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Today's Marists

Society of Mary in the U.S.



Today's Marists

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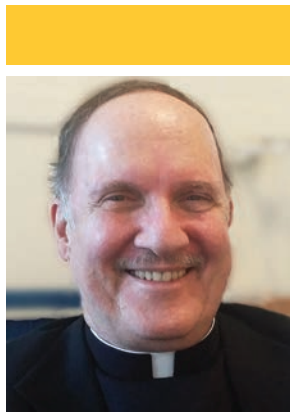
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On this 100th anniversary of the apparitions at Fatima in the midst of the horrors World War I, we remember Pope Benedict XV's **Letter To the Leaders of the Warring Parties** soon to re-released, and his institution in response to Fatima of the **Universal Feast of Our Lady of Peace**, a former, private devotion. That Marian image seems to be worthy dedication and remembrance for this Issue and our work toward non-violence and dialogue.



from the Provincial

Fr. Paul Frechette, SM

The Mission of Mercy and Fatima and Lourdes

Our Marist Founders were convinced that they were responding to a wish of the Mother of Mercy who sought to be with our Church today as she had been at its beginning.

Mercy is central to the Mission of the Society of Mary. Jean-Claude Colin articulated while preaching, "Mary is the master work of the hands of God, the prodigy of His power, the miracle of His wisdom and mercy."

We recently witnessed Pope Francis visiting the shrine of Fatima in Portugal, where he canonized two shepherd children. One hundred years ago, beginning on May 17, 1917, three young Portuguese shepherd children reported that the Virgin Mary appeared to them, and to honor the centennial of this extraordinary event the pontiff visited the shrine on the centenary of the apparitions. Officials said that one million people converged on the rural town, the site of one of the world's most popular Catholic pilgrimage destinations. The visions of the Virgin Mary have marked one of the most important events of the 20th century Catholic Church.

At the heart of the Fatima message (100th anniversary) and the message of Lourdes (159 years ago) the Mercy of God shines clearly, emphasizing Mary the Mother of Mercy, and this continues at both shrines up to our own day.

In a world then so torn by the violence of a world war, Fatima manifested the Mother of Mercy as a stark contrast and contradiction to armed conflict. She is still the perfect image today for the Church and the world of a merciful mother, a source of comfort and

reconciliation, the one we look to in our heavenly home to gather lovingly all her children around her Divine Son. It is as if she is insisting that the path of peace leads essentially through mercy. Without mercy there is no peace, without mercy there is no true justice. For the studious readers among our readers, I refer you to a wonderful book, *"Mercy: The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life"* by Cardinal Walter Kasper, especially p. 52, "The Mercy, Holiness, Justice, and Fidelity of God."

Mercy has been the rock solid sense of identity for Marists since Jean-Claude Colin's time, as he called us to be instruments of Divine Mercy in all our pastoral settings (parishes, schools, hospitals, etc.) to witness to the reality of God's Mercy in the Church, in the world and in our own spirituality. Did you know that Marists have a long-standing reputation for being good confessors? This began in the early years of our congregation's foundation in rural France, when Colin and the other early Marists preached mission retreats in isolated parishes, and it included especially hearing the people's confessions for hours at a time. Even today we continue to hear similar stories, for example, from Fr. Paul Hachey, SM stationed as St. Patrick's parish in Sydney, Australia where the team of Marists hears close to 700 confessions a week! Or in our St. Louis King of France parish in St. Paul, Minnesota. The pastor there, Fr. John Sajdak, SM tells us that he heard 17 confessions before an early Saturday morning Mass, including those of two diocesan priests and an eight-year-old boy. This ministry of reconciliation has obviously endured over the years. Cardinal Richard Cushing of Boston

gladly made it known that his confessor of choice was Fr. Augustin Depatie, SM, one of the French Marists assigned to Our Lady of Victories in Boston.

Another remarkable Marist ministry of Mercy takes place at The Lourdes Center, located in Kenmore Square in Boston, known as the National Lourdes Bureau of America. It was founded in 1950 at the request of Cardinal Cushing with the agreement of the bishop of Lourdes in France. It is at the Center that you will find Marists and volunteers serving thousands of people across the country who are looking for only one thing: hope. These generous people provide many ministerial services, including sending out genuine Lourdes water, which is a recognized sacramental in the Church. The Lourdes Bureau also publishes a bi-monthly newsletter titled "Echoes of Lourdes" which features and discusses various messages of hope that come from Our Lady of Lourdes. This newsletter is sent for free to more than 50,000 subscribers. The Marists at the Center offer many ways for their associates, most of whom are sick or homebound, to connect with Our Lady of Lourdes wherever they are.

For over 50 years the Lourdes Center has led pilgrimages to Lourdes. In 1966 special pilgrimages to Lourdes for children afflicted with chronic and progressive diseases became a part of the new foundation. Today, the Center's annual pilgrimages serve an all-inclusive public.

Father George Szal, SM has just now begun as the new director of the Lourdes Center, replacing Fr. Andy Albert, SM on July 1, 2017.

Dialogue Lived in Communities of Gospel Life

by Ted Keating, SM

We continue our theme in this issue of *Today's Marists* suggested by Pope Francis' World Day of Peace Message of January 1, 2017: *Nonviolence: a Style of Politics for Peace*. Following Pope Francis, we saw how the principles of dialogue in our last issue were a practical way for bringing home this theme of non-violence into daily life and spirituality. We also went back to Paul VI's *Ecclesiam Suam* (1965) which re-visions the Church as a Communion in dialogue in the midst of Vatican II.

Inspiring lay movements in the Church have led the way for us in implementing the principles and practices of dialogue in dealing especially with Islam and in witnessing to the deeper tolerant history of Islam they find there. If we stereotype Islam as an inherently violent religion against the declarations of Pope Francis, we would have no hope of appealing to its Sufi mystical elements or to its deeper history of tolerance. For example, the most famous poet in the world right now is the Sufi Sunni mystic, Rumi. But for the most part the ordinary opportunities for dialogue in our contemporary world seem to be in the local inter-religious communities in which we live today. We interviewed two of those communities for this article.

Focolare

Focolare ("the hearth") is an enormous lay movement (a lay ecclesial movement in Church language) represented in 182 countries with about 140,000 members. Its truly humble beginning was in Trent, Northern Italy in 1944 at the height of World War II. "Chiara Lubich and her first companions attended the Mass on the Feast of Christ the King. At the end of the Mass she and her friends remained recollected and reflected on a phrase they had just heard from the book of Psalms: 'Ask it of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and, as your possession, the ends of the earth'" (Ps 2,8). They asked God to help them put this phrase into action by saying to God, "You know how to bring about unity. Here we are. Use us." (From the website at www.focolare.org) Their mission and ministry is simply one of unity in our diverse and conflicted world.

A long-time leader of the movement here in the United States shared with us that the simplicity of their charism—"living the simple life of the Gospel in search of human unity"

— avoids complexities or qualifications. The community is uniquely attractive to religious people across all spectra of religions and even people without religion. Early on they formed relationships with Lutheranism in Germany and included Lutherans in their core Catholic Movement. They saw Vatican II as a confirmation of their world charism along with their deep devotion to reading of and prayerful reflections on the Gospel (not so common before Vatican II). By 1956 they had spread across Europe; in 1958, South America; and in 1961, North America. In 1963, they reached Africa; in 1966, Asia; and in 1967, Australia. Now they have two million "adherents." It includes people from 350 churches and ecclesial communities. People from other world religions including Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and Sikhs embrace their simple spirituality and way of life. Their ability to admit Islamic and Buddhist members was received directly from the Vatican in more recent years.

Like the Marists, they describe themselves as "The Work of Mary" and see the simplicity and humility of Mary as the model for their opening to their truly diverse membership and "adherents" across so many nations. Their radical witness to Gospel Life is a following of Mary's way of being present to the world as the "perfect disciple."

Their openness to Islam began early in their history and they describe one striking example here in the U.S. on their website:

In May 1997, Chiara Lubich, the founder, was invited by Imam Wallace Deen Mohammed (leader of the American Muslim Mission, with over two million followers) to give her testimonial in the Mosque of Harlem (New York) dedicated to Malcolm X, the renowned religious leader and human rights activist, killed in 1965 while he was speaking before hundreds of people. Never before had a woman, a Christian and even more, a white person, spoken in the New York Mosque.

