

Licentiate Program in Ecumenism

by Floyd Gatana, SM, Seminarian

As I reflect on my journey this year, I am grateful for a new academic program of study in Ecumenism. I thank the Society of Mary for giving me another opportunity to further my studies toward earning a Licentiate in Sacred Theology. I have come to appreciate and love the course in ecumenism. It has broadened my perspective on the whole curriculum of theology. It teaches me to look beyond our Catholic tradition and to reach out to other Christians who proclaim Jesus Christ.

As I reflect on my experience, I can say that we cannot deny the fact that ecumenism has opened a new horizon in the Church. It allows us to reach out to other churches with openness and understanding. The program teaches us how to dialogue and share God's word with other churches. Today the Catholic Church has moved into the new era of dialoguing with other Christian churches. As Catholics of today, we also need to adapt to the changes within our Church and be open to reaching out to other churches and religions. The course in ecumenism helps

us find our common beliefs and makes us understand and accept others with mutual acceptance.

One of the things that I enjoy is being able to study with my fellow classmates from different Christian churches and religions. I am also privileged to study alongside my Marist confrere Kevin Medilo, SM from the Philippines who is focusing on Inter-Religious Dialogue. Studying with Pentecostal, Muslim, and Eastern Orthodox students is a rich experience that I count as a privilege to have. It teaches me a lot about how to be open and share what we have in common. It is always enjoyable when we discuss and share in the classroom because we learn from each other. We all have one goal in common and that is to work for our salvation, but each of us in different ways. The ultimate end of God's creative and saving action will be realized when all things have been made subject to the Son, *"then the Son himself will also be subject to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to everyone."* (1 Cor 15:28).

The study of ecumenism has made me realize how important it is to be ecumenical in the Church. It is important in our mission today because we are surrounded by many different Christian churches and religions, and we need to have the skills to dialogue with them. The course has also helped me grow in my understanding of the Church and other religions, particularly in what we have in common.

When the early Marists sailed to Oceania, they had no idea what was awaiting them. The local people had their own culture and ways of worshipping. Their lifestyle was naturally different from that of the arriving Marists. This makes me imagine the challenges those missionaries went through to evangelize the people. As a Marist, I have come to appreciate what this course has given me. It makes me see dimensions of what it means to be a missionary. We are called to be open and to share with others what we have. Taking up ecumenism prepares me to be more ready and better equipped for what lies ahead.



Gabriel Mukong during pastoral experience in Ranong, Thailand

Pastoral Experience in Ranong, Thailand

by Gabriel Mukong, SM, Seminarian

Soon after completing my first year of theological studies, I was asked by my superior, Tony Kennedy, SM, if I would go to the mission in Ranong, Thailand for a pastoral experience during the summer of 2018. The mission, called the Marist Asia Foundation (M.A.F), is run by our Marist confreres from the district of Asia. It was time for me to experience missionary life in a completely different cultural context, predominantly Buddhist. The answer was YES, even though I had been giving thought to going somewhere else for a pastoral experience. Nevertheless, I knew that my superior is the one who sees best and knows to a greater degree my potential, and he also understands needs of the Society. So, therefore, my YES was sincere as to these two aspects: that others are there and have been there, and that my superior sees in me useful potential for this mission.

My specific mission at M.A.F was to teach at the school and to assist the health committee that oversaw patients living with HIV/AIDS. This sounded interesting to me because teaching has always been my passion, and I feel quite compassionate when it comes to serving vulnerable people. So, I left for Thailand full of energy and enthusiasm for this mission.

My experience at M.A.F as an assistant teacher and in serving the health committee was quite enriching and helped form me in several ways. First, I learned a lot about humility, especially through my daily interactions with the innocent kids I taught. Second, I learned how to become more spiritually altruistic by shifting the attention from me and focusing more on others, especially praying more for the sick that I served and for the future of

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the students I taught. Third, I learned to appreciate different cultural beliefs and religions. Learning some of the “Do’s” and “Don’ts” of this culture helped me in my growth as a future Marist missionary. I was advised always to show respect to the King and to Buddha, especially whenever I came across a Buddhist shrine, where the appropriate gesture is bowing low with hands clasped upright across the chest as a Christian might do when making a good sign of the cross. Most of all, my greatest learning was how to listen to people in pain and difficulty without using many words. It was at this moment that I came to a deeper understanding that the work I was doing was not mine but rather God’s and Mary’s.

