



Today's MARISTS

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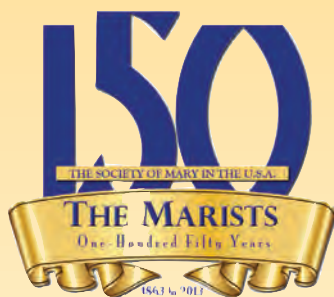
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*Father Ted Keating,
S.M., Provincial*

As you may be aware from our past Marist communications and our website, we are celebrating our congregation's 150th anniversary of our arrival in the United States in 2013. It gives us an opportunity to consider our history and how God's grace has guided and sustained us, from our earliest days in America, when our next steps were less than certain. It is God's grace that has always enabled us to live our religious life in response to the ministry needs of the present moment. This, and the rich experience of the gift of our shared common life as Marists, is what has underpinned our mission work for the past 150 years, and continues to strengthen and guide us today.

What could have been in the minds of Frs. Henri Bellanger, S.M., and Joseph Gautherin, S.M., as they arrived on what had been a French warship on April 3, 1863, Good Friday of that year. They traveled with some 40 other Catholic missionaries coming to the United States to serve a growing Catholic immigrant population. Given the Civil War was raging up river and a number of other unexpected complications, they were only able to travel up as far as St. Michael's parish, Convent, LA in mid-May. The battle of Vicksburg, a key turning point in the War, was just beginning up river.

Frs. Bellanger and Gautherin came to serve the French population of the River Road (along the Mississippi River) in Louisiana,

all under the pastoral leadership of Archbishop Odin of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. By 1864, several other Marists arrived to take on St. Mary's parish and Jefferson College close by, the only college in Louisiana at the time. In that same year, Fr. Bellanger returned to France to present Archbishop Odin's request that the Marists take on another parish in New Orleans in the Algiers area of the West Bank. This request was readily approved by the Superior General. All three ministries thrived under the direction of the Marists and Holy Name of Mary, the parish in the city of New Orleans, became the central Church for the West Bank of the Mississippi for much of its history.

These two parishes, their missions, and the College consumed much of the energy of the Marists for the early decades of their years here. In 1886, the US Province was made a vice-province of the French province, and then a province on its own in 1889. Its first provincial was Fr. Benoit Forestier, S.M. By that point, the Marists were spreading all over the continent. By 1924, the province had become so large that it was split into the provinces of Boston and Washington, DC. There were then 148 priests, four brothers, two bishops, and 39 scholastics at Marist College in Washington, DC. It had grown from the three founding ministries to 32 institutions including 25 parishes, three colleges (secondary schools), a minor seminary, a novitiate, and a scholasticate (school of theology for the Marists), and the Archdiocesan seminary in New Orleans. The Boston Province was principally French in its ministry, language, and culture, while the Washington Province emerged because many non-French

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The Mission Band of the Washington Province in its prime. The blue cape and the pectoral mission crucifix constituted the preaching habit. Front row (left to right): Fathers Peter Quinn, S.M., William Longergan, S.M. and John Murphy, S.M.; back row: James McGuckin, S.M., Philip Hasson, S.M., Willis Maguire, S.M. and William Daly, S.M. (Undated photo)



Fr. Joseph Buckley, S.M., meets with Pope John XXIII during the Vatican II Council meetings. (Undated photo)



Fr. Eugene Bleakley, S.M. examines the Chapel bell at St. Michael's Church, Convent, LA. (Undated photo)

vocations were coming to the Society, and its ministries in the South were among English-speakers.

Besides the few educational institutions, the bulk of the ministries were in parishes of a missionary character, either in rural areas of the country (e.g., West Virginia and Maine) or as language parishes where English was not the predominant language. The Marists had succeeded in clearly maintaining the missionary charism of their founder—mission to the margins and where others may not wish to go. Even Marist College (secondary school founded in 1901) in Atlanta, GA, was in the midst of an almost exclusively non-Catholic population. The US was missionary territory, building what has become our contemporary Church in the US, and the Marists were busily making their contribution among other religious congregations.

As the century moved on, the Society returned to work that the Founder himself had done through what was called its **Mission Band**. Based in Washington, DC, Boston, MA, Nampa, ID, and San Diego, CA, these missionaries traveled to parishes throughout the United States and Canada, renewing parish communities everywhere for another 50 to 60 years. Many of our finest preachers travelled the highways for months at a time preaching renewal and reenergizing parishes.