Chiara Lubich launched an invitation to Christians and Muslims to work together side by side, for universal brotherhood. Over 3,000 people listened to her in absolute silence, also in other seven halls connected via video conference. «A historical page has been written here in Harlem today» **Mohammed solemnly announced**, and right after the meeting accepted the invitation to make a pact to work



together for peace and unity, in the name of the only God. “God is a witness that you are my sister. I am your friend and will always give you a hand.” **Two great religious leaders and a sole objective: to create a world of peace.**

Focolare celebrated the 20th anniversary of this momentous event with the American Muslim Mission here in Washington this past May with a keynote by Cardinal Theodore McCarrick. When we questioned our *Focolare* friend about how this began, she explained that they move in this direction firstly by opening to relationships across boundaries and then develop openings to dialogue across the great cultural, religious and racial divides here in the U.S. It was an outgrowth of their charism and their Marian simplicity of life completely rooted in the Gospel living and without layers of complexity. It is a radical living out of the Gospel. It is the simplicity of the House of Nazareth for them, but not in many words but in many loving deeds of listening and kindness without blinders or walls. *Focolare* often provides hospitality to the U.S. Imam in Rome. Their name *Focolare* is the Italian word for “hearth” and is a symbol of this hospitality of Nazareth spread to the world. The name came from their earliest days in Trent when the homeless and hungry talked about going to the “hearth” for some food, shelter and kindness.

Similar relationships of simple love and kindness with Islam occur across North Africa and the Middle East including Nigeria, Morocco, Egypt, Israel (in both Israel proper and the Palestinian Territories), Iraq and Syria. They have delivered reflections in more than 40 mosques worldwide. They describe themselves as a “People born from the Gospel to bring people back to the home of Nazareth” irrespective of their beliefs or differences. They live lives of witness more than preaching. Is *Focolare* the very core of the first essential steps to dialogue? Does it show that the attractiveness of the Jesus of the Gospel is the basis of a truly human movement beyond religions and ministries and Christian labels? It brings new depths to Paul VI’s mystery of the Communion of the Church in the image of Mary as a mission as well as an identity. The Society of Mary, the other “work of Mary,” could perhaps find great riches in a dialogue with this gently powerful Marian group with a mission and charism so close to its own “Work of Mary.”

The Community Sant’Egidio

The other great Lay Ecclesial Movement of our time is the *Community of Sant’Egidio* founded in 1968 by a young man named Andrea Riccardi (a senior in high school). He brought together a number of other young men smitten by the *Universal Call to Holiness of Vatican II*. Like the *Focolare* they arose out of a simple but profound desire to live truly and authentically the call of the Gospel in all of its simplicity and to root their prayer lives together in the Gospel and in what it called them to be and do. They realized that they were blessed with education, resources and an understanding of their culture and social system. They called themselves simply *The Community of Sant’Egidio*.

I had the opportunity to interview one of their members who is very close to the Marists. He described how they grew in their early decades, so the Church of *Sant’Egidio* in the Trastevere area of Rome was given to them by the Vatican as a base for prayer and work leading them to their present name. Like *Focolare*, they saw themselves as a community without boundaries, open to the world. It has about 70,000 members

in more than 70 nations. Unlike *Focolare*, their founding inspiration was not directly from Mary but from the heart of Vatican II reflecting their deep meditations on the Church of the Acts of the Apostles where the early Christians lived lives of simplicity and service sharing their resources. This led to the obvious comprehension of Mary among the Apostles and then gradually to Mary as the “perfect disciple of the Lord” leading them ever more clearly to the poor and marginalized and on to the whole world.

It would take pages to describe the truly impressive peace keeping projects of Sant’Egidio around the world. The community was born out of a passionate desire to serve those who are poor and vulnerable in the way of the Gospel, a mission that took them eventually around the world dealing with everything from AIDS in Africa (developing a widely recognized expertise in this area) to the dire poverty in many developing nations.

Their deep life of prayer rooted in the Gospel led them to the discernment that “War is the Mother of every poverty,” a motto leading them to bring the high trust that they had evoked in many nations into the midst of conflicts tearing away at these societies. They began this work in Mozambique in the midst of the Mozambican Civil War. In 1990, the Community was accepted as a mediator by the ruling FRELIMO and rebel Mozambican National Resistance, playing a key role in the Rome General Peace Accords signed in 1992. They continued peace initiatives in Algeria (notably the 1995 Sant’Egidio Platform), the Balkans, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other areas of the world. They have received numerous international awards for this work and were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by the Italian Congress. This past June 20, 2017, they mediated a political agreement in Rome that will lead to the pacification of the protracted war in the Central African Republic.

Conclusion

It is puzzling how *Focolare* and the *Sant’Egidio Community* have gained such enormous trust and friendship with so many diverse and dissimilar groups often in conflict with each other. There are international aid groups galore across the face of the world, but they are not being called to mediate warring parties nor are they spending time speaking in Mosques all over the world. These successes are amazing in themselves by any secular standards, but they are more so the product of groups of committed lay people rooted “only” in the tools of an intensely lived simplicity of the radical call of the Gospel, the fruit of prayer and discernment always with an eye to how it will be lived out each day. It does not take a long reading of history to find that this style of life and commitment was the original inspiration of many of the great religious orders in the Church. The Ecclesial Lay Movements often including the single, the married, the ordained, the vowed living in communities without borders (a phrase used by both of these movements) may have picked up that torch for our times. Can they be compared to Dorothy Day’s *Catholic Worker Movement* from our last issue of *Today’s Marists*?

IMAGE: Our Lady Queen of Peace Image used with permission Our Lady Queen of Peace Church 210 Princetown Road Schenectady, New York, 12306 (518) 346-4926 Website: www.olqprotterdam.org

Binding Up the Wounds of War: A Meditation

by Thomas Ellerman, SM

Archbishop Jean-Marie Odin, C.M. of New Orleans was not the first American prelate to offer work to the Marists. The first invitation came from Bishop Mathias Loras of Dubuque, Iowa (1837-1858). He wished to secure the services of the priests of the newly founded Society of Mary. The Marists, however, were still small in number and Father Colin could not accede to the wishes of this zealous bishop.

In 1863 Archbishop Odin visited Europe in search of men and money for the archdiocese of New Orleans. In Lyons, he called on Father Julien Favre, Father Colin's successor as Superior General, hoping for Marist assistance. In this and in his wider endeavors, he was successful for he was able to charter a ship to transport the forty missionaries he had recruited, including two Marist priests, Henri Bellanger and Joseph Gautherin. To them he committed the parish of Convent, Louisiana; shortly afterwards, in 1864, the Society took charge of Jefferson College in the same locality; and in the following year a parish in the Algiers section of New Orleans. These assignments were all on the Mississippi River, the super highway then of trade and transport.

The Marist apostolate in North America, though geographically distant from the home countries in Europe, could hardly be called missionary since it was directed primarily to European settlers and their descendants. Rome, however, considered the United States a missionary country and thus still under the mission office of the Church, "Propaganda Fide". Even today in the twenty-first century large sections of the Southeastern United States are considered somewhat mission territories in the Catholic Church.

All this may seem somewhat routine and not worthy of note until we consider that Father Favre sent his men into a foreign land torn asunder by a bloody and tragic civil war.

Although the French Marists were familiar with political, economic, religious chaos and even civil wars in their home territory, it still strikes us as highly imprudent on Favre's part to send two Marists into the heart of a vicious war which had little to do with them. What was he thinking? What did he know? What had Archbishop Odin told Favre to get the priests he wanted for New Orleans?

There are not enough adjectives to describe the blood spilled, and the loss and tragedy caused by the War Between the States. Its effects are still felt today in the Southeast and all across our nation. The causes and the nature of this tragic and fruitless violence are still hotly debated. But there is no doubt about its effects: the lives of thousands of young men and civilians, the destruction of the economy of the South; the unemployment, scattering, and abandonment of thousands of poor workers; and a legacy of hostility, hatred, and misunderstanding that still seems to go on forever.

