



### **Early Childhood Education**

The Marist Education Project at Mabiri, on Bougainville, incorporates a high school and a vocational centre. They were established to provide education for child soldiers who missed out during the war from 1989-2000.

People are the backbone of any successful Marist endeavour and the teachers at Mabiri are the key to its success. Alongside the four Melanesian Brothers there are nine Marist lay staff – many of them graduates of our original Marist school on Bougainville, St Joseph's, Rigu. The staff contribution to the education and welfare of the students is vital and we need to enable them to continue making a contribution.



But because Mabiri is isolated there are no elementary school opportunities for teachers' children and other local children. The young families of our teachers will be obliged to move to the towns that can provide for their children's education. Mabiri is in danger of losing good Marists!

The teachers do not want to move on and an obvious solution is to sponsor the establishment of a simple Elementary School at Mabiri. This idea has the support of the educational authorities on Bougainville.

International funding agencies stand ready to partner us in this development. They have confidence in the coordination of projects in the past by Marist Solidarity.

#### **What is NEEDED...**

- A double classroom block with staff facility between the rooms.
- A boys and girls sanitation unit.

Marist Solidarity will support the building of a classroom block and sanitation unit for the elementary school children.

The Marist District of Melanesia has committed the services of a Brother as a teacher in the school and one of the local young people will be sponsored for in-service elementary teacher training.

#### **What you can DO...**

Continue to support the development of the Marist Education Project at Mabiri. By helping to educate the young in the Mabiri community you will make a real contribution to the building up of the Marist Village at Mabiri. It is this community that underpins the success of education for young people affected by the recent civil war on Bougainville.

MSA will contribute part of the co-financing component of a funding proposal. The local community will do their part by providing timber from their forest, and their labour as an 'in-kind' contribution.