



subjects like English, Burmese and Thai languages, also mathematics, science and history. These centers are usually run by Burmese families with little resources of their own and with the help of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Unfortunately, these private learning centers are not recognized by the Thai government.

So when children, both boys and girls, reach 13 years of age, they are normally encouraged by their parents to go out and look for work and earn something for the family. They look for jobs either in the fish factories or for other job opportunities in Ranong. Some choose to return to Myanmar, their country of origin and, sadly, others are “lost in the dark.” Ranong has a high rate of HIV/AIDS patients.

A Consolation

We firmly believe, however, that God has a special place in his heart for the poor and the vulnerable of this world. In the

Book of Exodus, God says to Moses, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying for help on account of their taskmasters. Yes, I am aware of their sufferings” (Ex 3:7). What consoling words from the Scriptures. But would these words console the vulnerable people here in Ranong today? Here are the statistics: the total population of the Kingdom of Thailand is 69,148,481 according to the 2018 census. Buddhists count for 95% of the population, Muslims for 5%, and Christians are merely 0.7%. Most of the migrants in Ranong are Buddhists, with very few Christian Catholics. How could these words of Scripture be a consolation for the migrants?

Let’s take a look. In all four Gospels, we always encounter Jesus moved with compassion for the poor and the

powerless. In Luke’s Gospel Jesus is moved with compassion when he sees the widow of Nain grieving the death of her only son. Jesus restores the son to life. In John’s Gospel, Jesus speaks to a woman caught in adultery and about to be stoned to death: “Has no one condemned you?” he asks. “No sir,” she replied. “Then neither do I condemn you.”

In our day, Jesus continues to console the underprivileged, the poor and the powerless regardless of whatever differences in cultures, religious affiliations, or traditions. In fact, we have just celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus at Easter, and we continue to rejoice in the blessings of the Easter Season. The power of his passion, death and resurrection has become the consolation for the poor and the powerless in all the world. In so many ways, we are all poor. And yet Jesus himself

continued on page 12

Marist Mission, *continued from page 11*

has become one with us in our poverty as well as in our wounds, our vulnerability and our powerlessness.

The Risen Lord is our compassion and consolation, and he gives this gift to all regardless of differences. But how can this gift be given to the poor and the powerless migrants in Ranong? Perhaps this is the mission of the Society of Mary, to share in the creative action of compassion and consolation of the Risen Christ. As Marists, we are convinced that it is Mary's initiative for us to be here in Ranong. Mary, our blessed mother and our first and perpetual superior, desires and wants us here.

Marists have been in Ranong for 13 challenging years. Perhaps, the most challenging aspect of the mission is to be a source of life, compassion, and consolation in the midst of the migrants' distressing situation. It would be easy to become like one of the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) operating in dangerous and difficult places. But we have to remind ourselves constantly that we are not an NGO, but rather a Marist community participating in the mission of God who constantly reveals his love and compassion to the poor. This is not an easy call to embrace. We realize, however, that the presence of the Spirit of the Risen Christ, who has been journeying with us and inspiring us enables the creative action of God's compassion to flow through us.

A Concrete Action

Explicitly, the action of the Spirit can be seen in the way we respond to the needs of migrants. Their needs are so great that no mere human endeavor could adequately meet those needs. But as principal agent of God's mission, the Holy Spirit is able to direct the generosity of the many people from all parts of the globe to faithfully participate in the mission.

The Marist Asia Foundation (MAF) responds to the needs of migrants through Education, Health, and Migrant programs. A permanent but simple building was constructed in 2014 to provide space where all these programs could be accommodated comfortably. In the Education program, Burmese students from different tribes of Myanmar have the opportunity to take classes. The MAF offers a preschool program for two years. It also offers subjects at the

secondary level where students learn three languages as mentioned above. They also learn mathematics, science, history and computer. When students finish secondary school (after at least four years), some of them apply for the online program provided by Australia Catholic University. These students earn a diploma after one and a half years of studies.

Those who have done the online course can work as teachers. Some work as staff for both non-governmental as well as government organizations, while others find work in various hotels and restaurants. A few have been given an opportunity for further studies at universities in Thailand. It is wonderful to see these students gaining confidence and advancing in their careers. Education is, indeed, an essential road to freedom.

As mentioned earlier, most migrants work in fish factories. The MAF has been trying to provide them choices beyond fish factories. In this part of Asia it is a big advantage for those looking for better job opportunities to be able to speak Thai, Burmese and English. Thus the Marist project gives the migrants choices to learn Thai as well as basic, intermediate, and academic English. We have also set up a computer training program.