It was into all of this that the first Marist Missionaries ventured. No matter what their pastoral assignments may have been, these brave men had to bring peace, order, forgiveness, reconciliation, and any other improvement they could to the situation. Like many overworked religious and clergy, they had little time to leave us written records of their activities. Yet any documentary evidence we could find today would be a fascinating source of scholarly research. The parishes of Convent and Algiers still exist today, and Jefferson College has become a Jesuit Retreat House. These and other historical religious institutions in the area might someday be the source of important knowledge.

For the moment we must rely on our imaginations to visualize what could have happened. While the Marists were relatively helpless in addressing the

socio-economic and political problems of the terrible times in which they found themselves, they still had the gifts of compassion, moral influence, pastoral and educational expertise, stability, and fidelity to be a balm for the wounded humans that crossed their paths.

Like Mary, the Sorrowful Mother, Marists did not run away in the face of suffering, but remained at the foot of the cross. Through patient listening to the woes of many, they learned the art of spiritual analysis. Through their preaching, teaching, and wise counsel, they tried their best to bring those in their charge to improved spiritual health. After all, war does terrible things to the human body, but it does far more horrendous things to the human spirit.

All in the South suffered – rich and poor, educated and ignorant, old and young. One of the keys to a better future was education. Jefferson College continued until the mid-1920s and was able to lend enough money to build Marist College in Atlanta, Georgia, a city newly risen from its own previous ashes. St. Michael's Parish at Convent tapped its resources to provide elementary education for European-Americans and African-Americans. Holy Name of Mary in New Orleans had a long history of both primary and secondary education.

While the decisions of Father Julien Favre to send Marists into a country ravaged by war may seem foolish to the cautious and careful, he did launch a spiritual force for the sake of many in Mary's name to help bind up the raw wounds of war and division.

Impact of the New Immigration Policies on our Ministries

by Joel Konzen, SM

Conversations with educators and pastoral ministers around the country point to an effect that the immigration order signed by President Trump in January is having among immigrant populations in the US. The order made it possible for law enforcement officers to interrogate or detain anyone whose immigration status is in question, regardless of the reason for the initial contact. This has created fear among the undocumented, to be sure, but also among their family members, many of whom are in the United States legally or with legal protection, such as the so-called Dreamers, those who arrived in the U.S. as children and have been granted the right to apply for deportation relief and work permits.

In Marist ministries, the perception of increased law enforcement and resultant deportation of undocumented immigrants is affecting these ministries—sometimes because of actions that have been taken with individuals or families, and sometimes because of the anxiety over possible enforcement actions.

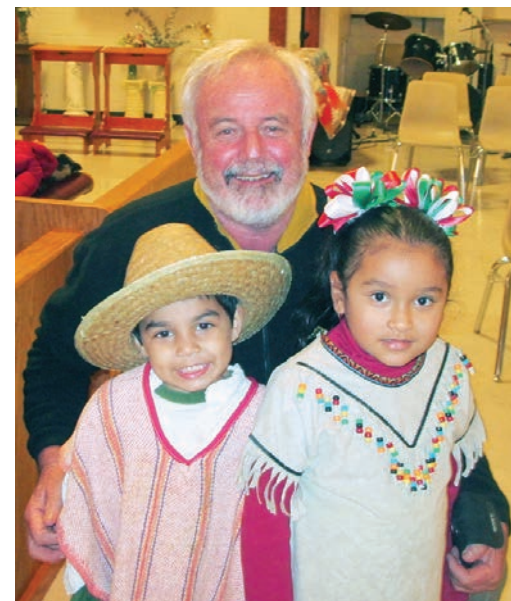
Centro Hispano Marista, a program at Marist School in Atlanta dedicated to helping Hispanic young adults complete their high school equivalency, has between 500 and 600 students enrolled every semester, and nearly 80% of the students are eligible for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals or DACA designation. Students in the program reported apprehension about the possibility that the government would revoke DACA protections. After the criteria for deportation were expanded in mid-February, sharply increased concern and fear spread throughout the student population.

Dr. Leticia Valencia, Centro Marista program director, described what she has seen:

“Students are generally eager to come to class every Tuesday. In mid-February we had a sudden 40% hike



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in absenteeism. Students expressed their fear of being profiled or of being stopped while driving to school. They were fearful of the possibility of having their families torn apart. We invited an immigration expert to explain to the students their rights and how to better prepare themselves and family members. The specialist explained why it was important to keep coming to school and to listen to reliable sources of information. We set up carpools for those students in the DACA program who had not yet received driver's licenses. Some of the anxiety was reduced, and, although we did lose some students because of fear, most students stayed and are coming to class.”

Dr. Valencia goes on to say, *“We did hear some heartbreaking stories from students who were stopped either for a minor traffic infraction or seemingly for no reason at all. In some cases, they had not renewed their DACA due to the uncertainty and the recommendation of their lawyer. They were arrested and transferred to an immigration jail. These young adults spent weeks in jail or are still in jail. Some of them were lucky to leave, but they still had to pay all the fees. Many had to cash in their family's savings bonds. Some are wearing a tracking bracelet. We know of a mother who*

will be deported next week. She will be taking her older undocumented daughter while her husband with DACA and younger son, an American citizen, will stay to support the family. We keep praying for all of these families.”

Karen Dessables, director of the *Reach for Excellence* program at Marist School which provides supplemental education and training for middle school students with high educational goals but limited economic advantages, states that the immigration order has had an impact on that program. *“Only one current Reach scholar is undocumented, and the father was deported in December. The student is still in Georgia with his mother and will be graduating from Reach this July*

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A Mother at Marist School Atlanta Awakens to a New Ministry

by Katie Kibbe

Five years ago, I was looking, with apprehension, toward the fall when my daughter would enter Marist School in Atlanta as a freshman. When we opened the email announcing her acceptance, she was able to exhale and to begin thinking about her new academic home. Little did I know that Marist School would become more than just an academic home for my child, it would become a spiritual home for our family.

We both arrived in August a little uncertain about the new beginning. She did not know many students at Marist, and the beautiful campus can be a little intimidating until you begin to learn your way around. In a few short months, she had her sea legs and was feeling confident and doing well. I, on the other hand, was feeling like a fish out of water. It seemed as if all of the other mothers had many friends and were deeply connected with each other. There seemed to be a “Marist Mother Code” that I was not necessarily clued into.

As the year wore on, I volunteered at the school for a variety of things and began to take advantage of the spiritual opportunities available for parents. In the Family Mass, the Marist Women’s Bible Study, and the Marist Mother’s Prayer Group, I began to recognize some familiar faces. When I would volunteer a little of my time, I was able to work alongside other parents and get to know them a little better as well.

As I grew more comfortable on campus, questions began bubbling up in my mind about what made the Marists tick. What was it about being Marist that made the school environment unique?

Through Mike Coveny, Director of the Marist Way Program, I joined a Marist Way group with other mothers to learn more about the Marist history and spirituality. Father Joel Konzen, S.M. graciously entertained all of our questions and shared his story as he

introduced us to the Society of Mary. Once our group completed the Marist Way program, I retained a sense that I was being called to understand more deeply what it means to be Marist in our modern, fast-paced world.

When a mother falls in love with Jesus and comes to understand more personally the deep and abiding trust that allowed Mary to say “Yes” to God over and over again, profound changes happen not only in her life, but in the life of her family as well. For several years, I facilitated women’s small groups in my parish. Joining in conversations around a table with other women who are seeking to know how to love God and others more fully helped me understand the importance of a small community in our increasingly fractured society. But I discovered many women are unable to find the time to go to their local church or get involved in a small group.

As I found answers to my many questions in the Marist writings, I also began to see that small discussion groups *for mothers by mothers* could be a way for Mary to continue her work in the 21st century.

And so *The Spirit of Mary* was born. *The Spirit of Mary* is a three part series that enables women to gather and explore Marist Spirituality. The discussions are facilitated by a fellow Marist mother. The first book in the series, “*Pray*” blends Scripture, Marist history, and personal reflection to remind us, as Father Colin encouraged, “to be missionaries of prayer and action”. The second book, “*Ponder*” uses Scripture and personal reflection to enable women to think, judge, act, and feel as Mary. Finally, the third book, “*Act*” explores the aspects of our lives that will allow us to follow in Mary’s footsteps and give our own “Yes” to God. The workbooks are available for purchase at the Campus Store and have also been adapted for use in a church or home setting. The books can be used by individuals or in a small group. In



order to purchase your copy of *The Spirit of Mary*, email Ginny at campusstore@marist.com.

