

Marist Minute

Our family recently moved to a nearby suburb and we are adjusting to the new travel routes. Along one particular stretch there are three sets of chicanes and a speedbump for good measure. I've resigned to the fact that it is quicker to weave my way through this triple threat to my daily commute than take an alternative route. The word chicane comes from the French verb 'chicaner', which means to create difficulties or dispute pointlessly. And yet, we need the 'chicanes of life' – those people we try to avoid, the situations that will hold us up, processes that take longer. Have you ever driven over the top of someone, instead of applying the brake and patiently engaging in conversation? Perhaps you avoid some people altogether, going out of your way to bypass the threat of a challenging encounter. Recalling a novel by Ricardo Guiraldes, Pope Francis encourages us to develop "the ability to move with kindness and humility, a calmness in life." In a fast paced, efficiency orientated world that prioritises productivity over people, we Marists need to go gently, to slow down and let our spirit catch up.

Reflection:

*What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.
No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.
No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.
No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.
A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.*

- Leisure, William Davies

Journal Questions:

Where are the chicanes in your life? Do you avoid or embrace them?

When was the last time you slowed down to 'stand and stare'?

