



Today's MARISTS

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Mary, Bearing the Light to the World and Hope To an Advent People

By Joel Konzen, S.M.

We are sometimes able to add to our Christian understanding through the sayings of Jewish rabbis that have come down over the years. One such tale asks how one might tell when darkness ends and day begins.

After students make several vain attempts to answer, the rabbi reveals his answer: It is when you can look into the face of others and recognize them as brothers and sisters; until then, the darkness has not lifted and we do not truly enjoy the light.

The season of Advent is all about light and hope. In the Prayer of the Church, the daily breviary we recite, I am interested to see the many references, even in Ordinary Time, to light, such as "We are called to remember the Light of the World as we see the first light of day." Each day, then, is a small Advent, its dawn recalling "God come down" and recalling the redemption wrought in Jesus Christ.

As we are reminded by the rabbi, the Light helps us to see and to love each other much as we see and love God. The rich symbolism of the season—including evergreens and candles—speak to us of banishing the darkness and of celebrating the newness of life that Jesus represents. For us Marists, the symbols are deeper still, as the "vessel" of Christ's coming, the Mystical Rose, was Mary. It was Mary whose example inspired the first Marists to follow her and who shows us the way to her Son.

So, of all the symbols of the season of Advent, the person of the Mother of God stands as the largest—the "door of Heaven's High King." It is she who bears the Light to

the world and, in doing so, bears hope to all who await "the Good News."

We may well feel these days that good news is in short supply. We await glad tidings on the economic front. Our armed forces are still giving their lives on foreign soil.

Catholic schools are closing, and state and local laws are at variance sometimes with Catholic teaching. For all that, France in the days of the founding of our Marist "family" of congregations was reeling from even harder times. The faith had been dealt a blow by the state, and families had suffered greatly at the hand of their own government. Where was hope to come from?

Father Colin said of the very name of Mary, which Marists bear: "What a source of hope, of reassurance!...I shall say to her, 'Blessed Virgin, help me, I falter.'" When we are feeling the rushing tide overtaking us, it is our challenge to know where to turn. For Father Colin, it was clearly to the one who had called him into her "little company," where he would joyfully serve her Son and gather others for the same purpose. It was she who was there at the foot of the cross and she who was at prayer with the Apostles. Surely she will sustain those who depend on her loving assurance.

The joy of Advent is the joy of expectation. It is just before dawn, and we await the Light. What has Mary brought to the world except that which was good, was our greatest good? We can wait in silence or, as Father Colin suggests, we can wait by calling on the Mother of Grace, who desires what is good for us no less than what was good for Jesus, her Son. If we are of her family, should we expect any less?



*Fr. Joel Konzen, S.M.
is Principal of Marist
School, outside
Atlanta, Georgia.*



Father Ted Keating, S.M.,
Provincial

Provincial's LETTER

Dear Friends,

What a dark time this Advent brings to so many among us. At least 9,000,000 of our brothers and sisters in this country are searching for

work, with faltering hope that the economy will turn their way. Congress seems deadlocked over incidental non-negotiables that make a distant dream of relief. Europe seems locked in powerlessness in the face of its own debt and banking woes. African famine continues, along with the war and violence that spawns it, tearing families apart and subjecting the weakest to disease and death. Massive numbers of foreclosures are throwing families out of their homes and beginning to destroy whole neighborhoods. Large numbers of Hispanic families are being decimated by a controversial Federal program that is splitting them up as parents and spouses are deported. Those at the top of the financial system that had a significant impact on this crisis seem cavalier, if not unrepentant, in the face of it.

It is easy to get theoretical and fall into the media hand-wringing frenzy that feeds on this suffering and outrage. But the most affected often suffer in silence behind the talking heads and purveyors of angry, blaming rhetoric. When the hopes and dreams of a family collapse in the face of foreclosure, deportation, loss of work, and, in the case of Africa, devastation, only hopelessness remains. Most of this suffering is the result of victimization by policies and forces beyond their control, no matter how hard they try to be responsible and faithful. Where is Hope in this? Where is God in this? Both anguished cries. There are no quick and easy answers to the cries.

