headquarters for the Oceania Provincial administration, place of second novitiate, and temporary home for missionaries passing through Sydney or stopping over for medical treatment. Bertin retained the twin roles of Provincial and novice master until 1937, when Maurice Boch, a French Marist working in the Solomons, was appointed to Villa Maria as master of second novices and superior of the house.

The clergy responsible for the parish of Hunters Hill continued to live there until 1936, and in 1933 Villa Maria took on a new and additional role as house of probation and formation for coadjutor brothers from Australia and New Zealand who wished to work in the Pacific Missions. Br. Anthony Burke and Br. Michael Cunningham went to Villa Maria late in 1933,
the first an Irishman and the latter an Indian-born Englishman; early in 1934 they were joined by Br. Henry Simmonds from New Zealand. The brothers were supervised in their preparations by John Rausch, who spent three years at Villa Maria following his heart attacks in 1931 and 1932.

Two constants during the period 1925-1938 at Villa Maria were Louis Rigard, who turned 80 in 1932, and coadjutor brother Theodore Carron. Julien Huault left Sydney at the beginning of 1931 for a trip to Europe after 10 years as chaplain to St. Joseph's college, and did not return to Australia. The other long-serving resident at Villa Maria, Br. John Mary Pelicot, returned to Europe also sometime in the early 1930's, pleading incompatibility with Br. Theodore.

Hunters Hill Parish

On 1 April, 1925, the parish of Hunters Hill, with its churches at Villa Maria and Woolwich, passed to the care of the New Zealand Province of the Society of Mary. The parish priest, Laurence Kelledy, and his assistant, Thomas Boyle, continued to live at the monastery until such time as the New Zealand Province could manage the construction of a separate house for parish staff and a band of parish missioners. Boyle was transferred to the Marist seminary at Greenmeadows at the beginning of 1929 to the post of bursar. He died there two years later, one of two priests and seven seminarians crushed by stone and rubble when the seminary chapel came crashing down on the occupants during an earthquake on 3 February, 1931.

Boyle's replacement at Hunters Hill was Francis Vincent, who had recently changed his name from Sontheimer. As Sontheimer he had been offered by the superior general to Chevreuil in 1920 to work in Australia, but the grapevine had been talking, and Chevreuil declined the offer: "Several here know Fr. Sontheimer, and have advised me not to accept him". He was eventually sent to New Zealand and worked there and in Australia as a parish missioner in the years immediately prior to his appointment to Hunters Hill.

In May, 1930, Kelledy became seriously ill with kidney stones and high blood-pressure; on 5 May Rausch alerted assistant general Dubois that the illness might prove fatal: "If he died, his death would be a great loss for us at Sydney. He has always been so gentle, the friend of everyone, loved and esteemed by all". Kelledy came through the crisis, but was hospitalised until July and was away from the parish convalescing until late October. His temporary replacement was John Ainsworth, like Vincent a parish missioner from New Zealand who had been working in Australia. Ainsworth apparently made himself quite at home in the parish and in the monastery. A bemused John Rausch reported to Eugene Courtais, who was away on visitation, that "Father Ainsworth has got a chauffeur to drive Father Kelledy's car, has got his room nicely painted, a nice linoleum on the floor, new chairs and a nice arm-chair ..."

Eighteen months after resuming work, Kelledy's term as parish priest came to an end, and he was farewelled by his parishioners on 25 February, 1932. They were clearly sorry to be losing him; speakers referred to the "genuine love and affection" of the parishioners for their pastor, and spoke of Kelledy's "kind and gentle nature" and the "depth of kindness and charm behind his quiet manner, which had so endeared him to all". Kelley's new posting was to Gladstone, but after only 18 months poor health forced him to return to Sydney; he died in the
The new parish priest of Hunters Hill was John Barra who, like Ainsworth and Vincent, had come to Australia from New Zealand after 1925 to conduct missions and retreats. He soon found working with Vincent a trial, and in May, 1933, Bertin wrote to his New Zealand counterpart David Kennedy to urge him to remove Vincent as quickly as possible:

Fr. Vincent, a good priest, but having no idea of the religious life, is a truly impossible confrere for Fr. Barra, as he was for Fr. Kelley ... The parishioners realise the situation, and this is a bad thing. The house of Villa Maria is suffering also; it is a situation which must not be prolonged.

He was replaced in July by Louis Menard, who had last lived at Villa Maria in 1905, when, following difficulties with the superior, Placid Huault, he had transferred to the New Zealand Province. But Barra's dissatisfaction was apparently more deep-seated than mere incompatibility with the prickly Vincent. Early in 1933 he wrote to the superior general asking to be allowed to return to Europe. The New Zealand Provincial, David Kennedy, had thought that Barra would become more settled following Vincent's removal, but in October he informed assistant general Moran that this was not the case:

Father Barra is tired of Villa Maria and wants to leave it, whether he is allowed to return to France or not. He is a strange man, very impressionable and easily discouraged. I have no objection to his going to France if Father General considers his reasons sufficient.

Barra was recalled to New Zealand early in 1934 on the understanding that if he still wished to return to France at the end of the year he could do so.

Leopold Carcenac became the new parish priest in January, 1934, returning to Australia after seven years as assistant in the Parish of Whangarei (New Zealand). After two years in the post he was granted permission to take long service leave in France, and left Sydney on 11 March, 1936, planning to be away eight months. During Carcenac's absence the New Zealand Province finally decided to proceed with the presbytery and mission house, for which land had been allocated on the Gladesville Road side of Holy Name of Mary church in the 1925 transfer agreement. The Freeman's Journal of 11 June, 1936, announced that contracts had been signed for a two-storey building of 7,100 square feet to cost £5,000. The new building, named "Maryvale", was blessed and opened by Archbishop Kelly on 28 February, 1937, and Carcenac and his new assistant, Robert Nowlan, moved in almost immediately. The third member of the first Maryvale community, and its superior, was Thomas McCarthy, who came from Wellington in January as the first member of a parish mission band to be based in Sydney.

Carcenac had a much shorter holiday than he had originally planned. His temporary replacement in the parish was Joseph Herring, who had been Carcenac's superior at Whangarei. A big man with an obvious sense for the big occasion, Herring collapsed and died of a heart attack at the annual Corpus Christi procession at St. Patrick's seminary, Manly, on 14 June, 1936. Carcenac was recalled from Europe and arrived back in Sydney in October. In February, 1937, just prior to the opening of Maryvale, Louis Menard was transferred to St. Patrick's, and the newly-ordained Robert Nowlan, a former pupil of Blessed Peter Chanel's at
Mittagong, was appointed assistant. Bertin was complimentary: "The new priest at Villa Maria, Father Nowlan, makes a good impression on everyone".70

St Patrick’s Parish

On 1 April, 1925, the day St. Patrick’s parish came under the authority of the New Zealand Provincial, the parish staff consisted of Francis Laurent, Peter Piquet, Victor Thierry, and Thomas McBreen; John Rausch's continued presence at the presbytery in his role of Missions procurator had been specifically guaranteed by the act of transfer.71 As Charles O'Reilly had noted when commenting on the meetings with Dubois in June of the previous year, Francis Laurent was not enthusiastic about coming under the authority of the New Zealand Provincial. O'Reilly had put this down to Laurent's fear that Piquet might be allowed to proceed with his sanctuary project under the new administration, and also Laurent’s belief that the New Zealanders had been scheming for years to get their hands on St. Patrick's.72 Writing to Bishop Charles Nicolas on 28 August, 1924, Laurent expressed personal insecurity about the new arrangement:

Australia will become shortly part and parcel of the New Zealand Province. But then what will become of us foreigners? I may be sent to Hong Kong or to the North Pole! Somehow or other, I don't think I'll remain in St. Patrick's ...

In January, 1925, he cabled the superior general for permission to resign immediately and leave for a European holiday, but withdrew the request when he realised that this might be interpreted as sour grapes: "I learnt that my leaving like this would be misunderstood here and I should be accused of having a bad spirit in wanting to desert my post just when important changes were being made".74 Later that year he told O'Reilly that his term as superior of St. Patrick's expired in August, 1926, and that he would like to take a trip to Europe; he indicated that he was quite willing to retire before then if O'Reilly wished to replace him.75

Early in 1926 Laurent received a request from Archbishop Kelly which may have been coincidental, but was certainly convenient. On 25 March he wrote to Rieu to inform him that Kelly had asked him, Laurent, to leave Sydney on 5 May in company with the organising secretary of the 1928 Sydney Eucharistic Congress, James Meaney, to attend the 1926 Congress in Chicago: Kelly wanted Laurent and Meaney to learn what they could about organisational matters in preparation for the Sydney Congress. Laurent explained that he had been acting as a secretary to Kelly in connection with the 1928 Congress for the previous three years. Kelly insisted on his going; O'Reilly approved of the trip; he wanted Rieu's final authorisation. He would probably go to Europe when his work in America was completed, while there combine a holiday with acting as liaison for Kelly with the Paris-based Eucharistic Congress permanent committee, and return to Sydney for the actual Congress in 1928.76

A cable from Rieu agreeing to the trip as outlined by Laurent was received by Charles O'Reilly on 26 April.77 Laurent was farewelled by the parishioners of St. Patrick’s on 29 April. The Freeman's Journal reported that "the big parish hall, with its spacious gallery, was filled to its utmost capacity", and the durable W.J. Spruson praised Laurent for his "unfailing courtesy and his gracious tact". Laurent was certainly tactful: when his turn came to speak he stated that he was "privileged in being the immediate successor of his dear friend and brother in religion, the
saintly Father Piquet". John Rausch was clearly impressed with the warmth of the farewell:

People gave him a glorious send-off. I never saw anything like it. he is certainly a man of great qualities, an excellent priest, and excellent religious, an excellent confrere ...

Victor Thierry served as acting parish priest until the arrival in mid-November of Laurent's successor, Daniel Hurley, a 43 year old New Zealander, who had just completed seven years as parish priest of Timaru (New Zealand). A reserved, formal little man with just the hint of a limp, Hurley had an indefinable strength of character which made him at one and the same time appreciated by parishioners, respected by Marist superiors and bishops, and feared by some of his confreres. John Rausch was quickly won over:

For the last eight days we have had a new superior at St. Patrick's. Father Hurley of New Zealand, a truly superior man, who will do everything possible to help our Missionaries.

Hurley brought with him a new assistant for St. Patrick's, James Roche, who had initially been designated as Hurley's successor at Timaru. However Charles O'Reilly had received a tipoff that Bishop Brodie of Christchurch was about to launch an attack on Marist-controlled parishes in his diocese, and thought that the mild-mannered Roche might not have sufficient steel to resist.

Hurley's coming to St. Patrick's signalled a new direction for the church and parish; a man of imagination and foresight, he initiated measures which gave the church a new appeal to compensate for the inexorable decline of resident parishioners in The Rocks; for Peter Piquet, the change of superior represented a fresh hope that his ten-year obsession to extend the sanctuary at St. Patrick's might at last be realised.

In fact, the tide was already turning in Piquet's favour. While realising that nothing could be done while Laurent was parish priest, Charles O'Reilly was expressing an openness to the sanctuary redevelopment as early as June, 1925. Writing to assistant general James Moran, he mentioned that Archbishop Kelly's coadjutor, Archbishop Michael Sheehan, had been to see him in support of Piquet's plans. O'Reilly told Moran that something would eventually have to be done: "There is room for improvement in some respects in St. Patrick's and Fr. Piquet is the man to get the money without any bother."

In August, O'Reilly was even more positive, and in a letter to Moran hinted at a face-saving formula which would allow the project to proceed without a backdown by the general administration:

The sanctuary will probably come up again before long. Of course I shall do nothing without Fr. General's consent. Archbishop Sheehan will perhaps insist, once he comes into power ... If the sanctuary roof becomes dangerous owing to the ravages of white ants, there may be urgency. In that case it is the superior's business in conjunction with the archbishop and no doubt Fr. General's consent would be sought, possibly by cable.

The last sentence is significant. O'Reilly is saying: "Piquet was prevented from undertaking the project because he was defying his superiors. However if a request comes from
the new superior for the work to go ahead, and the archbishop is in favour, then the general administration could approve the project without losing face”.

But was there any possibility of Kelly approving the project in view of his earlier opposition? Indeed there was. Apparently five years of persistent hectoring by Piquet had finally worn Kelly down. On 7 August, 1925, the archbishop wrote to Rieu requesting that Piquet be given his head: “We thought it better to recognise Father Piquet's merits, and in view of his persistence, to satisfy him”. In his reply Rieu told Kelly that his sole preoccupation in the matter had been to safeguard religious discipline; he could not therefore "consent to the enlargement of St. Patrick's being undertaken out of regard for Father Piquet, owing to this action of his against religious discipline"; however, if the archbishop thought the project worth proceeding with he was at liberty to deal with the superior of St. Patrick’s. Rieu had clearly taken O'Reilly's point; with Kelly in favour of the project, and the general administration not opposed to it per se, only Hurley's agreement was needed for the sanctuary extension to proceed. In March, 1927, Hurley wrote to the general administration to state that Piquet had convinced him about the need for the extension; he asked for an expression of opinion about proceeding. The general council reiterated the line taken by Rieu in his letter to Kelly in October, 1925: it was not opposed to the extension as such, and was happy for it to proceed if Hurley and the archbishop were in favour.

Work commenced early in 1928 at an estimated cost of £2,500; according to the Freeman's Journal the final price was £5,000. Essentially the project consisted in extending the sanctuary a further 15 feet on concrete pillars made necessary by a fall-away of the land at the rear of the church; a fourth stained-glass window, depicting the institution of the Eucharist, was added to the existing sanctuary windows. The remodelled sanctuary was blessed and opened by Archbishop Kelly as an official function of the 1928 Eucharistic Congress on Sunday, 26 August. For Piquet it had been a long campaign, but his extraordinary persistence had been rewarded. Francis Laurent, however, found the pill too bitter to swallow. He had returned to Sydney on 20 October, 1927, to help with final preparations for the Eucharistic Congress, timed for August, 1928. He elected to stay not at St. Patrick's but at Villa Maria, and never once visited his former parish; he was pointedly absent from the sanctuary blessing on 26 August. The return to Sydney was clearly a great trial for him, made even more painful by frustration at being little used by the Congress organisers; the general council minutes for 31 January, 1928, record a letter from Laurent expressing his disappointment: "He believes his presence is useless to the Congress, and would be ready to return, the preparation being completed". Laurent departed for Europe as quickly as possible after the Congress; he had clearly invested almost as much energy in fighting Piquet's sanctuary project as Piquet had in bringing it to completion, and probably considered himself betrayed by the same superiors he imagined he was supporting.

For many at St. Patrick's, Hurley arrived in November, 1926, in the persona of an undertaker; one parishioner summed up the general feeling: "Well Father, you've come to bury St. Patrick's; the Quay is finished, the people are being dispersed, making room for the roadway up to the Harbour Bridge". However Hurley was optimistic that St. Patrick's could still serve a useful purpose despite the population decrease:

There are great possibilities for good work here but we need a good staff for it. The parish itself is dwindling away but our church could be made a great centre of devotion. At present it is a centre for confessions and nothing else, a good work certainly, but very
restricted considering our position and the needs of the people generally. Archbishop Kelly has been very kind and encouraging. He seems to expect much from us, and we will certainly do our best.  