My feelings after this pastoral mission were that of great satisfaction and fulfillment. I am happy to have been sent there for this experience and, God willing, I hope one day to return to M.A.F for a longer period of service.

My prayer is that God will continue to bless and use our confreres who dedicate themselves indefatigably to this daily mission, and that God will also replenish the resources of our benefactors and all those who support the mission in one way or another, by their prayers and good thoughts.

All for the greater glory of God and for the honor of the Mother of God.

Final Profession and Diaconate

by Josefo Amuri, SM, Seminarian

Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are, Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach. (The Rite of Ordination of a Deacon)

During my last four years in formation, I have witnessed many of my brothers profess their perpetual vows in the Society of Mary. This academic year I had the privilege of witnessing our only fourth-year student, Kenneth Akua, make his lifetime commitment to God as a Marist. This year, however, I feel that my experience has been a little different, a little more personal. This is because I have seen the progress of true discernment, growth and sacrifice that Brother Kenneth has experienced during the past eight years of his formation. Being myself a Marist, I can imagine Mary smiling with great joy on that day as another new member joined her family. I am happy to say that the Society bearing her name is still growing. At this point in formation it is truly amazing that someone could give himself so completely and wholeheartedly to the Lord, that someone could have the confidence and assurance of publicly professing that he wants to dedicate himself to serve the Lord as a religious living the evangelical counsels.

A month later, on November 3rd, the formation community at Casa di Maria along with other members of the Marist Family here in Rome, including our confreres, benefactors, and friends, gathered to attend Kenneth’s ordination to the Diaconate. On this wonderful occasion, the words of the prophet Jeremiah echoed in my mind: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” (Jer. 1:5) It also reminded me of a phrase from Pope Francis:

“One who serves is not a slave to his own agenda, but ever ready to deal with the unexpected, ever available to his brothers and sisters, and ever open to God’s constant surprises.” (Mass for the Jubilee for Deacons, May 29, 2016)

Moreover, these two great experiences celebrating Kenneth’s final profession and his diaconate ordination brought me humbly before God with confidence to say that my life is not totally known to me and is not even under my own control. It is only God who knows all and is in control of all.



(Left to Right) Tony Kennedy, SM, Kenneth Akua, SM, Bishop Tom Burns, Cyprian Akua (Kenneth’s brother), and John Larsen, SM after the Diaconate Ordination



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Marist Vocational Discernment in Today's World

by Jack Ridout

When young people today talk about what they want to do with their life, the word forever does not easily appear in the conversation. Serious consideration about religion and living a life in a religious context does not have the same attraction as it did in times past. Thinking about what to do with one's life crosses young minds today, but if the thoughts get too serious or a commitment seems too permanent, then the process can be quickly dropped.

Many times the supports of family, school, parish life, teachers, and institutions have been diminished, and in spite of these positive influences, individuals can either increase their faith in other ways or move onto other arenas of living. Instead of loving support, people are left with a smattering of social media only to rely on that for social acceptance and conformity. This is not to say that our youth do not commit themselves to lofty motives, but the "noise" of the world tends to deafen the eternal call of what God wants one to do in life.

Marist discernment begins with reflecting on the commitments made at Baptism, and how God continues to call a person to be a follower of Jesus and to live that life as a member of the Church as a married person, a single celibate, a consecrated Sister, Brother or Priest in a religious community or as a diocesan priest.

How does one discern God's call? What does this decision mean in one's daily life? Why do this at all? Consider the consequences of the decision, but be happy about that decision. To make any decision a person will have to say "no" a thousand times before they can say a single "yes" to God! Taking time to discern is necessary, but it should not take forever.

One needs to PRAY, both in silence and in the use of guided books and a trusted spiritual director, continue to receive the sacraments, and prayerfully read the Bible. Is this a call from God? People throughout the ages have responded to that call by joining a religious congregation, and have taken vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and they do this for the honor of God, and the salvation of the world.

Marists believe themselves to be called by Mary to be instruments of her presence in the Church of today as she once was present and active in the church of the Apostles.

Is God calling you?



“Of One Heart and One Mind”

Prayerful Reflection with the Movie *Of Gods and Men*

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



The movie *Of Gods and Men* first appeared in 2010. It tells the story of the abduction and murder in 1996 of seven monks of the Monastery Notre-Dame de l'Atlas of Tibhirine in Algeria.

These Trappist monks lived a simple life serving the poor community surrounding the monastery. During the Algerian Civil War they are threatened by rebels but decide as a group to stay in the country, among the people they had chosen to live with, and not to seek safety by returning to France.