One reason there are no easy answers is that real Christian Hope is so difficult to articulate in words. The poet Emily Dickinson defines real Hope as “The thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the song without the words that never ends at all.” Try to summarize that definition in the face of devastating loss, and it will certainly fall flat, if not be insulting. But real theological Hope is in “things unseen” as St. Paul says. He goes on to say that if it were seen, it would not be Hope. Our human tendency is to confuse Hope with expectation—our expectations about what we want, what we see as the solution to our difficulties, how we think things are supposed to work out.

Actually, Hope is the essence of grace. It infuses our imagination, our will, our emotions, our intelligence with

a newness and creative freshness. It gives us the courage to go on and the heightened use of our full personhood to be ready for the unexpected. With Hope, we can be ready for the unforeseen grace, for the potential for self-transcendence and self-transformation that is often buried in the loss and even tragedy that we are facing. It takes prayer, opening our hearts to the fullness of God’s love and care for us, to prepare ourselves for the fine-tuning of our hearts and minds. With prayer, we can face the crisis with meaning, purpose, and the flowering of a deeper love for those around us. We must allow ourselves to be stripped down to pure grace in these moments if we are to endure and come out whole on the other side.

In Advent we live again that dark world that was awaiting the coming of Christ. St. Paul describes humanity as “being without hope and without God in the world,” aware of the law and what it called us to, but unable to fulfill it. In the midst of the coming of Christ into the world, Mary sings in her Magnificat about an unimaginable world that God was bringing into being in Jesus Christ: “He has shown might with his arm; he has confused the proud in their inmost thoughts. He has deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places. The hungry he has given every good thing, while the rich he has sent away empty.” We have seen some of that going around in the Middle East in recent months and even there it was unimaginable. Mary’s way is no promise of quick fixes and magic in the midst of tragedy. But it does require being open to shatteringly unimaginable surprises. The Mother of Sorrows mothers her children into that kind of grace, that kind of endurance.

This is the faith that can move mountains. Our Founder, Jean Claude Colin, told us repeatedly that nothing less was necessary for the success and perseverance of the Society of Mary and its mission in the world. He was a gentle but harsh task master in holding our feet to the fire of pure Faith and Hope. He expected nothing less of us as Marists in our daily lives and he left us with this to form the heart of our spiritual tradition for mission. He suspected that we would always be living in “difficult times” but he prepared us by entreating us to follow Mary’s example of Hope.

In this Advent season, may we, as Mary did, allow the full power of grace to enable Christ to be born in us again in indomitable Hope, unquenchable courage, and a fired-up imagination.

Fr. Ted Keating, S.M.

THE EARLY DAYS OF THE MARIST MISSION TO HAWAII - PART ONE OF A TWO PART SERIES

By Paul Carr — Director of Development

In August, 1943, as the bombs of World War II crashed down on the Pacific theater, Bishop James J. Sweeney of Honolulu, wrote a letter to a colleague on the mainland asking for Marist men to serve in the Hawaiian Islands. Defense workers, military personnel and Asian economic immigrants had multiplied the islands' Catholic population. "From the purely missionary angle," Bishop Sweeney wrote, "the Oriental races are awaiting what we alone can bring them." Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos joined Hawaiians and today, nearly 40% of the archipelago's residents claim Asian ancestry.

The Marist provincial in Washington sent four priests, who sailed under wartime restrictions aboard the Navy freighter, "Fort Royal." They were accompanied on the voyage by 40 lay passengers and 5,000 cases of liquor.

On October 1, 1944, Marist Fathers Joseph Robeck, James Gilbride, Joseph Callaghan and William Collins landed in Honolulu and set off for two different parishes on Kauai, the fourth largest of the Hawaiian islands.

When Fathers Robeck and Gilbride arrived at St. Theresa's Parish in Kekaha, they lived in the sacristy and bell tower until a rectory was built in 1945. In the waning days of the war, building materials were scarce, so the rectory was assembled from scrap materials. Electrical service was spotty and communications and travel were still curtailed. Thanks to the Sacred Heart Fathers who preceded the Marists, the church was completed in 1941.

