



Today's MARISTS

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The Holy Name of Mary

Fr. Tom Ellerman, S.M. and Fr. Ted Keating, S.M.

September 12, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, is the patronal feast day of the Marist Fathers and Brothers. In 1683 the feast was extended to the whole Church when, after intercession to the Holy Name of Mary, the King of Poland was victorious at the siege of Vienna by the army of the Ottoman empire. The victory was seen as protecting Western Christianity from possible annihilation.

The first article of the "Constitutions of the Society of Mary, 1872," written by the Venerable Jean-Claude Colin, our founder, provides the connection of this title of Mary to the Marists. Father Colin writes: "This very name sufficiently indicates the military banner under which it [the Society of Mary] desires to serve in fighting the battles of the Lord, and what its spirit should be."

One is somewhat taken aback by the connection between Mary, the humble and merciful Mother of Jesus the Christ, and this military image of fighting battles. But fighting battles for the Lord has often been used as a metaphor for leading the Christian life in the face of evil and sin in a world fully aware of the consequences. Under Marist auspices, the Holy Name of Mary should not be heard in our time as any justification for Christian-Islamic conflict. Rather, it is a call to dialogue and open-listening to one another so that the Spirit can emerge for all in discerning God's plan for the world with its many religions.

When we turn to the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke, we find another connection between Mary and the kind of struggles with which today's world is only too familiar. The Evangelist presents Mary as a teenage girl, pregnant out of wedlock, an image of total vulnerability, powerlessness and marginalized by society. This teenage girl courageously and confidently makes a dangerous trip through the "hill country" of Judaea to visit her aging, pregnant cousin.

Further on in verse 46 of the chapter, St. Luke puts into Mary's mouth an amazing canticle telling not only of Mary's lowliness before God but also of the great things that God will do for and through Mary and for and through all of us. Mary, the Prophetess of God's might and mercy, sings of the complete overthrow and reversal of a world order built upon sin and evil. *The proud are scattered; the powerful are brought down; the rich have empty stomachs.* This is hardly good news to those who thrive on the arrogance of power. But the majority of the inhabitants of the earth have good news awaiting them. *The lowly are lifted up; the hungry are filled.* It is God himself who will bring this about through Mary and all his other humble servants. It is a fight against injustice, hunger, arrogance, and the structures that support them, but mentioned in the same breath as the coming of the Kingdom of God. Jesus also said that He has come to bring peace, but it will be perceived as a sword to such a world which violently clings to its values.



A dialogue between Tom Ellerman, S.M., and Ted Keating, S.M. led to the following reflection.



Father Ted Keating, S.M.,
Provincial

Provincial's LETTER

Dear Friends,

I am happy to be greeting the larger audience of our readers in this first issue of the Society of Mary's US

Province newsletter to all of our friends throughout the country. The former provinces of Boston and Atlanta became one US Province of the worldwide Society of Mary (The Marists) on January 1, 2009. Much work has been going into reorganizing and integrating the structures of the two previous Provinces into the one new Province. Thanks be to God, it has been a fairly smooth transition with only the normal challenges in a restructuring of this type. Now we have put together in this issue for the first time, the newsletters of the two previous Provinces and it is called simply Today's Marists.

Let me say a few words about the name of the publication. It is called Today's Marists because it communicates what is happening in the US Province and often around the Marist world. But it is also meant for those who feel called to connect themselves in various ways with the Society and its broader mission in today's world. Our founder wanted to "make the whole world Marist" not in any sense of just spreading the Society. He meant it more in the sense of involving people of all walks of life in this gracious mystery of "living Mary's life" in our own times and thereby making present in the world her spirit (really the Holy Spirit as modeled in Mary's life of grace). Our founder saw all of this as bringing about a Church and human society rooted in the power of God's love and mercy to refashion them according to God's plan for the world.