Moreover, the Health Program benefits from many generous resources to provide compassion and care for the most abandoned. The Marist project has set up an HIV/AIDS program to provide support, counselling, and advocacy.

These are some of the responses that the Marists, together with our collaborators, Buddhists, Muslims and Christians, currently offer in Ranong. This is our way of participating in the mission of the Trinity entrusted to the Society of Mary here in Thailand. At present, there are three Marist priests permanently assigned here, Fr. Frank Bird from New Zealand, Fr. Gil Casio and Fr. Hermes Sabud, both from the Philippines. We look forward to welcoming Bro. Denis O'Brien from New Zealand. We are blessed with the contribution of the two RNDM Sisters (Religieuses De Notre Dame des Missions - Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions) who have been collaborating with us for many years. We are also gifted with many volunteers from different parts of the world who have come to participate in the mission. At the moment we have two young teachers from New Zealand who have been helping in our education program.

A Grace and A Blessing

Being called to share in the communion of God's creative action of love and compassion to the vulnerable migrants in Ranong is a grace and a blessing for us Marists. Success or failure in our mission is not really the essential part of our ministry. What is essential is that we have the privilege to participate in God's mission here in Ranong. Let us continue to journey together, wherever the Holy Spirit leads us.



We ask for your prayers for this mission. And if you are able to help financially, please use the envelope in this magazine to send your gift. Please mark the inner flap of the envelope "Marist Foreign Missions."

Marist Laity **Sharing Faith** on the New Technology

by Christine Columban, Convener of Marist Laity

"Marist Skypers" across the US just celebrated their second year anniversary of meetings online. The idea for doing this originated from a retreat of Lay Marists in Cullman, Alabama in the fall of 2014. We wanted to stay connected and share faith on a regular basis. And it was important for each one of us to keep Marist spirituality alive. For any one of us who lived in an area with little Marist presence, we felt a profound desire to find ways to deepen our understanding, knowledge, and love of our charism, and to share ideas on how to do that. We also wanted to meet more Marists around the country and overseas without having to buy a plane ticket. And so, in January 2016, our little Skype Marist community was born!

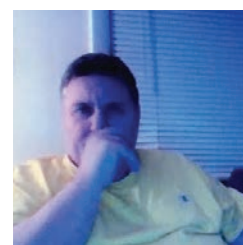
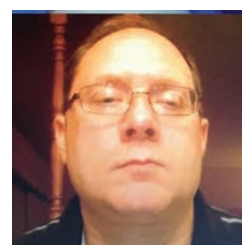
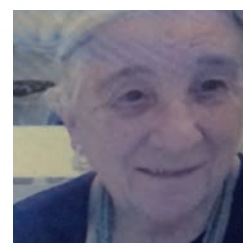
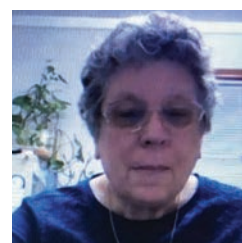
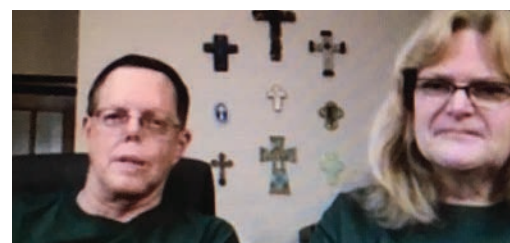
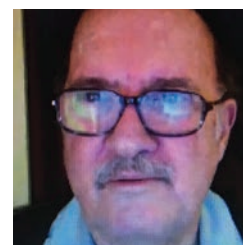
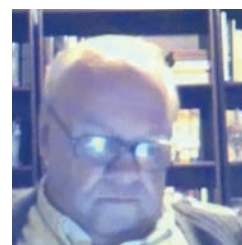
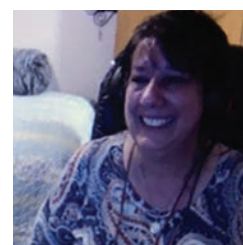
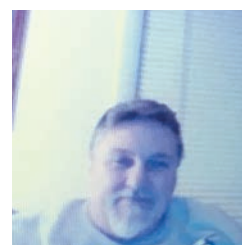
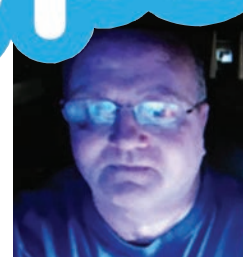
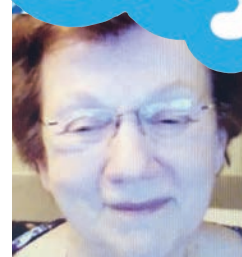
Our meetings bring together people of very different backgrounds, each with a call from Our Lord and Our Lady and each in very different circumstances. We range widely in our individual experience of progressive or conservative. Some of us are driven by Marian piety and some by theology, yet the Marist reality appeals to all of us. The first material we dealt with came in the form of nine index cards on the theme of "Nazareth" which were provided by European Lay Marists whom I had met in Los Negrals, Spain during their third gathering in the summer of 2015. The most recent literature we studied was "15 Days of Prayer with Jean Claude Colin," a collection of his thoughts and writings. It has been stimulating and a good source of sharing as well. We find that Colin's thinking is so well suited to our times, and it certainly serves in building the kingdom.