St. Theresa's first Marist pastor, Fr. Robeck, acquired army barracks and converted them to a school and convent. He also recruited the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity from Manitowoc, Wisconsin to staff the school. Another Marist priest, Fr. Paul Flynn, built a parish hall for the church in 1956.

Fathers Callaghan and Collins went from the dock to St. Catherine Parish in Kealia, whose church was built in 1887. In contrast to the makeshift accommodations at St. Theresa's, the parish in Kealia afforded comparative luxury accommodations for two new Marist priests. The modern and spacious rectory overlooked Kealia Bay.

Fr. Callaghan built a new parish school for St. Catherine's in Kapaa, less than a mile from the church. St. Catherine's includes the outlying missions of St. Sylvester's at Kilauea and St. William's at Hanalei.

Next time: the early days of Marist parish Star of the Sea (at top of page) and the conclusion of our look at the Marist mission to Hawaii.

We Remember

Members of the Society of Mary –
United States Province
who have died since November 2010



Fr. John W. Bryson, S.M.

Born December 8, 1923
Vows September 8, 1946
Ordination July 25, 1953
Died May 17, 2011

Wellesley, Massachusetts



Fr. Lucien M. Chasse, S.M.

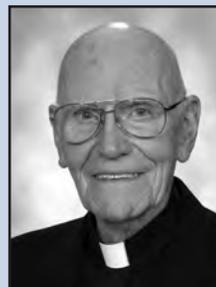
Born November 13, 1916
Vows September 12, 1937
Ordained February 2, 1943
Died July 29, 2011

Boston, Massachusetts



**Bro. Peter A.
Di Francescantonio, S.M.**

Born July 12, 1938
Vows September 8, 1960
Died November 20, 2010
Atlanta, Georgia



Fr. Lawrence R. Schmuhl, S.M.

Born December 13, 1920
Vows September 1, 1941
Ordained June 8, 1947
Died August 22, 2011

Atlanta, Georgia

"You Are Not Alone"



Ed.'s Note: The following is the address given by Jack Ridout at the recent Marist postulant initiation ceremony. To recognize postulants' entry into a new stage of formational growth as Marists, postulants receive medals portraying the Basilica of Our Lady of Fourvière, Lyon, where the original group of young seminarians made their pledge to Our Lady and to form a society under her name, the Society of Mary.

I would like to bring the image of the Rich Young Man to our minds and how he responded to Christ's call to come and follow him.

“Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven, then come and follow me.’ But when he heard this he became sad; for he was very rich...Then Peter said to Jesus ‘Look, we have left our homes and followed you.’ And Jesus said to them. ‘Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God who will not get back much more in this age, and in the age to come, eternal life.’”

Serious stuff... tough words to live by and everyone in this chapel has had to think about them, and more importantly live by them. Andres and Richard are at this crucial point in their discernment.

What does this mean for all of us? We are witnesses to their leaving home, family and possessions to follow Christ. This is not the usual path for young men in our world, not many have made this kind of sacrifice as Richard and Andres are attempting to do today.

We are seeing the transition from successful careers in school, business and in general, success in their life as good Catholics. But, there is a nagging emptiness, that the secular world could not fulfill and I believe this has led them to question what is important and missing in their own life. They are attempting to renounce both the intimacy of another person, and the riches of this world. Like the Rich Young Man they have heard the challenge of Christ, but unlike him they are not sad and are willing to come and follow Him.

Andres and Richard have been tested, both mentally and physically, they have been scrutinized and analyzed, they have been asked to move from their homes and have placed their futures in the hands of strangers. They are ready for the next step as their discernment of religious life takes on a new profound phase that up until now has been a small object on the horizon.

That object is getting closer and it is with **joy** that those of us, who have walked with them so far, turn their care, their concerns, hopes and dreams over to those who will accompany and advise them on the next part of their journey of following Christ. Andres and Richard you are not alone, you have the members of the province behind you, along with *their* concerns, hopes and dreams. As a child you could not see too far until picked up and placed on the shoulders of your parents, today you are placed on the shoulders of all those Marists who have gone before you, again you are not alone.