Since its foundation, the US province has sent large numbers of its men to the missions of Oceania and has provided a sizable number of Bishops to that area of the Church. In more recent years it has also provided missionaries to the Society's newest mission fields in the Philippines, Peru, Brazil, and Africa.

You will see in other parts of this special issue of *Today's Marists* how so much of that mission and ministry continues today. We continue in ministry among the rural people of the missionary diocese of Wheeling, WV. We continue to serve migrant populations that need ministry in their own tongues—Hispanics in Brooklyn, Tampa, Atlanta, Brownsville (TX); Haitians and Atlantic Isle peoples in Brooklyn; Filipinos in Tampa. *Reach for Excellence*, a project of Marist School in Atlanta, provides preparatory education to

disadvantaged young people who would not likely have other opportunities to obtain a first-rate college-preparatory educational experience. Since 1986, our border ministry in Brownsville, Texas has been situated in an area that the *New York Times* designated one of the economically poorest areas of the United States.

By mid-century, as we approached our Centennial in the US, there were upwards of 350 Marists in the US and 75 scholastics studying theology. The US had provided two Superior Generals in a row: Fr. Alcime Cyr, S.M., Fr. Joseph Buckley, S.M., and a good number of assistants general as well. Fr. Buckley was invited to attend Vatican II, given the size of the Society, and made a major intervention on the *Document on Religious Liberty*, a unique contribution of the US experience to the deliberations of Vatican II.

Lest its Founder's focus on a movement with laity to help "bring about a new Church" be lost, the new province had 13 confraternities of the Third Order of Mary, including 1,347 members committed to Marist life. These would blossom in numbers and intensity as the 20th century moved on.

In the next pages, you will read about this rich history from the viewpoint of each of the regions of the United States. By 1923, the US Province had spread to Mexico and Canada (later vice provinces and then provinces on their own), and to all the corners of the US: Van Buren, ME; Salt Lake City, UT; San Francisco, CA; Atlanta, GA; Nampa, ID; Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN; Boston, MA; Washington, DC (its headquarters and formation houses); the Merrimack Valley in New England. You can readily observe the essential missionary nature of the Marist commitment to the United States, planting the Society in all the corners of the nation and in between where there were needs. It was clearly a national enterprise and not a regionally-based entity. That extensive spread across the nation and continent continues today in the many regions of the Province.

What I have described here are the flesh and bones of our rich narrative history in the United States. What it lacks is the spirit and



Notre Dame Seminary, operated by the Marists for the Archdiocese of New Orleans from 1924 to 1967. (Undated photo)

life that we brought to these years, and the rich experience of mutual communion that formed the gist and tendons of our lives as Marists. Our Founder, Jean Claude Colin, struggled mightily in his leadership for the Society with Bishops, especially in our tough missionary days in the undiscovered territories of the South Pacific, insisting that our men would not be effective in any Marist sense without their congregational experience of communion, fraternity, common prayer and a united sense of mission. We are not just workers in a ministerial enterprise. It is in our shared life together where the spirit of our ministry becomes real and authentic. It is in that sense that we place our ministries and our Society in the hands of God to make us worthy instruments of Mary's gift to the Church. Unless that experience of communion together is at the forefront of what we do, we would merely become an association of people in ministry.

While we are proud of our history, it is that sense of spiritual communion that it is still our focus as we look to our own times and to our future to see where God calls us in the spirit of Mary to live that rich history now. Our life is not about numbers or the challenges of diminishment facing the religious life today. We live our religious lives in the present—the only place where they can be lived. God's grace is always enough for us as we strive to do our best to invite men to join us in this communion. But we must live the life that has been given us. And it is God's grace that gives us the strength and courage to face each day, continuing this rich mission and history.

So today we seek to place ourselves differently in US Society than we did in the past when we had large numbers and could run large institutions almost completely on our

own. Now, we sponsor more schools than we could ever have managed in the past (Notre Dame Academy in Duluth, GA; Sophia Academy in Atlanta, GA; Notre Dame des Victoires primary school in San Francisco, CA; *Reach for Excellence* program in Atlanta, GA). We have formed structures of leadership for mission in our two schools (Notre Dame in Pontiac, MI; Marist School in Atlanta, GA) that help us bring the gifts of the Marist charism to large schools with fewer Marists on site than in the past, and sometimes we find ourselves better at assuring a truer sense of Marist identity for these schools than in the past.

