



**Marist  
Solidarity  
Cambodia  
Annual  
Report  
2019**





# Marist Solidarity Cambodia

Giving children and young people with a disability a sense of their own value as individuals and as members of their family and community; a sense of purpose; a sense of the many possibilities that could be before them, and the means to live life in a meaningful way is the essence of what we strive for in the LaValla Project.



## **Bishop Olivier Schmitthaeusler**

Bishop Olivier is the Catholic Bishop of Phnom Penh and a good friend of LaValla. We thank him for this friendship and support and we pray for his well being and for the work of the Catholic Prefecture of Phnom Penh





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## **From the Director**

**“No one teaches us how to dream, we just do.”**

No one teaches us how to dream, we just do. But for young people living in remote rural areas, especially those with disabilities, who have no access to education, the dreams will not carry them far.

For the Cambodian children and young people with disabilities who become part of the LaValla Project, their dreams do become a reality. The dream to be accepted, to be treated with dignity, to have fun and enjoy life, to have an education, to be able to walk, to have skills for employment and more - all these dreams are realized by our students.

At LaValla primary school students have not only receive a comprehensive education programme, but also access to health services they would never have at home and the opportunity to live in an environment in which they can develop their many talents and social skills. An environment where all are equal, where abilities are more important than disabilities, where for the first time in their lives they are not defined by their disabilities.

After LaValla most students move on to Secondary school, either from their homes or, if that is not possible, from LaValla Village. These Village students study at the local Government High School. This Inclusive Education programme gives the students the opportunity to become part of the wider society but with the ongoing support of their friends and LaValla Staff and the Health and Rehabilitation services at LaValla.

The Inclusive Education programme has been greatly enhanced by the new facilities at LaValla Village, officially opened in November 2019. A



report on the new facility is included in this report.

The staff – teachers, carers, programme coordinators, support staff, health care staff, cooks, drivers, grounds and maintenance staff – all contribute to the success of the LaValla project. Their commitment to the welfare of the students is extraordinary. They are wonderful role models. Without them there would be no LaValla Project. On behalf of the students, the Board, and the Marist Brothers, I thank them all sincerely.

Since our students come from the poorest families in the country, a project like ours depends totally on the generosity of others – funding agencies and individuals. These individuals and agencies are listed elsewhere in this report, but I sincerely thank all of them for their generosity and belief in the young people whose lives benefit so much from their support.

I also acknowledge the support and encouragement from our local, Provincial and National Government agencies. Thank you.





# Our Values



## Marist Solidarity Cambodia

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

All students that are welcomed to Marist Solidarity Cambodia have disabilities, here they find that their lives are not defined by their disabilities and so can live as normal young people and develop their individual talents and personalities. They also able to build up a resilience to cope with being disabled in the wider society.





## Vision and History

Marist Solidarity Cambodia (MSC) is an international non-government organization which encompasses LaValla School, Villa Maria Hostel, LaValla Village and an Outreach Programme.

MSC aims to support young Cambodians with physical disabilities by way of furthering their education and assisting them into employment.

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

- LaValla School established in Phnom Penh in 1998 is a government approved school in Cambodia providing a full elementary school

education for children and young people with physical disabilities.

- Villa Maria, built by the Australian Marist Fathers in 2005 is now a hostel for the young people attending university. Later in this report you will read of the opening of the LaValla Village. This new facility is the hostel for students of MSC who are attending the local Governemnt High School in Takhmao.

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

- Many of MSC's students come from rural provinces of Cambodia and due to difficulties with travel they are residential.

- In 2010 MSC was established to integrate various programmes and sites into one entity, which we now call the LaValla Project, with its own Board of Directors under the aegis of Marist Brothers Province of Australia.





# LaValla School

At the start of the 2018 - 2019 school year the enrolment at LaValla was just over 90. When school ended in September 2019 there were 87 students, all but five of them residential. 23 Grade 6 students graduated in August 2019. Of these 14 students have continued to Secondary School at Takhmao, while being accommodated at Villa Maria Hostel and then to the new LaValla Village. 5 students returned home and go to their local Secondary School. The remaining 4 are doing skills programmes. The course of studies at LaValla is made up of Ministry of Education curriculum requirements - the study of Khmer, Mathematics, Social Science and Science and of subjects required by MSC itself - English, Computing, Art, Music, Health and Physical Education, Sewing and Agriculture. Students are encouraged to learn to play a musical instrument and tuition is offered in our own Viola Wheeler Music Programme.

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

Our students are from poor families and their own education has been constrained by the difficulties facing their families. At LaValla the aim is to broaden their horizons, deepen their knowledge, increase their skills, improve their health, lift their self-confidence and prepare them to meet the challenges that await them, in high school, at work, and beyond.

One of the enriching experiences afforded them is their encounter with young adults from Australia who come to spend a week with us. They have the opportunity to practise their English and to try to engage with young





people from a very different background. Usually our students do very well in this regard - come the end of a visit by the foreigners saying goodbye is not easy to do.

**Residential Programme**

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

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





# LaValla Village - Inclusive Education Project

Upon successful completion of Grade 6 at LaValla Primary School, students with the capacity to go further are encouraged to continue their education, supported by a team of mentors, as part of the MSC Inclusive Education Programme. For most this will mean commencing High School while others will attend Vocational Skills Programmes. For those who would not be able to access Secondary education in their local environment MSC provides Hostel accommodation and students attend Hun Sen High School Takhmao. MSC is not the primary carer for any of these students.

**Essential elements of this program include:**

- Accommodation in a place where their basic needs are met with families contributing in-kind where possible;
- Regular family visits during holidays;
- Transportation to and from school or university;
- Provision of essential educational supplies and school uniforms;
- Supplementary tuition in English, Mathematics and Computing;

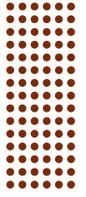
- Individual mentoring;
- Regular medical examinations and personalised care, including surgery if required;
- Access to a range of rehabilitation services including physiotherapy.

Until now these students have been accommodated in Villa Maria Hostel and rented Accommodation.

The new LaValla Village provides improved accommodation facilities for the Secondary students while the Villa Maria site accommodates the University students.

Currently we have almost 70 students living in LaValla Village and attending Grades 7 – 12 at the local Government High School. 15 University students live at the Villa Maria site, about 2 km away from LaValla and attend University in Phnom Penh. There are also a number attending Vocational Skills programmes.





At the Village the students will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress, for the development and maintenance of the facilities.

As well as bedrooms the village has dining / kitchen, sports facilities, classrooms fitted with computers for study, accommodation for staff and access to the Lavalla health facility.





# Finance Report

## Balance Sheet

	Year Ended 31 December 2019	Year Ended 31 December 2018
Opening Balance, beginning of year	216,797	149,536
(Deficit)/Surplus of receipts over Expenditure	21,450	67,261
Prior year's adjustment on bank balance	(20,468)	-
<b>Fund Balance, End of Year</b>	<b>217,779</b>	<b>216,797</b>

Represented by:

Cash in Banks	227,588	207,459
Cash in Hand	1,190	6,953
Staff loans receivable	2,700	2,880
Severance Payable to staff	(13,699)	(495)
	<b>217,779</b>	<b>216,797</b>

## Statement of Receipts and Expenditure

	Year Ended 31 December 2019	Year Ended 31 December 2018
<b>Receipts</b>		
Funds from Donors (Recurrent)	480,506	489,381
Income from commercial Enterprises	-	10,554
Other Income	40,116	27,016
Restricted Fund Receipt (Capital)	196,321	244,013
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>716,943</b>	<b>750,964</b>

### Expenditure

Programme Costs	297,304	265,623
Personnel Costs	143,052	158,623
Administration Costs	31,577	18,710
Commercial Enterprise Costs	2,104	5,449
Capital Expenses	221,456	235,518
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>695,493</b>	<b>683,703</b>
(Deficit) /Surplus of receipts over expenditure	21,450	67,261



**Capital Development**

During 2019 four major building projects were completed. Figures include Site preparation, Construction, Furnishing and Fittings, Landscaping, Planning and other costs.

	<b>Total Cost</b>
LAVALLA VILLAGE (commenced 2015) Includes the cost of Land	\$ 1,171,958
MUSIC CENTRE (Commenced 2018)	\$ 54,156
COVERED WALKWAY (Commenced 2018) LaValla School to LaValla Village	\$ 35,500
FARM BUILDING (Commenced 2018)	\$ 32,033
IT EQUIPMENT	\$ 37,450

During 2019 MSC was able to purchase, or had donated

35 Laptop Computers for Classrooms at LaValla School and LaValla Village

15 Secondhand Computers

6 Laptops for Project Managers

4 Smart Televisions for Library and classroom use

1 Photocopier





# Health and Rehabilitation Report

The number of students who received physiotherapy each month varied due to the education schedule. Similarly, Hydrotherapy did not take place for the whole year because the team only selected students who matched the criteria of hydrotherapy. It was important too for a successful outcome that the students themselves wanted to join. It is also important to note that the school curriculum includes swimming lessons in their time table.

Marist Solidarity Cambodia has dedicated health care for all our students through a part time medical doctor and our permanent health staff. WE also facilitate referrals to hospitals, private clinics and other health partner agencies. The Cambodia World Family organization (CWF) kindly provided Dental care service to 93 students, Caritas Cambodia [Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CCAMH)] provided epilepsy medicine regularly for students who require it. The Takeo Referral Hospital kindly permitted students from MSC to get treatment and health services free of charge. Three students from MSC received surgery for bone remodeling and we thank Mr. Putheara who facilitated the approval from the hospital

## Spanish Doctors

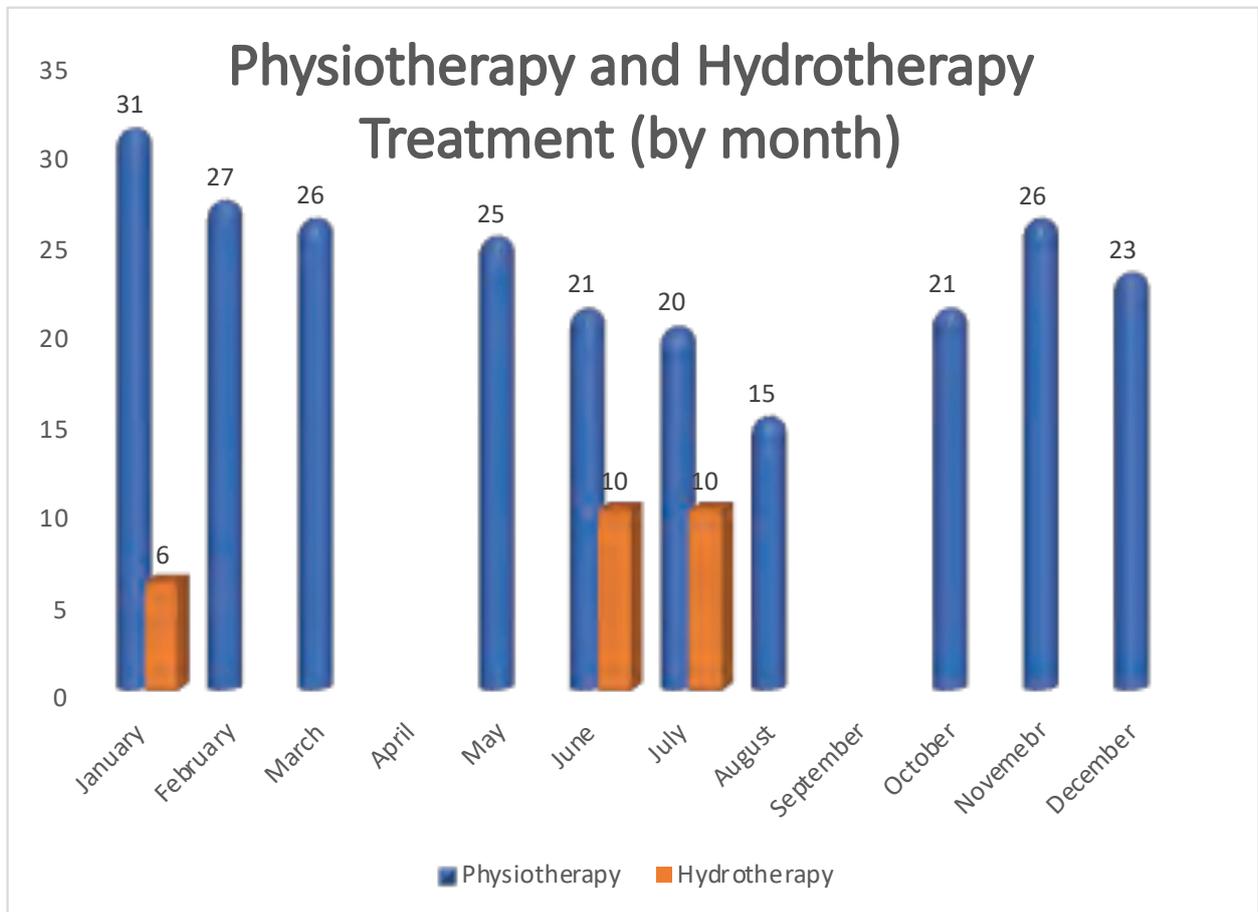
A Spanish Pediatric neuro-orthopedic team working through Bambino Gesu hospital (OPBG) led by Doctor Hector Aguado, cooperated with the Takeo Referral Hospital (Takeo province) to provide services to LaValla students. This group generously funded all their expenses. They did assessments as to which of our students would benefit from surgery. Eleven students received

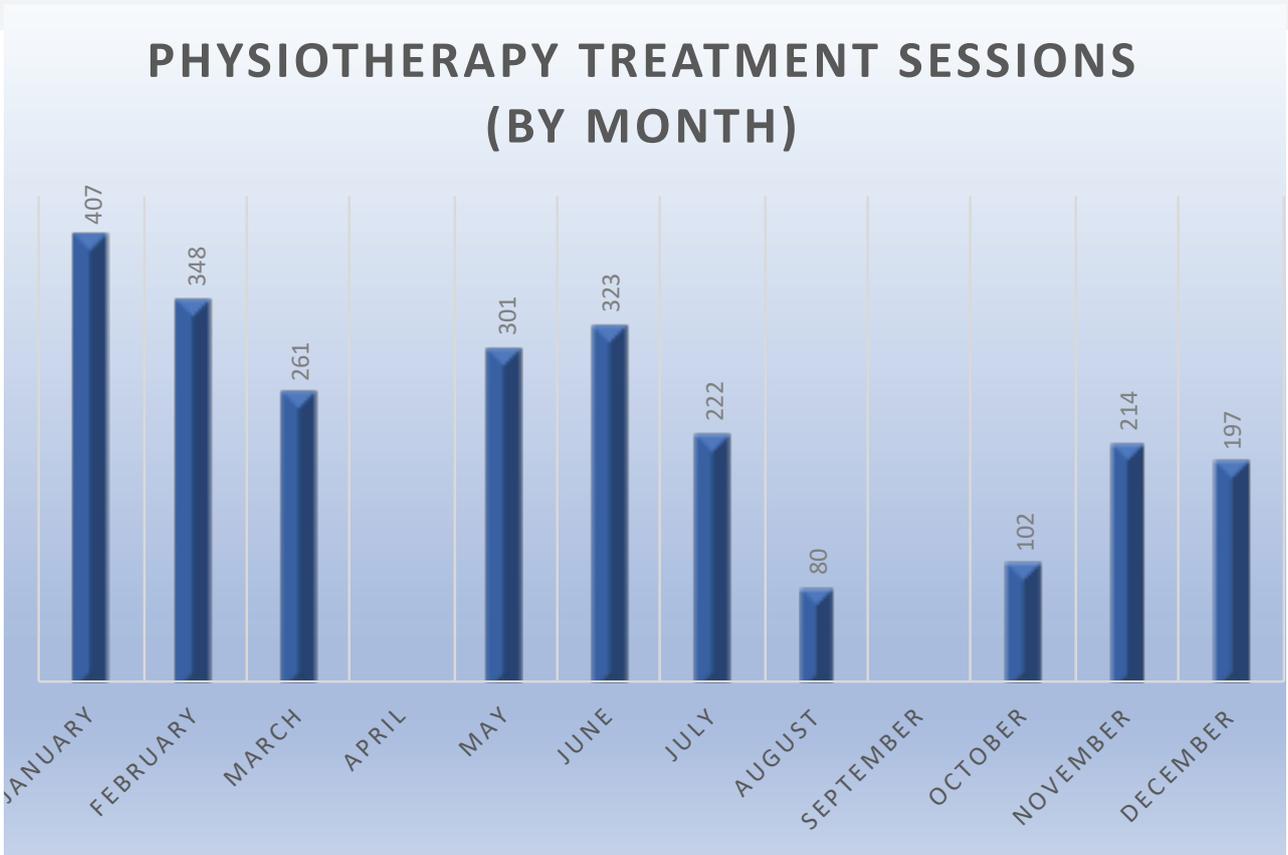
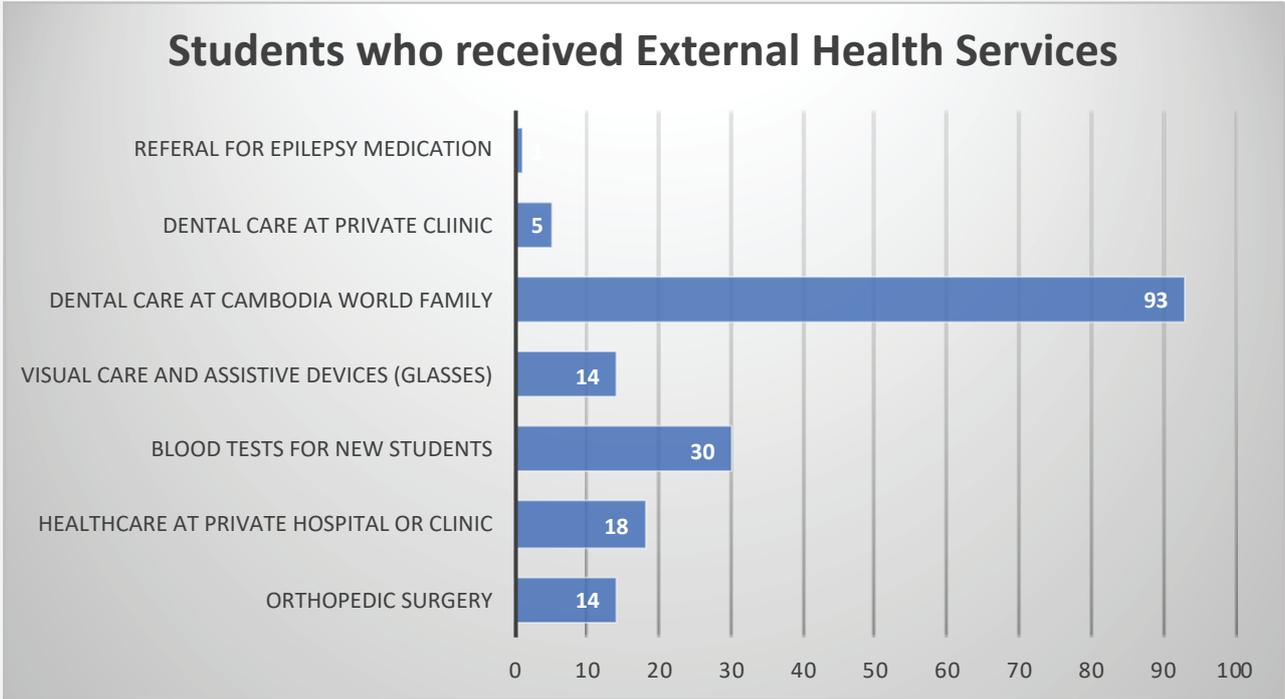
corrective surgery from the team. Post-surgery, most the students were happy with the result giving relief from physical restriction (tightness of muscles, joint stiffness and range of motion) that led to improvements in mobility and the activities of daily living.

## Referral for Assistive devices at rehabilitation

We refer our students with physical disabilities for assistive devices (Prosthetic, Orthotic, or wheelchair) to provide mobility support to the two-rehabilitation centers: Kien Khleang National Rehabilitation and Exceed Rehabilitation both based in Phnom Penh. 49 students from LaValla School and LaValla Village were referred. These students benefited from rehabilitation services in more than one session in the year include new devices and repair of existing devices. In house maintenance of wheelchairs and other assistive devices is carried out by senior physiotherapist Mr Sokny.











# Opening of the LaValla Village 21st November 2019



**H.E. Mr. Mikami Masahiro - Japanese Ambassador to Cambodia, His Excellency Mr Em Chan Makara - Secretary General Disability Action Council, Br Peter Carroll, Provincial Marist Brothers of Australia,**

LaValla Village was the last of the major projects commenced by Br Terry Heinrich in Cambodia. The Village offers accommodation for Graduates of LaValla Primary school so that they can attend the local government High School. These are students who, if they returned home after Grade 6, would not be able to access a Secondary school.

The new facility was opened by His Excellency Mr Em Chan Makara, Secretary General of the

National Disability Action Council, and Br Peter Carroll, Provincial of the Marist Brothers Australian Province. Other guests included the Ambassador of Japan to Cambodia, many Province and local Education, Social Affairs and community leaders. Local friends and supporters of LaValla. Also present were other donors and friends of Br Terry who came from Australia and Canada.

The Village provides accommodation for up to 80 students. Most will attend the local Hun Sen High School in Takhmao. Some will use the Village as a base from which to attend Vocational Skills training courses.



As well as being more spacious, the obvious benefits are that students have better facilities for study, far better living conditions than they had previously. With the greatly improved facilities we have been able to establish a more rigorous study and tutoring programme.



*Br Peter Carroll and HE Mr Em Chan Makara cut the ribbon.*



# Immersion 2019

During the year we welcome visits from students from Australia who come in immersion groups. In 2019 regular visitors Marist College Ashgrove, Marist North Shore, Francis Xavier College Hamilton, OLSH Alice Springs, Marist College Canberra, Marcellin College Bulleen, Maris Stella College Singapore, Woodlawn College, Lismore and UWSEA, Singapore, returned to spend time with our children and young people. These groups have each become one of our annual fixtures as groups from each school spend a week working, tutoring, interacting with our students either mid-year or towards the end of the year.

This engagement is for the students at LaValla and Villa Maria a great opportunity to get past fears to do with foreigners, overcome shyness, practise some English, broaden horizons. As pleasing as all that, establishing bonds, even if just for a week, experiencing friendship from unexpected meetings – these we hope are formative experiences as well.

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

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

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





# Music 2019

## Music

For many years LaValla has had a very successful music programme where students learned both traditional Khmer and modern instruments. The music programme is known as the Viola Wheeler Music programme, named after a wonderful long-time supporter of our work at LaValla – especially Music.

Recently LaValla opened a new Music Centre, located between the LaValla School and LaValla Village sites. The construction of the Centre was co-funded by Grapes for Humanity Global Foundation and Marist Brothers Australian Province.

Grapes for Humanity Global Foundation also provided us with \$12,000 to purchase new music instruments and other equipment for the Music Centre and programme.

We very much appreciate the support of our wonderful friends at Grapes for Humanity, who not only fund Music, but also vehicles, buildings and other important equipment that makes for better living and learning for our students.



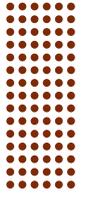


# With Thanks - Donors and Supporters

## DONORS – 2019

Australian Marist Solidarity  
Australian Marist Province  
Misereor (Germany)  
Liliane Fonds (Netherlands)  
Grapes for Humanity Global Foundation  
Mission Bambini (Italy)  
Marist Mission Centre (Marist Fathers Australia)  
Little Kings Movement (Australia)  
United World College of South East Asia (Singapore)  
Diocese of Bozen-Brixen (Italy)  
St John's College Woodlawn (Australia)  
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Renshaw Family  
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H.E. Em Chan Makara  
ESCO (Singapore)  
Marist Schools in Australia  
Raskob Foundation

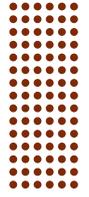




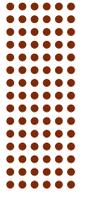
# Images/Activities













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