In closing, I am reminded of a poem by Robert Frost, *The Road Not Taken*, which I feel parallels the road taken by Andres and Richard so far:

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way
I doubted if I should ever come back*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

— Jack Ridout, Director of Vocations



Richard Whittington (left) and Fr. René Itube, S.M. (right)



Richard Whittington and Andres Sanchez are blessed by Marist Fathers Fahey (in back) and Itube

A ROOM FULL OF 'MARIST' SPIRIT

AT COME AND SEE WEEKEND, SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2011



(L to R) Richard Whittington, Tom Ellerman, S.M., Joe Apple, Jack Ridout, Steve Kautzman, Paul Cabrita, S.M., Matthew Tenney.

They came from Largo, Florida, St. Paul, Minnesota and Claremont, California. They were cradle Catholics and a convert, but they had one thing in common: the idea of exploring the next step of religious life and the Society of Mary. Joe Apple, Steve Kautzman and Matthew Tenney came to St. Peter Chanel Seminary in Berkeley, California on a bright and sunny day in September with the expectation of meeting others who share the same ideas and goals.

The group met with our two postulants, Andres Sanchez and Richard Whittington, Fr. Paul Cabrita, S.M. and Jack Ridout. Introductions were made with attention given to their own "vocation" story and journey. It was gratifying to see how their own story became a common one as they listened to each other explain his own vocation journey.

On Saturday afternoon, Fr. Ted Keating, S.M., Provincial of the USA Province of the Society of Mary addressed the group as well as each of the participants separately.

Fr. Paul Cabrita, S.M. of St. Louis, King of France Church, St. Paul, Minnesota, a Marist Parish since 1886, celebrated our Masses and was available for spiritual direction and confessions for those attending the Come and See weekend. Fr. Tom Ellerman, S.M. volunteered for all "cooking duties" and along with the postulants, Andres and Richard, were the perfect hosts for those attending.

The weekend provided a glimpse of those men who possibly might be the nucleus of the future of the Society of Mary in the United States. The great spirit and sense of community of both the postulants and those attending the Come and See weekend was very evident as the weekend progressed. I believe one of Father Ted's comments summed up the weekend best when he thought about all those gathered for the weekend "I really felt like I was in a room of full of Marists".

I can only wish for this same spirit to continue as others "Come and See" what the Marists are all about. Two of the three have submitted applications for the next step in their discernment of Marist religious life. Please keep these men in your prayers as they continue to journey to see where God is leading them in their life.

— Jack Ridout, Director of Vocations

Why we are donors

We came to know the Marists through a family friend who began sharing with us some of the work of the late Fr. Leo Bourdeau, S.M., whose writings we found inspirational and very accessible for their simplicity and common sense. It seems that Fr. Bourdeau had a unique knack for honing in on a subject and bringing home a point that was, first, worth pondering, and, second, nearly always bound to uplift one's spirits in the direction of God.

Over time, we came to recognize that Fr. Bourdeau's writings in the Marist Lourdes Center's *Echoes from Lourdes* newsletter, were characteristic of the broader Marist charism. These quiet, unassuming articles seemed to whisper very potent messages without shining any particular light on the writer. These were earnest, sincere, joyful words that pointed the way to our Lord in the quiet, unassuming way of Mary, our Mother. This purposeful, modest approach is clearly a common Marist quality — and, it would seem, has been throughout the history of the Order.

Marist founder, Fr. Jean Claude Colin, instructed those who would choose the Marist way of life to be "hidden and unknown to the world." This was not an instruction to retreat and retire; it was part of a clarion call to engage actively in a consecrated life of service and prayer without seeking reward or favor.

Consider for a moment the fact that the Marist Fathers and Brothers are out in the world, in missions and schools, hospitals and parishes, quietly doing the Lord's work and are, almost by definition, doing so quietly and without fanfare. Consider how unusual this is.