Hurley's first initiative to compensate for a loss of parishioners was to promote St. Patrick's as a centre of Eucharistic devotion. Specifically, he applied for permission from his Marist superiors in Rome and from Archbishop Kelly to make St. Patrick's a church of perpetual adoration, where the consecrated host would always remain exposed on the main altar for adoration by the faithful. Hurley's plan was to establish St. Patrick's as a centre where people could come to pray before the exposed blessed sacrament at any hour of the day. In a letter to Rome on 29 August, 1927, he floated the idea to assistant general Moran: "Certainly around the Blessed Sacrament we could build our church up into a great devotional centre". In a petition to Archbishop Kelly early in August he asked for permission to establish perpetual adoration at St. Patrick's daily from noon until evening devotions, commencing at the end of the 1928 Eucharistic Congress; and in the meantime, by way of a lead up, he asked permission to expose the sacrament on the first Friday and third Sunday of each month. Kelly granted the last request, but deferred the first until the time of the Congress; eventually he sanctioned the proposal in April, 1928. Perpetual adoration was inaugurated at St. Patrick's on September 5, 1928, in connection with the ceremonies of the Eucharistic Congress, before long it would bring hundreds and eventually thousands of visitors each day to the church.  

St. Patrick's had long been popular with Sydney Catholics for confession; Claude Joly had remarked on this as early as 1886, as had Augustin Aubry in 1899. The long-serving Peter Piquet was particularly popular as a confessor: reporting to Rome in March, 1927, Hurley observed that "Fr. Piquet is very active, mostly in hearing confessions here, there and everywhere". Building on this existing tradition, and catering for the increased numbers using the church because of perpetual adoration, Hurley rostered a priest to be available each afternoon in one of the church confessionals. This service, of walk in-walk out confessions was commenced in 1930 and like perpetual adoration attracted an increasing clientele. The service gradually developed to the extent that up until very recently priests were rostered to man the confessionals at St. Patrick's "all day, every day" from 7.00 in the morning until the church was closed in the evening.  

Hurley was also innovative in his use of slide projection in the church. In March, 1928, he began using a series of 64 "lantern slides" to explain the intricacies of the Latin Mass to the congregation at Sunday evening devotions. The Freeman's Journal reported that with "a very large congregation ... Fr. J. Roche operated the machine from the choir gallery, while Fr. Hurley, standing beside the large screen (15 square feet) lucidly explained each action of the priest ..." Hurley repeated the illustrated lectures in 1930, 1931, and 1934; on 11 March, 1930 the crowd was so large "that it became necessary for the church wardens to remove the book stall at the entrance to the church to provide standing room", and even more tried to gain entrance to the follow-up lecture a fortnight later.  

In addition to being obliged to attend Mass each Sunday, Catholics were required to attend on five "Holy Days of Obligation" each year: Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Ascension Thursday, Assumption of Mary, and All Saints Day. For Catholics working in the city on a day of obligation, this meant rising very early and attending Mass before work in their own parish, or
in one of the city churches. Beginning in 1930, Hurley introduced a lunch-time Mass on days of obligation to cater for the increasing number of office workers in the Church Hill and Circular Quay sections of the city. This service became so popular that eventually several Masses were celebrated simultaneously: one in the church, one in the church basement, and a third in the parish hall.

Responding to enquiries from non-Catholics about the Catholic faith, Hurley established at St. Patrick's in 1933 an annual course of lectures in the teachings of the Church, using films and slides as well as a text-book to supplement the classroom presentations. These classes were attended by persons interested in learning more about the Catholic faith as well as by baptised Catholics interested in improving their understanding. In 1935, 90 students attended, with about half this number asking to be received into the Church, and a further 25 re-enrolling for further instruction. Hurley also had considerable involvement with the Catholic Evidence Guild, a group of Catholic laymen who joined soap-box orators in Sydney's Domain to explain and expound Catholic teaching; Hurley spoke from the Guild's platform on Sundays as well as helping to train laymen for the work.

In addition to introducing measures to develop St. Patrick's as a popular devotional centre, something he did with flair, imagination, and success, Hurley was responsible for other changes at St. Patrick's. At least since the time of Peter Le Rennetel, St. Patrick's presbytery seems to have been a place where laity mixed comfortably with clergy, where parish workers and friends of the parish were often invited, and where tea was not the only drink dispensed to visitors and guests. Hurley appears to have been a little shocked by this tradition, and in March, 1927, reported to headquarters that he had moved to modify hospitality patterns:

One abuse I have corrected was that of dispensing "refreshments" too freely to lay people. The Fathers here warned me that it could not be done without giving great offence, but I took the risk, and so far there has been no schism.

In the same letter he announced that having been encouraged by the apostolic delegate, he had "taken steps to reform the church music which was theatrical in the extreme"; Pius X's decree of 1903, promoting gregorian chant in the liturgy, was still a dead letter at St. Patrick's. At the end of the year the choirmaster, W.H. McCarthy, retired, and was replaced by the church organist, W.J. Caspers; Caspers' sister Agnes became the new organist. Hurley reformed slowly. Initially the style of music remained essentially the same: elaborate compositions performed by orchestra, soloists, and choir. Then gradually Hurley began encouraging the choir to learn new works which were more liturgical in spirit, though still basically concert pieces. By Easter, 1930, the revolution was well advanced:

The choir rendered Max Filke's Mass for the first time in Australia. Filke, who is a German, still resides in Breslau. The music is melodious and devotional and conforms strictly with the late Pius X's Motu Proprio.

In May, 1933, Caspers left St. Patrick's to become choirmaster at St. Mary's Cathedral. His departure coincided with a dramatic change in the style and composition of St. Patrick's choir. A Benedictine monk, Dom Stephen Moreno, was brought from New Norcia (Western Australia) to organise a new choir which would be all-male; it would concentrate on "classic
polyphony, Gregorian Chant, and selected modern compositions". The new choir was formed in August, 1933, and sang for the first time on Sunday, 29 October. Moreno was an accomplished organist and had some talent as a composer; in February, 1934, a sacred concert was given by the choir at St. Patrick's consisting entirely of Moreno's compositions, and broadcast nationally by the Australian Broadcasting Commission. The apostolic delegate came along to inspect Hurley's handiwork. Sometime in 1934 Moreno completed his contract and handed the choir over to a new choirmaster, Leo Finn.

Hurley was responsible for a number of changes and innovations at St. Patrick's; during his term as parish priest he also presided over several major building projects. On 18 March, 1928, Archbishop Kelly blessed and opened new premises for St. Patrick's Girls' Commercial college, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, and begun in 1922. The four-storey building was designed to cater for an enrolment of 300, and occupied a site in Harrington Street between the sisters' convent and the presbytery. The guest speaker for the occasion was the Jesuit, William Lockington, an advocate of greater participation by women in social and political issues, who had founded a Catholic Women's Social Guild in Melbourne in 1916. Lockington applauded the expansion of the commercial college; he wanted institutions like this multiplied so that women could become more independent and take their true place in society; women had as much right to be in politics and to be lawmakers as men had. Archbishop Kelly was the next speaker; he clearly set himself to correct Lockington's "dangerous" remarks, and told the girls that:

They were not so strong nor so tall as men, and as a matter of fact they were made by God to be the helpers of man. They were a great deal better than men in love, more enduring, more self-sacrificing, but they must not to go up to him and say "I am just as good as you. I'll go and be a Member of Parliament".

The following year Hurley wrote to Kelly to ask permission to build a new girls' primary school in Gloucester Street on land adjoining the church, the existing arrangement of classrooms in the upper storey of the parish hall being now unsatisfactory. Kelly approved the project and blessed the new school on 9 November, 1930. Concern about the Depression was clearly in the forefront of peoples' minds, as Kelly closed proceedings with an Our Father and a Hail Mary "for those who are unemployed and those desirous of helping the unemployed".

Hurley's final construction project consisted in adding a second storey to a very old building which dated back to 1835. On 28 March, 1933, he wrote to Kelly:

I would be grateful to Your Grace for your sanction and permission for improvements to the school conditions at St. Bridget's Infant School, Kent Street. The proposal is to build two classrooms over the present building which is also used as a Church. The plans have been approved by the Diocesan Building Committee. The lowest tender received is £1,365 which is in range of our finances and will not entail any debt.

St. Bridget's had been built for the Catholic vicar-general, William Ullathorne, in 1835, on land granted by the Government for a church-school. An unpretentious single-storey sandstone building, St. Bridget's had remained essentially unchanged until Hurley's additions in 1933. Archbishop Kelly opened the new classrooms on 27 August, 1933. In line with its
original purpose, the building continued to serve as a school during the week, and as a Mass centre on Sundays.\footnote{130}

Hurley completed his term as parish priest at the end of 1934, when he was appointed Provincial. He had been David Kennedy's first choice to succeed him:

... a good religious, prudent, tactful, well known and liked by the Bishops of Australia as well as of New Zealand and is \textit{persona grata} with Archbishop Kelly of Sydney and Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne. His knowledge of Australia, and its Bishops and priests would be useful for the future development of the Society in that country.\footnote{131}

Hurley's appointment was not automatic. In the middle of 1934 the general administration had received an anonymous letter from New Zealand alleging that Hurley had been highly critical of the general administration and that he was unpopular with his Marist confreres in New Zealand.\footnote{132} Asked to comment following his nomination of Hurley to succeed him, Kennedy rejected the charges: he had always found Hurley "loyal and respectful" and believed that he was "highly esteemed" among New Zealand Marists.\footnote{133} On 19 October the general council considered Kennedy's response, and acting on his renewed recommendation, appointed Hurley Provincial.\footnote{134}

Hurley's eight years at St. Patrick's had been years of innovation and development, during which time the transition from parish church to Eucharistic shrine had been made smoothly and successfully. Although St. Patrick's had always been a church frequented by visitors and non-parishioners, especially for confession, the population decline in The Rocks had raised serious doubts about its future viability. Hurley had settled those doubts, giving the church a new \textit{raison d'être}.

During Hurley's period as parish priest staffing was reasonably stable. When he arrived with James Roche in November, 1926, he inherited Peter Piquet, Thomas McBreen, and Victor Thierry. Neither Thierry nor McBreen particularly impressed Charles O'Reilly when he had made an official visitation of the community in June, 1926. Thierry was "very fidgety, unimaginative, not too fond of work"; McBreen "would be better in a college".\footnote{135} Thierry was transferred to the chaplaincy at the Marist brothers' novitiate at Mittagong in October, 1927,\footnote{136} and McBreen's services were dispensed with even sooner, he being appointed to the staff of St. Patrick's college, Wellington, for the beginning of the 1927 school year.\footnote{137} Hurley, Piquet and Roche cared for the parish in 1928 and 1929, and were joined by Aloysius Jeffcott, sent down from Gladstone, towards the end of 1929.\footnote{138} For the next three years there were no further changes in staffing, and David Kennedy was pleased with the work at St. Patrick's when he came for visitation in July, 1931: "The Fathers of this house are doing excellent work".\footnote{139}

Soon after his arrival at St. Patrick's Jeffcott was appointed chaplain to the Catholic Seamen's Institute, an offshoot of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, with premises at 192 Kent Street. The work consisted in visiting ships as they berthed and offering material and spiritual assistance to Catholic seamen; the Institute maintained recreation rooms and a chapel, and held special religious services for seafarers.\footnote{140} Jeffcott was a particularly dedicated chaplain, promoting the work of the Institute in the Catholic press, and immersing himself in its activities to the extent that his other duties at St. Patrick's would allow. In 1932 Jeffcott and the dozen or
so active members of the Institute visited 408 ships and interviewed 4,710 Catholic seamen; 2,530 of these were coaxed to attend Mass at the Institute's rooms, and a total of 11,099 seamen took advantage of other facilities offered at Kent Street. In 1937 614 ships were visited, and 11,339 Catholic seamen were interviewed; 21,771 used the Institute's rooms that year.

At the beginning of 1933 James Roche was transferred to the position of assistant master of novices at the Marist Fathers' novitiate house, Palmerston North (New Zealand) and was replaced by the newly-ordained Leonard Brice, a 25 year old New Zealander. While acknowledging that Brice was "an estimable young man", Hurley regarded Roche's departure as a "heavy loss" to the parish. Like Jeffcott, Brice soon became well known beyond the walls of St. Patrick's church; during his two years in Sydney he took a particular interest in social issues, delivering a series of public lectures under the auspices of the Catholic Evidence Guild during 1934. The Freeman's Journal of 1 February, 1934 reported a lecture given by Brice on 22 January on the subject of "Socialism and Communism". Brice contended that communism and socialism as currently being practised in Russia led inevitably to the suppression of individual rights. The following month he attacked unbridled capitalism, claiming that distributism, or small-scale ownership and production, was the only social system which protected individual rights. Brice continued his lectures throughout the course of the year. They appear to have been a faithful reflection of current Catholic social teaching, as expounded particularly by the English Catholics Hilaire Belloc and G.K. Chesterton.

Hurley's successor at St. Patrick's was Hugh McDonnell, a 51 year old New Zealand Marist who arrived in Sydney towards the end of February, 1935. McDonnell's previous posting had been vice-principal at the Marist Silverstream college, near Wellington (New Zealand). His period as parish priest was destined to be the shortest of any Marist since the Society was given care of the parish in 1868, terminated at his own request in March, 1938. They were not, it would seem, particularly good years for St. Patrick's. On 27 March, 1937, Hurley wrote to the general administration to indicate that confessions had fallen off considerably because the priests there were not sufficiently interested in promoting this ministry, and further that the new curates John McHardy and Stephen O'Connor spent too much time speaking with women, and smoking cigarettes with them in the parlour.

Unenthusiastic curates may have been one cause of the fall in confessions; a more significant factor was surely the death on 10 August, 1936, of Peter Piquet, at the age of 82. Piquet had spent 56 continuous years ministering in the parish of St. Patrick's; he had become a legend among Sydney Catholics, and was marvellously active until only a few months before his death. By popular verdict he was considered to be a saint, though some of his Marist confreres experienced aspects of his personality which made them wary of such descriptions. Andrew Marion expressed his frustration with the Piquet enigma when he summed him up as "un drôle de saint" ("a funny kind of saint"). Yet for all the contradictions in Piquet's makeup, there is no denying his extraordinary effect on people and the blessings which his life brought to many. Herbert Moran wrote him a beautiful epitaph in Beyond the Hill Lies China:

Shepherd of sinners; to him went the drunkard from near the Cut, the shamefaced man from a distant parish, afraid to face the fierce blackthorn morality of his local priest, the wife of a mixed marriage troubled in conscience, and some of those tired and distressed poor women who along lower George Street hold out the begging bowl of their flesh ... His colleagues thought his methods too quick and his penances too light. Clerical envy
always finds its grounds. But the French priest induced more people to make amends, to restore and to repair, than all those who angrily rebuked the sinners. He loosed their sins and later went into their homes, as a friend, making things straight.152

The size of Piquet's funeral at St Patrick's on Wednesday, 12 August, was impressive.153 Perhaps even more impressive, and more indicative of his extraordinary effect on people were the numbers who gathered each year on the anniversary of his death at the little tree-shaded cemetery at Villa Maria where he was buried. In 1937 and 1938 special trams were needed, and many hundreds made the journey from the city.154 Piquet's death effectively ended the French Marist presence at St. Patrick's, which spanned almost exactly 70 years. It was a presence productive of much that was good, and Catholicism in Sydney was richer for having known and experienced it.