One night the monastery is raided, and seven of the nine monks present are abducted and held as hostages for several months before being murdered, exactly by whom has never been clearly established.

Earlier this year Pope Francis met the last surviving member of the Tibhirine community when visiting Morocco. Father Jean-Pierre Schumacher, OCSO is now 95 years old (the other survivor, Brother Amédée, died in 2008). Father Jean-Pierre continues to serve both as a reminder of the tragedy of Tibhirine and also as a witness of the Church's commitment to seek a new and deeper relationship with Islam.

As an important aside, Jean-Pierre Schumacher has a particular significance for the Marist Fathers and Brothers. Educated by the Marist Fathers in France, he later joined the Society of Mary and was ordained a Marist priest. He can claim a direct link with the US Province of the Society of Mary in that Fr. Etienne Siffert, SM, in San Francisco, California, was a contemporary of Jean-Pierre Schumacher in the seminary.

After several years as a Marist priest, Jean-Pierre Schumacher sought and received permission to follow a contemplative vocation with the Trappists and eventually came to Tibhirine.

Of Gods and Men (directed by Xavier Beauvois) is a dramatization rather than a documentary of the lives of the monks of Tibhirine. As such, one could wonder just how much of an appeal to general audiences the movie would have. That question was resoundingly answered when the film received a standing ovation upon its first release at the International Film Festival at Cannes.

The motion picture focuses almost entirely on the monks wrestling - as individuals and as a community - with what their vows mean and the nature of their commitment to stay with the local people even though they knew that that it was likely (in fact, probable) that to remain at Tibhirine would result in their deaths.

Naturally, not everyone agrees with their commitment to stay.

For example, the late, highly regarded movie reviewer Roger Ebert said in 2011, “Did they make the right choice? In their own idealistic terms, yes. In realistic terms, I say no. They have the ability to help many who need it for years to come. It is egotism to believe that their help must take place in this specific monastery. Between the eight of them, they have perhaps a century of life of usefulness remaining. Do they have a right to deprive those who need it of their service? In doing so, are they committing the sin of pride?” (Review, March 10, 2011)

The responses to such questions depend, to a large extent, on how one views things.

The movie directly confronts the question of discernment: how and why did the monks reach their decision.

The Canadian Jesuit, Monty Williams, has said, “A decision is not necessarily a deliberate, self-conscious choice, and it does not necessarily occur in the context of prayer. Discernment does both. With discernment, we enter into a dialogue with God, after establishing a right relationship between ourselves and God. In that mutual sharing and trust, an answer emerges. Then we not only see as God sees, but we act as we believe God would want us to act.” (*The Gift of Spiritual Intimacy*, Novalis Books)

Of Gods and Men is about a group discernment, but every group discernment necessarily involves the individuals who make up the group engaging in their own personal discernment.

Some of the most powerful and moving scenes in the film depict individual monks wrestling with the question of whether they should seek safety or remain, and it becomes abundantly clear that there is no straightforward, obvious answer for any of them.

The scenes depicting the Community Meetings show over time how individuals shifted in their position because of prayer, discussion, and listening to each other. When the final decision [to stay] is reached by all, it is the result of a right relationship having been established between the monks as a community and between each monk with God. There is mutual sharing and trust which is the only way such a consensus could have been achieved.

It is that depiction of discernment in action that makes *Of Gods and Men* more than simply a story, albeit a very powerful and moving story, about the monks of Tibhirine.



It shows audiences how and why it is possible to come to fundamental and far-reaching decisions in a way that avoids coercion, intimidation, and group pressure on individuals to conform to the majority opinion.

And that is an approach to which we as Marists are called.

In our *Constitutions*, we read: “When they make profession, Marists declare before the Church and one another their intention to live out their baptism more fully. They choose to follow Christ more closely by a radical commitment to the spirit of the Beatitudes in a community that has one heart and one mind.” (*Constitutions* 93) Our Founder, Fr. Colin, put it this way: “The Society began like the Church, so we must be like the apostles and those who joined them and were already numerous. One heart and one soul.” (*A Founder Speaks*)

For Marists, discernment, both on an individual as well as on a group level, has to be a hallmark of the way in which we operate.

We need to avoid the temptation to be expedient in reaching decisions on key matters, to avoid deciding our individual position on the grounds of self-interest, and to resist being guided only by what seems intellectually logical and prudent.