For the first year and half, we reached out to new members and invited guests to join us at various meetings. We had the pleasure to meet enthusiastic Lay Marists from Florida, the UK, and Mexico. It has been important for us to take time to introduce ourselves and to share about our different missions. Overall, we have met quite a number of people, which has added such a richness to our group, and

I believe we have planted little seeds which will definitely grow with time.

Lately, the core group has been meeting without adding new members, mainly due to challenges with Skype. We feel we have grown, and although we are not meeting with everyone in the exact same geographical space, we have, nevertheless, been able to form closeness. This has come with time, patience and listening to one another. Father Edwin Keel provides us with spiritual guidance and insights. We see, again and again, how the style of Marists is to be gentle. It is non-confrontational, even in circumstances where we may have to remind others that what they are doing might seem to go against the Gospel message or the rules of the Church. Love is the key. We have had some very good talks about the Church, which energize our spirit. Social justice issues have also been at the center of our discussions. We had a special meeting exploring the work of Dorothy Day, and we are now more and more comfortable sharing on sensitive topics. Each one has something quite valuable to contribute, and we always aim at respecting each other.

This year, we have switched to the "GoToMeeting" platform to be able to welcome more participants and to minimize the challenges which come with technology. We were delighted last year to have Sister Linda Sevcik, S.M. and Fr. Paul Frechette, S.M. join in some meetings, and we wish to extend a welcome to all religious and laity who want to build bridges with us. We are brothers and sisters together on a journey within the Society of Mary. If you have some interest in who we are and what we do, we meet on the last Friday of the month, via Internet. Information can be found on the Facebook group page: "RegionalLayMaristsUSA" or via email to me, Christine Colomban, at: MaristWayUSA@gmail.com.





MOVIE REVIEW

Find the Key to the Human Heart Prayerful Reflection with the Movie “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri”

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



The poet William Blake (1770-1820) wrote “We see through our eyes, not with our eyes. We see with our vision – the power of our imagination.”

Blake could not have had the films of Director Martin McDonagh in mind when he wrote those words, but they are certainly apposite to McDonagh’s most recent movie, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*.

The movie centers on Mildred Hayes’ (Frances McDormand) quest for justice after the rape and murder of her daughter less than a year earlier.

Outraged by the lack of progress in apprehending the killer, Mildred decides on a very public shaming by challenging the local police, in particular, the Sheriff, Bill Willoughby (Woody Harrelson). She rents space on three derelict billboards just outside the town of Ebbing and puts up her messages: “Raped While Dying,” and “Still No Arrests?” and “How Come, Chief Willoughby?” Willoughby, while not happy with the public attack on him, copes much better with it than his volatile deputy, Officer Jason Dixon (Sam Rockwell), whose active involvement in responding to Mildred’s challenge escalates rapidly.

McDormand won this year’s Oscar for Best Actress, and it is easy to see why. Mildred Hayes is a complex character to bring to life, and McDormand gives a stunning performance, revealing the rage, the pain, the scorn of a woman who mourns the rape and murder of her daughter and yet can find no justice.

Almost as impressive is the performance of Woody Harrelson as Chief Bill Willoughby, the main target of Mildred’s rage and frustration. A man popular within the local community and one who is dying of cancer, he appears to have done everything that could reasonably be expected in his hunt for the perpetrator. Understandably, he is not happy with the billboards displaying a most public attack upon his character and competency, and, yet, he is not insensitive to Mildred’s pain.