We carefully plan our personnel work and train men (sometimes making use of older and wiser Marists) to be able to continue our work in key areas of ministry that represent our founding US sense of mission to the margins and to migrants. Our General Chapter of 2009 (the global leadership body of the Marists) heard our interest in this country in re-envisioning our center city ministries in Boston, St. Paul, and San Francisco as centers of evangelization. Using the ideal locations of these churches to reach out to larger numbers of people in urban centers, our work together with laity can do more to make these churches spirituality centers while offering outreach to the marginalized. This is now a global project of the Marists.

You may think that this is merely clever thinking and strategizing for doing mission with fewer Marists. Rather, we think (and dream) that we are merely responding to the call of Vatican II to bring the Church to the laity and to make better use of our religious congregations, along with their wisdom and history, to help them live out more authentically the laity's call to mission – an early dream of our founder.

Pray for us that we may be authentic to our rich history, and that we may find the grace to maintain the energy and passion of these first Marists into an even richer future.

Fr. Ted Keating, S.M.



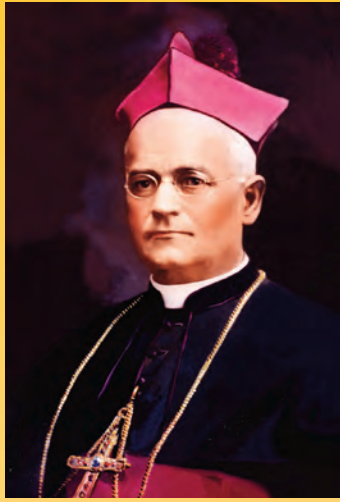
St. Louis Church, St. Paul, MN. Circa 1915.



St. Joseph Church, Haverhill, MA, one of the Merrimack Valley parishes. (Undated photo)



Celebration of Mass, Sacred Heart Parish, Atlanta, GA. Late 1950's.



Archbishop James H. Blenk, S.M.

THE MARIST MISSION IN AMERICA

150 YEARS OF HELPING BUILD AN AMERICAN CHURCH

Compiled by Paul Carr, Director of Development

With contributions from: Rev. Thomas Ellerman, S.M. Rev. Philip Gage, S.M., Rev. William Rowland, S.M., Rev. Edwin Keel, S.M.

The Marists came to the United States in 1863, in the middle of the Civil War, to serve the needs of French-speaking minorities in Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and California. In the U.S., the Marists were part of an immigrant Church struggling to survive in a sometimes anti-Catholic landscape. They opened a school and cared for parishes in Georgia where Catholics were a very small minority, and undertook missions to the rural poor, especially in West Virginia, Louisiana, Georgia and Texas,

In celebration of the Marist's 150th anniversary of ministry in the United States, this article will survey, from a regional perspective, some of the development and expansion of the Marists' ministry and their important contribution to building the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. While this article focuses on the early days, it will also highlight how Marist ministry continues in these same areas to the present day.

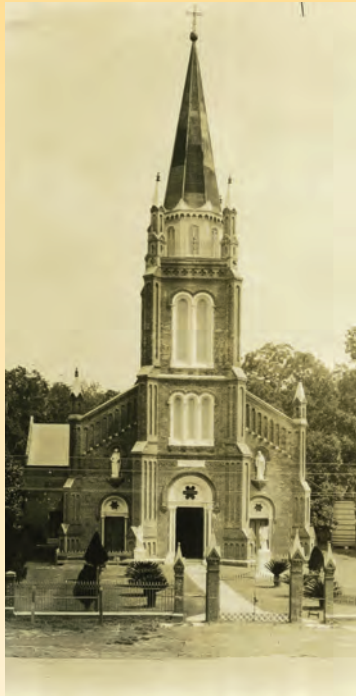
While the Christian world prepared for Christmas in 1836, the first group of Marist missionaries left France that Christmas eve for an area of the South Pacific known as Oceania, where Jesus Christ and His Church were still unknown. These men, among the first Marists, had taken their vows earlier that year when the Society of Mary was first sanctioned by Pope Gregory XVI, and Fr. Jean-Claude Colin, S.M. was elected the Society's first Superior General. It was to become the year when the destinies of the Society of Mary and those craving the peace and wholeness of Jesus came together in the world's most forgotten places.

Marist American Frontier: New Orleans and The River Road

From the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church, the United States was a missionary land during the Civil War and well into the 20th century. During the middle of that war, in February 1863, two Marists set foot on American soil in New Orleans, the first Marist missionaries to America. They had arrived in New Orleans at the request of the local bishop to help build the Church among the French-speaking people of the region. By April 1863, Frs. Henri Bellanger and Joseph Gautherin had set-up the first Marist American foundation in the River Road towns along the Mississippi River in Convent, LA. They took pastoral care of St. Michael's parish in Convent, LA, and, a

year later, took the administration and teaching duties at nearby Jefferson College, which had been operating since 1834. More parishes in the New Orleans area followed.