Rather, we need to commit, as individuals and as a community, to “entering into a dialogue with God after establishing a right relationship so that in that mutual sharing and trust, an



answer emerges.” (*The Gift of Spiritual Intimacy*, Novalis Books)

Of course, that can be our desire, but how do we know if we are in fact living a discerning life?

One way is to **look at the effects of the decisions and choices we make.** We can measure them against the fruits of the Spirit, which St Paul tells us are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22)

We can ask **who or what motivates us in the making of our decisions and choices?**

We can **look at the lives of others who have engaged in discernment.**

And we can from time to time **view again *Of Gods and Men*.**

Jean-Pierre Schumacher describes the film as “an icon, that is, it contains more than what it shows.” (*The Last Monk of Tibhirine*, Freddy Derwahl, Paraclete Press, 2013)

As with all icons, one needs to sit with it and reflect on it to learn what it is saying to us today.

The 150th Anniversary of St. Louis King of France

by Ted Keating, SM



The church of St. Louis King of France, in downtown Saint Paul, Minnesota, celebrated its 150th Anniversary on Sunday, November 4, last year. Originally a little wooden building intended for ministry to French-speaking Catholics was dedicated and blessed on December 20, 1868, by Bishop Joseph Crétin, who became the first bishop of Saint Paul in 1850. By sheer coincidence, Bishop Crétin had done his priestly studies in France at the same seminary where future Marist St. Peter Chanel was also a student, and they knew each other well. The third bishop of Saint Paul was John Ireland, who came from Saint Paul, and who was sent by Bishop Crétin to France for his priestly studies at a seminary run by Marists. It seemed only logical, then, for Bishop Ireland to entrust the “the little French church” to the French-speaking Marists during his term as shepherd in 1886.

Through these many years, St. Louis, King of France parish has been known for both its devotion to the French language, and for gorgeously celebrated Liturgies. People come from all over the Twin Cities to appreciate the magnificent

church, the parish organ (often in concert), and the many singers and musicians who lift their voices to God with their sweet music.

Our Marist archives are full of letters from different archbishops thanking the Marists for the frequency with which the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered every day, and for hearing the confessions of many priests in the diocese as well. The Marists hear confessions before the 6:45 a.m. and the noon Mass. It is an important ministry of the church, and it is obvious that the Marists have cultivated this ministry of Mercy over many years, and the parish has become well known for it.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet staffed the parish school from 1878-1962. The Marists were also chaplains to their large convent opposite the rectory which housed up to 90 sisters at its peak. Only four nuns at a time taught at the parish school, while the rest went by streetcar, bus, or on foot to teach at other nearby schools. Over the years, there were also several School Sisters of Notre Dame who

LEFT: Congregation at 150th Anniversary Mass
RIGHT: Marists Ron DesRosiers, Roland Lajoie, Ben McKenna, Paul Frechette, Paul Morrissey, Jim Duffy and Joe Hurtuk
BOTTOM: Pastor John Sajdak, SM and Archbishop Hebda welcome the congregation

lived near the church and were involved in the parish. The Christian Brothers, some of whom lived at Central Towers, also ministered at the parish.

Among the over 100 Marists who served at St. Louis, King of France were: Fr. Alcime Cyr, SM, Provincial of the Boston Province of the Marists and later the first American Marist to be elected Superior General of the worldwide Marist community; Fr. Joseph Buckley, SM, who was born in St. Paul, became a provincial of the Washington Province and later also Superior General of the Society and a member of the Second Vatican council, delivering a key address

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Rev. Arthur Duhamel, SM – A Marist Missionary Priest

by Susan J. Illis, Archivist, Archives of the Society of Mary, US Province

“But you need not worry for me no matter what happens here. We can never tell just how things will turn out and just what are Japan’s plans. So far it is peaceful and quiet and I hope it remains like this...”

Reverend Arthur Duhamel, SM, thus reassured his brother from the Marist mission at Ruavatu, Guadalcanal on January 4, 1942. Eight months later he was dead - bayoneted by the Japanese.

Born in Massachusetts, Duhamel (1908-1942) felt called to religious life at a young age. However, both his father’s disapproval and his personal concerns about his academic abilities delayed his studies for the priesthood. Ordained as a priest in 1937 in the Society of Mary, he celebrated his first Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Methuen, Massachusetts where he had once served as an altar boy. Rev. John André, SM, who had encouraged his vocation, preached at the first Mass.