Gladstone Parish

When the parish of Gladstone became part of the New Zealand Province (1925), the Marists in residence were Leopold Carcenac and Aloysius Jeffcott. Charles O'Reilly made a formal visitation of the parish in July of that year. In response to a question on the standard report form which was sent to the superior general after the visitation - "Is the work too heavy or not enough?" - O'Reilly unhesitatingly wrote "Work is easy". He found Carcenac "very shy, somewhat nervous and changeable in disposition; not quite satisfied, though no reason to grumble"; Jeffcott he described as being "cold, silent, good-tempered, careful and economic".155 Carcenac's main complaint about Gladstone was its distance from other Marist houses in Australia; in a letter to the general administration written two months after O'Reilly's visitation, he raised the question as to whether there was any point in the Society keeping the parish.156 It became someone else's problem at the end of 1926, when Carcenac was transferred to a New Zealand posting. Jeffcott seems to have been left on his own with only occasional assistance until early in 1929, when Michael McKenna was sent to Gladstone. McKenna, an Irishman, had been working among his countrymen in the London east-end parish of St. Anne's, where he came under the notice of the Home Office, and had to be hastily shipped to New Zealand. Charles O'Reilly received a cable announcing his arrival; he wrote to the general administration to suggest that he was entitled to a little more information:

The cable suggests that Father Michael McKenna is being sent out to this Province. I presume, if there is any particular reason for this move, I shall be told of it. It is said he was mixed up with Irish Republicanism in London and that the Cardinal objected to his activity in that sphere.157

The general administration confirmed O'Reilly's information, and McKenna was sent to work at St. Mary's church, Christchurch. Reporting to Rome that McKenna seemed to be settling well into his new environment, O'Reilly observed drily: "There is no likelihood of his being involved in Republican business in Christchurch".158 Early in 1929 McKenna was sent to Gladstone as superior and Jeffcott remained on as assistant. The mix was not a happy one: in June, McKenna complained in a letter to John Rausch that Jeffcott had let the parish slip badly while he had been in charge;159 and in August he told Eugene Courtais that Jeffcott had "queer ideas on the matter of permissions" and that he, McKenna, would be writing to the superior
It would be unwise to take McKenna's opinions at face value. He was not an easy man to deal with, and Jeffcott also wrote to the general administration to put his side of the story. Towards the end of the year David Kennedy, apprised of the conflict, recalled Jeffcott to Sydney.

His replacement was Thomas McBreen, who had been sent to work in a Marist secondary school in Wellington following his departure from St. Patrick's at the beginning of 1927. McBreen performed his first baptism in the parish in June, 1930, but had probably arrived some months earlier. David Kennedy visited Gladstone in June, 1931, and like his predecessor Charles O'Reilly, thought the work was not overtaxing; he reported that there was "work enough for one active man". Something less than harmony reigned in the presbytery: "The two Fathers do not agree very well on account of their peculiar characters". McBreen was brought back from Gladstone shortly afterwards, and Laurence Kelley went there in March, 1932, following his departure from Hunters Hill. Kennedy returned to check on the new arrangement in September, 1933, but found Kelley in Brisbane convalescing after further illness, and eventually sent him back to Sydney. In his report to the superior general he once more raised the question of closing Gladstone:

This house is very isolated from our other houses. There is scarcely enough work for two Fathers. There is no prospect for the future, as far as one can see for the present. Some serious Fathers think we should give it up.

One of the "serious Fathers" was Michael McKenna, who made enquiries of the bishop of Rockhampton as to what compensation the Marists might expect for their buildings and land if they withdrew. Kennedy informed Rieu in a letter of 23 January, 1934, that Bishop Hayes would not oppose a Marist withdrawal, and was offering £1,000 compensation for Marist property, in February he wrote to indicate that his Provincial council was in favour of closing the house. Since the authorisation of a general chapter was normally needed for such a closure, the general council decided to hold the matter over to the following year, when a chapter was due. When the time came for proposing the closure to the chapter in October, 1935, the general council still could not make up its mind and resolved once more to defer the matter. The new Provincial of New Zealand, Daniel Hurley, seems to have been less anxious to make the break than his predecessor, and in the absence of persistent pressure for closure, the general council took no further action.

Meanwhile, in Gladstone itself, life meandered on at its traditionally leisurely pace. Because of the possibility that the house might soon be closed, McKenna was left on his own during most of 1933 and into 1934, receiving an assistant in the person of John McSherry, a 30 year old New Zealander, at the beginning of 1935. On 9 June, 1936, the general council approved a request from Hurley to remove McKenna from Gladstone: "Bishop Hayes has complained about the lack of harmony between him and the sisters and parishioners". His replacement, John Campbell, began in the parish that same month. Gladstone remained in Marist hands because for the second time in 15 years, the general administration had been reluctant to take a final decision to close the house, despite the strong recommendation of the provincial administration.
Marist Missioners at Glenlyon

In the same year that Marist houses in Australia came under the direction of the New Zealand Provincial, a permanent base for Marist parish missioners was finally established. In Chapter 5, the work of the first band of New Zealand Marist missioners in Australia during 1911-1912 was described. Several years after this initial foray, in 1916, the New Zealand Provincial, Patrick Smyth, launched a campaign to set up a permanent base for his missioners in Australia; his men were finding New Zealand a very small paddock to work in, and in addition the Society in New Zealand was facing the prospect of being evicted from some of its parishes by diocesan bishops. Australia was the logical place to look to, and a permanent base would facilitate a future expansion into Australia when and if this became necessary. Smyth asked Charles Nicolas if he could suggest any bishops who might be interested in having New Zealand Marists in their dioceses, and also approached the apostolic delegate, and Dr. Stephen Reville, the bishop of Sandhurst (Vic). While he succeeded in getting some work for his missioners in the diocese of Rockhampton, and from the Marist parishes in Sydney, Smyth failed to elicit an offer from any bishop to establish a permanent house for the missioners in Australia. In June, 1916, he came to Australia to press the matter further, but interviews with the apostolic delegate and Archbishop Kelly proved unproductive. Nevertheless, he had brought with him one of his missioners, 41 year old James Taylor, perhaps by way of a sample, and Taylor returned to Australia in 1917 and 1918 together with Thomas McCarthy to conduct missions and retreats in the Rockhampton diocese and in a number of Sydney parishes. Both narrowly escaped death by drowning early in 1918 when they were swimming at Bronte, the Freeman's Journal reporting that "they were rescued with great difficulty after heroic exertions by Mr. Edward Fahy, who is in charge of the Bronte municipal surf shed". It was only a temporary reprieve for Taylor, who died of influenza in Townsville on 28 July, 1919, having returned to Australia that year in the company of fellow missioners Alfred Herring and Joseph Herbert for further missions and retreats in the Rockhampton diocese.

Meanwhile Patrick Smyth had died in September, 1916, and the new Provincial of New Zealand, John Holley, constantly under pressure from the hierarchy to provide military chaplains, was much less keen than his predecessor to deploy his forces in Australia. Charles Nicolas had come to believe that the only way the Society could become better known in Australia and attract young Australians to its ranks was through the establishment of a house of New Zealand Marist missioners in Australia; he encouraged Holley to make such a foundation, and was supported in this by the superior general John Claude Raffin. But Holley contended that the war had made this impossible, and sent no more missioners to Australia after 1919; the project to establish a house lapsed completely. The appointment of John Baptist Chevreuil as Provincial of Oceania at the beginning of 1919 ensured that no further progress would be made in this matter for some years.

The Marist missioners finally came back to Australia in 1924, and their return seems to have been effected by three coalescing factors: firstly, the appointment in New Zealand of a new Provincial, Charles O'Reilly, at the beginning of 1923; secondly, an explicit invitation from Bishop Carroll of Lismore, who had several years earlier invited the Marists to establish a secondary school in his diocese, and finally, an apparent softening of attitude in John Baptist Chevreuil, following the mauling he received at the 1921 general chapter and a realisation of the inevitability of the New Zealand Province taking responsibility for Marist operations in Australia. Writing to Gaston Regis in June, 1924, John Rausch reported progress on the
missioners' new campaign:

Frs. Herring and Eccleton have returned to Villa Maria to take a little rest after three months of Missions in the Lismore diocese. The Marist Missioners are very much liked; they have many more offers than they are able to accept. Fr. Herring has no doubt that they will find many vocations for us and for the Marist Sisters.¹⁸¹

Herring and Eccleton were joined by a third missioner, Mark O'Leary, in the second half of the year. Generally they worked apart for the smaller parishes and towns in Lismore diocese, coming together for the larger centres. A fortnight-long mission at St. Carthage's cathedral, Lismore, in November, was an outstanding success, and the missioners received further invitations from parishes in the Lismore diocese which kept them busy well into 1925.¹⁸²

Meanwhile, in July, 1924, Charles O'Reilly had called on Archbishop James Duhig of Brisbane, who had begun reversing his predecessor's stance of total opposition to the presence of clerical religious in Brisbane archdiocese. On 7 July O'Reilly reported to James Moran that an opening to establish a permanent base for the missioners might soon be forthcoming in Brisbane:

I visited Archbishop Duhig in Brisbane ... he told me confidentially that he would like to invite us to the Archdiocese and give us a parish - probably to support a mission house. He is, however, bound by etiquette to consult his Council; he has already invited the Jesuits and the Redemptorists.¹⁸³

In May, 1925, the missioners took up invitations to preach missions in Brisbane. Interviewing Duhig again, in June of that year, Charles O'Reilly was both hopeful and exasperated: Duhig had liked the missioners' style and had promised to do something for them, but at the same time there was still no concrete offer.¹⁸⁴ Finally, at the beginning of July, Duhig installed the Marist missioners temporarily at "Glenlyon", a two-storey mansion in the Brisbane suburb of Ashgrove. Duhig had purchased the house and property in April, 1924, for £10,100 with the intention of establishing a seminary.¹⁸⁵ The first community consisted of Alfred Herring, John Ainsworth, Francis Vincent (alias Sontheimer) and Mark O'Leary.¹⁸⁶

While pleased that some progress had at last been made, O'Reilly was clearly still exasperated by Duhig's negotiating style. At the end of July he reported to Moran:

The Missionaries are temporarily established at Brisbane, in a house lent by the Archbishop free of rent, until he wants it, or until other arrangements are made later. The offer is satisfactory meanwhile; but it is very difficult to pin the Archbishop down to anything very definite. He is noted for indefiniteness.¹⁸⁷

In April, 1927, Duhig offered to sell "Glenlyon" with five and a half acres of land to the Society; the Marists understood they were being offered it at the bargain-basement price of £5,000. After confirming the offer, O'Reilly cabled the general administration on 6 July for permission to buy,¹⁸⁸ and the purchase was approved in Rome on 16 July.¹⁸⁹ Writing to James Moran on 18 July, O'Reilly offered the opinion that "the Archbishop has made a big concession in asking only £5,000 for house and 5½ acres".¹⁹⁰ Duhig would have agreed, had he in fact been
asking only £5,000; actually he wanted £10,000, O'Reilly somehow misunderstanding the terms of the deal. As an alternative to "Glenlyon" DuHig offered the missioners a house at Manly, capable of accommodating six priests, for £6,000, with an attached obligation of celebrating Sunday Mass in the basement of the house for any Catholics who happened to live nearby. Perhaps to make the Manly offer seem more attractive, DuHig also raised the asking price of "Glenlyon" to £20,000. When they considered DuHig's new offer on 28 July, the Marist general councillors were unimpressed; on the basis of information supplied by O'Reilly they judged that the prices of both properties were inflated, and that Manly was too far away from the centre of the city. Patience eventually paid off; in June, 1929, motivated either by charity or liquidity problems, DuHig relented and sold "Glenlyon" house together with three and a half acres to the Society of Mary for £5,000.

In the first years of the foundation the missioners had no difficulty finding work, although the superior, Alfred Herring, was criticised for incurring additional travel expenses by accepting missions in Sydney. Writing to James Moran on 13 April, 1928, Herring reported that "God has blessed our work in a remarkable manner. Last year I refused about forty applications for missions and retreats. In all probability there will be more refusals this year." David Kennedy made Provincial visitation of "Glenlyon" in June, 1931. He informed the superior general that "our Missionary Fathers at Brisbane are doing excellent work". Another visitor at "Glenlyon" in June and July of that year was Francis Redwood, Marist archbishop of Wellington, still an inveterate traveller despite his 92 years. Redwood had come to spend the winter in Brisbane, and found the weather much to his liking: "The weather here now is like our best New Zealand summer weather with even a brighter sky".

The missioners were still in heavy demand in 1933; Kennedy returned in September of that year for a further visitation and informed the superior general that there was "Great demand for missions and retreats. The Fathers cannot cope with the work offered". Alfred Herring was still superior, and there were four other missioners in residence. Kennedy thought the younger generation, represented by James Joyce, Timothy Minehan, and Arthur Keane, a little unskilled in the use of their voices:

The three younger Fathers seem to suffer very much from their throats, possibly because when they get a sore throat during a Mission they have to continue preaching, and partly perhaps because they do not use their voice properly when preaching.

"Glenlyon" was purely and simply a house for missioners; the Marists had no parish responsibilities in the area, and their house was within the existing parish of Ashgrove. Difficulties arose in 1935 when the local parish priest, William Hogan, objected to 40 of his parishioners regularly attending Sunday Mass in the "Glenlyon" chapel. After complaining to the New Zealand Provincial on several occasions without result, Hogan decided to take matters into his own hands. On Sunday, 16 June, he entered the chapel armed with pen and paper, and began taking names of those attending. Herring ordered him off the property; Hogan left grudgingly, and wrote that day to David Kennedy, whom he assumed was still Provincial. As compensation for the "grave injury" caused to his honour and reputation, he demanded an apology from Herring and the sum of £200. Further, he complained to Archbishop DuHig, who wrote a stiff letter on 30 July to the acting superior at "Glenlyon", Timothy Minehan: in it, DuHig accused the Marists of breaking faith with him and violating canon law and the
regulations of the archdiocese. He threatened to act against them if they persisted in allowing lay people to attend Sunday Mass in their chapel.  