In 1878, James H. Blenk, a graduate of Jefferson College, was ordained a Marist priest. He went on to become president of Jefferson College and, later, Archbishop of New Orleans after having served as Bishop of Puerto Rico. During his tenure, Archbishop Blenk systematized the Catholic School system in New Orleans, unifying and standardizing the Catholic educational board, and his efforts were instrumental in the Marist presence in the southern missions. In 1924, the Marists were placed in charge of



St. Michael's Church, Convent, LA. 1922.



St. Michael's Church Choir with Fr. Lloyd Whitfield, S.M., Convent, LA. 1952.

Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, with the school's first rector having been Fr. Charles Dubray, S.M. The Seminary was a Marist ministry until 1967 when it was handed over to the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Marist service in the River Road region flourished until 1996, when a lack of personnel forced the withdrawal of the Marists from the birthplace of their American ministries there.

Western Expansion

In 1878, Archbishop Joseph Alemany, O.P., of San Francisco invited the Marists to staff his new seminary at Mission San José. In 1880, Father Favre, S.M., second Superior General, accepted the invitation and sent Father Regis Pestre, S.M., and three other Marists to staff the seminary. Because of its isolated location and consequent lack of students, the seminary was unsuccessful and the Marists ceased to staff it. Despite its closing, six of the students became priests and served the Archdiocese.

Although St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary did not succeed, the Marists did not leave California. In 1885, they took possession of the French national Church of Notre Dame des Victoires. Eventually the Marists established the Chapel of St. Joan of Arc as a French National Mission in the Hunter's Point district of the city. St. Joan of Arc Mission was absorbed by the Marists of All Hallows Parish, c. 1946.

In 1889, the Marists took charge of All Hallows College, Salt Lake City, Utah, a day and boarding school for boys, founded by one of the seminarians the Marists had taught at Mission San José. This was also the year that Pope Leo XIII gave the Society permission to establish an American Province. The papal decision centered on the influx of Marists who had arrived not only in San Francisco, but in other parts of the country, primarily servicing French-speaking Catholics in Louisiana, New England, Minnesota, and also in Georgia up until that time.

In 1918, when All Hallows College was closed, the altar of the Chapel was sent to Notre Dame des Victoires, San Francisco, where today it serves as the Blessed Sacrament Altar.

In 1903 the parish of St. Paul was established at Nampa, Idaho, as a mission center for almost all the territory of three Idaho counties. The Marists returned it to the diocese in 1998.

In August, 1943, Bishop James J. Sweeney of Honolulu, wrote 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 arrived in Honolulu on October 1, 1944, and over the next 55 years, the Marists in Hawaii helped build and lead centers of faith that blended Americans from vastly different backgrounds and cultures, to help them know and serve God in the way of Mary. Other Marist western ministries followed in California and Arizona, and in 1962, the Marist Province of San Francisco came into existence.

In 2013, the same missionary spirit that brought the Marists to the western states continues today from California to Washington State at Marist Center West in San Francisco, Notre Dame des Victoires parish and school, in colleges, a hospital, apostolates of prayer, and in the military.

New England

In the mid-1800s, many French-Canadian immigrants entered the New England states looking for work. Some farmed land in Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire, while others earned wages inside busy mills



St. Joseph Church, Paulina, LA, one of the Marist River Road churches. 1950.



Fr. Lawrence Schmuhl, S.M., Fr. Robert Martin, S.M. and Fr. George Fahey, S.M. during a winter skate on Wolf's Pond, St. Mary's Manor. (Undated photo)



Fr. Omer St. Onge, S.M. Boston Province Provincial (1970 to 1979) and beloved educator in ME, MI, NY and MA. 1975.



A group of Marist novices gather with their Novice Master at Our Lady of the Elms Novitiate on Staten Island, NY. 1940.

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and factories in places like the Merrimack Valley cities of Lowell and Lawrence, Fall River and New Bedford, MA; and the Providence, RI area. These people all had two things in common: they were Catholic and spoke French as their primary language. The French Marists responded in great numbers to help serve the burgeoning Francophone faithful in this region. Some Marists arrived in Merrimack Valley and Boston 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.) 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.

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.