Two years after ordination, Duhamel arrived at the Marist Ruavatu mission in the Solomon Islands. His insecurities returned as he struggled to learn the native language. However, his years spent working in the mills in Massachusetts paid off as his mastery of tools and mechanics earned the respect of the natives from the very beginning. They called him “wonder-worker.” He contracted malaria, but persevered, writing, “...when we work for God, difficulties become sweet. My one desire is that God will give me health and the necessary means to keep on marching forward for the salvation of these poor Solomonese, among whom His Providence has called me to work.”

The escalating war in Europe created new challenges as his fellow Marist missionaries (Rev. Hendrik Oude Engberink, SM and Marist Missionary Sisters M. Odilia, M. Sylvia, and M. Edmée), all from



Europe, had their funding from home cut off. Thus, the contributions that Duhamel solicited from the United States became their only source of support. The arrival of the Japanese on the island, however, signaled a far more imminent threat.

The Marists refused to leave their mission, remaining there until the Japanese forced them to an internment camp. Sr. Edmée, SMSM was sick and stayed back with the children. There are several descriptions of what happened next. A contemporary account says that when the Japanese ordered Duhamel to carry a message to the U.S. Marines while they held the others hostage, he refused. Another version suggests

Duhamel visited some Americans, attending to their spiritual needs, despite Japanese prohibition. Still another says that Japan’s secret headquarters were bombed, and Duhamel was accused of informing U.S. troops of its location. A final version, from Rev. Emery de Klerk, SM, claims that “he was killed by the Japanese for war reasons.”

Although the precise cause for the Japanese executions may never be known, the four Marists were bayoneted by the Japanese in September 1942.

A mere five years after Duhamel’s ordination, Fr. John André, SM preached again at a Mass for him, this time as the eulogist at his funeral Mass held, appropriately, at Mount Carmel. André declared it “a day of sadness, as well as glory, – glory because Mount Carmel has been selected to offer such a sacrifice for the faith...an apostle has fallen, and he is one of your own.”

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there on religious freedom; Fr. Leo Foley, SM, Ph.D., professor of philosophy at The Catholic University of America; and Fr. Thomas Dubay, SM, PhD, a native of Minneapolis, and a well-known national speaker and author in the U.S. Church. There are a host of other Marists who are remembered by Mary and the generations of parishioners whose lives they so deeply touched.

The 150th Anniversary of the church was celebrated with a special Mass followed by a dinner and silent auction at the Town and Country Club. “The Mass was just spectacular,” Fr. John

Sajdak, SM, the pastor, said. The church was festooned with flowers with all the candles of the church lit, and the music by the dedicated choir was magnificent. An estimated 250 worshippers filled the nave. Special guests for the anniversary celebration included Archbishop Bernard Hebda and several visiting Marists, including Fr. Ben McKenna, Assistant General from Rome, Paul Frechette, Provincial, and Paul Morrissey, former pastor.

Saint Louis, King of France parish in Minnesota, Notre Dame des Victoires in San Francisco (taken on in 1885), and

Our Lady of Victories in Boston (taken on in 1886) are three great Marist centers of ministry for French speakers coming to the United States. Over the years, these parishes have served about a million French Canadians coming into the United States.

Being Marist: One School's Vision of "the Greatest Work"

by Kevin Mullally, Principal, Marist School

I must be the exception, because I actually enjoy strategic planning, that laborious and time intensive process through which an institution sets forth a vision and roadmap for the future. There is great worth in the scholarly research and rich discussions that are the prerequisites of the process as well as the need to clarify the values and goals that are the sine qua non of the institution. It is important to step forward and say: "This is who we are, this is what we believe, and, therefore, this is where we are going."

Marist School, in Atlanta, Georgia, has spent the last 18 months in prayerful reflection and lively discussion producing its next strategic plan, which will take us to 2025 and beyond. The School identified five strategic priorities that will be the focus of growth. They are:

- Be Unwaveringly Marist
- Excel in Academics
- Educate the Whole Child
- Form Global-Ready Servant Leaders
- Secure the Future

The overarching essential question we worked on as we identified these five areas was: *How do we capture, preserve, communicate, and demonstrate the Spirit of the Society of Mary to ensure that the charism of the Marists is still experienced by everyone in our school, and in local, and global communities?* We see the value that a Marist School education makes in the lives of our students, guiding them to think, judge, feel and act as Mary in all things, so they can be Mary's much needed presence in the world today.

