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Dear Friends

It is very hard to realize that we are almost half way through Lent. A few weeks ago I was aware of having a certain amount of 'spare' time but a number of events changed that.

YOUR CHARITABLE PRAYERS Are requested for the repose of Fr Kevin O'Neill SM, 73 year old, who died early on Monday 21st March. Kevin spent much of his life in Blackburn where he was head of the Sixth Form College for a number of years and was highly admired. Requiem mass will be 12.00 noon in St Andrews, Teesville, Middlesbrough. Also for my brother, Fr Aelred Coleman OFM (Cap), 83 years old, who died quite suddenly 16th March. Mass was celebrated in St Francis, Middlesbrough on Tuesday 22nd March and the Requiem mass and burial was at the Capuchin Friary in Pantasaph on Wednesday 23rd March. May they rest in peace, Amen.

On Saturday 26th March I went to Westminster Cathedral to attend the Mass for the inauguration of the Celebrations for "Richeldis 950", Walsingham 1061 - 2011, "A place of Pilgrimage". Archbishop Vincent Nichols was the principal celebrant, in a full cathedral, for the mass which was a worthy celebration of this great event. This was a timely reminder to us of the great gift that the National Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham is to this country.

A few weeks ago I was puzzled to be invited to the: 'All-Party Parliamentary Inter-Faith Group Celebration and Discussion: Role of Mary in the Bible and the Qu'ran- House of Lords, Monday 28th March 2011'. It was addressed to me under the title of 'Marist Way'. It proved to be a very interesting event. As instructed - "For those outside Parliament, entrance to the Parliamentary Estate is via the Black Rod's Garden Entrance. As admittance is by presentation of the invitation card only, please remember to bring it with you." I did this and Archbishop Kevin McDonald and Hajj Ahmad Thompson addressed the subject of the role of Mary in the Bible and Qu'ran respectively. I was most grateful for invitation and the subject certainly provided much food for thought and action for the future.

Events in Japan - earthquake, sunami and the atomic power station - have combined to make us forget about Christchurch, New Zealand. I attach my latest information:

The earthquake struck Christchurch about 20 minutes after the midday Mass in the Marist parish. Fr Rod Milne sm and Br Frank Brennan sm were driving one block away and witnessed the wall of the Knox church collapse as they stopped in the middle of the road. They returned quickly to help rescue the parish secretary, Joan Adams. She miraculously escaped with

minor injury from the demolished parish office which she had visited briefly to collect documents to use at home from where she was working. After the first earthquake in September, the presbytery, home to the Marist community, was deemed unsafe to occupy but could be visited to retrieve necessities. At first the priests and brothers resided wherever they could, but in January moved to a rented house in the suburb from where they continued to serve the parish. In the larger February earthquake the presbytery was completely destroyed. The church appears structurally sound but inside there is considerable damage. Pews are strewn haphazardly and furniture in the kitchenette and catechetical area scattered and broken, and piles of spilled and broken vases, candles, books and other equipment in the sacristies and foyer. The statues of Our Lady and St Joseph were smashed but those of St Therese and St Peter Chanel remained standing which might say something for the French.

In the parish there is one Marist Third Order group and in other parts of the city several groups of Marian Mothers. It seems that all of them are safe although a few have suffered some damage to their homes. However, like so many in the city, they are suffering from the stress of ongoing aftershocks, chaotic infrastructures, and coping with fear and nervousness which has been heightened by the disaster in Japan. Now the task is to rebuild lives, families and structures. The church of the Marist parish will remain closed until further engineering examinations are completed and in the meantime Masses are being held in the nearby Mary Potter chapel of the sisters of the Little Company of Mary. Life goes on and Mary's Magnificat continues to be a significant and inspiring prayer for the Marists of Christchurch

We continue to pray for the all the victims of these various disasters and also the events in the Middle East.

EUROPEAN MEETING of the MARIST LAITY will take place in Francheville (just north of Lyon) and will be attended by members from all parts of Europe. Various types of accommodation will be available. All rooms are equal in that they all have lavabo, shower and toilet. They basically offer the same kind of comfort. The difference is in the number and the positioning of the beds:

Chambre single €430.00 *Chambre comfort* is primarily for couples € 350.00

Chambre à 2 lits: 2 beds that cannot be put side by side €340.00

Chambre à 3 lits: 3 beds (2 can be put side by side and 1 separate bed). €330

I am prepared to act as a 'booking agent' and will deal with the transfer of monies and the coordination of travel arrangements. If you are interested I will Email a copy of the booking form.

35th MARIST LOURDES PILGRIMAGE Sunday 29th May to Sunday 5th June 2011.
Travel by coach and ferry. Full board accommodation, twin en-suite rooms, celebratory dinner, travel insurance. Cost: £385.00 Hotel Esplanade; £520.00 Hotel Padoue. Booking forms are now available from me.

Marist Liturgical Calendar and Mass Intentions 2011

Date	Feast or Celebration	Mass Intention
April 24	Easter. Resurrection of the Lord	
28	St Peter Chanel SM	Vocations SM
29	Ann. Approbation SM Gregory XVI 1836	Society of Mary

M. Coleman SM, Marist Way Regional Animator

THE LORD HAS RISEN
ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA