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In 2013 we take up the theme *iBelieve...Seeing Beyond*. It invites us to see our lives as they really are; what we know, what we experience, what we hope for...what we believe. Jesus tells us; *'Your faith has made you strong'* (Mt 9.22). Faith for us is not some magic hallucinate that blinds us from the reality of life. Faith gives us eyes to see things more clearly, to feel and engage with life at a deeper level, and the courage and strength to make a difference. Our future is full of hope. I believe.

Faith doesn't have you believe that you will have no worries, or that you will not make mistakes, or that people you love won't get sick. What faith gives us is the assurance that God is good, that God can be trusted, that God won't forget us, and however we may be feeling, God is there for us...always. We are in good hands. We are in God's hands. This is seeing reality, the reality that God loves us more than we could ever imagine, a God who will never give up on us. I believe.

As Marists, let us live with the open and trusting faith of Mary as we face the often uncertain and unpredictable times in our lives. Like Mary, let our lives be open to wherever the Spirit will lead us, trusting an unknown future to a known God. I believe.

As Marists, let us be people of faith who know the presence of God. Like Saint Marcellin, let us live every day with the consciousness that God is part of our world and desires to be known and experienced in our lives. I believe.

As Marists, let our faith be seen in our struggle for justice; the struggle of the poor, the young people who feel no one cares...that God doesn't care. I believe.

As Marists, let our faith be seen in our struggle for people suffering fear and depression, for those whose sadness and worries seem to never end. I believe.

As Marists, let our faith be seen in the struggle of a culture whose thirst for information and distraction closes eyes and hearts to the experience of God's gentle and powerful presence. I believe.

*Your faith has made you strong.* Our faith may be the size of a mustard seed but has the power to move mountains (Mt 17:20). This is seeing beyond, seeing the reality of the goodness and power of our lives. God is good, God is with us. This truth gives us the strength to move mountains, power to transform the darkest, loneliest and most desperate in our world. As Marists, we believe.

## Tony Clarke

Director

Marist Mission and Life Formation