Our new Province has now been through two sessions of its first Chapter (the major decision-making and policy-setting body of the Province); focused meetings of its Provincial Council (consultants to the Provincial for decision-making) and Council of the Province (representatives of the Province's membership by region) on the shape and structure of the new Province; and a General Chapter of the international Society and is ready to focus on the Province's key goals and objectives for these coming few years of the new Province. Let me share with you some of these goals and their rationale.

MARISTS "ON MISSION" IN A CHANGED WORLD

It is clear to us as Marists as it is to everyone else, that we live in a very changed world from 40 years ago. The emergence of large numbers of vocations from the ethnic groups of the immigrant Church is long behind us. Secularization and the changes in the way our surrounding society sees religion make it a critical concern that we can communicate a clear sense of who we are as Marists to a large, chaotic world immersed in media and advertising. The days when we simply go out to recruit priests and brothers are behind us. We need to work a great deal on recapturing the dynamic and attractive founding vision for the Marists that our Founder Jean Claude Colin had in mind. We came to the US principally as missionaries and helped build the Church in key areas of the country. That often led to us seeing ourselves like diocesan clergy, serving in parishes and teaching in schools. Now we have to be clear that we are clearly projecting an image and identity of Marists on mission spawned by our circle of Founders. Young men that simply want to be priests are by and large going to dioceses today. If we wish to recruit young men, they must see what we are about in a clear way so they can be set on fire with this charism and this vision of our mission and life together in a Church that has changed greatly since Vatican Council II. So doing everything we can to clarify that identity is a first goal including focusing more closely on the Founder's purpose of forming a broad family of priests, religious, and lay people on a common mission.

A STRONG COMMUNITY LIFE

Young men today are looking for a religious life that exhibits a strong community life rooted in prayer, shared faith, and corporate communion in mission and ministry. We have begun a process of upgrading our commitment to these aspects of our life together in our communities and regions around this far-spread province. As an expression of our seriousness about the commitment, we have set out accountability mechanisms to assure planning and execution of goals in this area in September of each year including prayer and renewal experiences, outreach and involvement of Marist laity in our community life, and a special focus on

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hospitality to young people so that we can become more known among the younger generation. We are also redoing and rethinking our website and internet presence to help us engage young people in the world where they spend so much of their time these days.

**INVOLVEMENT IN DISCERNING
LIFE'S CALL**

Finally, we come to realize more clearly that we cannot just leave vocation work to one man or even one small team. Our strategies in vocation work have now been expanded to involve all of our province members wherever they are located to be involved, either with young men in their own locale who are referred to them by the vocation director, or with young men whose names they can surface locally by being less hesitant to engage young men about a vocation. We are asking all of our ministries—parishes, schools, campus ministries, etc—to set up discernment ministries for young people to help them come to see their baptismal call in life (first stage), their vocational call to state in life or dedicated life's work (second stage), and from these groups if appropriate discernment about a call to Marist life without pressure at any level about a Marist vocation. But such ministries through our Province will not only help young adults in our world better discern the call of God in their life, but will also help surface for us some key young people who may be discerning a Marist call.

Please keep us in your prayers as we focus on these key goals for these coming years. They emerge from the best hopes of what our Province membership wanted to see in a new Province. We now move into relying on God's grace and Mary's presence to her Society to faithfully implement them as this period of discernment comes to fruition for us.

Fr. Ted Keating, S.M.

**THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM OTHERS:
FR. AL PUCCINELLI, S.M.**



Brazil Marists

Marist Father Al Puccinelli's rich experience as a missionary in Brazil arose from an unexpected call to service for the Society of Mary. "One day, the general administration asked if I would go to either the Philippines or Brazil. They decided on Brazil," he recalls.

Fr. Al became part of the Marist mission outreach to Brazil, which began in 1981 "when the general administration attempted a new way of the Marists being present in the world." The mission has grown over the years, with Marists serving two parishes in Sao Paulo and four parishes in the rural northern diocese of Caetite in Bahia. There are also two Brazilian Marists who are chaplains for the large Marist brothers' Pontifical University in the southern part of the country, Curitiba. The Marist witness has drawn local men to the Society. "Presently we have seven seminarians who are in various years of their formation," observes Fr. Al. There are also three Brazilians who are ordained Marists, two of whom are working as formators. The Mission district is also one of the most diversified districts in the Society in terms of nationalities, including a Marist from the Congo, Africa, and another from Tonga, the province of Oceania.

