



# SM bulletin

Friday, 21 July 2017

## General Administration

After five days visiting significant places in the west of Sicily, the GA has returned to Rome refreshed to take up the work of the last days of this administration.

In the coming week Fr John Hannan will be in *La Neyliere* to participate in the final days of the Colin Renewal.

## THE VATICAN MUSEUMS AND OCEANIA

During the year the general house community and our archivist, Fr Carlo Maria Schianchi, have received visits from Fr Nicola Mapelli PIME from the Vatican Museums. Fr Nicola is in charge of the 'World Art and Cultures' section of the museums, the department that holds all the non-European art of the Vatican, including Oceania. With his Australian collaborator Katherine Aigner, with whom he has worked on the museum's Aboriginal Australian collection – he is researching the Oceania collection. The collection contains many artifacts sent by the early Marist missionaries and by the local communities as gifts to the Holy Father.

One of the principles of the museum, and one of the curators' goals, is 'reconnection': they want to reconnect with the descendants of those who donated objects and works of art to the popes, through the centuries. For this they plan to travel and to meet with the local communities, in order to bring their perspective and their stories into the presentation of the items the museum has care in its care. Fr Nicola has been contacting with Marists in the Pacific for information and advice. He has already received great help from Elizabeth Charlton, archivist for New Zealand.

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## CATHOLIC CHURCH IN TONGA CELEBRATES 175TH ANNIVERSARY

The 175th Anniversary of the Catholic Church in Tonga was celebrated with a mass led by Cardinal Soane Patita Paini Mafi at Pangaimotu Island. At this site a white cross that marks the place where the first mass celebrated in Tonga took place on 2 July 1842. Pangaimotu is a small island in the Tongatapu group lying near the capital. It is reachable by a 10-minute boat trip from Nuku'alofa. The morning mass was attended by more than a thousand Catholics from throughout Tongatapu and 'Eua who travelled to the island by boat. A plaque was unveiled by Cardinal Mafi to mark the anniversary. As part of the celebration Cardinal Mafi ordained Lutoviko 'Olie to the priesthood on 29 June, at Pea. Pea was the first village to receive the Catholic Faith. Father Joseph Chevron of the Society of Mary came to Tongatapu under instruction from Bishop Pompallier, accompanied by Brother Altaic. Chevron and Altaic were responding to an invitation sent to them at Lakeba in Fiji, through relatives of the chief of Pea, Moeaki.

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## AN ONGOING HISTORY

Fr Jan Snijders continues his work on the early history of the mission in the Pacific. Following on from his publication, *A Mission Too Far ... Pacific Commitment*, he has continued to write additional chapters. There are now six bonus chapters, with the latest addition being: Chapter 16 - "1843: A Visitor in New Zealand". These can be downloaded from the Marist Studies website: [mariststudies.org](http://mariststudies.org).