In 1924, the Marist American Province was divided into two parts to form the Boston Province and the Washington Province. In 1962, the western portion of the Washington Province formed the San Francisco Province, which extended to Hawaii. Later, the Washington and San Francisco Provinces were taken into the new Atlanta Province, and finally, on January 1, 2009, all of the American provinces were unified into one Marist Province of the United States.

In the early 1950s, the Marists of Boston sent priests to Michigan to assist the Archdiocese of Detroit with school staffing and manage-

ment there. In 1953, the Marists built a high school in Harper Woods, Michigan for 750 boys and welcomed the first class to the school, named Notre Dame High School in 1954. The school was closed by the Archdiocese in 2005. In August, 1994, the Marists of Boston agreed to establish Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy in Pontiac, MI, at the request of the Archbishop of Detroit. Under Marist guidance and administration, the distinguished school continues to foster the Marist tradition of academic excellence and is known for its outstanding graduates.

In July 1950, the National Lourdes Bureau of America was approved by Archbishop Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston, and entrusted to the Marist Fathers. The Marists acquired a commercial building in Boston's Kenmore Square, from where the Lourdes Center continues to operate in 2013.

In 1984, the Marists of the Boston Province took on a new urban ministry at what is now St. Francis-St. Blaise Parish in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, NY. This dynamic urban parish has a large Haitian and growing Hispanic population, runs a performing arts outreach program for the community, and is attached to a highly-regarded school.

Our Lady of Victories Shrine in Boston is the oldest Marist establishment in the former Boston Province. It 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.

Through most of the Marist history in New England, Massachusetts and Maine were centers for Marist vocations and formation, with Marist College in Framingham, MA, a minor seminary in Bedford, MA, and a significant number of vocations coming from St. Mary's College, Van Buren, ME.

Minnesota

On August 4, 1886, Minneapolis Archbishop John Ireland invited the Marists to care for the parish of St. Louis, King of France, a

French-speaking parish in St. Paul, MN, whose parishioners had moved south from Quebec for employment opportunities. Later that month, the first Marists arrived in Saint Paul: Fr. Jean-Baptiste Bigot, S.M., previously president and superior of Jefferson College in Louisiana, and Fr. Jean-Marie Portal, S.M., a curate at Saint Anne parish in Lawrence, MA. In 1917, the Marists assumed responsibility for Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Minneapolis for the next several decades. The Marists continue to minister at St. Louis parish in 2013.

Washington, D.C.

When the Marist American Province was established in 1889, there came the need for a provincial headquarters and plans, at least, for a formation program, which would naturally ensure the future of the new province. Around 1890, it became apparent that the Society of Mary should begin to attract local vocations if it were to flourish in the United States, since the number of vocations in France was diminishing, and the French government was growing more hostile to the Catholic Church at all levels. The most logical place for a house of studies was Washington, DC, where the American bishops were establishing The Catholic University of America, a pontifical faculty to award ecclesiastical degrees: philosophy, theology, and canon law.

In 1890 the first house of formation (a novitiate) of the new American Province opened on the Dodon Estate near Davidsonville, MD. The second house of formation was established close to Catholic University, when the Marists purchased and added a wing to the former Brooks Mansion in the Brookland neighborhood of Washington, DC. Marist College was built on the northern end of the Catholic University campus, a large three-story building with about 40 rooms and classrooms, serving as the scholasticate (major seminary) for the next 75 years.

The first provincial of the American Province, Fr. Benedict Forestier, S.M., traveled vast stretches of territory to visit the province's houses, but established his office in Boston. As the issue of the major seminary was developing toward Marist College, it seemed

logical to also settle the provincial headquarters in Washington. Accordingly, another large building went up near Marist College, "Marist Seminary," the first building in the District of Columbia made of poured concrete. Over time, Marist Seminary served as the Provincial's office, a minor seminary (until the flu epidemic of 1918), a residence for Mission Band priests, a novitiate, and then a college seminary.

When Pope John XXIII announced a Council in 1959, the meetings were limited to bishops and Superior Generals. One Marist priest, an American, Fr. Joseph Buckley, S.M., was in attendance at each of the Vatican II Council meetings. Fr. Buckley, the seventh Superior General of the Society of Mary, taught at Marist College and the regional seminary in New Orleans. He was Provincial of the Marist Washington Province from 1959 to 1961 and from 1970 to 1972, before and after his term as General.