In a world with many distractions that prevent us from hearing the voice of God, learning more about Mary’s ability to ponder allows us to open ourselves more fully to recognizing His voice. Over 150 mothers have participated in *The Spirit of Mary* over the past year. The overwhelming response has been positive with an increasing awareness of the beauty of Marist spirituality. On the day that a mother shared with me, “Before I speak, I now ask myself: how would Mary respond?” I knew that all of the hours of work had been Mary’s work.

As I write this I am only days away from my daughter’s graduation. I can now say with confidence that both she and I are Marist and will remain so always.



by Joseph Hindelang, SM

Thirty-eight educators from North American schools owned or sponsored by the Society of Mary attended a special Marist workshop June 11-14, 2017 near Pontiac, Michigan. The purpose of the three days was to share more information about the Society of Mary, its history and its philosophy of education with lay teachers and staff members at our schools. It was also a time to meet and share ideas with colleagues from Marist schools in Mexico City and Guadalajara; Quebec; and Atlanta, Duluth, Pontiac and San Francisco, USA.

Back in 2004, the General Administration of the Society of Mary sponsored an international meeting of educators in Rome. To continue the vital work of that meeting, leaders at schools of the Marist Fathers and Brothers in North America worked together to establish the Conference of Marist Schools in North America.

The goal of the Conference of the Marist Fathers' Schools of North America is to support and strengthen the presence of the Marist charism among the students, staff, and parents in our school communities and to develop bonds of cooperation among our schools.

This was the fifth such workshop for personnel from North American Marist schools. Participants heard from four dynamic presenters: Fr. Alois Greiler, SM, from Germany; Mr. Mike Coveny and Fr. Bill Rowland, SM, from Marist School in Georgia; and Fr. James Strasz, SM, from Notre Dame Prep and Marist Academy in Pontiac, Michigan. The topics included Marist historical themes, the inspiration of Fr. Jean-Claude Colin, Marist spirituality, elements and characteristics of Marist education and lessons we can learn from

Mary as we go about living a more Marian spirit at our schools.

The idea of the Conference was to gather leaders and future leaders from schools owned and sponsored by the Society of Mary including teachers, administrators, staff and board members. The Conference met at the Capuchin Retreat House in Washington, Michigan where we received a warm welcome.

In addition to the presentations and discussions, the participants had the opportunity to share information about each school and how we can collaborate for the good of our students. They toured nearby Notre Dame Prep and Marist Academy guided by student volunteers and Fr. Joe Hindelang, SM. Then came a welcome dinner on Sunday evening. There was also time to pray (in English, Spanish and French), dine and relax together and also to have a tour of Detroit. A positive and fraternal spirit reigned throughout the entire event.

"It was truly an enriching experience learning more about Jean-Claude Colin, the Marist history, and education today," wrote Connie Buford from NDV in San Francisco. Julie Pack, a religion teacher at Notre Dame Academy in Georgia, added, "It was such an honor and privilege to meet other Marist colleagues and share our experiences." Brian Freel, Director of Campus Ministry at Marist School in Atlanta and volunteer song leader for the daily liturgies at the Conference, wrote, "It was a very enriching time for me, and I am grateful to be part of this international group."

The five participants from our two schools in Mexico were grateful to be a part of the meetings. They patiently worked through

continued on page 13



Top to bottom:

Three student guides: Kyle Conroy - 12, Lorena Dorantes - 11, John Kenny - 11.

Fr. Joe Hindelang and Fr. Bill Rowland.

Three NDPMA faculty: Sandy LewAllen - Art Dept. Chair & teacher, Jim, Cathy Zuccaro - Campus Minister



Reflections on a First Trip to Marist Africa

by Paul Martin, SM

This year I had the opportunity to visit the Marists working in Africa, with whom, as a New Zealander, I had not had much contact. Since coming to Rome as Bursar General I have been able to become much better acquainted.

Our men are based in Cameroon and Senegal. Originally started by the Marists from France, Africa is now a district under the General Administration. In March I was in Yaoundé, the capital of Cameroon. Here the formation program is flourishing with thirteen men at the seminary, one at novitiate in the Philippines and four at the theologate in Rome. There is a parish in the area of Obili started by the Marists 25 years ago. This has both French and English speaking congregations, and people from around the city come for the English Masses.

Four hours from Yaoundé, at the end of very rough roads, is the town of Voundou. Here two Marists care for a parish and have also established the Jean-Claude Colin primary school. There are six classrooms and 240 pupils! It is proving to be quite a popular place for education.

Eight hours north of Yaoundé is the city of Bamenda, where, in the area of Bambili. Marists run a parish which is next to the burgeoning university quarter. Bamenda is English-speaking and the proximity to

the university allows our men to work with young people at such an important time of their lives. Here, too, there is a center for handicapped young people run by the Marists, providing education and support for the disabled.

A challenge for a district like Africa is financial sustainability. Most ministries are not self-sufficient, and thus the district needs to supplement its income. Land has been purchased for the growing of cocoa and bananas in Yaoundé and other fruit in Bambili. There is also hope of building a university hostel for young people in Bambili from which the university chaplaincy could also be centered.

I was struck by the fertility of the land of Cameroon and the life and energy of our confreres there. There are Marists from various African countries as well as from Canada and France, with a good range of ages. There is a strong desire to seek out and engage young people and to do so in best ways possible.

In May I visited Senegal where 90% of the population is Muslim. The relationship between the different religions is positive. Marists came from France to Dakar 70 years ago in the late 1940s with full awareness of the presence of Islam. They established a very successful school, Cours Ste Marie de Hann, which the Society has

now turned over to the Archdiocese. Today Marists serve in a parish in the area of the school, and provide a chaplain for the school.

The Marist Fathers, Sisters and Missionary Sisters also share a project working with street children, and each Wednesday the youngsters come to the Marist house “Nazareth” to wash up, to eat a wholesome meal, and to receive any needed medical attention. One of the aims of this program is to reunite the children of the street with their families.

I was certainly disturbed to see these boys and teenagers living on the streets and to imagine what their lives must be like, especially, what their lives must have been like before they sought survival on the streets of Dakar. The trust that they have placed in the Marists and this successful program is inspiring.

The Marists of Africa have been at work to establish a school in an area about 30 minutes from Dakar in a newly developing area. Cours Ste. Marie de Hann purchased a property and began to run a primary school on the land. They have sold this to the Society, and starting in September the district will begin to operate the school, which they are hoping will grow from the current 160 children to a full “école” for students aged from 5 to 16.



This is an ambitious project and obviously involves a significant financial commitment to provide the facilities that are needed for a school of eventually 800 pupils. I was surprised, however, at how things can be done there economically as compared to other countries. One of the tasks of our General Administration is to find ways to support the establishment of this new ministry financially. We look to the whole Marist world to help our confreres in Africa pursue this pivotal ministry of education, especially continuing to promote a positive relationship between Christians and Muslims.

So after two trips to Africa in three months, I am left with an impression of life and vitality and many wonderful possibilities. We have men in the District eager to seize any opportunity to reach out and spread the Gospel in such challenging circumstances and times. I felt a sense of growth and youthful vigor, and I can certainly understand why places such as Africa hold real hope for the future of the Church.

I also have a sense of the fruits of the labors of all those who have gone before, recalling particularly the work of the



French confreres in the past who laid such a solid foundation from which current Marists are reaping the fruit.

The Marists of Africa are a real sign of hope for the Society, and I have been fortunate to see what is unfolding there and to meet the Marists who labor in the Lord's vineyard so zealously.

Please look forward to a major article on the Marists in Africa in our next issue

NON-NEGOTIABLES:

Prayerful Reflection with the Movie “Denial”

by Brian Cummings SM, Director, Pā Maria Marist Spirituality Centre, Wellington, New Zealand

There are inherent challenges, and difficulties, in making a film about an overwhelmingly significant event still very much alive in the memories of people.