Daniel Hurley, the new Provincial of New Zealand, discussed the problem with the general council in Rome in October of that year while attending the general chapter. While in Rome he was advised to consult Archbishop Bernardini who had just returned from Australia after a short term of 18 months there as apostolic delegate. He also obtained written opinions from two canon lawyers. Armed with his advice, Hurley wrote to Duhig on 9 December, appealing against the archbishop's ruling on the basis of canon 479/2, which gave religious communities the right to have a public oratory, or Mass centre, open to the public. Hurley received no reply to his letter, and interviewed Duhig early in the new year when in Brisbane on Provincial visitation. He found the archbishop in a conciliatory mood, anxious to find a solution which would recognise the Marists' rights while not causing the local parish priest to lose face. Hurley suggested that Duhig alienate a small area centred on "Glenlyon" from the existing parish of Ashgrove and proclaim it as a parish under the care of the Marist fathers, thus changing the legal status of those attending Mass at "Glenlyon": they would no longer be parishioners of the parish priest of Ashgrove. Duhig accepted the suggestion, and offered the Society land within the newly created parish to build a parish church and school. On 7 April, 1936, Hurley wrote to recommend the solution to the general administration, stating that it "will bring peace with the parish priest of Ashgrove and at the same time will provide revenue for the upkeep of the house at Glenlyon". After referring back to Hurley for further clarifications the general council accepted Duhig's offer on 9 June, 1936. The new parish, named St. John's Wood, commenced operating the following year, and a weatherboard church with accommodation for 200 worshippers was dedicated by Archbishop Duhig on Sunday, 18 July, 1937. The first parish priest was Henry Seymour who, under the terms of the agreement between the Society of Mary and Archbishop Duhig, lived with his confreres at "Glenlyon".

The mission house at Brisbane was the first new community established in Australia by the New Zealand Province following the transfer of 1925. It was a successful foundation during the years 1925-1938, and the Marist missioners became widely known in the cities and towns of outback Queensland; it was also the means of the Society of Mary acquiring a second parish in Queensland.

St John’s College, Lismore

When "Glenlyon" was occupied in 1925, negotiations had already been proceeding for four years between the bishop of Lismore and the Marist Provincial for the establishment of a secondary boys’ boarding school in Lismore. On 19 May, 1921, Bishop John Carroll wrote to the New Zealand Provincial, John Holley, asking whether the Marist fathers would be interested in beginning a school in his diocese. He could see advantages for the diocese in such an arrangement: a community of religious priests would always be on hand in the diocese for the giving of retreats and missions; further, they would be well placed to prepare candidates for the diocesan priesthood prior to their entering the seminary. Carroll offered 100 acres of land as a gift to the Society for commencing the school, and mentioned his hope that the new school would give particular emphasis to an agricultural course for boys going on the land. The bishop would later tell Holley that he had turned to the Marists because he had been impressed by their school in Wellington (NZ), St. Patrick’s, and by the number of students from there who
had chosen to become priests.210

On their way back from the 1921 general chapter, Holley and a co-delegate, the ex-
Provincial Peter Regnault, passed through Sydney in December, and took the opportunity to visit
Lismore and interview Bishop Carroll. They were shown two sites, each about three miles in
opposite directions from the town. In addition to giving land, Carroll also offered to allow the
Marists to collect money throughout his diocese for the construction of the school.211 Though
Regnault was crippled with rheumatism by the time he and Holley returned to Sydney, the two
Marists were clearly impressed with the offer.212 A third Marist visited Lismore to make an
assessment in the week before Christmas, 1921: Francis Bartley, a New Zealand Marist with
considerable teaching experience, was visiting Sydney and Holley asked him to go to Lismore
and submit a written report. Bartley saw the two sites on 19 December, and thought one to be
much superior to the other: it was close to a railway siding, was bounded by a "fine stream"
suitable for boating and swimming, offered a commanding rise for the college buildings and
ample level ground for playing fields, and had rich alluvial soil for grazing and cultivation.213

On 16 January, 1922, Holley wrote to Carroll to formally accept his invitation to establish
the college, opting for the site recommended by Bartley; he indicated that the Marist designated
to collect funds throughout Lismore diocese for the college would be ready to commence by the
end of the year, and that plans for the college buildings would be drawn up as soon as the
canvas was completed.214 In his reply Carroll indicated that it would be helpful to him if the
canvas was delayed until 1924.215 Later in the year he suggested that the college might offer up
to five bursaries in the diocese, one for every £2,000 collected.216 The New Zealand Provincial
council was wary of the proposal, fearing that such largesse might place considerable financial
strain on the fledgling college; following a promise from Carroll to allow a further canvass at a
later date if the 1924 canvass failed to reach £10,000, the new Provincial, Charles O'Reilly,
accepted the formula of one diocesan bursary for every £2,000 collected.217

Early in May, 1924, Thomas Segrief began his appeal for funds in Lismore, the cathedral
city of the diocese. Forty years old, Segrief had been ordained in 1911. Apart from four years as
a military chaplain during the first world war, when he served with New Zealand forces in
Samoa, Egypt, Gallipoli and France, he had spent his years since ordination on the staff of St.
Patrick's college, Wellington.218 At first it must have seemed an easy game; John Rausch
informed Gaston Regis early in June that the first appeal at the Lismore cathedral had "netted
him £1,000 sterling in a single day".219 Still in the Lismore area in June, "awful floods and bad
weather" began to complicate Segrief's task;220 on 7 July Charles O'Reilly reported to James
Moran that Segrief had completed his work in Lismore and that "his success has not been up to
expectations".221 Segrief was in Kempsey in July and went to Port Macquarie in August;222 in
October he raised £850 in Wardell, and £500 in Coraki the following month.223 After a break
during the summer months he started again in Murwillumbah in June, 1925;224 at the beginning
of July he had collected £600 in the town,225 and eventually left with cash and promises totalling
£840.226 In the latter months of the year he worked the Grafton district, and concluded his
progress in Casino in March, 1926;227 later in the year he travelled the diocese giving missions
and retreats.228 In July, 1926, Segrief reported to Charles O'Reilly that he had been promised a
total of £9,300, £4,371 of which was already in hand. He thought that the prospects of securing
the outstanding promises were "very good".229

Meanwhile, steps had been taken to begin the construction of the college. In August,
1925, the architect for the project, Austin McKay, visited the site for the first time; a *Freeman's Journal* report of the visit stated that the foundation stone of the new building would probably be laid in May, 1926. Bishop Carroll returned from a trip to Rome in March, 1926, with an unusual donation towards the college: during an interview with Pius XI, the pontiff had tipped out the contents of one of his desk drawers and handed over a strange assortment of notes; Carroll exchanged them later for Aus. £57/10/1. Plans were sent to the Marist general administration for approval that same March, but on 10 April Ernest Rieu cabled O'Reilly to wait on further correspondence from the general house. The resulting letter raised serious questions about the viability of the project: the buildings as planned were costed at £35,000 to £40,000, and the general administration thought that this amount was beyond the financial resources of the New Zealand Province. Further, the letter expressed unease about the lack of preciseness in negotiations between the Society and Bishop Carroll, and urged the drawing up of a contract under one of two forms:

Either his Lordship will consent to give to the Society the full property of the grounds and of all the moneys brought in by the diocesan collections so that the Society shall be the sole and independent owner of the College; or the Diocese will entirely finance the building and the furnishing of the college and remain owner of it, the Society being merely tenant.

Somewhat protracted negotiations between Carroll and O'Reilly followed during the remainder of 1926, complicated by the distance between Lismore and New Zealand, with agreement eventually being reached that full ownership of the land and college buildings should be vested in the Society. On 7 January, 1927, the general administration sent O'Reilly a proposed contract as a basis for a final agreement: the bishop would give the Society 72 acres and £5,000, the latter being the banked total from Segrief's canvass; the Society would have the option of making a further canvass of the diocese five years after the opening of the college; the Society would be responsible for building, furnishing and directing the college. After further discussion between Carroll and O'Reilly, the bishop indicated his acceptance of the terms on 1 July, 1927, and made a strong plea that a start be made on the college as soon as possible.

In October new plans were sent to the general administration together with a cost estimate of £37,000: this time the general council thought that the revised plans were too small for the estimated number of pupils (100), and too inflexible as regards later development; permission to proceed was once again withheld. Early in the new year a further problem surfaced: the Lismore City council was unwilling to pass the septic-tank arrangements as outlined in the building plan. The project languished during 1928; perhaps by now, in his last year as Provincial, Charles O'Reilly had had enough of the new college. His successor, David Kennedy, was asked by the general administration in February, 1929, to try to resolve all outstanding problems and to have revised plans ready for inspection by the superior general when he visited Australia later in the year.

Rieu arrived in Lismore on 9 July, and spent several days in meetings with the bishop, the diocesan consultors, and Catholic laymen. He announced before leaving that work on the new college would commence before the end of the year. In fact, tenders were not called until early in 1930, and the successful tenderers, Kennedy and Bird of Sydney, finally commenced operations towards the end of February. Thomas Segrief, who had remained in Australia on
mission and retreat work after the completion of his canvass, was appointed first principal of the college, and after recovering from an appendix operation in Sydney in May, came to Lismore in August to supervise building operations and to enrol students for the college opening. Segrief was regarded by his superiors as a capable all-rounder rather than as a top-drawer teacher and administrator. In 1927 Charles O'Reilly had described him as "not very brainy but capable of filling any position creditably", and he was passed over as a possible principal for the Marist's prestigious St. Patrick's college, Wellington, because "he has not the learning nor the ability that one would like to have in the Rector of St. Patrick's, though he has many other excellent qualities such as tact, good manners, which are also very important".

An elaborate ceremony was held on Sunday, 24 August, 1930, for the laying of the college foundation stone, though construction had been proceeding for almost six months. Thomas Segrief was embarrassed by the stone: the Latin word *sollemniter* had been misspelt, and he believed that purists would be offended by the phrase *cum assistentia*; he suggested to Carroll that it might be quietly jettisoned after all the dignitaries had gone away and replaced with another stone, but the bishop demurred. Segrief lamented to John Rausch: "We are tied to the present one - such as it is - for keeps". The ceremony was marred by rain as well as bad spelling, but 1,500 still made the three mile journey from Lismore to see the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Cattaneo, place the stone. The cost had risen to £60,000, but the building would be completed in time for the 1931 school year. Reporting on the opening, David Kennedy told superior general Rieu: "The roof (which is flat) is finished, and the building will be completed by the end of December. We are all very pleased with it".

St. John's college, Woodlawn near Lismore, opened on 10 February, 1931, fully 10 years after Bishop Carroll first approached the New Zealand Provincial about establishing a college. The first staff consisted of Thomas Segrief, James Monaghan (who had recently completed a course at Hawkesbury Agricultural college), William Buckley, Patrick McCarthy, David Murray, Anthony Bergin and Francis Kerley. Monaghan, Murray, Kerley and Bergin were Australians, the remainder New Zealanders. A lay-teacher, W.B. Murphy, Irishman, engineer, and first world war pilot, also lived at the school. St. John's college started with 70 boarders and 8 day students; by the end of the year the school roll stood at 77 boarders and 11 day pupils, a total of 88. Considering that the college opened its doors in the middle of the Depression, and that the projected student population was 100, the enrolment figures must have been regarded as very satisfactory.

As well as supervising the agricultural course which the college offered, James Monaghan was also appointed master of novices for coadjutor brothers, since future applicants from Australia for the Society's brotherhood were to come to Lismore for initial formation.

The official opening of the college was postponed until Sunday, 24 May, 1931, when an impressive list of Catholic notables made their way to Lismore: Bishop Carroll was joined for the occasion by Archbishops Redwood, Kelly, Mannix and Duhig; and Bishops O'Connor (Armidale), McCarthy (Sandhurst), Norton (Bathurst), McGuire (Townsville), Byrne (Toowoomba), Gleeson (Maitland), Dwyer (Wagga), Coleman (Armidale), and Farrelly (Lismore). David Kennedy, the Marist Provincial, was also in attendance, and the peppery rector of St. John's college at the University of Sydney, Maurice O'Reilly, made the appeal, bringing in £1,900. The final cost of the college was £48,271, considerably less than the £60,000 estimate which appeared several times in the press.
David Kennedy wrote to assistant general Moran a week later on 31 May, but his mood was not exhilaration at the successful opening. A problem had surfaced with the bishop. The 72 acres on which the college was built had been provided by a Miss Margaret Buckley, given Carroll for the purpose of establishing a Catholic college; in 1928 the donor had died, and by the terms of her will left two further farms opposite the college site for the "Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees to be applied in or towards the erection of a Roman Catholic College or Educational Institution at Woodlawn". Kennedy and Segrief had called on the bishop on or about 28 May to enquire when they might expect to receive the farms; he had told them "that there would be no difficulty about the college taking over the farms, but that he would expect the college to pay a rent, which would be devoted to diocesan bursaries". He defied the Society to take him to court in the matter. Kennedy informed Moran that rather than argue further he had terminated the interview. In fact, no further progress would be made on the issue for 50 years. In October, 1932, after considerable and unproductive correspondence between Marist authorities and the bishop, the superior general decided to let the matter rest for the time being and not to have recourse to an ecclesiastical tribunal: "Through deference due, and in the interests of peace, we do not propose to undertake this course but prefer to put up with the loss which ensues". The issue remained as an unresolved sore, the Marists paying an annual rent for the farms and resenting being taxed for what they believed was rightfully theirs; the bishop and later diocesan administrators believing that the Marists had been well treated by the diocese, and were unreasonable and greedy in their demand for absolute ownership of the farms. A private settlement in the dispute was not reached until 1977.

David Kennedy returned to the college in July, 1931, for official visitation. He told the superior general that a good start had been made: "This new college is so far very successful. There is a good spirit amongst Fathers and boys". Early successes were registered by the agricultural department: at the Lismore Show in November, 1931, the college pigs carried off two first prizes, and a second, while a Jersey cow won a second placing.

The school began 1932 with 86 boarders and 13 day pupils, just one student short of 100 enrolments. By September of the following year the roll had dropped to 54 boarders and 8 day boys. In his report to the general administration in that month Kennedy curiously made no comment on the fall in numbers and was still pleased with the functioning of the school: "The Fathers at the College are doing good work and are very happy together. A good religious spirit prevails". Kennedy was pleased to report that there were seven new candidates for the brotherhood doing their initial training at the college, in the company of two senior brothers. He noted that Segrief had collapsed several weeks before from a duodenal ulcer, and would not be able to resume work until the new year.

Segrief did resume at the beginning of 1934, his fourth year as rector of the school. The school roll climbed back to 77, an improvement, but disappointing when compared with the college's first two years. Paul Ginisty, a French Marist working in New Zealand, reported to Eugene Courtais in June, 1934, that things were far from good: "The Lismore college is also in a bad way ... Too much boasting -not enough reality!!". There was only marginal improvement in 1935 with 80 students attending the college, though the leaving class for that year certainly lived up to Bishop Carroll's hopes that the school would produce priests: of the 13 students who completed their final examinations, three entered St. Columba's seminary, Springwood, and six went to the Marist seminary at Greenmeadows.
Nineteen hundred and thirty-six was the last year of Segrief's six year term; enrolments fell to 72 students. In correspondence later that year between Hurley and the general administration it was decided to appoint James Bell, a 39 year old New Zealander, as the new principal; however, since Bell would not be free to take up the appointment until the beginning of 1938 because of university studies, Segrief was appointed for a further year. He was not a well man, and spent several weeks in June hospitalised in Sydney. Of an open and optimistic bent, he told Eugene Courtais in July, 1937, that "here at Woodlawn the school is becoming more and more consolidated, with our numbers usually very satisfactory, and the community very happy and generous in all their efforts". Daniel Hurley, New Zealand Provincial since 1935, could not agree: writing to assistant general Schaefer in September, 1937, he lamented that Segrief had no idea of management, and that the college was "drifting hopelessly".