For us, this is exactly the type of Catholic organization we want to support with prayer and through our financial contributions. We recognize the value of supporting the Marist Fathers and Brothers as they move into the future, through donations to their vocation and formation program and by asking ourselves if there any young men we know who might answer Fr. Colin's quiet call to service.

Bill and Jean Norton
New York, NY

On Pilgrimage: A Marist and Parishioners at World Youth Day 2011

By Jim McGoldrick, S.M.

Youths and adults from three West Virginia parishes put a contemporary spin on the medieval practice of pilgrimage when they visited ancient shrines in France and Spain en route to World Youth Day 2011 in Madrid.

Marist Father James McGoldrick led parishioners from St. Vincent de Paul in Wheeling, and other parishes in Charleston and Wheeling, on a spirit-filled adventure that began in Paris, France. At the Cathedral of Notre Dame, the group celebrated the Eucharist for the intentions of their West Virginia benefactors. After Mass, the participants were urged to demonstrate kindness and consideration to one another. They were also advised to take in stride the misadventures likely to punctuate their pilgrimage as it did for those in the Middle Ages, including awkward accommodations, unusual food and inevitable delays. The thirty pilgrims ended their first day at the Basilica of Sacre Coeur, on the Mount of Martyrs.

All came together for Mass the following day at the Rue de Bac, foundational center for devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Miraculous Medal. From Paris, they travelled by bus to Lourdes for a day of pilgrimage at the shrine of Our Blessed Mother. In joyful observance of the feast of Mary's Assumption, Father McGoldrick celebrated Mass and preached on the Marian theme to more than 200 pilgrims in the Crypt Church of the Lourdes Basilica.

Upon arrival in Madrid, the West Virginia adults and youth participated in the scheduled events of World Youth Day. Cardinal Antonio Maria Rouco Varela, archbishop of Madrid, celebrated the opening Mass for a sea of youths assembled in a public square of Madrid. Each of the six days began with English catechesis and Mass with 15,000 other pilgrims from around the world.

Pope Benedict XVI arrived on the third day of the event and warmly welcomed the youth. The next day, he presided at a public celebration of the Stations of the Cross through the streets of Madrid. An estimated two million pilgrims camped overnight at a Spanish airport and celebrated the closing Mass with the Pope.

The West Virginia youths and adults were moved by World Youth Day. They found that self-denial and prayer, especially the Rosary, were integral to their pilgrimage experience. Each was touched by the faith journey in a personal way and many are already anticipating World Youth Day 2013 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Wheeling West Virginia Pilgrims at Prado



Wheeling West Virginia Pilgrims at Rue de Bac

The Treasure of La Neylière By Kevin Duggan, S.M.

In the spring of 2009, I spent four weeks at the Marist House in La Neylière, France. This is a special house to the Society of Mary because it happens to be a house in which Fr. Colin lived in the later years of his life, and the place where Colin wrote our Rule. My experience at the house in La Neylière, where I was in a Marist Renewal program, was very nourishing for me personally and re-energizing for my commitment to the Society of Mary. I found that there was much more to La Neylière than the beautiful pastoral setting that enhanced my regular 5-mile jogs – although this is one of the first things I noticed about La Neylière.

What I found at the heart of La Neylière is hard to describe. There was something sacred about being in this hallowed house. I always knew that Colin put great effort and devotion into getting the Society of Mary approved. I always knew that Colin felt our Rule (1872 Constitutions) really came from Mary and that he prayerfully knitted it together in this house. My contemplative side was also aware that Colin loved the house in La Neylière because its setting allowed him the solitude that nourished his desire to be ‘still’ with God. But all this head knowledge doesn’t move the heart, and this is really what happened to me in La Neylière.

Most mornings I sat in the Oratory at Fr. Colin’s tomb for prayer and meditation. Frequently, I would sit on the floor in Colin’s study later in the evening for centering prayer. These quiet moments of prayerful reflection allowed me to get to know Colin more deeply. It allowed me to get in touch with his desire to serve, his love for the ‘work of Mary’, his concern for the men sent to Oceania, and his spiritual gift to all Marists. All this moved my heart and gave me a deeper appreciation of Fr. Colin. An appreciation which made me see more clearly the gift of Mary’s gracious choice – a gift I wish I had had this strongly earlier in my life as a Marist.