One such challenge is that the event itself can become trivialized with depth of content sacrificed for entertainment purposes.

Another is that key characters can become one-dimensional, with the result that it is hard to take either them, or their attitudes, seriously.

“*Denial*” (directed by Mick Jackson) faces both of these challenges, and others, and overcomes them successfully.

The core story is well known. In the mid-1990s English writer and self-styled historian David Irving sues American Professor Deborah Lipstadt and her publisher for referring to him as a Holocaust denier. The movie itself focuses on her years-long fight to defend the historical truth of the Holocaust and to expose Irving’s views for what they are.

The drama in the courtroom scenes, which occupy the majority of the film, arises partly from the nature of English libel law which requires the defendant (Lipstadt) to prove that what was said was right, rather than the plaintiff (Irving) having to show why it is wrong.

The huge risk in all of this, of course, is that if the defense is not successful then denial of the Holocaust becomes a plausible position for Irving, and anyone else really, to continue to promote.

Given the nature of the movie and its particular focus, the credibility of the characters becomes central to establishing the magnitude and significance of the case.

The performances of Timothy Spall as Irving, Rachel Weiss as Lipstadt, Andrew Scott as solicitor Anthony Julius and Tom Wilkinson as barrister Richard Rampton are key to the success of “*Denial*” and to ensure that the focus remains on the

implications both of the claims of Irving and on the outcome of the trial.

This is no small achievement given that the verdict is already known by the audience, and that David Irving is largely viewed these days in the light of the trial’s outcome rather than as he was in the 1990s.

So “*Denial*” is a very important and effective representation of a key moment in maintaining and reaffirming the truth of the Holocaust in modern history.

But can we fairly ask if it does anything else?

If the movie is solely about the truth of the reality of the Holocaust, presumably it has a huge but very narrow significance. We could imagine that, as a movie, it would have its major appeal in regions where the Holocaust remains very much in the memories and experiences of large numbers of people.

In New Zealand, for example, that cannot be said to be the case. Those who identify as Israeli/Jewish form less than 1% of our population, and while the Holocaust is, of course, well known here, it is also true that the Holocaust is much more at the level of something that is “known about” rather than something in the lived history of many.

And so it could be imagined that “*Denial*” would have limited appeal to movie audiences living in a nation of the South Pacific. And yet that has not been the case since its release in early April. On the contrary, the movie continues to record strong numbers at showings throughout the country.

The reason for that is that “*Denial*” is not only a film about the truth of the Holocaust. As Deborah Lipstadt said (Time magazine September 30, 2016), “If some people take away from this movie the notion that there’s a difference between facts, opinions and lies, I will be very satisfied.”



We can enter into reflection of “*Denial*” by being aware not only of what we are thinking in response to what we are watching, but by also focussing on what we are experiencing: what moves us closer towards life and a sense of God, and what causes us to close in on ourselves.

In this film there are at least three levels of denial involved. There is, obviously, the denial by David Irving of the truth of the reality of the Holocaust. But there is also Lipstadt’s denial of herself, since she desperately wants to speak in her own defense at the trial, but is persuaded not to by her legal team. There is, thirdly, the denial of the various Holocaust survivors, again at the discretion of the legal team, of the chance to tell the court their story.

Key to the legal strategy is keeping the focus on Irving and his claims, rather than giving him the chance to shift the focus to Lipstadt and the survivors and the truth of their stories. It is a successful strategy, but it asks so much from those who are denied the chance to speak.

And that makes the point that not all denial is wrong. It is, of course, when it denies truth or reality. It isn’t when it calls for denial of self in order to achieve a greater good.

As Marists, we are familiar with the famous “Three No’s” of Fr Colin: No to Greed, No to Power and No to Prestige.

For Colin, these are central elements of the Marist way. They are founded on the personal experiences he went through, but he had the insight to realize that they related not only to him but also to the attitude of Mary as he understands her, and for that reason they came to be non-negotiable for Marists.

Colin understood how easily and subtly the desire for money, power and personal aggrandizement can enter into people’s lives and cripple them spiritually (cf. *A Certain Way*, Craig Larkin, page 54).

For Colin, money, power and recognition were not in themselves necessarily bad or to be avoided at all costs. His question always was: “Is what we are doing in the spirit of Mary?”

Reflection on these impulses and whether we can in fact say “No” to them is central to our lives as Marists. And that is where **“Denial”** can serve as a very helpful way to contemplate key questions in our lives.

Questions such as:

- How do I cope with reality? With truth? Is it an “intellectual appreciation” or a “commitment of the heart?”
- When faced with challenges to what I know to be true, can I maintain my integrity or do I compromise and maintain silence?
- Do I view life “in the spirit of Mary?” Can I resist being seduced by the desire...
 - to have more than I need by convincing myself that I’m just being prudent?
 - to acquire wealth because it allows me to be more in control of my own life, rather than trusting in God?
 - to be the center of attention and to be highly successful for my own self-satisfaction rather than for the good of others?

“Denial” is not only a worthwhile and successful movie, it is also an important one. Entering into contemplation through it leads us as Marists to ask in our turn: How do we defend truth and integrity in our world today? How do we bring the spirit of Mary into our lives and into the lives of all those with whom we come into contact?

Impact of New Immigration, continued from page 7

and attending a local independent high school,” Ms. Dessables commented. “Three additional families representing three current Reach scholars, one graduate, and one incoming Reach scholar were very anxious about the immigration order because their parents are undocumented. One family has left, and I have been unable to communicate with them to know of their whereabouts and situation. The other two families have decided to remain in Georgia, and their children will be attending schools in the area.”

Father John Bolduc, S.M., who ministers to a diverse population at St. Patrick’s Parish in the Roxbury section of Boston, relates that he is aware of some parishioners who do not leave their homes to buy groceries for fear of arrest. Some children stopped going to school for a time, for fear that on returning home their mother would not be there. He believes that the Cape Verdean immigrants, many of whom are fairly new arrivals, are the most concerned of the various immigrant groups in the parish. Father Bolduc is aware that a raid by ICE took place in a church parking lot in Lawrence, Massachusetts, but he has heard of nothing similar in Boston.

In Brownsville, Texas, at San Felipe de Jesús Parish on the Mexican border, Father Tony O’Connor, S.M. says that he is seeing more uncertainty and fear as a result of the increased enforcement activity nationwide, but that the number of undocumented people crossing the border is definitely down from previous years.

Educators in the Marist schools indicate that students who come from families with undocumented parents exhibit some of the behaviors described above, particularly absence from school because of a fear that parents without the ability to communicate in English or without specialized legal advice might be vulnerable to immigration enforcement and arrest.

Marists and their affiliates in these ministries are used to responding to a variety of trials that affect those they serve, but ministering to parishioners and students who are absent or hampered by fear presents a singular challenge to remain faithful to the Marist principle to do the works of mercy and especially to attend to those who are the poorest and most neglected.

Conference of Marist Schools, continued from page 9

the translations and their input was truly appreciated by the group. Despite being in the midst of final exams in their school, two participants came from Quebec and also made a real contribution through their participation. Their school faces a unique challenge because by law they cannot teach formal religion. So they look for creative ways to impart Christian and Marist knowledge and values to their students and staff.

Sandy LewAllen, chair of the art department, and Brandon Jezdimir, newly named principal of the middle school, both at NDPMA in Pontiac spoke about how much they learned from the presenters and their colleagues. “There was a lot to think about and to pray about.” As the workshop ended, they began talking with Fr. Jim Strasz, SM about how to incorporate some ideas from the Conference to their local levels and so impact their students with Marist values.

It was a wonderful opportunity to share information about the Marist spirit and philosophy of education. Participants from

each school discussed plans about how to bring this experience back to their schools so they continue to be places where Mary, the first disciple, is alive through us, still leading people to her Son, Jesus.