At the beginning of 1938 Thomas Segrief was appointed to the Marist mission band at "Glenlyon". It would be misleading to give the impression that he left St. John's college as a failure. Certainly in terms of paying its way the college had indeed fallen on hard times: James Bell, the new principal, was later to recall that in his first days at the helm the local mayor came to ask if the rumour was true that the college was closing down; St. John's began the year with 43 students, and ended it with only 60. But if Segrief had ultimately been less than successful as an administrator, he nevertheless inspired great affection in those who knew him. Particularly was this true for the students of the tiny, family-atmosphere boarding school which was St. John's college in the first decade of its existence. It would fall to others to rescue and to make successful the college he had established; the achievement of Thomas Segrief was to endear himself to those who lived at the college, priests and pupils, and to many connected with it, by his kindness, tact, and irrepressible enthusiasm.

The Juniorate’s Last Years

The juniorate at Mittagong survived no longer than the opening of the college at Lismore. In August, 1924, James Monaghan had been sent to New Zealand for second novitiate; Arthur Burger, a 39 year old New Zealander with a background in teaching, was posted to Mittagong with the expectation that he and his charges would shortly be moving to Lismore. As a companion he was given Matthew O'Sullivan, a 66 year old Australian Marist who had been ordained in 1893, and who was taking up an appointment in Australia for the first time. O'Sullivan appears to have functioned as chaplain to the nearby Marist brothers. Eight students were in residence during the year, but none was sufficiently advanced to be sent to Greenmeadows in 1925.

The roll remained at eight at the beginning of 1925, and Burger was given further assistance in the person of Andrew Lysaght, New Zealand born, and ordained in December, 1924; Mittagong was his first appointment. Charles O'Reilly made his first official visitation of the house in June. He was not anticipating that he would be making many more: "It does not seem to warrant existence any longer than the opening of Lismore college".

The staff remained the same in 1926, as did the number of students. Austin Roberts had commenced at Greenmeadows at the beginning of the year, but left in November, 1927. In July, writing to James Moran, O'Reilly indicated that he had not changed his opinion about
Mittagong since his report of the previous year:

Mittagong is not too successful as a nursery. It is not large enough for a crowd, even if we get a crowd. It would seem a cheaper proposition to send the students to N.Z. and release the staff at Mittagong for other work ... Our best hope in Australia, will be, as in N.Z., a college.272

So Mittagong struggled on until the opening of St. John's college in 1931. In 1928 Andrew Lysaght was replaced by William Buckley, and at the beginning of 1930 Arthur Burger completed his six year term as superior and returned to New Zealand. Buckley became superior and was joined by Anthony Bergin, himself a former pupil of the school.273 At the beginning of 1931 Bergin, Buckley, and seven students packed up and left for Lismore.274

Documentation for the final years of the juniorate is scarce; it is impossible to say with certainty how many Australian students were sent to Greenmeadows from Mittagong in the years 1925-1931. The probability is that there were eight: Austin Roberts (1926), Herbert Massey (1927), Thomas Kennedy and John Walsh (1928), Carl Heesh (1929), and Robert Nowlan, Maurice Murphy, and Richard O’Sullivan (1930). An additional Australian, John Webber, commenced studies at the New Zealand Marist seminary during the period and was eventually ordained, but he did not attend the Mittagong school.275 Herbert Massey, Carl Heesh, Robert Nowlan, and Richard O’Sullivan all proceeded to ordination.

Between 1919-1930 Mittagong sent 12 Australian students to Greenmeadows: Austin Woodbury and David Murray (1921); Stephen McIsaac (1922); Anthony Bergin (1923); Austin Roberts (1926); Herbert Massey (1927); Thomas Kennedy and John Walsh (1928); Carl Heesh (1929); and Robert Nowlan, Maurice Murphy, and Richard O’Sullivan (1930). Seven of these reached ordination. Two further students sent from Fiji by Bishop Nicolas at the beginning of 1923 went through Mittagong and commenced studies at Greenmeadows: Philip Brailey (1929), and Hugh Ragg (1931). Philip Brailey was ordained in 1935, but subsequently left the priesthood. Finally, two students from New Caledonia, Louis Meyer and Paul Bichon, studied at Mittagong 1920-1922; they were sent to France in 1923, and Paul Bichon was eventually ordained in 1930.

Therefore, in the 20 years (1911-1930) that the Society of Mary operated a juniorate in Australia, firstly at Hunters Hill and then at Mittagong, 18 students from Australia were sent to Greenmeadows, and 10 of those were eventually ordained. Four others who studied at the juniorate, two from Fiji and two from New Caledonia, also began seminary studies; two of these reached ordination.

When Mittagong closed at the end of 1930, Victor Thierry, who had come in October, 1927 as chaplain to the Marist brothers, remained the only Marist priest in Mittagong: Buckley and Bergin transferred to Lismore, and Matthew O’Sullivan became chaplain to the Marist brothers' college at Campbelltown.276 Writing to Archbishop Kelly in September, 1930, David Kennedy indicated that the Society wished to keep its options open in Mittagong:

We propose to leave the property at Mittagong for a few years, and then if God blesses the Society with vocations, we would, with Your Grace's sanction, re-open it as a
Novitiate or Scholastic House of Studies.  

An ex-student, Stephen McIsaac, was allowed to live in the house as caretaker with his mother, but was forced to vacate in June, 1931, when the property was leased to a tenant.  Finally, in December, 1935, Daniel Hurley wrote to Rome to ask permission to sell the property, believing that it would not be suitable for a future novitiate or scholasticate. The general administration gave its assent in March, 1936, and the property passed from Marist hands in December, 1937.

An Offer from Melbourne

During the period 1925-1937 the Society of Mary opened a college at Lismore, established a missioners' house and parish in Brisbane, built a further missioners' house and presbytery at Hunters Hill, and sold its property at Mittagong. In 1932 it almost accepted a foundation in Melbourne. On 15 September of that year, Daniel Hurley, then parish priest of St. Patrick's, wrote to the superior general with details of an offer from Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne. The work was to care for 30 homeless adolescents aged 12-14; the archdiocese owned a large house on 160 acres at Mornington, and this would be made available to the Marists; the St. Vincent de Paul Society would finance the operation, and pay a salary to the two priests and two coadjutor brothers engaged in the project. Hurley was very enthusiastic about the offer "not so much for the work in itself, as for the great opportunity for expansion that it offers..." He thought the archdiocese of Melbourne "superior to any part of Australasia". On 17 October David Kennedy wrote a follow-up letter to James Moran, indicating that the Provincial council was willing to accept the offer. The council was not unanimous, and had decided that Hurley should suffer any undesirable consequences of his enthusiasm:

At a Council meeting ten days ago, at which Fr. Hurley was present, we decided to agree to Archbishop Mannix's proposal ... Fr. O'Reilly is not very keen on accepting, as the work is not in our line. I am not enthusiastic about it either, but I do not think it advisable to refuse ... The Council decided to propose Fr. Hurley as the first superior if Father General accepts the offer. Fr. Hurley's term of six years at St. Patrick's is nearly up.

In fact, by the time Kennedy's letter arrived in Rome, the superior general had already rejected the offer. On 29 October he wrote to Kennedy to inform him of the decision, explaining that the work was not in conformity with the Society's tradition and spirit.

The years 1925-1937 had seen considerable development and vitality within the Society of Mary in Australia, especially when compared with the Society's situation in the years prior to 1924. The resources of the New Zealand Province had made possible an injection of manpower into existing works, and the opening up of new apostolic opportunities. The 1923 Index of the Society of Mary lists 12 Marist priests in Australia, working in four communities; four of the 12 could reasonably be classified as elderly or incapacitated. By comparison, in 1937 there were six communities and 32 Marists in Australia, only six of whom were temporarily or permanently incapacitated. Of course, figures tell only a limited story, and the situation of the Society of Mary in Australia in 1937 was far from being one of trouble-free growth. Problems had surfaced in the latter years of the decade at St. Patrick's and with St. John's college, Lismore; further,
there was real questioning as to whether the parish at Gladstone was worth keeping, and this latter operation had been given a reprieve only because the general administration had been reluctant to take a final decision in the matter. One further factor was of significance in the Australian Marist equation. The appointment of Daniel Hurley as Provincial of New Zealand from the beginning of 1935 had brought to the fore a man who not only knew the Australian situation, but who was enthusiastic about the development of the Society in Australia. The Hurley factor was destined to have considerable influence on the future shape and form of the Society in this country.

ENDNOTES CHAPTER 7

1 Courtais to Andre, 3 April, 1925, OMPA B.3.
2 MPV, 11 October, 1924.
3 Courtais to Chevreuil, 3 April, 1925, OMPA C.3.
4 Courtais to Gonnet, 12 June, 1925, OMPA B.3.
5 Letter of Superior General Rieu, n.113, 24 October, 1928, copy AMPA A235.
6 Dubois to Courtais, 9 November, 1929, OMPA A1.2.
7 Courtais to Rausch, 30 May, 1928, OMPA B3.
8 Courtais to Rausch, 23 June, 1928, OMPA B3.
10 "This building, which I call the gatehouse because, I suppose, it was erected in former times for this purpose, is today unused and will remain so" (Courtais to Rieu, 18 July, 1927, APM OP 418).
11 Courtais to Kennedy, 10 January, 1929, OMPA B3.
12 Ibid.
13 Kennedy to Courtais, 1 February, 1929, OMPA A10.3.
14 Courtais to Dubois, 18 May, 1929, OMPA B3.
15 Courtais to Mother Chanel, 11 April, 1925, APM OP 418.
16 Courtais to Rieu, 5 November, 1925, APM OP 418.
Ibid.

Courtais to Rieu, 18 January, 1926, 24 June, 1926, OMPA B3.

FJ, 18 November, 1926, p.21.

Courtais to Rieu, 2 April, 1927, APM OP 418.

Courtais to Mother Pia, 20 March, 1927, OMPA B3.

Courtais to Nicolas, 7 June, 1927, OMPA B3.

Courtais to Doucere, 26 May, 1927, OMPA B3.

Courtais to Rieu, 6 June, 1927, APM OP 418.

Ibid.

Rausch to Courtais, 1 October, 1930, OMPA A10.1.

Bertin to Rieu, 4 December, 1932, OMPA A10.1.


Ibid., p.28.

Courtais to Kennedy, 9 April, 1932, OMPA B3.

Courtais to Rieu, 25 May, 1932, APM OP 418.

Courtais to Rieu, 6 March, 1932, APM OP 418.

MPV, 26 April, 1932.

Rieu to Courtais, 2 May, 1932, OMPA A1.1.

Courtais to Rieu, 8 June, 1932, APM OP 418.

Courtais to Rieu, 9 June, 1932, APM OP 418.

Kennedy to Courtais, 9 June, 1932, and 17 June, 1932, OMPA A10.3.

Courtais to Rieu, 12 July, 1932, OMPA B3.

Courtais to Rieu, 3 August, 1932, APM OP 418.

Courtais to Wade, 22 September, 1932, OMPA B3.

FJ, 6 October, 1932, p.20; Courtais to Rieu, 20 September, 1932, OMPA B3.
Courtais to (?) 26 December, 1932, APM OP 418.


Kennedy to Moran, 1 October, 1933, APM Z418.

Kennedy to Rieu, 3 October, 1933, APM Z418.

Kennedy to Bertin, 8 March, 1934, A10.3.

Bertin To Br. Andrew, 17 April, 1934, OMPA B4.

Courtais to Kennedy, 18 December, 1930, OMPA B3. The Marist fathers were unable to replace Huault at the College, and the brothers were forced to look elsewhere for a chaplain.

Courtais to Dubois, 4 November, 1929, OMPA B3.

FJ, 12 February, 1931, pp.22-23; Anon., St. Mary's Scholasticate, Meanee and Greenmeadows, 1890-1955, nd, no publishing information, pp.32-38.

Chevreuil to Raffin, 19 February, 1920 APM OP 418. Sontheimer was London-born, but was ordained priest in the Society of Mary in Washington in 1898; he worked in America prior to the outbreak of the first world war.

Courtais to Dubois, 27 May, 1930, APM OP 418.

Rausch to Dubois, 5 May, 1930, APM OP 418.

Bertin to Courtais, 28 October, 1930, OMPA A10.1.

Rausch to Courtais, 27 June, 1930, OMPA A10.1.

FJ, 10 March, 1932, p.21.

Ibid.


Bertin to Kennedy, 30 May, 1930, OMPA B41.

Kennedy to Rieu, 13 June, 1933, APM Z418.

Kennedy to Moran, 1 October, 1933, APM Z418.

McCarthy had been the focus of a minor sensation at St. Mary's Cathedral in May, 1926. While preaching a broadcast sermon he became intoxicated by his own rhetoric and launched into a strong attack on Protestantism. The radio station terminated the broadcast after a number of telephone complaints, and the incident received considerable publicity in the daily press (see FJ, 27 May, 1926, p.25).

Carcenac to Courtais, 14 July, 1936, APM S61.580.5; O'Donnell to Kelly, 21 October, 1936, SAA Marist Box.

Bertin to Dubois, 9 February, 1937, OMPA B4.

"Actus Authenticus", 27 January, 1925, copy AMPA B211.

See above, Ch.6.

Laurent to Nicolas, 28 August, 1924, RCAF 14.3.3A.

Laurent to Rieu, 9 February, 1925, copy AMPA C215.05.

O'Reilly to Moran, 13 October, 1925, APM Z418.

Laurent to Rieu, 25 March, 1926, copy AMPA C215.05.

O'Reilly to Moran, 27 April, 1926, copy AMPA B216.50

FJ, 6 May, 1926, p.22.

Rausch to Bellwald, 26 May, 1926, OMPA E1.36.

Rausch to Haumonte, 30 November, 1926, OMPA E1.36.

O'Reilly to Moran, 14 September, 1926, copy AMPA B216.50.

O'Reilly to Moran, 27 June, 1925, copy AMPA B216.50. Sheehan had also contacted Moran during the latter's 1923 visitation and put the case for Piquet being allowed to proceed.

O'Reilly to Moran, 3 August, 1925, APM Z418.