La Neylière was the place where I came to understand more fully Colin’s gift to me, to all Marists, and to the Church. This is the treasure of La Neylière for me. I was able to see him in his study working on the Rule. I could see him walking the grounds thinking about the hardship and dangers his brothers were experiencing in those far distant islands. I could hear him encouraging and praying for those who were newly entering the Society. Colin became more real, more vibrant, and more alive for me because my renewal took place in his ‘place.’ I presume this is true for many other Marists who have passed through its hallowed halls. I’m grateful for the blessing of being able to spend time in Le Neylière.



Fr. Kevin Duggan overlooking Cerdon, Fr. Colin's first assignment



Fr. Colin's Study



Marist House and Chapel in La Neylière, France

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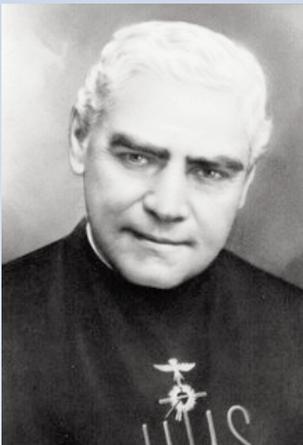
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Family in Ministry: THE MARISTS AND MISIONEROS DEL ESPIRITO SANTO



**Venerable Felix
de Jesus Rougier**

As Marists, we have a strong kinship with the *Misioneros del Espirito Santo* (The Missionaries of the Holy Spirit). A well-regarded missionary congregation based in Mexico, they also have a growing presence in the United States with many Hispanic vocations.

The congregation was founded in Mexico on December 25, 1914 by Fr. Felix de Jesus Rougier, a Marist Father from Lyon, France. Fr. Rougier was sent to Colombia in 1896 to establish two Marist

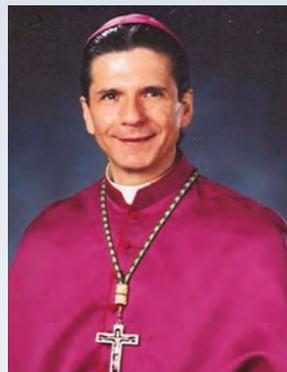
schools. His plans were interrupted by a violent civil war and he was transferred to Mexico in 1902.

In 1903, he met Concepcion Cabera Armida, who encouraged him to found the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit. Later, Father Rougier would also found three congregations of women religious. He ran into difficulties with the Marist Fathers regarding the vision to form the Missionaries, but showed profound obedience in his discernment of this project, always believing that nothing of God can ever come except through obedience to his superiors. While maintaining obedience to his superior, Father Rougier was granted temporary leaves to establish the congregation. In 1926, he received permission to join the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit.

From then until his death in 1938, Father Rougier devoted himself wholeheartedly to the congregation. The group's early

years were forged in the violent and turbulent anti-clerical fires of the Mexican revolution. Father Rougier was declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II in 2000 and his cause for canonization proceeds.

Despite a difficult start, there has always been a strong kinship between the Marists and the Missionaries. They are our *primos* ("cousins"), and they call us their *tíos* ("uncles"). Many friendships have formed between the two groups, and we Marists have great respect for their robust ministry among Hispanics in the United States.



**The Most Reverend
Gustavo Garcia-Siller
Archbishop of San Antonio**

One good friend of many Marists is the Archbishop of San Antonio, Texas, Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSPS. Archbishop Garcia-Siller served as an auxiliary bishop in the Archdiocese of Chicago from 2003 until his festive installation in San Antonio in 2010. He addressed a Marist assembly in 2007 and was warmly received. The Missionaries of the Holy Spirit are renowned for their preaching and the Archbishop is an excellent example of that hallmark.

We rejoice with all our *primos* in the *Misioneros* on the elevation of Archbishop Garcia-Siller.

For more information, please visit their website,
<http://mspsusa.org/>.