Our North American (and German) Marist school websites:

Pontiac, MI - ndpma.org

Mexico City - colegiofrancoingles.edu.me

Guadalajara, Mexico - colegiopedrochanel.mx

Atlanta, GA - marist.com

Duluth, GA - ndacademy.org

San Francisco, CA - ndvsf.org

Fuerstenzell, Germany - mgfuerstenzell.de

Quebec, Canada - spmaristes.qc.ca

facebook.com/seminaireperesmaristes

PEACE PILGRIM

In Memoriam of a Life Consumed by God and Peace

Witness for Peace (d. 1981)

She called herself Peace Pilgrim. Otherwise, she had no interest in describing the particulars of her early life, her age, or even her given name. She walked back and forth across the United States for almost three decades owning nothing but the clothes she wore and a tunic bearing her chosen name on the front and on the back, the simple words, “25,000 Miles on Foot for Peace.”

As far as she would reveal, her early years were conventional. But at a certain point she realized that a “self-centered” existence did not bring fulfillment. At this point she came to a “complete willingness, without any reservations, to give my life to God and to service.” At that point she was overcome with peace.

After preparing for her mission, she set off on January 1, 1953. Those were

years when even the word “peace” was regarded with suspicion. Nevertheless, she walked from town to town, engaging in conversation with whomever she met and spreading the message of peace. In 1964 she stopped counting the miles, but she maintained her pilgrimage until July 7, 1981, when she was killed in a car accident.

Website www.peacepilgrim.org

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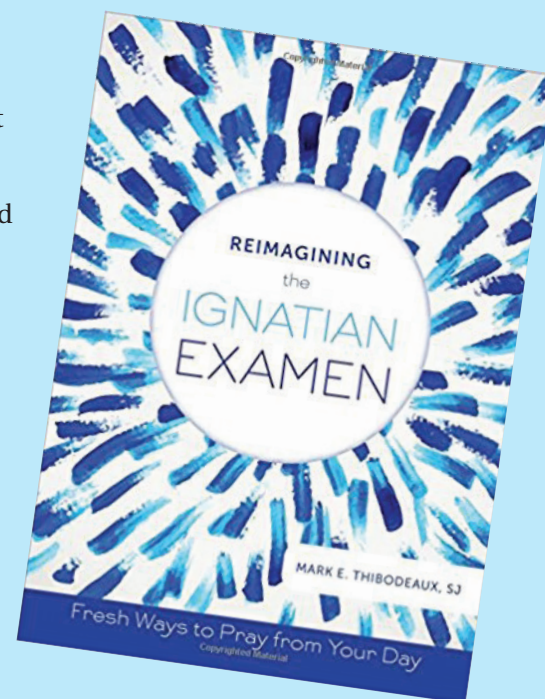
“Who am I? It matters not. This clay garment is one of a penniless pilgrim journeying in the name of peace. It is what you cannot see that is so very important. I am one who is propelled by the power of faith; I bathe in the light of eternal wisdom; I am sustained by the unending energy of the universe; this is who I really am.”

—Peace Pilgrim

BOOK CORNER

by Ted Keating, SM

A jewel of a new book has been written by Mark Thibodeaux, SJ, the current US Jesuit novice master. It is called *Reimagining the Ignatian Examen*. The Jesuits also call this spiritual exercise the *Examination of Consciousness* (formerly for many centuries called the *Particular Examen* as distinguished from the *General Examen*). St. Ignatius was quite clear with his men that times would come when the work of the apostolate would so overwhelm Jesuits that they would not be able to give the time to their spiritual exercises on a particular day. He advised that they never skip the *Examination of Consciousness* and its critical role in connecting them ever more deeply with their most profound desires and nurturing them in prayer. As Augustine says “The language of God is desire.” It would not only keep them in contact with the presence of God in their lives but also bring about a growing conversion of consciousness itself. There are many abstract formulations of the *Examen* but this book provides 33 reflective meditations for the *Examen* easily useful for busy people finding their way in this critically important exercise. Its subtitle is “Fresh Ways to Pray from Your Day”. It is available from Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble.com, and also directly from the publisher, Loyola Press.



Vocation Awareness at Notre Dame des Victoires San Francisco

by Jack Ridout

Congratulations once again to the Seventh and Eighth grade students from Notre Dame des Victoires School in San Francisco, California for submitting essays, poems and posters about religious life. The contest follows their learning about vocations in their religion classes and was the third competition sponsored by the Marist Fathers and Brothers Vocation Office.

The idea of a “religious vocation” contest attempts to bring awareness of a religious call as comparable to the call to marriage and to the single life. Three entries stood out above the others, first place went to Dimitri Ryan for an insightful poem, second place went to Millie Kutz for her poster on how one needs to listen to what God is calling someone to become and third place went to Grace Nesmith for her poster prayer/poem about listening to God’s call. They were awarded monetary prizes (\$200, \$100 and \$75) for their poems and posters.

This contest is available to all of the Marist schools in the United States and hopefully provides some additional “awareness” of religious life along that of married and single life.



First Place *Vocation Poem*

by Dimitri Ryan

Vocation is your purpose and call.
Don't be afraid to take more than one fall.
I promise, you will make it through them all.
Whether your call is a Priest, Brother, Sister,
Or Nun, take some time, and have some fun.
Just make sure you choose the right one.

Religious life is not for all, and this decision
Is nowhere near small. Whether you aspire
To be an average Joe, or decide to simply
Take it slow. No matter what it is, make
Sure you go with the flow.

Your decision is momentous,
So take care, make sure it's stupendous.
Your life is full of ups and down, just
Don't let the downs bring you to the
ground.
No matter what you are, Dad, Mom, Sister, or
Brother, make sure always love one another.

“Make a Mess”

by Alejandro Muñoz, Assistant to the Superior General of the Society

Pope Francis surprises us over and over again with gestures, words and actions, especially words that are so familiar to us as Marists, to our values and spirituality. The convocation of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome in 2018 is dedicated to “Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment”. It is another of those moves by Francis that make us feel close to him as Marists. It is not only a call to more concern for the Church’s youth but also a preferential option for young people at this time. The spirit of respect and listening by those who make these invitations to young people to a life of faith, and the energy with which the Pope asks us who have the mission of accompanying youth both create a challenge to us to leave our own comfort zones in order to stay close to them. We are called to engage them without prejudice and in the name of the Church to call them to a journey of discovery of the joy of the Gospel. As the Pope told the young Argentines during the World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro: “make a mess”. We must unleash in them the transforming energy that is only possible when youth and the Gospel come together. The combination is not always “neat” and predictable.

During these months prior to our Marist General Chapter in September we have been facilitating in the general administration



a video-blog of “Marist Youth International”. (See <https://maristyouthinternational.wordpress.com/>). We have been working to encourage reflection and action in the field of youth and vocational ministry of the Marists. In the process we have been listening to helpful experiences--practices that can truly change the course of what we see today in the drought of vocations in so many of our units. Vocational teams, better use of social media, ongoing personal formation, participation in the World Youth Days and International Marist Young Encounters all have offered experiences of meaningful solidarity among us as Marists. We have established Communities of Welcome, prayer--a great emphasis on prayer—and many other events and strategies that have been helpful and useful for both youth ministry and vocation work.

Pope Francis asks of us the same as he did of the young people in Argentina: “Make a mess”, or in Jon Sobrino’s words, “Push the car of history” knowing that it will often be uphill. But we have so many external and internal signs of hope in our world, that perhaps we must convince ourselves that “the world does not have to be the way it is” (Karl Rahner).

See more about the 2018 Synod at <http://youth.synod2018.va/content/synod2018/en.html>

Encouraging Vocations

by Jack Ridout

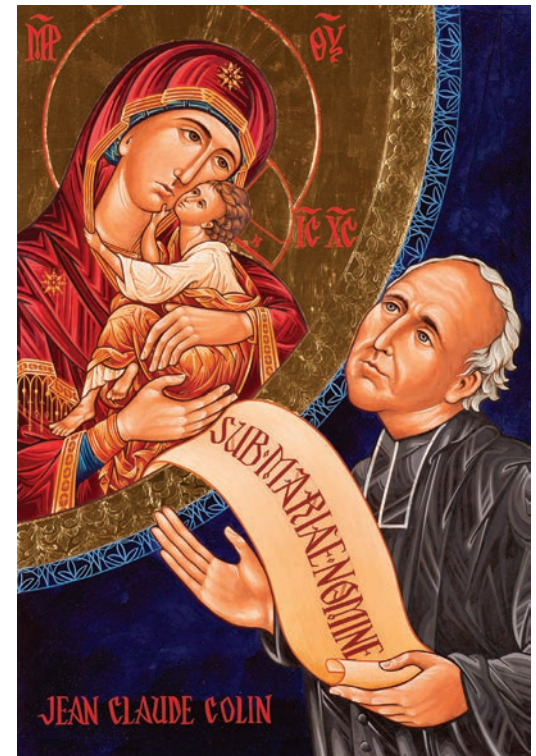
It was like any other Sunday at the local parish, but it was going to be different. During the week, the priest from the neighboring parish presided over the funeral of the old pastor who had been sick for some time. The parish was expecting a new pastor, and the bishop promised a new priest would be assigned soon. The congregation was waiting for Mass to start, but nothing happened and still no priest. Silence. Finally, a man came out and spoke to the congregation that since there was no priest, they would be having a prayer and communion service.