This is a time of transition for the Marists in Brazil. While their mission is changing, both the Society of Mary and Fr. Al have been deeply affected by the years spent with the people of Brazil. The former superior general, Fr. Hulshof, explained this in his report (*How Can We Sing the Lord's Song in a Foreign Land?*) to the General Chapter of September 2009: "We have now entered upon a phase in which the staffing of our mission regions from outside is coming to an end and new assignments to districts will mainly be made for specific purposes."

"Reflecting on his mission years in Brazil," Fr. Al notes, "My greatest gift comes from the people who have a very strong faith in the midst of poverty and violence." The ex pat Marists have also been changed by their time in Brazil. "The Society of Mary has had the rich experience of encountering another culture. At times we get trapped in our own culture thinking it is the only and the best one. When we think this way we lose the opportunity to learn from others, whether poor or rich."

*- Interview by Sheila George with
contributions from Fr. Paul Frechette, S.M.*

Historical Perspective on Our New Province FRENCH-SPEAKING MARISTS WERE ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHEAST DIOCESES

Following decades of violent anti-Church oppression, during Napoleon Bonaparte's reign in France, the gathering roots of the Society of Mary took shape in Lyons, amid the burned embers of the French Revolution. Under the direction of founder, Fr. Jean-Claude Colin, SM, the Marists exercised their ministry at forming and sending missionary bands throughout France to help rebuild its shattered and broken Church. This method of seeking and serving those least capable of helping themselves became a Marist trait that came to help characterize the Society as it grew into a global missionary force centered in Marian spirituality. By the 1880s, so many Marists had arrived in the United States that Pope Leo XIII gave the Society permission to establish an American Province in 1889. This happened to coincide with a steady influx of French-Canadian immigrants into the New England states, who had come to farm the land, mostly in Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire, and to earn wages in the thriving mills and factories throughout the region, with strong presences in Massachusetts, within the Merrimack Valley (Lowell and Lawrence) and south coast (Fall River and New Bedford).

French Marists responded in droves to help serve the burgeoning francophone body of faithful who were settling into New England; some Marists came from their first U.S. missions in Louisiana, others from Canada and France. The French identity within the New England Marist ministries became so strong at one point that there were only two Marist foundations in New England where Marists who knew little or no French could render effective service (St. Mary's College in Van Buren, Maine, and the Immaculate Conception Parish in Westerly, Rhode Island.) Over time, Marist service to French-speaking Catholics blossomed throughout New England, from the far reaches of northern Maine, in Van Buren, where many vowed Marists were born and raised, to Providence, Rhode Island, from where several future Marists hailed.

It is generally agreed that St. Anne's Parish in Lawrence was the "Mother Parish" of all Marist-operated parishes in New England. Founded in 1882, some 40 years after the City of Lawrence was planned, St. Anne's was followed by the establishment of Marist-run missions that became four French-speaking parishes in the Greater Lawrence area: Sacred Heart (Marist-operated for 101 years), St. Joseph (85 years); and in Methuen, Our Lady of Mount Carmel (78 years) and St.

Theresa (61 years). Outside these key centers, the Marists served in and established several strong French-speaking parishes throughout New England. In some cases, they built and maintained these parishes for over a century before passing them over to the New England (arch)dioceses. St. Anne's in Lawrence closed in 1991.

If St. Anne's Parish was the mother of Marist New England parishes, Our Lady of Victories in Boston is certainly its crown jewel. The oldest Marist establishment in the former Boston Province, Our Lady of Victories began as a chapel near the State House on Beacon Hill before the Marists purchased land at its present location and constructed the first French Roman Catholic parish in the city.