The third major character, in what is overall an outstanding cast, is Officer Jason Dixon, played by Sam Rockwell. Both racist and violent, Dixon is not only insensitive to Mildred’s pain but threatened by it. He is, all things considered, a thoroughly dislikeable and unsympathetic character who manages to offend every other character in the film and, presumably, everyone in the audience.

Three Billboards was nominated for Best Picture by the Academy, and it would have been a worthy winner. But “Best Picture” covers a broad sweep, so we have to ask: Just what category of film does *Three Billboards* fit into?

It is certainly a crime story. It is also clearly a drama. And there are large elements of black humor evident.

It doesn’t neatly fit into any one category, nor does director McDonagh want it to. He does not do straightforward interpretations or black-and-white views of the world. For him, and consequently for his audience, there is work to be done in coming to a personal interpretation of *Three Billboards*. In other words, as Blake urges us, “to see through our eyes.”

So, as the movie progresses, we are called to go beyond our initial impressions.

Mildred is never really presented as likeable, but she is certainly sympathetic. Throughout the film she remains a character we can relate to because of what has happened to her daughter. But in the course of nearly two hours, other questions about her begin to surface. Have her demands for justice morphed into a desire for vengeance at all costs? Has she lost the ability to see good in anyone, or certainly in any man? Has the fire she has lit by erecting the three billboards blown back on her, and is it now consuming her?

The main target of the billboard messages is Chief Willoughby, someone Mildred believes has let her and her daughter down. Yet almost everything good that happens in and around Ebbing seems to include Willoughby, and in the course of the movie his integrity clearly emerges as he searches for justice rather than for vengeance.

The biggest transformation comes with Officer Dixon. *Three Billboards* does make clear that Dixon hasn't achieved his generally repulsive nature by himself and unaided. His mother, a singularly unlovable individual in her own right, has been anything but a positive influence on his life and continues to ridicule and degrade him at every opportunity. Nevertheless, the movie does not excuse Dixon from personal responsibility for his racism and violence.

The only person in Ebbing who seems to see anything good in Officer Dixon is Sheriff Willoughby, who tells him in a letter that "deep down" he is a good man. The reasons behind that evaluation, however, are never made clear to the audience.

By the end of the film, Willoughby is dead, and Mildred and Dixon have formed a kind of alliance to kill a perceived rapist (not the one who killed Mildred's daughter, but still someone in their minds who deserves to die). Whether or not they follow through on their plan isn't clear as the movie ends. Neither are a number of other things.

As we've seen, this is how director McDonagh wants it to be. Some would see what happens to Officer Dixon as a kind of redemption. Others would say it is much more a matter of damnation. Our views of Mildred have been changed in the



course of the movie – not entirely but certainly subtly. The seemingly most balanced and “good” individual in the story, Sheriff Willoughby, has committed suicide in the face of terminal cancer.

Do we emerge from *Three Billboards* depressed and buffeted by the rage and violence, or uplifted, drained and entertained? Or perhaps elements of all these in varying degrees? McDonagh would say that that is for us to work through.

One way we as Marists can approach *Three Billboards* is in the light of one of Marist Founder Jean-Claude Colin's admonitions to the early Marists in the remote Bugey mountain regions of France: “Have a great knowledge of the human heart and find the key to the human heart. You must win people's esteem, and their heart, in order to win them over.”

To esteem the heart is the way to change people

rather than pursuing a purely intellectual approach. In the film we see that with Willoughby's positive assessment of Dixon. We also see it when the local priest visits Mildred to suggest that she take down the billboards because, after all, Chief Willoughby didn't commit the crime personally. Her response is withering, not just about guilt and innocence, but also about the pain of a wounded heart.

Three Billboards is a movie that warrants significant reflection. The key to relating to the characters, to seeing insights in how and why they act and react as they do, is to look, following Colin's words, into their hearts. Such insights will not make them more likeable or their actions more excusable, but they will help us to see the person below the surface.

Nor will Colin's insights enable us to give our own neat conclusion to the movie. There is no “satisfying end” to *Three Billboards*, just as there often isn't in real life when it comes to wounded, hurting people.

Colin does not call us as Marists to “solve” people's problems. He calls us to relate to them at the level of the heart and to enter into the mystery of their lives. From there, anything may be possible.

An Interview with a Millennial about Marist Spirituality

by Jack Ridout, Marist Vocation Director and Marist Postulant Nik Rodewald

Niklas Rodewald has been a postulant with the USA Marists for the past three years and will be attending the next novitiate class. Nik has been living with the Marists and understands our spirituality and wishes to be professed in the Society of Mary.