More than a century after the arrival of the Society of Mary in America, vocations began to diminish in the mid 1970s. An exchange of property between the Marists and Catholic University took place at this time, when Marist College was given to the University, and the University turned over two smaller buildings it owned, adjacent empty convents in a nearby area known as Sisters College. The faculty and students at Marist College (which would be renamed by the University "Marist Hall") moved up the road to Marist Seminary and it remained the provincial headquarters. Marist Seminary was re-christened Marist College, and later the provincial administration moved into the former Ursuline and Glen Riddle Franciscan convents, calling the new location "Marist Administration Center."



Fr. Joseph Buckley, S.M. a Marist priest of the Washington Province who served as the Society's Superior General from 1961 to 1969, is photographed at the Society's General House in Rome with several U.S. Marist leaders, from left: Vincent Robichaud, S.M. (Boston); Regis Sirois, S.M. (Boston); Edward Donze, S.M. (San Francisco); Cyr Alcime, S.M. (Boston); Maurice Dupont, S.M. (from the Canadian Province); Fr. Buckley; Francis Lambert, S.M. (from the Province of Oceania); James Lambert, S.M. (Boston); Charles Willis, S.M. (Washington); Austin Verow, S.M. (Boston); John White, S.M. (Washington). (Undated photo)



Marist College Deacon Class of 1941. Front row from left: Kirk Clemens, Bishop Michael J. Keyes, S.M., Charles Bernhardt. Back row: Valentine Becker, Charles Barrett, Julian Marquis, Joseph Robeck, James Gilbride.



Bishop John Edward Gunn, S.M.



Cadets processing: Sacred Heart rectory in back, Old Marist College on right. (Undated photo)



Marist College Baseball team. (Undated photo)

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The most recent change occurred in 1998, when Marist College was put on the market for sale, due to a need for smaller quarters. The faculty and students moved into the former Ursuline convent, which would now be known as “Marist College.” The adjacent building now bears the title of “Marist Center,” and houses the financial office of the USA Province as well as publication databases and several retired Marists. As of this writing, there are no seminarians at Marist College, but the Provincial continues to make the building his headquarters.

In this somewhat involved history, we see that change and movement seem to be the one constant.

Georgia

On a June day in 1897, two Marist priests arrived in Georgia and opened a pathway of Marist service in pastoral work and education that continues to thrive in the area today. The two Marists, Fr. William Gibbons, S.M., and Fr. John Guinan, S.M., had come to answer the invitation from Bishop Thomas A. Becker, sixth bishop of Savannah, to minister in the burgeoning Diocese of Savannah, which at the time encompassed all of Georgia.

The Marists had been offered two parishes: Sts. Peter and Paul, now Sacred Heart, in Atlanta, and St. Francis Xavier parish in Brunswick. The former was a full conveyance in perpetuum, while St. Francis Xavier was handed over for a period of care. The first Marist Mass celebrated in Georgia took place in Atlanta on June 8, 1897.

It soon became apparent to Frs. Gibbons and Guinan that a new church would have to be constructed in Atlanta to suit the growing needs of Sts. Peter and Paul and its 340 parishioners. Land at the intersection of Peachtree and Ivy Streets was selected for the new church. Built in the French Romanesque style, the church was dedicated on May 1, 1898 by Bishop Becker as Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The dedication of the new church coincided with Fr. Gibbons’ retirement from priestly service. He was replaced by another Marist, Fr. John Edward Gunn, S.M., whose contributions in the areas of parish and education



Marist School Library, Autumn 1948. Librarian Fr. Valentine Becker, S.M. Seated, left to right: Stan Payne; Richard Reynolds (Marist School historian); Don Kelley; Joe Donahue (professor at Amherst College).

ministries included: creation of Marist College, a school for boys, which was constructed and opened adjacent to the church in 1901. By 1910, the parish community had grown to 1,250 members, with an additional 300 in the north Georgia missions. Fr. Gunn’s time in Atlanta would come to an end during the following year when, on Aug. 29, 1911, he was consecrated bishop of Natchez, Miss. The ceremony took place at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Atlanta.

Over the coming decades, the Marists cared for as many as 14 missions in north Georgia, many of which became parishes. In 1965, Sacred Heart in Atlanta was returned to the care of archdiocesan priests and the Marists were given pastoral care of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, where they continue to serve today.

In 1962, Marist College moved to a new facility and changed its name to Marist School, where boys from grades 7 to 12 were educated in the Marist tradition. The school became co-educational in 1976 and continues to provide exceptional learning opportunities under the guidance of Marists and lay faculty and staff.