Located at the corners of Boston's Back Bay, Bay Village and South End, the parish opened its doors in 1886 to serve the people of its immediate area, and those living in Brookline, Dorchester and Roxbury, where a considerable number of French-speaking families had settled. Unlike the French-speaking immigrants in Merrimack Valley and Maine, these families were not just Canadian, but also French, Belgian, and Swiss — all sharing the common denominators of their Catholic faith and French language.

Today, for its proximity to numerous Boston hotels and a bustling business area, Our Lady of Victories has become a center of worship for a small group of neighbors and many workday commuters, tourists and business travelers, who bring a variety of native tongues and traditions into the church, yet share their devotion to God and an appreciation for the parish's splendid history, architecture, stained-glass and glorious music, each of which transcends all languages.

- Paul Carr, Marist Development Director



St. Anne's Parish, Lawrence, Massachusetts

An Appreciation of Ken Clinton APRIL 28, 1944-APRIL 2, 2010

Ken Clinton came into the lives of the Marists quite serendipitously. His friendship with us began about 40 years ago after he went on a blind date and met the girl he married, Barbara Bode. Barbara was the daughter of Howard and Florence Bode, very good friends of Marist Fathers Larry Schmuhl and Philip Gage. The Bode's and Barbara and Ken Clinton stayed close to the Marists and specially to their friend Fr. Larry Schmuhl for all the years of his ministry at Marist School and as a part of the Atlanta Marist community. Fr. Larry was their dear friend and he enjoyed the Bode's and their children as much as they loved being around him. He was a frequent visitor to their home and was part of many of their family celebrations.

Ken and Barbara moved to Florida but stayed connected to "their priest" Fr. Larry and friend who laughed and prayed with them for many years till Barbara, who went through 13 years of cancer and treatment, died in May 2007. Just a few days before Barbara's death, Ken who had taken care of the woman he adored for many years at home, right until she died contacted Fr. Larry Schmuhl. He sent Fr. Schmuhl a note on May 23, 2007 four days before Barbara's death that reflected his own "joie de vivre" and inimitable irrepressible, unique style and joyous way of living in God's world, even as he faced the death of his wife. Ken's note told Fr. Larry that Barbara and he had decided that they wanted to make a substantial gift to thank the Society of Mary "for the friendship, guidance, way of life and wonderful example of how easy and joyous it is to be a Catholic Christian" for the many Marists they had met and known. Ken wrote that he (Ken had studied to be a Benedictine monk in Alabama for four years) was "converted to become a Marist" because of Fr. Larry's presence in their lives! The letter written on a computer in a 16 point font advised Fr. Larry to get settled in his easy chair before he looked at the attached check.

The scriptures tell us that it is "more blessed to give than to receive." Ken lived these verses. In the two years after the death of Barbara, Ken let us know at every moment how his life changing gift to the Society of Mary had changed *his* life and brought him and his new wife Sondra, great joy beyond measure. Ken lived this joy every time we spoke or had the pleasure of spending time with him. As one who had spent a few years in seminary with the Benedictines, Ken was on fire with his passion for God's word and especially for the work

of St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota. The abbey had commissioned the beautiful illustrated St. John's Bible, an incredible work of art glorifying God in his Word. Ken was an artist with an incredible love for religious art and wanted nothing more in his life than to spread the word of God. His dream was to have every parish and religious order in America purchase and have a copy of the St. John's Bible available so people could see God's Word in all its splendor.

Knowing Ken's passion for this Bible and its illustrations, the



An illustration of the Pentecost from the St. John's Bible hangs in the Marist Pine Street residence and is dedicated to Ken Clinton's wife, Barbara.

