



CELEBRATING THE 10th ANNIVERSARY OF THE LATINO COMMUNITY AT OLA

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” Matthew 25: 35

On February 19th Our Lady of the Assumption parish (OLA) celebrated the 10th anniversary of the beginning of its ministry within the Latino Community. The celebration began with a beautiful Eucharist presided by Joel Grissom SM with pastor Jim Duffy SM and Marist Provincial Paul Frechette SM assisting, which was followed by a colorful supper for 300 prepared and served by the Latino community. The participants were entertained by two Latino musical bands and a dance troupe.



Pastor Jim Duffy SM greets congregants

It was a great opportunity to recognize and give thanks to God for the different ways the Marist community has responded to the needs of the Atlanta's Spanish-speaking population. From the beginning of its work in the United States in 1863, the Society of Mary has served the immigrant community and minorities. Following the spirit of Mary, the mother of Jesus, the Marist community has created ministries that bring spiritual enrichment especially to those who have been marginalized. One example that reflects the compassionate and inclusive love of Mary is the creation of the Latino Community ministry at OLA and the continuous work to address the educational and spiritual needs of this growing community.

At OLA Latino families encounter pastoral care through the preparation and reception of sacraments; Spanish speaking young adults have opportunities of faith formation and continuing education programs through the service provided by the Centro Hispano Marista, a program that had its origin in the Upper Room of the parish and now is hosted by Marist School. In this parish the Charismatic and Apostles of the World groups have a place to pray and to develop leadership.

Welcoming the stranger is at the heart of the church's mission. Pope Francis urges us constantly to be a welcoming church, saying, “The work of mercy that relates to strangers is, in our times, more relevant than ever.” Our Lady of the Assumption is a parish where all are welcome, this is not only a slogan, it is the way the parish receives the stranger and invites all to be part of this diverse community of disciples.

Pastor Jim Duffy SM noted: “Our parish invited the community to join us after the closing of the Our Lady of the Americas Mission in Doraville. This humble yet vibrant community has had a profound effect on our parish. Their joyful expressions of faith - through Mass, prayer services, catechesis, and more - are reminders for all of us of what is truly important in our lives.”

adapted from online parish article by Carlos Vizcaino



Latino dance troupe performs