The first priority, to **Be Unwaveringly Marist**, responds especially to the challenge the school faces as the presence of vowed Marist religious diminishes. For almost two decades now, our Marist Way program has developed lay leadership, and over the next five years we will advance the Marist Way into a continuous and progressive program that meets the needs and readiness of all Marist School employees, wherever they are in their



understanding and commitment to those qualities that make us Marist.

The second priority, to **Excel in Academics**, is a prerequisite expectation of families today and represents the School's commitment to one of Fr. Colin's threefold duties towards students, "to teach them letters and the various sciences." Here, we balance the tradition of excellence and the heritage of Catholic education with preparing an academic program that is contemporary and comprehensive, dynamic and personalized. Our goal is for students to learn all the things that are required for a superior education, while also learning as much as they possibly can about the things they personally love and are interested in.

The third priority, to **Educate the Whole Child**, recognizes that an education does not just occur in the classroom, but includes opportunities for growth and experiences aimed at the whole human

person. Said directly, the physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and aesthetic development of our students is just as important as an academic education. This aims at a second of Fr. Colin's threefold duties, "to impart to [students] all solid virtues, so that they may grow up into honest and upright citizens." Through the panoply of rich, comprehensive, and balanced programs, we graduate students of integrity, who are comfortable in their own skins, and who have cultivated a sense of purpose and meaning in life.

To **Form Global-Ready Servant Leaders**, the School's fourth priority, represents its commitment to the remaining duty that Fr. Colin outlines, "to form [students] into strong and faithful disciples of Christ." As Catholic and as Marist educators, we are counter-cultural; we work against the strong and frequent voices of a permissive culture that is increasingly secularized and polarized. Because of that, it is more important than ever that graduates of Marist School be prepared to engage

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A New Model of Vocation Accompaniment in the US Province

by Ted Keating, SM

Jack Ridout, in his parting comments about his work as vocation director in the US Province after eleven years (see page 15), describes the cultural “noise” in the ears and heads of today’s young people attempting to make any serious decision about a meaningful “call” or choice of life and career in our world. Listening to the quiet voice of God in the heart (Ignatius describes it as “**weak as a light breath which scarcely agitates the air**”) requires guidance, encouragement, and time off by oneself. Offering such guidance has been Ridout’s role during these years while also drawing in vowed Marists. A major part of his work was “stirring up” concern for vocation work among the members of the Province.

A recent study of groups that acquire vocations regularly found that prospects visit communities who: 1) are devoted to prayer and sharing faith; 2) show a stunningly clear sense of identity and values to the Church; 3) show a “culture of vocations” through the active participation of all members of the group. The US Province has been working on these three goals for many years. The

third element is the most difficult one - widespread participation in the vocation work of the province.

Building upon Ridout’s work, we are moving toward a widespread involvement of Marists in each of the geographic regions of the Province. With our new approach, all inquiries about joining the Society of Mary will initially come to Marist College in Washington, DC. Ted Keating, SM and Randy Hoover, SM will clear the names for probable contacts/candidates. If a **Contact**, being of proper age, seems viable after one thorough interview, and if he is clearly close to a region, the regional vocation coordinator(s) will meet with him, complete another general interview, and work toward a clearer sense of his viability as a future Marist. During this time the Contact would be in constant communication with the regional vocation coordinator and would be invited to community and regional celebrations. When the Contact is prepared to take the next step into candidacy, he would participate in a **Live-In experience** in a Province community in



order to get to know the Marists better and for us to get a better look at the candidate. The candidate could then be called to **Postulancy** in Washington, DC where he may begin studies, if appropriate. While the regional coordinators have the lead role, they can include other local Marists in the process at any time, allowing for active participation of all Marists in this vocation work.

Please keep our new approach in your prayers.

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in constructive dialogue, community outreach, and spiritual practice. Like Mary and her Son, we want our students to be integrated as individuals and to understand those who have different and varied backgrounds or perspectives. Thus they will be well equipped as they seek to serve and to lead those in greatest need, the least favored among us.

Finally, it’s important that we **Secure the Future** because we have seen the transformational power of a Marist education. We want to make sure that such an education is accessible as we continue to support programs and provide facilities that help us to live our mission to form the whole person in the image of Christ. We know that the work

we do to achieve our mission is under the guidance and protection of our heavenly Patroness, and we see our mission as contributing to her work, and we seek to do it in her way, the Marist way.