I asked Nik to add his insights and explain how he has heard through the “noise” of today’s world in light of those Marist values as expressed by Fr. Colin so many years ago.

Nik, what has been your path to the Marists?

After experiencing a sort of ‘second conversion’ during my first years in college, I began to feel a possible call towards religious life. Based on my own personal spirituality and desire to work among God’s beloved poor, I felt that God might be calling me to a congregation that was focused on Marian spirituality, the Eucharist and an apostolic mission that emphasizes the poor and marginalized in our world today.

I visited with a couple of different religious congregations, including the Dominicans. With the Dominicans, I felt as though I had found my vocation: they emphasized Marian spirituality and Eucharistic adoration; served AIDS patients in New York City; and celebrated beautiful, sung liturgies. It seemed like a perfect fit.

In explaining what happened next, I think about Elijah meeting God at Mount Horeb (1 Kings 11-12). In order to reveal himself to Elijah, God leads him up the mountain: a strong wind passes by and pierces the rocks, but God was not in the wind; an earthquake thundered, but God was not in the earthquake; a fire blazed, but God was not in the blaze. In the end, a small voice spoke, and in that Elijah found God. Despite all the ‘criteria’ that the Dominicans met, it was a small voice that spoke to me and said, “This is not what I want for you.”

A couple of weeks later, I was visiting with a friend and mentor of mine, and as we’re sitting down having coffee, he tells me about his friend, Fr. Mike Mahoney, SM, who

had been a missionary in Brazil for many years. He told me about Fr. Mike’s spirit, dedicated service to the poor, and humility. He ended the story by saying, in his slight southern drawl, “Just like we have a Society of Jesus, we’ve also got a Society of Mary to carry on her work in the world.” I looked up the Marists online, did a bit of reading, and reached out. I was pleased to learn that there was a Marist presence in Boston. And the rest is history.

What values stand out the most?

The phrase I always come back to in my meditation upon the Society is, “As Marists, they desire to breathe her spirit, to be humble and obedient, and to deny themselves for the love of God and their neighbor” (Constitutions, 9). Breathing Mary’s spirit means living as she did. And how did she live? She was always attending to the will of God – both in her extraordinary ‘fiat,’ but also in her ‘everyday ordinariness’ as the mother of a family and the maker of a home. Her life and her spirit also mean darkness and self-denial: she followed her Son to the cross, and “a sword pierced her heart, too.” Finally, we as Marists come face-to-face with the beautiful paradox of Mary being ‘hidden and unknown.’ As we read in Acts, “All these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren” (Acts 1:14), yet we have as our founding story the message of Mary to Fr. Courville and Fr. Colin, “I upheld the Church at its birth, I will do so again at the end of time.” She is at once simply mentioned as being among the disciples, and yet her ‘hidden and unknown’ presence upholds the very life of the Church.

Our lives are a participation in the life of the Blessed Mother: we breathe her spirit, and live the very life of Mary. How blessed we are as Marists to have been called to spend our lives “breathing Mary’s spirit” and taking all of the gifts that come from it – the ‘fiat,’ ‘everyday ordinariness,’ the ‘sword that pierces our heart,’ ‘hidden and unknown’ – and ‘pondering all these things’ in our hearts, just as Mary did!



How does your music mesh with your Marist life?

I worked in a recording studio for a while, and I remember my boss talking about being a sideman. Our job – whether we were playing on a record or producing it – was not to make the music as we thought it should be made, but to help the artist fulfill their dream. In short, it was not about us, but about the music.

In a similar way, making Christian art means taking up the spirit of Mary – it’s not about ‘self-expression’ or ‘my’ art, but is rather about the artist’s call to make known the presence, mystery and grace of God in our world, right here and now. Being challenged daily to ‘breathe Mary’s spirit’ helps keep my musical focus on the mystery of Christian faith, and away from the ‘self-expression’ that produces noise instead of music. Likewise, being a musician means that I have been gifted with a special way of breathing Mary’s spirit and making it known in a particular way. Couple this with the generous support that I have been given by so many Marists, and music and Marist life become two sides of the same coin.

Our Blessed Mother continues to influence young people today by pointing them to her son Jesus. We pray that more will open their hearts and minds to accept those cherished values of Fr. Colin and to make “the whole world Marist.”

Should wish to follow a blog by Nik Rodewald sharing his experience of formation please go to <https://maristformation.wordpress.com> and sign up. You will be notified of updates.