This could happen to any one of us, and for some it is already a reality in large parts of the United States. Many parents complain as well that they send their children to a Catholic school and find that there are very few if any religious on the staff. The culture of vocations as we once knew it, is gone, and the abundance of priests and religious following World War II are moving into retirement or passing on. That era apparently was a thing of the past, a blip on the screen of the Church in the US, and does not reflect our current situation as US Catholics. Priests continue to be ordained and men and women enter religious life, but certainly in anywhere near the numbers of years gone by. This brings us to today and what can be done to encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

There are several things that each of us can do to encourage vocations. First of all, one needs to understand the Good News of his or her own faith. This past Easter, Christ's life, death, and Resurrection renewed in our hearts the boundless promise of hope in even the "impossible things of God, celebrated in Word and Eucharist. The scene of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus is just such a powerful one. Following their recognition of Jesus, they said to each other "Were not our hearts burning within us as he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures for us"? As our faith "burns within us", we want to take that fire and fill the world with its peace, hope, courage for transforming the world.

With that passion for the Mission of the Church in the world, we invite young people to consider religious life as a sister, brother or priest as a life of meaning and adventure. May young people think today that the religious life is "boring". Talk to any religious or priest today and they will dispel that notion in a moment. But it is parents, friends, and relatives like each reader of this publication who are the ones reaching young people by and large. Belief in this life of adventure and meaning is the one way we can all start dispelling the misunderstandings of youth on this score. Media will not be help us in that regard. Yet studies of priesthood and religious life today show more satisfaction with their lives by many multiples in comparison to other walks of life. Nearly 80% of priests in one study say that they would unquestionably make their vocation choice again if asked. The Archangel said to Mary, "Do not be afraid". We Marists have a card you can give to any interested young person who asks. It is duplicated here and you can ask us for more.

Finally, continue to pray for vocations. We all can do this. It is simple and powerful. "A vocation flows from the heart of God and blossoms in the good soil of faithful people...." Pope Francis



Mary of Nazareth, the first disciple of the Lord and Mother of the Church, is the heart of our identity as Marists. This remarkable woman of faith has called us to this way of life. We believe that we have been called by a "gracious choice" into the family of Mary. It is her work that we do and so we commit ourselves to think, judge, feel and act as she did.

As a consequence, these qualities mark us as Marists: mercy and compassion, availability, welcome and hospitality, simplicity manifest in everyday ordinariness and a common touch. We are self-effacing apostles who demonstrate a spirit of joy and respect for others; we are called to be humble and hidden and unknown in the world.

Our spirituality, which is both mystical and practical, responds to the reality and circumstances of today's world. Jean-Claude Colin, acting on what he believed to be Mary's desire, encouraged us to establish a Marian Church, a Church with the heart of a mother beating at its center.

At our best, we are instruments of God's mercy working to help others taste the boundless love of the Lord, especially those who find themselves on the margins. As Marists, we seek to go where the Church is not. We should enable all with whom we come into contact to experience the gift of reconciliation as well as peace of heart and mind.

Mary is the icon of God's Spirit. As her fellow disciples, we pray that with God's grace we become the same.

Statement of Identity, US Province of the Marists
Assembly and Chapter of June 2013

AN EXCERPT OF

Marist Mission as Prophetic Dialogue

by Gerard Hall SM

....As inspiration for prophetic dialogue, we need go no further than Mary's Magnificat. The prophetic element is clear in the verses that sing of "collapsing thrones and humbled lords of this world," about God protecting the weak, raising the lowly and scattering the proud-of-heart. Mary, speaking in the long tradition of Israel's women prophets (Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Judith), proclaims God's liberation for oppressed peoples everywhere. There are political overtones: God's justice includes a new social order in which the poor are empowered, the lowly uplifted, the hungry fed. Equally, its spirituality is clear: God is Saviour; God is faithful; God is merciful. In particular, God's bountiful mercy is extended "from generation to generation, upon those who fear him." In a world where cruelty and violence all too often reign, the Magnificat proclaims that God's mercy and justice will be finally victorious. The Magnificat is Mary's version of Jesus' Sermon of the Mount (Matt. 5:1-12).

The Magnificat is not only a song of prophecy; it is also a song of dialogue. The first half of the Magnificat is clearly a song of praise and thanksgiving resulting from Mary's intimate experience of relationship with the living God. There is ecstasy in her voice as she proclaims her soul 'glorifying' the Lord, meaning to celebrate the Lord's greatness with all her body, mind and heart. The song is also dialogical in a structural sense: it is Mary's response to Elizabeth who initiates the conversation by praising Mary and sharing in her joy. In another sense, it is Mary who initiates the dialogue by responding to her cousin's situation and heading out in dangerous territory to visit her. The image is one of two poor, pregnant women responding to each other in need—and placing God at the centre of their lives. Through prophecy and dialogue, Mary and Elizabeth minister to each other in a situation of personal confusion, social exclusion and political oppression. Here, in this lowly place, they sing of God's transforming power coming to life in the birth of the Messiah.

Whatever the precise origins of the Magnificat, it is clearly associated with the early Church in Jerusalem. By placing the hymn on Mary's lips, Luke acknowledges her as representative of the Jewish anawim (lowly servant; one of the poor) now participating in the post-resurrection community of disciples. For Luke, Mary's faith in the impossible ways of God models the path of true discipleship. Yet, according to some scholars, the prayer may also represent the wider struggle for political survival. The conflict imagery, especially in the verbs describing God's actions—show strength, scatter, pull down, lift up, fill with, send away—resonates with the first century milieu of Palestinian resistance against Roman oppression. Pointedly, though, it is God alone, not a political movement, which brings liberation. Whereas Mary's passionate dialogue with God is evident in the first part of the

Magnificat, her prophetic call for God's liberating action is unmistakable in the second.

Equally instructive is the manner in which the Magnificat has been interpreted throughout Christian history. St Ambrose speaks of Mary's hurried visit through the hill country of Judea as symbol of the Church's stride across the centuries. This vision places emphasis on the proclamation of the Gospel so evident in the image of missionaries being "sent out." However, the vision also gives due importance to the Church's task of inculturating the Gospel (e.g. Hellenistic world) requiring deep dialogue with peoples and cultures. For St Irenaeus, the Magnificat expresses the heart of the

Church's liturgy, especially through its opening refrain: "my soul glorifies the Lord." For almost two millennia, the Magnificat has been and continues to be sung as evensong in Christian monasteries throughout the world. This reminds us that liturgy, prayer and contemplation are central elements of the Church's evangelising mission. Here the second missionary image comes to the fore.

In our own day, the Magnificat is also properly interpreted in relation to the Church's "option for the poor." Emphasis on solidarity with the world's most marginal and oppressed peoples is highlighted in the third missionary image with its focus on works of justice, peace and liberation. Linked to this is the Church's mission to care for the earth—or preaching, serving and witnessing to "ecological justice." Yet another aspect of the Church's missionary task given prominence today is the ministry of reconciliation—at personal, cultural, political and religious levels. Clearly, these approaches to Christian mission demand a prophetic response to the call of the Gospel as well as commitment to dialogue, accompaniment and solidarity. Mary's Magnificat, as a song of prophetic dialogue, continues to be a "dangerous memory" calling Christians to ever more authentic Christian life and missionary praxis.