While my enjoyment of the strategic planning process might come as a surprise, I trust my love of my profession - education - does not. As Fr. Colin said, “What a great work education is. It is the greatest work.” We on school staffs are humbled to participate in this “second creation” of the young people who are entrusted to our care, and the good work we do at Marist School will continue and move greatly forward through our strategic plan.

Society of Mary School Sponsorship in the USA

by Joseph Hindelang, SM

Soon after the newly united Province of the Society of Mary in the U.S. began in 2009, a committee was formed to plan for the future of Marist educational ministry. The committee was responsible for looking at current schools of the Marist Fathers and Brothers as well as those schools which would like to form a partnership with the Society of Mary.

Father Jean-Claude Colin, Marist founder, saw education of young people as an important ministry that the Society could do for the Church and for the world. He reluctantly took on leadership of the high school Seminary at Belley in France at the repeated request of his bishop. During the summer Fr. Colin wrote up educational instructions for the staff and then worked with them to bring the instructions to life as they interacted with the students. These brief “Instructions” contain a rich tradition which Marist Fathers and Brothers have drawn upon as they established schools in various parts of the world since the 1830s.

Within two years of arriving in the United States (actually the Confederate States of America at the time), the Marist Fathers and Brothers established their first school at Jefferson College in Louisiana. From 1864 until today, education has been a primary ministry of the Society of Mary in this country. The philosophy of education begun by Fr. Colin has been shared with lay faculty and staff members to benefit the students at Marist schools.

To preserve and build upon the Society of Mary’s philosophy of education, Ted Keating, SM (former Provincial of the Society of Mary U.S. Province), and Paul Frechette, SM (current Provincial of the Society of Mary U.S. Province), invited a group of educators within the Province to form a committee to work on the future of Marist education in the USA. With the help of Sean Sammon, member of the Marist Brothers of the Schools (FMS), who acted as facilitator and secretary, the committee developed the following vision and mission.

Vision: *To preserve and renew Jean-Claude Colin’s vision for Marist education and to advance that unique mission into the future.*

Mission:

- To provide a framework that will help to preserve and deepen the fundamental characteristics of our Marist schools;
- To establish guidelines that govern what is to be expected from those involved with these communities of learning and faith;
- To create a common language and set of actions that can be used to measure adherence to the larger mission of the Society of Mary;
- To share our common understanding within the Province and wider Society of Mary about the spirit that guides and the principles that animate the programs and progress of schools within our Marist mission and ministry.

The committee set goals and tasks, chose sub-committees, and began work. This will be an on-going project with documents that will evolve and grow as they are implemented by laity working with Marists in schools of the Society of Mary or sponsored by the Society: Marist School in Atlanta, Georgia (MS); Notre Dame Prep and Marist Academy in Pontiac, Michigan (NDPMA); Notre Dame des Victoires in San Francisco, California (NDV); and Notre Dame Academy in Duluth, Georgia. At our most recent meeting in March at Marist School, the committee finalized a document to be used at schools sponsored by the Society of Mary. The document is a reminder to these schools of the importance of preserving Catholic and Marist belief and practice in the daily lives of students and staff, in addition to all the other important aspects of school life.

This document, “The Relationship Between Sponsored Schools and the Society of Mary” will be posted on the Province website, www.societyofmaryusa.org, along with other papers and documents prepared or gathered by members of the committee and by various working sub-committees. These materials can be helpful resources for all of those interested in the Marist philosophy of education. Since the committee’s inception, the following people have worked on various aspects of this project: Mike Coveny (MS); Paul Frechette, SM; Mary Ghisolfo (NDV); John Harhager, SM (current Vicar General in Rome); Joe Hindelang, SM (NDPMA); Ted Keating, SM; Ed Keel, SM (Our Lady of the Assumption, Atlanta, Georgia); Joel Konzen, SM (current Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Atlanta); Kevin Mullaly (MS); Leon Olszamowski, SM (NDPMA); Julie Pack (NDPMA); Bill Rowland, SM (MS); Sean Sammon, FMS; John Sajdak, SM (St. Louis King of France, Saint Paul, Minnesota), and Jim Strasz, SM (NDPMA).

The committee will meet again in September to discuss how to present materials to administrators and boards of schools that are currently operated by or sponsored by the Society of Mary.