Kelly to Rieu, 7 August, 1925, copy SAA Marist Box.
85  Rieu to Kelly, 22 October, 1925, copy AMPA C220.05.5.
87  MPV, 14 June, 1927.
88  Hurley to Kelly, 3 February, 1928, SAA Marist Box.
89  FJ, 23 August, 1928, p.32.
90  FJ, 27 October, 1927, p.10.
91  Courtais to Laurent, 1 September, 1927, OMPA B.3.
92  Rausch to Dubois, 8 February, 1928, OMPA E1.37; Rausch to Regis, 31 August, 1928, OMPA E1.37.
93  MPV, 31 January, 1928.
95  Hurley to Moran, 4 March, 1927, APM S61.330.
97  "Petition to His Grace, the Archbishop of Sydney, from the Marist Fathers of St. Patrick's, Church Hill", nd, SAA Marist Box.
98  Kelly to Hurley, 4 August, 1927, SPA F175/D3.
99  Peoples to Hurley, 25 April, 1928, SAA Marist Box.
100 FJ, 13 September, 1928, p.13.
101 Sometime shortly after the beginning of perpetual adoration a tiny mortuary chapel was built at the rear of the church so that coffins brought to the church for funerals would not disturb worshippers in the church proper. (See FJ, 23 September, 1937, p.35).
102 See above, Chapter 2.
104 Hurley to Kelly, 4 March, 1930, SAA Marist Box.
107 FJ, 29 May, 1930, p.27.
112 Ibid.
113 FJ, 1 December, 1927, p.19.
116 FJ, 24 April, 1930, p.22.
117 FJ, 25 May, 1933, p.15.
118 Press clipping from Wireless Weekly, 17 November, 1933, p.11, at APM S61.23.
119 FJ, 3 August, 1933, p.22; FJ, 10 August, 1933, p.18.
120 FJ, 26 October, 1933, p.22.
121 FJ, 22 February, 1934, p.22.
122 FJ, 26 July, 1934, p.22.
123 For Lockington see Bygott, With Tongue and Pen, especially pp.114-115.
124 FJ, 22 March, 1928, p.23.
125 Ibid.
126 Hurley to Kelly, 9 July, 1929, SAA St. Patrick's Box.
128 Hurley to Kelly, 28 March, 1933, SAA St. Patrick's Box.
130 FJ, 31 August, 1933, p.15.
Kennedy to Moran, 12 June, 1934, APM Z418.

MPV, 2 October, 1934.

Kennedy to Rieu, 21 September, 1934, APM Z418.

MPV, 19 October, 1934. Hurley continued at St. Patrick's until December, 1934, and became Provincial on 1 January, 1935.


Thierry Diary, APM personal files.

FJ, 3 February, 1927, p.18.

Jeffcott performed his first baptism at St. Patrick's on 13 November, 1929.


FJ, 12 May, 1938, p.21.


FJ, 1 February, 1934, p.31.

FJ, 27 February, 1934, p.22.


Hurley to Schaefer, 21 August, 1937, APM uncatalogued material.

Hurley to Schaefer, 27 March, 1937, APM uncatalogued material.

Quoted by James Moran, Moran to Rieu, 17 May, 1923, APM 351.5.

Herbert Moran, Beyond the Hill Lies China, Sydney, 1945, pp.212-213.

FJ, 20 August, 1936, p.21.
221

154 FJ, 19 August, 1937, p.34; FJ, 18 August, 1938, p.22.

155 Provincial's Report on Gladstone, July, 1926, APM S61.330.3

156 Carcenac to General Administration, 30 September, 1925, APM S61.580.3.

157 O'Reilly to Moran, 27 April, 1926, copy AMPA B216.50.

158 O'Reilly to Rieu, 12 September, 1926, copy AMPA B216.50.

159 McKenna to Rausch, 27 June, 1929, OMPA D10.2.

160 McKenna to Courtais, 1 August, 1929, OMPA A10.2.

161 Kennedy to Rieu, 4 November, 1929, APM Z418.


163 Ibid.

164 FJ, 10 March, 1932, p.21.

165 Provincial's Report on Gladstone, 20 September, 1933, APM S61.330.3; see also Kenned y to Moran, 1 October, 1933, APM Z418; Kennedy to Rieu, 3 October, 1933, APM Z418.

166 Kennedy to Rieu, 23 January, 1934, APM Z418; see also MPV, 2 March, 1934.

167 MPV, 12 March, 1934.

168 Ibid.

169 MPV, 11 October, 1935.

170 MPV, 23 September, 1938.

171 MPV, 9 June, 1936.

172 Smyth to Raffin, 4 February, 1916, 28 March, 1916, 1 August, 1916, APM Z418;


174 Smyth to Ceretti, 10 May, 1916, NZMPA APD 1 F88.

175 Smyth to Raffin, 1 August, 1916, APM Z418.

176 FJ, 31 May, 1917, p.12; FJ, 23 August, 1917, p.29; FJ, 4 April, 1918, p.18.

177 FJ, 4 April, 1918, p.18.
Carroll's invitation to the Marist missioners, though willing, was not spontaneous. He made it in response to a letter of 24 July, 1923, from the Superior of the New Zealand Mission Band, Thomas McCarthy, announcing that the missioners were coming to Australia the following year. (See McCarthy to Carroll, 24 July, 1923, copy AMPA C350.05.5.)

O'Reilly to Moran, 7 July, 1924, copy AMPA B216.50.

O'Reilly to Moran, 27 June, 1925, copy AMPA B216.50.

FJ, 3 April, 1924, p.18; FJ, 25 June, 1925, p.32; copy of contract, AMPA C355.04.

FJ, 9 July, 1925, p.22.

O'Reilly to Moran, 29 July, 1925, copy AMPA B216.50.

Cable enclosed with Moran to Rieu, 13 July, 1927, APM 351.5.

MPV, 16 July, 1927.

O'Reilly to Moran, 18 July, 1927, copy AMPA B216.50.

MPV, 4 November, 1927.


Caniffe to Duhig, 3 July, 1929, copy AMPA C355.04.

Herring to Moran, 13 April, 1928, APM S61.330.4.

Ibid.


Redwood to Milligan, 14 June, 1931, Greenmeadows Archives (hereafter GMA) WD RED 1/C4.

Ibid.

Hogan to Kennedy, 16 June, 1935, AMPA C355.04.


MPV, 29 October, 1935.

Hurley to Duhig, 9 December, 1935, copy AMPA C355.04.

Hurley to Rieu, 7 April, 1936, APM S61.200.4.


Hurley to Rieu, 7 April, 1936, APM S61.200.4.

MPV, 9 June, 1936.

Catholic Leader (Brisbane), 22 July, 1937, p.13. Clipping at AMPA C365.10.

Carroll to Holley, 19 May, 1921, copy AMPA C325.04.

Holley to Raffin, 25 December, 1921, APM Z418.

Ibid.

Courtais to Regis, 14 December, 1921, OMPA E130.

Bartley Report (nd, but sometime after 19 December, 1921) NZMPA MIS 1 F56.

Holley to Carroll, 16 January, 1922, APM S57.200.3.

Carroll to Holley, 22 January, 1922, copy AMPA C325.04.

Carroll to Holley, 2 May, 1922, copy AMPA C325.04.

O'Reilly to Moran, 30 October, 1922, APM Z418.

Curriculum Vitae, GMA personal files; FJ, 10 July, 1924, p.9.

Rausch to Regis, 2 June, 1924, copy AMPA B160.

O'Reilly to Moran, 27 June, 1924, copy AMPA B216.50.

O'Reilly to Moran, 7 July, 1924, copy AMPA B216.50.

FJ, 31 July, 1924, p.10.

FJ, 11 June, 1925, p.35.

Segrief to Rausch, 2 July, 1925, OMPA D10.02.

FJ, 22 October, 1925, p.35.


FJ, 30 September, 1926, p.43; FJ, 18 November, 1926, p.31.

Segrief to O'Reilly, 20 July, 1926, APM S57.200.3.

FJ, 3 September, 1925, p.34.


"Note to explain the Meaning of the Cable Sent on April 10 by V.R. Father General Concerning the Future College of Lismore", nd [April, 1926], APM S57.200.3.

Grimal to O'Reilly, 7 January, 1927, AMPA C325.04.

"Proposed Contract for the New College at Lismore", nd, AMPA C325.04.

Carroll to O'Reilly, 1 July, 1927, copy AMPA C325.04.

O'Reilly to Moran, 30 October, 1927, copy AMPA B216.50; McKay to O'Reilly, 27 October, 1927, AMPA C325.04.

MPV, 14 December, 1927.

Carroll to McKay, 20 February, 1928, copy AMPA C325.04.

MPV, 5 February, 1929.

FJ, 18 July, 1929, p.34.

FJ, 6 March, 1930, p.19.

FJ, 21 August, 1930, p.29; Kennedy to General Administration, 5 May, 1930, APM Z418.

O'Reilly to Moran, 18 October, 1927, copy AMPA B216.50.

Kennedy to Rieu, 20 June, 1929, APM Z418.

Segrief to Rausch, 11 September, 1930, OMPA D10.2.
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246 FJ, 28 August, 1930, p.27.

247 Kennedy to Rieu, 31 August, 1930, APM Z418.

248 St. John's College Woodlawn Magazine, 1937, copy AMP A S/C 325.10.01/32.

249 Kennedy to Courtais, 7 January, 1931, OMP A B10.3.

250 FJ, 28 May, 1931, p.6; Kennedy to Moran, 31 May, 1931, APM S57.200.3.

251 Hurley to Rieu, 3 December, 1931, APM S57.200.3.

252 Kennedy to Moran, 31 May, 1931, APM S57.200.3; Buckley Will, 12 May, 1927, copy AMP A C325.04.1. See also McGuire to Carroll, 24/6/31, AMP A C325.04.1., which indicates that the 72 acres given by Miss Buckley was a quid pro quo rather than a pure gift. In exchange for receiving the 72 acres, the diocese spent £1000 on erecting various farm buildings on Margaret Buckley’s remaining properties.

253 Rieu to Carroll, 14 October, 1932, copy AMP A C325.04.1.

254 Provincial's Report on St. John's College, Lismore, 2 July, 1931, APM S57.200.3.


256 Segrief to Courtais, 25 April, 1932, OMP A A10.2.

257 Provincial's Report on St. John's College, Lismore, 12 September, 1933, APM S57.200.3.

258 Ibid.

259 FJ, 13 December, 1934, p.41.

260 Ginisty to Courtais, 18 June, 1934, APM unsorted material following 525.2.

261 FJ, 13 June, 1935, p.34.

262 FJ, 13 February, 1936, p.35.

263 Australasian Catholic Directory, 1936, pp.184-185

264 MPV, 2 October, 1936 and 10 November, 1936.


266 Segrief to Courtais, 7 July, 1937, APM unsorted material following 525.2.

267 Hurley to Schaefer, 3 September, 1937, APM uncatalogued material.
Bell Memoirs, AMPA D3.8.

Transcript of interview with Andrew Lysaght, 9 November, 1927, AMPA D13.10.

Provincial's Report on Mittagong, June, 1925, APM S56.000.3.

Notes Novitiate and Scholasticate 1924-1932, NZMPA.

O'Reilly to Moran, 13 July, 1926, APM Z418.


Courtais to Rieu, 27 April, 1931, APM S57.330.

For Roberts, Massey, Heesh and Nowlan, see Notes Novitiate and Scholasticate 1924-1932, and Notes du Noviciat, NZMPA. Thomas Kennedy (commenced at Greenmeadows 1928; later elected to transfer from clerical studies to become a coadjutor brother; at Lismore early 1930's, and subsequently left Religious life); Richard O'Sullivan (commenced Greenmeadows, 1930; ordained 1937); Maurice Murphy (commenced Greenmeadows, 1930; elected to transfer from clerical studies to become coadjutor brother; professed 1933); John Webber (commenced Greenmeadows, 1931; ordained 1937).

Kennedy to Kelly, 18 September, 1930, SAA Marist Box.

Ibid.

Rausch to Courtais, 19 June, 1931, OMPA A10.1.

MPV, 31 December, 1935.

Schaefer to Hurley, 6 March, 1936, NZMPA GHL 2 F309-310.

Lysaght to Bryant, 18 November, 1985, copy AMPA C85. The purchaser was Holt Property Pty. Ltd.

Hurley to Rieu, 15 September, 1932, APM S61.330

Kennedy to Moran, 17 October, 1932, APM Z418.

Rieu to Kennedy, 29 October, 1932, APM S380.

Society of Mary Index 1923. (No Index printed in 1924.)

Society of Mary Index 1937.
CHAPTER 8

AUSTRALIA: A NEW PROVINCE (1938)

Daniel Hurley became Marist Provincial of New Zealand at the beginning of 1935, and presided at his first Provincial chapter between 14-16 May in Wellington. In his opening address to the chapter he indicated that one of his major interests would be the development of the Society in Australia, and he asked for an expression of opinion on this and on the linked question of a Marist seminary in Australia:

You will be pleased to hear of steady progress in Australia. Good vocations are coming and it seems to be a matter of time when we shall have to consider the question of a vice Province. Unofficially, I have heard that some kind of house of studies is necessary before this can be effected. In view of the growth, and the expense and difficulty of bringing delegates to a Chapter, I would be pleased to have an expression of policy from the Chapter ...¹

The chapter responded by passing a resolution that "as soon as possible a House of Studies be established in Australia".² Hence, within months of coming to office, Hurley had received backing for a policy of working towards the ultimate aim of greater autonomy and independence for the Society's houses in Australia through the immediate goal of setting up a separate formation structure.

This was no recent preoccupation for Hurley. As early as October, 1931, while parish priest of St. Patrick's, he had written to assistant general Dubois to raise the question of a formation house for the Society in Australia: "Our work in Australia is growing gradually, and it will only be a matter of time when we shall need a novitiate, and then at a more future date a house of studies".³ Explaining to James Moran that he was unable to leave St. Patrick's in August, 1932, to attend the 1932 Provincial chapter, Hurley once more stressed the importance of taking advantage of opportunities in Australia, and expressed mild frustration that his confreres in New Zealand did not seem to share his enthusiasm:

I was anxious to be at the Chapter for many reasons, chief of which being to put before the Fathers our hopes and our needs in Australia. New Zealand knows so little of us and takes less interest, as we are so far away, and one has to live in Australia to realise its size and potentialities.⁴

Hurley's unsuccessful attempt in September of the same year to commit the Society to work in the archdiocese of Melbourne has already been described;⁵ his failure did not cool his ardour. Writing again to assistant general James Moran in March, 1933, he mentioned that several Australians had left that year for Greenmeadows, and concluded: "Australia will soon be clamouring for its own house of studies".⁶

On 26 April, 1935, just prior to his first Provincial chapter as Provincial, Hurley had written to the general administration to raise again the possibility of the New Zealand Province
buying Villa Maria. He suggested that as well as serving as a residence for home missioners and as a presbytery for the Hunters Hill parish clergy, it would be useful later on as a house of formation for Australian clerical students.\(^7\) The general council had discussions with Hurley and Bertin when they were in Rome in October for the general chapter. It was decided that the Oceania Province should retain Villa Maria, and that New Zealand should proceed without delay to erect a separate house for missioners and parish clergy as envisaged by the 1925 act of transfer; since Hurley was anxious to establish a novitiate at Hunters Hill for the training of coadjutor brothers in preference to the existing arrangement at Lismore, the Oceania Provincial consented to lease some of the Villa Maria property to New Zealand for cultivation by novice brothers.\(^8\)

*Seminary at Toongabbie*

In March, 1936, the general council considered a written request from Hurley to sell the juniorate property at Mittagong and buy a house and land in or near Sydney for a seminary for candidates for the Marist priesthood. Hurley pointed out that Greenmeadows would soon be stretched beyond its capacity, since there were 80 students in residence, 22 of whom were Australians; further, it was expensive to send candidates to New Zealand when there was no guarantee that they would persevere, and some potential applicants had already been lost to the Society because of a reluctance to travel overseas for training. Finally, Hurley stated that an Australian Marist seminary would be a big step towards the creation of a separate Australian Province. The council gave Hurley the permission he sought.\(^9\) A month later he wrote again to indicate that the feeling among Marists in Sydney was that the seminary should still be built at Villa Maria, although he believed personally that the suggestion would not be congenial to the Oceania Province.\(^10\) Whether it would be congenial or not, the general council rejected the proposal once and for all:

> The letter proposes to build the scholasticate for Australia at Villa Maria. It seems undesirable to have four or five religious communities on the one site, and there isn't anywhere for sporting fields for the young men at Villa Maria. We will write to Fr. Hurley making these points.\(^11\)

In fact, while the general council was deliberating on the matter, the Oceania Provincial, Joseph Bertin, learnt of the suggestion to build the seminary at Villa Maria, and wrote to Hurley encouraging him to make an offer for some land.\(^12\) Hurley replied on 4 June that he had just received a letter from the general administration rejecting the proposal, and that he would therefore have to look elsewhere.\(^13\)

Hurley stopped looking early in September, 1936. On the 3rd of that month he paid £5 for a month's option on a 100 acre dairy farm fronting Fitzwilliam Road, Toongabbie, with an asking price of £3,375. The owner, Ellis Smith, agreed to grant a further month's option if desired.\(^14\) On 8 September Hurley wrote to the general council to inform them that negotiations were proceeding and that he believed he had found a way of financing the land purchase and seminary development: he hoped to benefit from the desire of many Sydney Catholics to contribute towards some sort of memorial to the recently deceased Peter Piquet. Hopefully the new seminary could be promoted as a memorial to Piquet, and thus attract substantial financial support.\(^15\) Hurley signed a contract to purchase the land on 14 September and handed over £375
as a deposit. Ellis Smith was eventually contracted to manage his farm property at an annual salary of £260.