A New Marist Bishop

by Tom Ellerman, SM

With his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of Atlanta by Pope Francis, Most Rev. Joel M. Konzen, S.M. has become the sixty-third Marist bishop from the Society of Mary since its approval in 1836. He is the fifth Marist bishop to serve in the United States; the second Marist Bishop to serve in the state of Georgia; and the second Marist from Marist School to be made a bishop. The Marists who preceded Bishop Konzen in the United States were James Hubert Blenk, S.M., Bishop of Puerto Rico (1899–1906), then Archbishop of New Orleans, (1906–1917); John Edward Gunn, S.M., Bishop of Natchez (1911–1924); Michael Joseph Keyes, S.M., Bishop of Savannah (1922–1935), then resigned and named titular bishop of Areopolis (1935–1959); and Gerald Shaughnessy, S.M., Bishop of Seattle (1933–1950).

While it is an honor to be called by the Pope to be a bishop, this honor is not for personal advantage or glory, but is a call to a special ministry in the Church; a call to apostolic work and service. Christ instituted an ecclesiastical hierarchy with the mission of feeding the people of God in his name, and for this purpose he gave it divine authority. Bishops act in the exercise of their ministry in the name and person of Christ the Head. Every bishop exercises his ministry as a member of the episcopal college in communion with the Pope and shares with him in the care of the universal church. A bishop, in virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders, is responsible before Christ, who called him personally and conferred on him his mission. Bishops have the mission of teaching, sanctifying, and governing. Bishops have the duty to proclaim the Gospel faithfully and authoritatively to all. Bishops sanctify the Church by their ministry of the word and sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist. A bishop has care not only of his own local, particular church, but with all the other bishops, who are united to the Pope, for the entire Church. A bishop to whom a particular Church has been entrusted governs that Church with the authority of his own sacred power, which is exercised in the name of Christ, in communion with the entire Church and under the guidance of the Successor of Peter.



At this time, there are twelve Marists in the Society of Mary (including Father Konzen) who have been made bishops and dispensed from their Marist vows so that they can be at the exclusive service of various local Churches.

Not infrequently in the history of religious congregations, higher ecclesiastical authority takes a religious from the mainstream of their religious life to carry out some new special ministry. This sacrifice that the religious congregation makes reveals the love of the Church found among religious.

Along with Auxiliary Bishop Bernard E. Shlesinger, III, Father Konzen also will serve as Auxiliary Bishop to Wilton G. Gregory, Archbishop of Atlanta. Their role as auxiliary bishops will be to help Archbishop Gregory, in every way possible, in his ministry as bishop of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, which comprises the northern half of the State of Georgia. They will represent him to the clergy and the laity of the Archdiocese.

Father Jean-Claude Colin tells his religious sons that they are to hold more loyally to the Roman Catholic faith until death, defending it with all their strength. “Among the ways Marists put this loyalty into practice is by showing the greatest respect and reverence to the Supreme Pontiff.... To whom they will be obedient in all things, ready for any mission in any part of the world to which he may wish to send them.”



On the local scene, Marists are “to show honor and due respect to the bishops” and “should conduct themselves everywhere with such prudence and reverence that bishops may love our Society, care for it, protect it and even look on it as their own.”

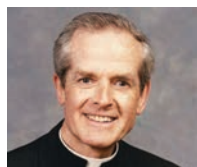
By saying “yes” to Pope Francis’s call to become Auxiliary Bishop of Atlanta Father Joel Konzen has shown himself faithful to Marist values. By sending him on his way with tears mixed with blessings, prayers, and much loving support, the Society of Mary shows itself true to the spirit of its founder.

Just before his consecration, then Fr. Konzen wrote to his Brother Marists to say *“I consider myself, regardless of applicable canons, a member of the Society of Mary in perpetuity. I will use the designation ‘S.M.’ wherever my name appears. Although my greater distance from the congregation is the result of my saying ‘yes’ to the request of the Holy See, I cannot say that it is entirely – or even primarily – my choice. We say that we enter the Society of Mary by a gracious choice of Mary. I have to hope that my call to the labors that await me as a bishop is no less graced than the one I heard so many years ago to enter the Society, and I anticipate being among you in some manner for the rest of my days.”*

OBITUARIES

Father Robert E. Graham, SM 1921 – 2018

Father Robert Graham, SM entered eternal life on January 20, 2018 at the age of 96 Bob was born



in Peabody, Massachusetts on October 29, 1921 to Hugh and Mary E. (Joyce) Graham. He made his novitiate at Our Lady of the Elms on Staten Island, New York where he professed vows in the Society of Mary on September 8, 1944. Robert was ordained at Our Lady of Victories in Boston on February 2, 1950 by Archbishop Richard Cushing.