Marists asked him if he would frame one illustration that depicts the feast of Pentecost for us. We invited Ken and Sondra to our parish of Notre Dame de Victoires in San Francisco on May 2, 2009 and officially dedicated a plaque in honor of his late wife and Ken. The gift that Ken made in honor of his late wife Barbara allowed us to renovate six rooms and create three new suites for the senior and retired men who reside at Pine Street. Ken was overjoyed to see

that these men who had dedicated their lives to the service of God's people could have some comfort and dignity in their senior years. He was overjoyed to see their renovated rooms and meet many of them. Sondra and he stayed friends writing to the men and sending them care packages long after they left San Francisco. Little did we know that Ken himself would be diagnosed with cancer and die less than one year later. He knew what he had been through with his Barbara and told us that he didn't have the heart to take any extraordinary measures to prolong his life.

The Society of Mary grieves the death of this wonderful man who was so full of the Spirit of God and shared his love of God and his love of life with us till the end. He came into our lives like a shining meteor and then went home to the source of his life. We know he was greeted by angels when he arrived in heaven and that his spirit rests in the heart of the God he loved so passionately, in peace eternally.

Fr. Dennis Steik, S.M.

Fr. Dennis Steik is a former Marist Provincial who serves as the Associate Pastor of the Marist parish of Notre Dame des Victoires in San Francisco.

Marist School — Atlanta, Georgia



Fr. David Musso with Kurt Hofius

MARIST GRADUATES MAKE THE GRADE



Fr. Joel Konzen with Nicholas Ashton

As we end the academic year, our youngest alums look ahead with excitement to their college careers. The decision process can be daunting, time consuming, and apprehensive. But the process has its rewards. At Marist, while there might be a few decisions each year that we wish colleges had made differently, we are also glad to say that overall our students did very well.

Marist seniors applied to an average of just under six schools, a total of 1137 applications for the class as a whole. A majority of students, 59%, will attend out-of-state institutions, up from 55% last year. Top destination states for students attending schools outside of Georgia include South Carolina (18), Alabama (16), North Carolina (12), Virginia (9), followed by Indiana, Pennsylvania, California, and New York (6 each).

The largest number of Marist graduates, 41, will enroll at The University of Georgia, similar to the number attending in each of the last five years. The number of Marist students admitted to UGA (93) was our largest in over ten years. Other popular Georgia destinations include Georgia Tech (18); Georgia College and State University (4); and Emory, Georgia Southern, and Georgia State (3 each).

Out of state, colleges selected most often are University of South Carolina (10); University of Alabama and Auburn (8); Clemson (5); Arizona State, Elon, and Southern California (4); and Notre Dame and Louisiana State (3).

Marist students will also attend such institutions as Princeton, Yale, Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, Georgetown, Carnegie Mellon, the Naval and Air Force Academies, Davidson, and Stanford.

Some schools that Marist graduates have attended infrequently in the past but will be attending next year include: Denver, High Point, Kentucky, Sarah Lawrence, Swarthmore, Holy Cross, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Morehouse, Hampton, and Lenoir-Rhyne.

Altogether, members of the class of 2010 will attend 70 different institutions in 24 different states.

College choice means turning away opportunities as well. A selected list of schools to which Marist 2010 seniors were admitted but which none decided to attend include: Vanderbilt, Brown, Barnard, West Point, Dartmouth, Williams, Duke, Rice, and Washington University in St. Louis.

- Fr. John Harkager, S.M.

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy, Pontiac, Michigan

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy in Pontiac, Michigan has had much to celebrate in 2010, as they recently graduated their sixteenth class. The 162 graduating seniors, consisting of

eight members of the Valedictory Court (4.25 cumulative GPA), one of whom scored a perfect 36 on his ACT, walked the stage in May as one of the most prestigious classes in NDP-Marist history.

Graduates continued on page 7 . . .

GRADUATES *continued...*



Fr. Joe Hindelang, S.M. with Jon Shepherd, Valedictorian

The Class of 2010 was accepted into 128 colleges and universities in 29 states and the United Kingdom. They received over \$10.4 million in scholarships; that's an astounding average of over \$64,197 per graduate. 100% of graduates were accepted to a 4-year university and 36 of the 162 graduates can boast scoring a 30+ on their ACT. The average ACT score for the class of 2010 was 26.25.