Marists still continue to perform sacramental ministry in those very places that were once shepherded by their predecessors. In addition to the *Reach for Excellence* program, Marist School now sponsors the Notre Dame Academy in Duluth and, in Atlanta, the Sophia Academy that is dedicated to teaching children with learning disabilities. Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, staffed by the Marists, has partnered with Marist School to sponsor a Hispanic Adult Learning Center that prepares students to obtain a GED. The

next phase will involve developing young adult Hispanics into pastoral leaders. Finally, the partnership with the laity is expanding to include a variety of methods by which they can share in the mission and spirituality of the Society of Mary.

West Virginia

Among the 50 states, West Virginia ranks quite low for the number of Catholics in the state, yet two significant factors contributed to the Marists having settled into ministries there. First, the location of the Marist major seminary in Washington, D.C., in the 1890s, brought Marists into relatively close geographic proximity to the state. Oral history suggests that some of the priests on the seminary staff traveled by train to bring the Sacraments to various towns in West Virginia on the weekends. Secondly, when the government of France expelled Religious, among them Marists, in the late 1800s, many came to the U.S.; some came from Alsace, a part of France where German was spoken, and from Luxemburg, a country where German is among the official languages. There was a large concentration of German Catholic immigrants in Wheeling, and the Marists were invited to take over the ministry of the parish of St. Michael in 1900.

Three more parishes were turned over to the Marists in quick succession: the parish of St. Joseph (later renamed Holy Rosary), in Buckhannon in the center of the state, in 1902; the parish of St. Vincent de Paul in the Elm Grove section of Wheeling with its mission parish of Our Lady of Seven Dolors in Triadelphia, in 1904; and Holy Family parish in Richwood, a town in a mountainous, lumber-rich and coal-rich area of south-central West Virginia, in 1905.

Over the years the Marists served in many other towns in the state, either as missions of their parishes or as special ministries of

individual Marists: Pickens, Philippi, Berryburg, Century, Adrian, Sutton, Gassaway, Webster Springs, Camden on Gauley, Summersville, Widen, Coalton, Cheat Lake, Rainelle, Paden City, Sistersville, and Middlebourne. Marists have also served for many years as chaplains at Good Shepherd Nursing Home in Wheeling.

Brownsville, Texas

In 1986 the Marists arrived in Brownsville, and in 1996 they took on San Felipe de Jesús, a parish in the U.S.-Mexican border town of Brownsville. They assumed a ministry that strikes at the core of their Marist missionary spirit and preferential option for the materially poor in the most abandoned places. While this was a developed neighborhood, not a single road was paved. There was no mail delivery or schoolbus service. There were no streetlights, sidewalks or parks. There was no police protection. Since that time, the Marists at San Felipe de Jesús have worked with the people in this community to claim a more inclusive piece of the basic American experience. Fr. Hector Cruz, S.M. and his associate, Fr. Joel Grissom, S.M. struggle to help feed an average of 300 families every month, to pay basic bills, utilities and rent.

Shepherding a fragile ministry such as the parish family crisis center, Fr. Hector carries on, as do the courageous people to which he ministers, in the quiet unassuming way of Mary.

* * *

From the very beginning, the Marists have worked side-by-side with bishops, diocesan clergy, religious and laity. In referencing the Centennial of its [the Society of Mary] Mission in the State of Georgia, Archbishop John F. Donoghue acknowledged this partnership when he wrote in a letter dated June 6, 1997: "From one end of this state to the other, there is hardly a place where the influence of generations of Marist priests and brothers cannot be felt. In a grand way, the history of the Catholic Church in Georgia is a history of the participation of Marists in our parishes, in our schools, and in our institutions of Christian charity." As it held true for Georgia, so it has been for the American Catholic Church and the Marists across this country for the past 150 years.

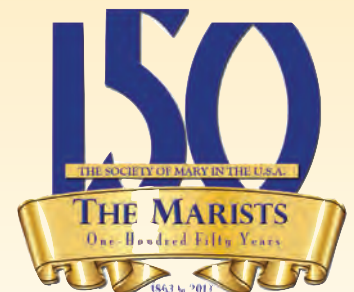
You are cordially invited to join with the Marists as they celebrate their 150th Anniversary year at events scheduled across the U.S. For a listing of upcoming events in your area, please go to

www.societyofmaryusa.org/about/celebrations.html

Use your smart phone to view these events by scanning this QR code.



Fr. M. Boch, S.M., in missions. (Undated photo)



MARIST MISSIONARIES: A CONTINUING TRADITION OF MINISTRY

Ed.'s Notes: In this Anniversary year, we recognize the many Marists of the U.S. Province who have served or continue to serve in foreign missions overseas over the past 150 years. Their names and years as missionaries outside of the United States are listed below.