(Left to Right) Paul Frechette, SM, Kevin Mullaly (MS), Joe Hindelang, SM (NDPMA), Julie Pack (NDPMA), Mike Coveny (MS), Mary Ghisolfo (NDV), Jim Strasz SM (NDPMA), Bill Rowland, SM (MS)

DONOR THOUGHTS

Why I Support the Marists

by Nedom Haley

When I was growing up, my family were members of Sacred Heart Church, in downtown Atlanta. At that time, the Marists had three parishes in Georgia: Sacred Heart in downtown Atlanta, Saint Joseph in Marietta, and Saint Francis Xavier in Brunswick, on the Atlantic coast. As many Catholic parishes, Sacred Heart had a grammar school, where I attended through eighth grade.

At the time Sacred Heart Church was adjacent to Marist High School, then known as Marist College. My family had several contacts with the Marists, including my grandmother who ran the cafeteria that served both Sacred Heart grade school and Marist High School. For several years, my mother was the secretary for two Marist High School principals, first for Fr. Philip Dagneau, SM and then for Fr. Vincent Brennan, SM.

My mother, brother, and I lived in a section of my grandmother's house; there was no father in the picture. That role was shared by a close family friend as well as the Marist Fathers. The Marists were frequent guests at our house for Sunday dinner and holidays. They were treated, appropriately, like family.

I belonged to the Scout troop sponsored by Sacred Heart Church, which enjoyed an annual camping trip to what was then a rural area. Fr. Valentine Becker, SM came to the campsite one Sunday morning to celebrate Mass and then joined us for a breakfast cooked over a campfire. The breakfast was hardly edible, but Fr. Becker ate it anyway.

As noted above, the Marists had a parish in Brunswick, Georgia, on the coast. Several families, including mine, would camp at the state park on Jekyll Island, just off the coast at Brunswick. Fr. Jim Cummings, SM would come out to say Mass on Saturday afternoon, using a picnic table for the altar, and then joined us for supper (cooked, naturally, on a campfire).

When I was a senior at Marist High School, I was sometimes responsible for answering the front door and telephone in the Rectory adjacent to the school. The priests would stop by to inquire how my family was doing. For several years, I served as president of the Sacred Heart Catholic Youth Organization (CYO).

Next to my immediate family, the Marists had a profound influence on everything I did in high school. I'll mention that I went to the Marist High School mostly on scholarship.

In short, my life would have probably been much different (for the worse) had it not been for the presence of the Marist Fathers while I was growing up. I was aware of many others my age who grew up without a father at home; some never had constructive guidance and unfortunately had trouble later in life.

My daughter (Marist School class of 1993) has the same affection for Marist School and the Marist Fathers. She spends her afternoons in the spring as a part-time community coach. Her daughter was baptized in the school chapel at Marist by Fr. Frank Kissel, SM.

The Marists have a strong commitment to service to others as evidenced by such programs at Marist School as "Reach for Excellence." The Marist tradition means that it is not enough to provide for one's own needs. The Marist Way is to provide for others.

I give to the Marists because I want them to continue to do what they do. I do not want the lack of financial resources to be an impediment to carrying on the Marist Way.



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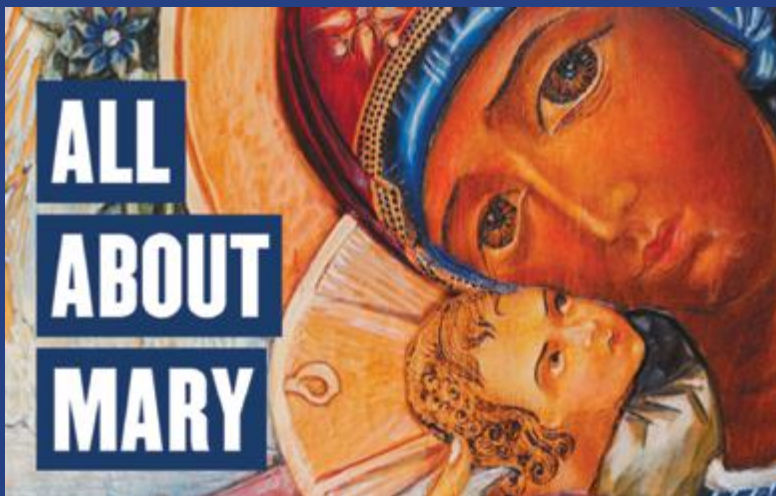


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From Scripture to papal documents to poetry to pop culture references – the “All About Mary” website of the Marianists at the University of Dayton is true to its name. “This website is the largest and most comprehensive site about Mother Mary,” says 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://udayton.edu/imri/mary>) 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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To speak with
our Vocation Director,
Call Jack Ridout (toll-free) at
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