The majority of Fr. Bob's assignments were to serve as a teacher: Maryvale Seminary in Bedford, Maine (1951-52); Cathedral High School, Detroit, Michigan (1952-54); Notre Dame High School, Harper Woods, Michigan (1954-57, 1974-78, 1979-81 and 1991-93); Marist College & Seminary, Framingham, Massachusetts (1957-67 and 1969-70); Bishop Grimes High School, Syracuse, New York (1968-69); Bishop Fenwick High School, Peabody, Massachusetts (1971-74). In later years Father Graham served as pastoral assistant at St. Anthony Parish in White River Junction, Vermont (1981-84); Sacred Heart Parish in Lawrence, Massachusetts (1984-86 and 1988-91); St. Joseph Parish, Haverhill, Massachusetts (1994-98) and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Bradford, Vermont (1999-2000). He also served as chaplain for the Sisters of St. Joseph at Fontbonne Hall (1986-88) and to the Sisters of St. Chretienne (1993-94) both located in Framingham.

In 1978 Fr. Graham spent a year in the Marist province of New Zealand teaching English at St. Patrick's College in Silverstream. He wrote to his provincial: "I hope that some of the other Marists of the Boston Province will volunteer to come to N.Z. They will meet outstanding hospitality and will enjoy this beautiful country, I'm sure."

In 1987 he began his ministry as the Boston province's archivist in addition to other assignments and in 1998 was archivist full-time until his retirement in 2010 with residence at St. Patrick's Manor in Framingham.

Father Graham is survived by nephews and cousins. Memorial donations may be made to the Marist Mission Office. Please mark the inner flap of the enclosed donation envelope "Marist Foreign Missions."

Father William F. Seli, SM 1931 – 2018

Father William Seli, SM entered eternal life on January 11, 2018 at the age of 86. Bill was born



in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on July 2, 1931 to John and Emma (Bilovesky) Seli. He attended St. Mary's Manor in Penndel, Pennsylvania for high school and college. Following novitiate at Our Lady of the Elms on Staten Island, New York, Bill was professed in the Society of Mary on September 8, 1952. He was ordained at Marist College in Washington, DC on February 2, 1958 by Bishop Michael J. Keyes, S.M.

Father Seli's first assignment was to Marist College (now Marist School) in Atlanta, Georgia as teacher and athletic director from 1958-64. From 1964-72 he served as guidance director and teacher at St. Peter Chanel High School in Bedford, Ohio. In 1972 he became Vicar Provincial and then served as bursar at the Marist Collegiate Community in New Orleans, Louisiana. In 1974 he began pastoral ministry as Associate Pastor at St. Michael Church in Wheeling, West Virginia. From 1976-82 Fr. Bill served as the pastor of Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Atlanta. He returned to West Virginia in 1983 to become pastor of Holy Rosary Church in Buckhannon until 1987. Fr. Seli served as Associate and then Pastor for St. Pius X Church in Bedford, Ohio from 1987-1994. He then spent 2 years in Marietta, Georgia as pastor of St. Joseph Church (1994-96). In 1996 he was assigned as pastor to the West Virginia parishes of St. John the Evangelist Church in Summersville and Holy Family Church in Richwood until his retirement in 2001.

Fr. Seli participated in several renewal programs beginning in Rome in 1972, in London in 1972, in the Marist Renewal program in La Neyliere, France which focused on Marist history and spirituality. As a senior religious, Fr. Bill resided with the Marist community at St. Vincent de Paul parish in Wheeling, providing pastoral help. In 2011 he moved to the Welty Apartments for priests in Wheeling and in 2013 to the nearby Good Shepherd Nursing Home where he spent his final years.

Father Seli is survived by four sisters, one brother and many nieces and nephews. Memorial donations may be made to the Marist Community Support Fund. Please check the "Senior Care of Marists" box on the inner flap of the donation envelope.

Father Francis H. Springer, SM 1924 – 2017

Father Francis Springer, SM entered eternal life on December 24, 2017 at the age of 93. Frank



was born in San Francisco, California on September 24, 1924 to Charles and Nora Catherine (Donovan) Springer. He served in the U.S. Army from 1943-46 and saw action in Europe including the Battle of the Bulge. Though he was reluctant to speak of his war-time service, it was during those experiences that Frank began to give serious thought to dedicating himself to God as a missionary priest. A chance meeting with a Marist priest led to Frank learning about the Society of Mary. He joined the Marists in 1946 spending 2 years at the Seminary at St. Mary's Manor in Penndel, Pennsylvania. His novitiate year and profession on September 8, 1949 were at Staten Island, New York. Frank completed his studies at Marist College in Washington, DC and was ordained there by Bishop Michael J. Keyes, S.M. on February 6, 1955.