Next, Hurley went to see Archbishop Kelly to ask permission to build the seminary; Kelly authorised the project and agreed to bless the foundation stone. On 28 September Kelly received a letter from the parish priest of Parramatta, indicating that as a matter of courtesy Hurley had informed him that the Marist fathers had purchased property at Toongabbie and would soon build a seminary there. It was news to Kelly, who had been under the impression in his earlier conversation with Hurley that the seminary would be built at Hunters Hill. He immediately summoned Aloysius Jeffcott in the absence of Hurley who had returned to New Zealand, and indicated that he would give permission for the new foundation only if the Marists agreed to waive their rights to a public oratory. Final approval, with this proviso, was granted by Kelly on 10 October, 1936.

Before leaving for New Zealand Hurley had also met with a group of prominent Catholic laymen and had won them to his idea that the proposed memorial to Peter Piquet be the new seminary at Toongabbie. Hurley hoped that the ability of Piquet's name to generate funds was still an active power, and that the seminary would be substantially funded by Piquet devotees. On 8 October an executive was formed to supervise the seminary appeal, and a public meeting was held on Sunday, 18 October, at St. Patrick's, to generate enthusiasm. A resolution was passed "that a memorial be erected in the shape of a house of studies for the purpose of enabling young Australians to qualify for membership of the Marist order". At the close of the meeting Aloysius Jeffcott indicated that the cost of the proposed seminary would be approximately £20,000, and that the organisers were hopeful of raising this figure and building the seminary free of debt.

On 1 October, 1936, Hurley had written to the general council to request permission to commence construction: he reported on initial discussions with the builders, Kennedy and Bird, and enclosed a preliminary plan. The main building would cost £10,000 and a free-standing chapel was costed at £3,500. The council cabled its approval in principle, but awaited more detailed plans before giving a definite authority to proceed. Meanwhile, problems were developing within the appeal committee in Sydney. Aloysius Jeffcott, Hurley's Sydney agent for the project, reported back that some committee members were contemptuous of the site chosen for the seminary, and dissatisfied that they were being given no say in planning the building; further, the appeal itself was going slowly. Hurley advised Jeffcott to tell the committee members that they would be able to inspect the final plans once they had been authorised by Rome, but that only minor alterations would be possible at that stage.

The general council inspected detailed plans on 23 March, 1937; they thought the estimated cost for the first stage of the seminary to be too steep at £12,000 to £15,000, considering there would be only 20 students' rooms and no chapel. They asked Hurley to come up with something better. On 24 July Hurley wrote to assistant general Schaefer to inform him that without changing the original plan in any substantial way it had been possible to cut the estimate back to £10,000. He indicated that he would be in Sydney from 24 August and asked for a cabled response as soon as possible. The council responded in the affirmative; on 3 September Hurley wrote to Schaefer to ask him to thank the superior general for his permission to begin. Hurley had reason to be grateful; he had already authorised the builder to order bricks and other materials.
Hurley arranged with Archbishop Kelly for the laying of the foundation stone on Sunday, 24 October. The past history of the site did not augur especially well for the enterprise: in the 1790's it had been part of a 134 acre Government farm worked by recalcitrant convicts. On 24 October, 1937, the Freeman's Journal reporter surveyed the landscape and praised it with desperate ingenuity:

The location has the advantage of being removed from the enervating influence of the sea, and its proximity to the life-giving gum trees should make it an ideal site for its purpose, while yet it is near enough to the city to make the journey a comparatively easy one.

Four thousand turned out to see the place for themselves. Archbishop Kelly gave £100 to demonstrate that he wished the Marist fathers "every blessing in the enterprise" and Daniel Hurley looked forward to the day when young men would go out from the seminary "to the Islands and later to convert the teeming millions of China and Japan". Aloysius Jeffcott read a financial statement which showed that the Piquet Memorial appeal had been something of a lame duck: only £2,600 had been collected in the 12 months since the appeal had been opened. He was hopeful that "the generous contributions during the day" would reduce the £16,000 debt the Marist fathers had for land and buildings. The immensely durable W.J. Spruson brought proceedings to a close by moving a vote of thanks to the archbishop.

Daniel Hurley would soon have his Australian seminary; he had already begun moves to establish the Marist houses in Australia as a separate Province. On 21 August he wrote to assistant general Schaefer indicating that a formal request would soon be forthcoming. The New Zealand Provincial council discussed the issue on 13 October and decided to propose to the superior general "that Australia be a separate Province". Hurley's letter to the general administration communicating this request was written on 18 October and considered on 9 November; it outlined five reasons in support of a separate Province:

The reasons that urge the Provincial council to present the petition are briefly:

1. The growth of the society in Australia.
2. The possibilities of fuller development will be aided by a competent authority on the spot.
3. For the discipline and well being of the members of the Society. This is one of the most cogent reasons.
4. When Australia has its own responsibilities, it will realise more fully its obligations.
5. The well founded hope of more vocations.

Curiously, Hurley felt little need to elaborate on any of these propositions. The only comment accompanies item 3, stating that the discipline and care of the members "is one of the most cogent reasons". Hurley had obviously experienced some frustration in trying to administer Australia from across the Tasman, finding particularly that the authority of the Provincial was much diminished by 2,000 miles of ocean. The general councillors were receptive to Hurley's
request, agreeing that "in principle the formation of an Australian Province is desirable", but noting for their own benefit that "only the General Chapter can decide this question". Since assistant general Schaefer was leaving Rome on 9 January, 1938, for a visitation of Australia and New Zealand, the council postponed a decision until they had the opportunity of reading his report.

In the same letter in which he proposed that Australia be made a separate Province, Hurley also nominated Austin Woodbury as first rector of the new seminary. Woodbury was a 38 year old Australian who had studied at Montbel and Mittagong from 1918-1920; following six years at Greenmeadows he was sent to Rome for further studies and was ordained there in July, 1927. He returned to New Zealand in 1929, and commenced lecturing at Greenmeadows the following year; after a heart attack towards the end of 1935 he came to Australia in May, 1936, to convalesce, and returned to a temporary appointment at the Marist Silverstream college, near Wellington, at the beginning of 1937. It was from there that he came back to Australia to begin the seminary in 1938, a tall, quixotic, eccentric genius, capable of inspiring exceptional loyalty and affection among his students, equally at home musing with original perception on great abstract truths, or judging pedigree cattle at the local show.

The opening of the Piquet Memorial seminary was set down for May, 1938. In the meantime fund-raising continued slowly. A "Father Piquet Memorial Fete", held from 5 to 12 February, 1938, in St. Patrick's hall, was supposed to raise £2,000 and only brought in £300. Someone's bright idea to take a leaf out of Piquet's book and sell 200,000 bricks at 1/- each was not especially lucrative: only 10,000 bricks were sold, bringing in £500 instead of the hoped for £5,000. The first seminary residents were already well established by the day of the official opening, having commenced lectures on 28 March. The Freeman's Journal reported that the new seminary was not particularly well endowed:

The library, a most important department in the life of a seminary, is as yet, bare and empty. The chapel floor is without covering. Some simple furniture is also required for the reception rooms.

The first seminary community consisted of four priests, two coadjutor brothers, five Australian students who had been brought back from Greenmeadows, and three new entrants. In addition to Woodbury, the first staff members were John Gorinski, a 26 year old New Zealander recently ordained and qualified in Rome; John Rausch, who had taught Woodbury at Montbel and Mittagong and was now working alongside him at Toongabbie; and Richard O'Sullivan, an Australian who had been ordained the year before and who was appointed the first seminary bursar.

The new coadjutor archbishop of Sydney, Norman Thomas Gilroy, performed the official blessing and opening on Sunday, 29 May. Six thousand came to share the occasion and inspect the building. They listened to Gilroy denounce indecent magazines which "corrupt youth and pander to the base passions of degenerates", and heard Aloysius Jeffcott thank them for donating £700 that day. The final cost of the first stage of the seminary including land and furnishings had been £18,000; £5,000 had been raised by the Piquet Memorial appeal, and a further £2,000 had been given in bursaries and gifts; £10,000 was still owing on the project.
William Schaefer, Marist assistant general, on official visitation of Australia and New Zealand, was present at the opening. He had left Rome on 9 January, and arrived in Sydney on 10 February, departing for his visitation of New Zealand on 22 February, and subsequently returning to Australia, probably sometime in May; he left for Europe in June.\textsuperscript{45} The general council began considering his report on 20 September.

\textit{Australian Province Established}

Schaefer argued strongly for a division of Australia and New Zealand, giving reasons not substantially different from those furnished by Hurley in his letter of 14 October, 1937: it was impossible to supervise the works of the Society in Australia from New Zealand ("It is necessary to have a man on the spot to put things in train, consult the ecclesiastical authorities, and give \textit{elan} to new works"); members of the Society in Australia were too far away from the authority of the Provincial ("Required permissions are too easy to presume when the competent authority is so far away"); finally, Schaefer believed that the link with New Zealand was losing the Society vocations in Australia:

The young Australians do not like to go to New Zealand. The parents are not easily convinced to allow their children to go when there are so many other orders on the spot. This objection is further accentuated by a fear, perhaps exaggerated, of earthquakes in New Zealand. For the rest, there exists a pronounced rivalry between Australia and New Zealand ... which predisposes Australians against New Zealanders.\textsuperscript{46}

Schaefer was not arguing in his report, however, for a fully independent Australian Province; he was thinking in terms of a vice-Province, which would give something less than full autonomy from New Zealand. He went on to recommend Daniel Hurley for the position of vice- Provincial of Australia because of his familiarity with the Australian situation, his good rapport with bishops, priests, and laity in Australia, and his ability to be innovative.\textsuperscript{47}

The general council minutes suggest that at some stage after completing his report, either before the Council discussion or during it, Schaefer changed his mind about the vice-Province recommendation. There is no doubt that he recommends a vice-Province in his report, but the council minutes record him as favouring a separate Australian Province in the discussion: "Fr. Schaefer proposes the constitution of an Australian Province".\textsuperscript{48} The minutes are not sufficiently detailed to indicate exactly why Schaefer changed his mind; they simply record his fellow councillors’ agreement with the recommendation, note that according to the Marist constitutions only a general chapter is able to propose the erection of a new Province, and comment that a vice-Province would be of no use. It was finally decided that the superior general would approach the Sacred Congregation for Religious to ask if a formal request for exemption from the requirements of the constitutions in this matter was likely to be successful.\textsuperscript{49}

On 23 September, 1938, Rieu reported to the council that Cardinal Agostini, prefect of the Congregation, had indicated that such a request would be granted for serious reasons; it was subsequently made, and granted by the Congregation on 20 October. Hurley was appointed Provincial of Australia and superior of St. Patrick's community at the council meeting of 28 October.\textsuperscript{50} On 30 October Rieu wrote to Hurley informing him of his appointment, which
commenced on 1 December; he reminded Hurley that it was customary for a new Province "to receive from the mother-Province ... some of its investments as a kind of dowry, to give it a start in life", and told him that for the time being all New Zealand Marists in Australia would remain at their posts; any future movements of personnel between the two Provinces Rieu reserved to himself.51

James Bell, at that time principal of St. John's college, Lismore, and later an assistant general of the order, recorded in his memoirs his surprise at the establishment of the new Province, and his curiosity as to how the change came about:

It was some time late in 1938, I fancy, that we heard Australia had been set up as a new Province, and this without going through the usual years of gestation as a vice-Province. How all this came about I don't know. Was it the New Zealand Provincial council or Fr. Hurley or was someone in Australia pushing? I don't think the last since nearly everyone in Australia was a New Zealander ... Probably it was Fr. Hurley's move. Usually too it's left to general chapters to do this sort of thing or those old special general councils in Rome. They may have held one of those. But we never found out. It's something I never checked on in Rome.52

Bell's educated guess was right. The establishment of Australia as a Province independent of New Zealand was due almost entirely to Daniel Hurley, supported in the end by the recommendation of assistant general Schaefer. Hurley had signalled his intention of working for the two, interconnected goals of an Australian Marist seminary and Australian autonomy, at the 1935 Provincial chapter, in his first year as Provincial. A little over three years later, he had brought both projects to completion.

ENDNOTES CHAPTER 8

1 Hurley, Opening Address to 1935 Provincial Chapter, NZMPA PCH 1, F418.

2 1935 New Zealand Provincial Council Minutes, PCH 1, F424-425.

3 Hurley to Dubois, 16 October, 1931, APM S61.330.
5 See above, Chapter 7.
7 MPV, 31 May, 1935.
8 MPV, 24 October, 1935. This latter arrangement was never proceeded with.
9 MPV, 16 March, 1936.
10 Hurley to Rieu, 7 April, 1936, APM S61.200.4.
11 MPV, 28 April, 1936.
13 Hurley to Bertin, 4 June, 1936, OMPA A10.3. Ironically, in 1975 the Marist Fathers' seminary moved from its original site to Villa Maria.
14 Option to Buy, 3 September, 1936, AMPA C165.02.2.
15 MPV, 16 October, 1936 and 20 October, 1936.
16 Deposit receipt, 14 September, 1936, AMPA C165.02.2. An adjoining farm of 19 acres seems to have been purchased later for £1,350. See Hurley to Jeffcott, 13 October, 1936, AMPA C165.04; Option to Purchase, 21 September, 1936, AMPA C165.02.2.
17 Contract, Austin Woodbury and Ellis Victor Smith, 6 November, 1936, AMPA C165.02.2.
18 Jeffcott to Hurley, 29 September, 1936, AMPA C165.04.
19 O'Donnell to Kelly, 28 September, 1936, copy AMPA C165.04.
20 Jeffcott to Hurley, 29 September, 1936, AMPA C165.04. A public oratory was a Mass centre which was not a parish church but which was nevertheless open to the public. Kelly was concerned less this siphon-off parishioners and revenue from the local parish.
21 O'Donnell to Hurley, 10 October, 1936, copy AMPA C165.04.
22 FJ, 1 October, 1936, p.21; Jeffcott to Kelly, 30 September, 1936, copy AMPA C165.04.
23 FJ, 15 October, 1936, p.31; 22 October, 1936, p.30.
24 MPV, 23 October, 1936; Kennedy and Bird to Hurley, 28 September, 1936, AMPA C165.04.
25 Hurley to Jeffcott, 29 October, 1936, AMPA C165.04.