For Marists, it is Mary herself who inspires their particular approach to evangelisation by calling them to be a Marian presence in the Church and world of our time. Indeed, they must "think, judge, feel and act as Mary in all things." How better to do this than by breathing in and breathing out Mary's spirit of prophetic dialogue expressed in the Magnificat?

Fr. Gerard Hall, SM, is a Marist professor of theology at the Australian Catholic University. He is specialist in the study of the mission of the Church and of the Society of Mary.





Celebrating the Jubilarians at Eucharist

Left to right: Jim Duffy, Joe Hurtuk (P-50), George Szal (P-50), Jim LaCrosse (O-50), Paul Frechette (Provincial), Walter Gaudreau (P-60), René Iturbe (P-50)



Louis Plourde (P-50) serves as lector



Tom Ellerman (O-50) offers the homily

A Number of 50 Year Anniversaries This Year

Forty-eight province members gathered at Bergamo Center located near Dayton, Ohio for the annual retreat June 25-30, 2017.

A memorable event at each retreat is the celebration of anniversaries of profession (P) and ordination (O). This includes a liturgy led by those marking an anniversary and sharing of stories after dinner.

Other Marist celebrating 50 years were not able to attend:

Gerard Timmerman, SM – *50 years of Profession*

Peter Blanchard, SM – *50 years of Ordination*



Bergamo Center & Chapel



Peter Blanchard, SM



Gerard Timmerman, SM

News Brief

General Chapter

We move closer to our international meeting of the Society of Mary in its General Chapter from September 18, 2017 to October 11, 2017 just north of Rome, Italy. This formal meeting of the international Society occurs every eight years. This will be the 29th Ordinary General Chapter since the foundation of the Society of Mary in 1836. The delegates include each of the provincial/district superiors of the Society along with locally delegates chosen from each province or district by their membership. Surveys have been sent around the Marist world and the beginnings of an agenda have already been proposed. This meeting is the highest level meeting of the Society and its final agenda is only set by the body itself when it meets together. An important moment will be the election or re-election of the Superior General of the Society and his council by the body. There are many challenges for religious congregations in this era brought about by significant diminishment in number of members and care of aging men who entered in the 1940's to the 1960's. It continues to be a moment to step back and take a good look at the Society and discern what changes or adaptations may be necessary at this time. Please keep us in your prayers as we discern our way faithful to our charism and founding purpose, but in a very changed world. Secularism and secularization remain centermost to our sense of mission in this era as they did in other forms during the lifetime of our Founder. Much of the charism he brought to the Society has great wisdom for dealing with these social developments. The better used of personnel and resources, including models of restructuring the Society for a different era from structures of many decades ago will also be a central concern.

OBITUARIES

Father Adrien Pelletier, SM | 1922 – 2017

Father Adrien Pelletier, SM entered eternal life on June 6, 2017 at the age of 94. Adrien was born in New Brunswick, Canada on September 9, 1922 to Solomon and Marie (Gauvin) Pelletier. After graduating from high school he emigrated to Boston to find employment and worked as a counterman for Waldorf Systems. Adrien was drafted into the U.S. Army Air Force where he was trained as a dental technician and served as a medic until his discharge in 1946. Adrien returned to Boston and Our Lady of Victories parish where he first met the Marists. In 1948 he was accepted at the Marist seminary in Bedford, Massachusetts. Following the novitiate in Staten Island, New York, Adrien was professed in the Society of Mary on September 8, 1951 and was ordained at Our Lady of Victories in Boston on June 8, 1956.



Father Adrien’s first assignment was as a teacher at Van Buren Boys High School in Maine (1957-58). He was then assigned to St. Charles Parish in Providence, Rhode Island where he served for three years (1958-61). His next assignment was as an Associate Pastor at St. Bruno’s in Van Buren, Maine just across the river from his boyhood town of St. Leonard (1961-62). Beginning in 1962 Fr. Adrien served as the Catholic Chaplain at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston for eight years (1962-70). In 1970 he was assigned once again to parish work, serving seven years at St. Joseph’s in Haverhill and twelve years at St. Anne’s in Lawrence, both in Massachusetts. In 1989, Fr. Adrien was assigned as Parochial Vicar at St. Anthony’s Parish in White River Junction, Vermont and Chaplain to the local VA Hospital (1989-2006). He often said, “I loved my work with the Veterans...working with the sick has been a joy for me.” On the occasion of his 50th jubilee of ordination Fr. Adrien wrote: “The priesthood is a wonderful life. I wouldn’t trade it for the world...I’ve made some mistakes along the way, but I’ve always tried to be faithful.” He spent his senior years in Massachusetts with confreres at Marist House in Framingham, St. Joseph Hall in Waltham, and returned to Framingham in 2015 with residence at St. Patrick’s Manor. Father Pelletier is survived by several nieces and nephews.

Brother Patrick Souza, SM | 1948 – 2017

Brother Pat Souza, SM fell asleep in the Lord during the night of Sunday, July 23, 2017. It was a shock to his community and to Marists around the Province. He was born on February 16, 1948 in Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii to Richard Souza and Mary (Lopes) Souza. He came to the mainland in California for his Postulancy with the Marists in 1967 at St. Peter Chanel Seminary in San Rafael, California and was professed into the Society as a religious Brother on August 30, 1969 after his novitiate in Rhinebeck, New York. Patrick held positions in various ministries of the former San Francisco Province including the minor seminary of St. Peter Chanel in San Rafael just after profession, and at various parishes of the Province including Notre Dame de Victoires in San Francisco, St. Paul’s in Nampa, Idaho and St Catherine’s in Kappa, Kauai, Hawaii. But the longest assignment for this past 30 years was at Marist Center of the West in San Francisco. His years at “Pine Street” as it is called, brought out Brother Pat’s extraordinary gifts of dedicated and persevering loving kindness always tempered with remarkable patience in service to a large number of our Senior Marists living at Pine Street in their later years, often in need of various levels of support at this time in their lives. When all is done and said, this was among the most important ministries of the province in these years. The Province could feel relieved and confident that in the busyness of the other ministries, one of our own, Brother Pat, was showing these men daily attention and assuring that they had all that they needed in as much comfort as possible in their later years. Brother Pat provided this fraternal service as a true Marist, not seeking attention or reward--just serving day in and day out. Patrick is survived by his two devoted sisters, Ann Simeona and Vivien Jones of Hawaii, and a beloved niece, Cherisse Simeona, serving the military as a contractor in Iraq. She will be coming back for the funeral.



Memorial donations may be made to the Marist Mission Office, 27 Isabella Street, Boston, MA 02116.

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From Scripture to papal documents to poetry to pop culture references – the “All About Mary” website of the Marianists at the University of Dayton is true to its name. “This website is the largest and most comprehensive site about Mother Mary,” says Marianist Father Johann Roten, SM, director of research, art and special projects for the Marian Library / International Marian Research Institute. “It is a wonderful way for people around the world to learn more about her.”

The University of Dayton’s Marian Library recently launched the “All About Mary” website - an updated version of the Mary Page, a site that was initiated two decades ago by Father Roten. The website puts centuries of information about the world’s most famous mother at anyone’s fingertips. The intent was to make the site accessible to anyone with an interest in Mary - a graduate student researching a thesis, a priest looking for text to support a homily, a catechist completing a homework assignment, or someone who simply wants to know why marigolds are named after Mary.

Checkout the website (<https://goo.gl/bLz4VI>) for :

- Biblical references to Mary
- Devotions, meditations, and liturgical celebrations
- Miracles and apparitions
- Artistic portrayals of Mary
- Mary in film –from “Lord of the Rings” to “Pinocchio”
- Shrines and Churches associated with Mary in the USA and worldwide
- Information on Mary in popular culture, including Marian symbols in “Buffy the Vampire Slayer”
- Why a parrot is sometimes depicted in artistic works of Mary

Are you or someone you know interested in discerning a call to priesthood or brotherhood?

See contact information below.
No commitment necessary.

Are you a Marist?

“In all things let us look to Mary, let us imitate her life at Nazareth... Let us unite silence and prayer with action. The Society of Mary desires that we, her children, should be missionaries of action and missionaries of prayer.”
Fr. Jean Claude Colin, SM, Founder

Are you called to live the Gospel as Mary did?

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our Vocation Director,
Call Jack Ridout (toll-free) at
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