Father Frank's first assignment was as an Assistant at St. Paul's Church in Nampa, Idaho (1955-58). In 1958 his desire of being a missionary priest was realized when he was assigned to Bougainville, North Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea (1958-68 and 1973-78). He also continued to serve the missions as Marist Mission Promoter (1968-73 and 1996-2001). Returning from the South Pacific brought him to Star of the Sea Church in Honolulu, Hawaii (1978-79) and St. Matthew's Church, Phoenix, Arizona as Assistant and Pastor (1980-89). In 1989 Fr. Frank returned to St. Paul's in Nampa as Assistant and then Pastor (1989-92). His final pastoral assignment was at St. Catherine's Church in Kauai, Hawaii (1992-96).

Father Springer spent his senior years in San Francisco at Marist Center of the West where he continued to request donations for the Bougainville Missions with the help of Brother Patrick Souza. In 2015 he moved to St. Francis Pavilion in Daly City, California. His varied life experiences led to penning the memoir "Father Springer's Journey: Soldier, Priest, Missionary".

Father Springer is survived by his niece Kathy. Memorial donations may be directed to the Marist Mission Office in the enclosed envelope mark the inner flap of the donation envelope "Marist Foreign Missions."

News Briefs

Another Marist Called to the Episcopacy

If you have seen the earlier article on Bishop Joel Konzen, SM, another Marist was consecrated the Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand on March 3, 2018. Like Bishop Konzen, most of Bishop Martin's ministerial years were spent in education. At the time of his call to the episcopacy, he was the General Bursar for the Marists at the General House in Rome. Bishop Martin joins 11 other Marist Bishops across the world.

Marist Postulant Had Two Acclaimed Projects This Semester

Marist postulant Nik Rodewald, currently pursuing a Masters in Music degree in Composition at the Catholic University of America (CUA), was recently recognized for his musical talent in a production celebrating Leonard Bernstein called *The Theater Songs of Leonard Bernstein at 100* at both Arena Stage and at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Nik has composed oratorios in the past but this time it was the hard work of stitching together the Bernstein pieces into one coherent whole in many parts for the performances. Nik also initiated a project at the CUA music school focused on a highly esteemed African American composer, George Wagner now in his 90's, including a performance of some of his music and a chance to share some of his wisdom with the students in composition at the school. It was a way of celebrating Black History Month at CUA. Nik has a bachelors of music degree from the Berklee School of Music in Boston.

The Barque of Mary

We wish to thank Sheila Barrett a lay Marist and a member of the Marist Way Group at St. Andrew Catholic Church, in Coral Springs, Florida for her initiating a project of rediscovery of the wonderful painting by Alphonso Chigot called *The Barque of Mary*.

Ms. Barrett worked to reproduce over two dozen copies of the painting to be mailed out to a number of Marist communities



within the Marist family. She was assisted with support from several Marists including Edward Keel, SM and Gaston Lessard, SM.

The Barque of Mary, is an undated painting by Alphonse Chigot, after a vision received by Elisabeth-Marie Blot, around Pentecost of 1866 of the Society of Mary as the Barque of Mary in which Mary would bring all her children to safe harbor. The original painting is located in the Colin Museum, at La Neyliere, Pomeys (Rhône), France.

It is from Elisabeth-Marie Blot's accounts of her spiritual experiences that we have the image of the lay branch as a "bridge to souls."

Fr. Colin used this metaphor when speaking to the Marists in 1872: "You are going to be surprised: I have a great ambition and that is to take hold of the whole world, under the wings of Mary, by means of the Third Order....The Blessed Virgin has given it to you to be *like a bridge* to go to souls and sinners." "And so, we see that a lay woman gave the Marist family one of its most important symbols." (*Lay Marist Notes* off the website of the Marist Laity in the United State: www.maristlaity.com)

Fr. Robert Brett, SM

Robert Brett, SM February 22, 2018 was the 50th anniversary of Fr. Brett's death as a navy chaplain in the battle of Khe Sahn during the Vietnam War. You will hear more in a new column in the next issue on *Marist Lives*.

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