NDP-Marist is authorized to teach the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP), a rigorous course of study designed to meet the needs of highly motivated secondary students and to promote international understanding. The school's first class of Diploma Programme Candidates graduated 16 this past spring. nine other graduates received multiple IB certificates for credit earned.

The NDP-Marist Academy Middle Division (6-8) graduated 75 students with 98% going on to the upper division.

- Fr. Jim Strasz, S.M.



Two members of the Class of 2010 carry in the Notre Dame Prep banner during the Baccalaureate Mass.

The Continuing Call to Religious Life

The Marists of the United States recently met near Chicago for their annual retreat and assembly. The last day of the retreat was devoted to vocations, in part to address the "alarm" sounded about vocations to the Society as defined by the Superior General and given further emphasis by the Provincial Chapter of the newly formed Province of the United States.

This alarm was given further voice by our Provincial Fr. Ted Keating, S.M. in a keynote address and taken to another level by Sr. Charlene Diorka, SSJ, assistant director of the National Vocation Religious Conference (NRVC).

Sr. Charlene explained that vocation ministry is not limited to one person but is the responsibility of each member of the Society of Mary. She further explained the findings of a study that NRVC commissioned that was conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). The study "was designed to identify and understand the characteristics, attitudes, and experiences of the men and women who are coming to religious life today as well as the characteristics and practices of the religious institutes that are successfully attracting new candidates and retaining new members."

"Why would Jesus Christ abandon his Church now by not continuing to call new members to His service?" Sr. Charlene asked.

This challenge provided the backdrop for the findings of the CARA study. Of the nine major areas considered by the study, I would like to share highlights of the first one about Religious Life Today.

- Most US religious institutes are experiencing diminishing numbers, but continue to attract new members, and a few are showing significant growth.
- There are nearly 4,000 men and women in initial formation or professed final vows within the previous 15 years, which confirms that there are still significant numbers of men and women who are responding to a call to religious life and are hopeful about its future.
- 78% of men's communities and 66% of women's have at least one person currently in initial formation.

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Reflections . . . from page 1

Marists with their mercy charism would rather style themselves as bearers of love than as fighters. Yet, through this image of the military banner with Mary's name on it, Father Colin tells his followers, at the very beginning of their Rule, whose side they must support as they strive with Mary, their Leader, to participate in God's work of transforming this world into God's Kingdom of "justice, love, reconciliation, and peace." The methods chosen, of course, and the core of the charism, reflect Gospel models and values of transformation as we will see.

Finally, Fr. Colin goes on to say that this name and this banner create a family of all who are committed to the Society and its mission. And, they are bound together under this common banner emulating Mary's virtues and "even living her life" and "in this way being able to attain more fruitfully the purpose of the Society."

So the Holy Name of Mary moves from the siege of Vienna to a life of humility, obedience, self-denial, mutual charity, and love of God preparing her family to turn back to our Islamic brothers and sisters (and the other religions of the world) in a spirit of self-emptying dialogue and love that can help recreate the human family anew.

If we are warriors, we are warriors of dialogue, self-forgetfulness, peace, mutual love for all of our brothers and sisters. We flee the ways of power, triumphalism, and violence and imitate Mary's life of bringing the Christ into the world in simplicity and ordinariness, allowing God's grace to work through us.

Tom Ellerman, S.M., and Ted Keating, S.M.

Continuing Call

from page 7 . . .

In light of these findings, the Marists are seeing some encouraging signs about vocations. Two young men have submitted paperwork which begins the initial application process to the Marists. The vocation office and individual Marists are in serious discussion with at least seven other men.

The alarm has been sounded and hopefully the call will continue to be heard and the "culture of vocations" will be instilled in each and every one of us. I ask for your prayers for all of these men as they continue to discern where God is leading them in their lives.

*Jack Ridout
Director of Vocation Ministry
Atlanta Sector*