26 MPV, 23 March, 1937.


28 Hurley to Schaefer, 3 September, 1937, APM uncatalogued material.

29 Hurley to Jeffcott, 26 July, 1937, AMPA C165.04.

30 Typed monograph, "Toongabbie", AMPA C165.10.

31 FJ, 28 October, 1936, p.23.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid. The components in Jeffcott's total were: £3,000 for land, £11,900 for the building and £1,100 for furnishings and architects' fees.

34 For Spruson's association with the Marists see Chapters 2 and 4.

35 Hurley to Schaefer, 21 August, 1937, APM uncatalogued material.

36 New Zealand Provincial Council Minutes, 13 October, 1937, NZMPA.

37 MPV, 9 November, 1937.

38 Hurley to Schaefer, 14 October, 1937, NZMPA GHL 2. F348.

39 MPV, 9 November, 1937.


41 FJ, 3 March, 1938, p.31.

42 FJ, 31 March, 1938, p.31.


44 FJ, 2 June, 1938, pp.18-19.


46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 MPV, 20 September, 1938.
49 Ibid.

50 MPV, 28 October, 1938.

51 Rieu to Hurley, 30 October, 1938, APM S203.3

52 Bell Memoirs, AMPA D3.8.
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Thirteen years elapsed between the 1925 act of transfer and the creation of a separate Australian Province in 1938. Long enough to ensure that the French Marists in Australia had all but vanished by the time the first generation of students to pass through Toongabbie reached ordination. There was little direct contact, therefore, between the new Australian Province and the French Marists who had first come to Australia in 1845. When Australian Marists came together in later years to tell the stories and relive the memories, they would be stories and memories about their own days at Greenmeadows and Toongabbie, or about New Zealand Marists; never about French Marists. The little that Australian Marists knew, or thought they knew, about their French forebears was vague and distinctly uncomplimentary: that the early French fathers had actively discouraged Australian vocations, and that the French Marists were not interested in developing the Society in Australia. In their personal experience of John Baptist Chevereuil, both John Rausch and Austin Woodbury had encountered these attitudes at first hand; Rausch and Woodbury may well have been influential in creating an impression among the first students at Toongabbie that these patterns were typical of all or most French Marists in Australia.

This study has shown that it is not accurate to say that the French Marists in Australia in the years 1892-1924 discouraged Australians from joining the Society and made no effort to develop the Marist congregation in this country. The opposite is the case: within the limitations and constraints under which they laboured, the Provincial superiors of the Province of Oceania made at very least a reasonable effort to foster local vocations and respond to opportunities for expansion.

The constraints and limitations were considerable. Firstly, the Oceania Provincials had only a limited amount of time and energy to devote to the situation of the Society in Australia: their primary focus had, of necessity, to be directed to the Pacific, and often the Society's operations in Australia could receive only cursory attention. Secondly, the quality of the Marists available for work in Australia during the period 1892-1924 was poor; the image they projected would not have attracted newcomers, and their personal limitations worked against the development of the Society. In addition, there was almost a total equation between Marist and French; until this could be broken down, young Australians would never perceive the Society as being for them. When to this is added the fact that a large number of Marists working in Australia were either sick, or elderly, or discontented, or traumatised, it is not hard to see why vocations were slow in materialising. Further, the Society in Australia was particularly short of men capable of filling positions of responsibility; it is literally true, for example, that during Andrew Marion's Provincialate, despite a willingness on the part of the Provincial council to establish a juniorate, there was simply no one available to begin the work.

Despite all these constraints, genuine efforts were made to encourage and foster Australian vocations, and to develop the Society in Australia. Well before the establishment of Montbel in 1911, Provincials accepted Australian candidates for the Society and sent them to
Greenmeadows at considerable expense. Those who enquired about joining the Society were treated seriously and with encouragement. In the thousands of letters read in connection with this study, there is not a single piece of evidence to suggest that Australians were ever actively discouraged from joining the Society, and a great deal of evidence to suggest that the contrary was true. Certainly there is abundant evidence to suggest that many of the French Marists in Australia assumed that St. Patrick's and Villa Maria should always be French preserves, and evidence that Charles Nicolas, for example, believed at one point that Australian candidates would always be reluctant to offer themselves for the foreign Missions; but while such attitudes may have made individual Marists less enthusiastic about recruiting Australians, this certainly did not mean that because of such attitudes local vocations were ever discouraged or ignored. This comes out clearly in a letter from Nicolas to Peter Regnault in 1911, where in a single sentence Nicolas expresses both his opinion about Australians not wanting to go to the Missions and his desire to recruit Australian vocations: "We all know our Australians too well: we shall not find many vocations for the Missions proper; but I do hope we shall find recruits good enough to imitate you in starting home missions". Among those Marists connected with the early years of the Australian Province who personally knew John Baptist Chevreuil, there was probably a tendency to project back his attitudes on the Marists who came before him. In the main, such a projection is unfair. There were few Australian vocations prior to 1924 simply because the Society of Mary in Australia was low-profile, predominantly French in character, and composed essentially of unattractive members.

Similarly, it is not necessary to posit that the French Marists were reluctant to develop the Society in order to explain its smallness in 1924, after 80 years in Australia. Again, within the constraints of available personnel, genuine efforts were made, particularly in the later 1890's and the early years of this century, to accept new apostolic opportunities. As the century wore on it became increasingly clear that the Society would not expand in Australia without a significant infusion of manpower. All the Provincials, from Augustin Aubry onwards, recognised this and tried to respond to the problem. Initially they looked to Europe to provide enough priests of sufficient quality in order to establish the Society in Australia, but beginning with Andrew Marion there was a developing realisation that such an influx would only come from New Zealand. Charles Nicolas was absolutely convinced of this, and in the latter years of his Provincialate, tried unsuccessfully to coax New Zealand parish missioners, in particular, to Australia.

The appointment of John Baptist Chevreuil to the Provincialate in 1919, coupled with the accession of the cautious John Holley in New Zealand, meant that the coming of New Zealand Marists in numbers to Australia was temporarily delayed. But before long Chevreuil's bizarre behaviour in office and his authoritarian and rigid attitudes had alarmed the general administration, and made it receptive to the complaints and submissions of John Rausch, John Monaghan, Eugene Courtais, and Bernard Quinn. Chevreuil was made a scapegoat for 75 years of Marist non-development in the Australian Church, and the general chapter and the general administration encouraged the New Zealand Province to become the flag-bearer of the Society in Australia. By the time of the 1925 act of transfer the New Zealanders had sufficient financial and manpower resources to willingly commit themselves to a genuine implantation of the Society in Australia. Francis Laurent thought them too willing, believing that they had been lusting after St. Patrick's in Sydney for some years, and had finally achieved their aim. Historically, Laurent
was right, although by the time of the actual transfer, the quasi-imperialistic designs of Peter Regnault in 1908 were no longer a factor in motivating the New Zealanders to come to Australia.

There is no reason to suppose that had Regnault and his go-between Thomas O’Shea succeeded in ousting the French Marists from St. Patrick's in 1908, the subsequent history of the Society of Mary in Australia would have been radically different. Regnault's reasons for wanting to insert New Zealanders at St. Patrick's were to provide religious and cultural cross-fertilisation for New Zealand Marists, and to give his parish missioners some relief from having to preach the same tired sermons to the same tired faces in New Zealand. He was not necessarily interested in any further development in Australia. Further, the Marists in New Zealand were numerically less strong in 1908 than they were in 1924, and in any case, the war would have hampered considerably any earlier New Zealand putsch into Australia.

Following the act of transfer of 1925, the New Zealand Province was able to provide the required injection of manpower necessary for a genuine implanting of the Society in Australia. The sending of Daniel Hurley to Sydney in 1926 was particularly significant, resulting in a new lease of life for the ailing St. Patrick's, and giving Hurley a taste for the Australian Church which would lead him to work for the development of the Society in Australia and eventually for the creation of a separate Australian Province.

The story of the Marist Fathers in Australia, 1892-1938, is divided therefore into two contrasting periods. The first period, from 1892-1924, characterised essentially by no development and little achievement, with the 1890's at St. Patrick's being an outstanding exception in a consistent pattern of either maintenance or crisis management. This state of affairs resulted not so much from any apathy or arrogance on the part of the French Marists as from the poor quality of manpower resources available for work in Australia.

The second period, 1925-1938, is basically a story of growth and new beginnings. Communities and works were established in Brisbane and at Lismore, and St. Patrick's was given a new lease of life. Increasing numbers of young Australians were offering themselves for membership of the Society, and in 1938 an Australian Marist seminary was established at Toongabbie. The picture was not entirely rosy: by the late 1930's Daniel Hurley was concerned about the increasingly desperate plight of St. John's college at Lismore, and also about a downturn in the fortunes of St. Patrick's. However the appointment of James Bell as principal of the Lismore college at the beginning of 1938 would eventually usher in a period of consolidation, while Hurley's nomination as first Provincial of Australia, stationed at St. Patrick's, would give him an opportunity of supervising a revitalisation there.

In December, 1938, when Daniel Hurley became the new Province’s first Provincial, Marists had been working in Australia for seven years short of one hundred years. Despite the contribution of men like Le Rennetel and Piquet, and despite the developments in the years 1925-1938, there was still comparatively little to show for almost a century of labour in the Australian vineyard. Given the manpower resources available in the years 1892-1924 this fact is perhaps little to be wondered at. Writing to Gaston Regis in September, 1924, John Rausch had lamented: "If our first Fathers in Australia had seized the numerous opportunities that were offered them in Australia, we would now have at least a hundred Australian Priests". The
"numerous opportunities" and the possibility of 100 Australian Marists by 1924 existed only in Rausch's mind, but would live on as myths in the collective consciousness of the newly-created Australian Province. With the human resources available between the years 1892-1924, significant expansion and implantation of the Society of Mary in Australia was never a possibility; at times the Society seems fortunate to have simply survived as well as it did.

---

ENDNOTES CHAPTER 9

1 Nicolas to Regnault, 2 June, 1911, NZMPA IPC 2 F20-22.
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2 Rausch to Regis, 22 September, 1924, OMPA E1.27.
### APPENDIX - ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH BAPTISMS

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<td>1931</td>
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<td>1932</td>
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<td>1935</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>1938</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>18</td>
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*When baptising babies from outside the parish during 1908-9-10, Peter Piquet frequently writes explanations or reasons in the margin
- ‘urgent’
- ‘child sickly’
- ‘very sick’
- ‘on a/c of difficulties’
- ‘unavoidable’
- ‘propter periculum’
- ‘parents with their business in the Parish’
- ‘cum permissu parochi’
- on 19.5.10: "a kidnapped nigger from the New Hebrides into New Caledonia".
CONTEMPORARY SOURCES

1. MANUSCRIPT

1A. Overview

This book is substantially based on correspondence, mostly in French. The following archives were visited, the first five being the most important for the present study:

- Marist Fathers' Archives, Rome
- Marist Oceania Province Archives, Suva
- Marist New Zealand Province Archives, Wellington
- Marist Australian Province Archives, Sydney
- Sydney Archdiocesan Archives

Useful material was also gathered from:

- Roman Catholic Archives, Suva
- Marist Seminary Archives, Hawkes Bay (New Zealand)
- N.S.W. State Archives, Sydney
- Mitchell Library, Sydney
- Josephite Sisters' Archives, Sydney
- St Patrick's Parish Archives, Sydney.

1B Detailed Outline

1B.1 Marist Fathers' Archives, Rome (Archivio Padri Maristi)

A great deal of correspondence from Marist administrators in Australia, mostly in French and (thankfully) mostly in readable handwriting, survives in the Marist General Administration Archives. The following sections were the most useful:

- APM 322-323 Minutes of General Chapters.
- APM 351 Correspondence between Superiors General and Assistants General.
- APM OP 418 Correspondence from the Provincials of Oceania to the General Administration.
- APM OP 458 Correspondence from the Sydney Procure to the General Administration.
- APM Z418 Correspondence from the Provincials of New Zealand to
the General Administration.

APM Personnel Dossiers.

1B.2 Marist Oceania Province Archives, Suva

Most of the material held in these archives was originally kept in Sydney, and was transferred to Suva in 1971. While a great deal of correspondence has been destroyed by outgoing Provincials, the remaining material is still impressive in its scope. The most useful sections were:


OMPA A2 Marists to Provincial.

OMPA B1 Outgoing correspondence of Andrew Marion (Provincial 1904-1910). This material now also available in French and English in AMPA B140.

OMPA B3 Outgoing correspondence of Eugene Courtais (Provincial 1925-1932).

OMPA B4 Outgoing correspondence of Joseph Bertin (Provincial 1932-1939).

OMPA C1 Provincial Council Minutes

OMPA C3 Minutes and Papers of Provincial Chapters.

OMPA D10 Marists in Australia to Sydney Procure.

1B.3 Marist New Zealand Province Archives

An extremely valuable collection, especially for the history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand, but generally disappointing for material relating to Marist activities in Australia. However material found here resolved questions arising from gaps in other archives. Useful sections were:

NZMPA IPC Inter Provincial Correspondence (correspondence between New Zealand Provincials and Marist administrators in Australia).

NZMPA MH Missions Apud Fideles.

NZMPA PHL Provincial House Letters.
1B.4 Marist Australian Province Archives

In theory these archives should not contain original documents dated prior to 1938, when the Australian Province came into existence. In fact, a considerable amount of original material generated prior to 1938 has found its way here. However, the main value of this collection for research prior to 1938 lies in a vast amount of copied material from other Marist archives and elsewhere which has been collected over recent years.

1B.5 Sydney Archdiocesan Archives

Documents from this collection proved invaluable for the study, although a considerable amount of material had to be sifted through for a comparatively small number of references. The following were read in their entirety:

- Marist Boxes (two)
- St. Patrick's Box
- Moran Papers
- Kelly Papers.

2. PRINTED SOURCES

2A Newspapers and Serials

The Sydney Freeman's Journal was read in its entirety from 1890-1938, and occasional recourse was had to the Catholic Press (Sydney). Use was also made of the following:

- Annales des Missions de L'Oceanie
- Annales de la Propagation de la Foi
- Australasian Catholic Directory
- Garland of St. Joseph
- Marist Fathers' Year Book
- Sands N.S.W. Directory
- Society of Mary Index

2B Other

- New South Wales Parliamentary Debates, Votes and Proceedings of the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly.


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