Our thanks to Marist Archivist Susan Illis for her painstaking work in compiling this listing, which is as complete as available primary documentation will provide.

Fr. Charles Barrett (1946-1959) Bougainville, North Solomons, New Guinea	Fr. Philip Fluet (1931-1937) Fiji	Fr. George Lepping (1938-1989) North Solomons, Bougainville, Papua New Guinea
Fr. Louis Beauchemin (1929-1988) Samoa	Fr. Paul Frechette (1994-2001) Peru	Fr. Jean Leterrier; first provincial of New Zealand Province - R.I.P. +1902
Bro. Jean-Marie Bedard (1942) Australia	Fr. David (John) Galvin (1966-current) Solomon Islands	Fr. Robert Logrip (1946-1951) North Solomons, Bougainville, New Guinea
Fr. Elias Bergeron (1919-1957); Served as Provincial of Oceania Oceania, Tonga, Fiji, Australia	Bro. Joseph-Chanel (Howard Gordon) (1952-1959) South Solomons	Fr. James McConville (1931-1982) North Solomons, New Guinea
Bro. Roland Bernier (1959, 1972-1978) Vanuatu	Fr. Carlton Grenier (1954-1999) North Solomons, Papua New Guinea	Fr. Joseph J. McLaughlin (1998-2009) Philippines
Fr. John Bolduc (1982-2012) Various	Fr. Joseph Grisward (1904-1946) North Solomons	Fr. Michael McMahon (1939-1947) South Solomons, New Zealand
Fr. Roger J. Bourgea (1972-1988) Various	Fr. Auguste Guillemin (1886-ca. 1903 or 1905) New Caledonia, Australia	Bro. Daniel Martin (1934-1951) Fiji
Fr. Timothy Brosnahan (1930-1933) North Solomons	Fr. Honore Hebert (1935-1958); Procurator of Missions in Sydney, Australia (1947-1958) North Solomons, Bougainville, Australia	Fr. Leonard Moran (1946-1954) Bougainville, North Solomons, New Guinea
Fr. Paul Chaisson (1947-1951) Solomon Islands	Fr. Yves-Marie Heliott (1903) Fiji	Fr. John Morel (1895-1912) New Hebrides, Samoa
Fr. Jean-Baptiste Chataignier New Zealand	Fr. Thomas Hogan (1946-1964) Bougainville, North Solomons	Fr. Louis Morosini (1972-current) Fiji, Solomon Islands
Fr. Eugene Cherdel (1894-1902) New Caledonia	Fr. Cyril Jepson (1941-1974) Samoa	Archbishop George Pearce (1950-1976) Samoa, Fiji
Fr. Thomas Clemens (1946-1957) North Solomons, Bougainville	Fr. Joseph Kane (1946-1948) North Solomons	Fr. Gerard G. Pelletier (1972-1980, 1986-7) North Solomons, Papua New Guinea
Fr. John Conley (1926-1944); Murdered by Japanese, January or February 1944, North Solomons	Fr. John Keady (1947-1999) Bougainville, North Solomons, Papua New Guinea	Fr. Alfred Puccinelli (1986-8, 1998-2012) Brazil
Fr. Raymond Coolong (1991-2001) Peru	Fr. Nicholas Kutulas (1955-1998) North Solomons, Papua New Guinea	Fr. Joseph Pusateri (1972-2004) Samoa, Fiji
Fr. Joseph Deihl (1920-1948) Samoa	Fr. Roger Labrecque (1974-1986) Samoa, Fiji	Bro. Joseph John Redman (1939-1944); Murdered by Japanese in North Solomons
Fr. Louis Desjardins (1920-1939) Fiji, Bougainville	Fr. Roland Lajoie (1998-2001) Africa, Israel	Fr. Frank Reitter (2005-2006) Jamaica
Fr. Roland Joseph Dionne (1937-1965) North Solomons, Bougainville	Fr. Joseph Lamarre (1935-1979) North Solomons, Bougainville, Australia, New Guinea Bougainville	Fr. J. Armand Robichaud (1972-1975, 1980-1981) Fiji, Africa
Fr. Louis Duclos (1902-1954) Sydney	Bishop Francis Lambert (1946-1996) Vanuatu, New Hebrides, Fiji	Bro. Camille Rossignol (1946-1951, 1972-1980) New Hebrides, New Caledonia
Fr. Arthur Duhamel (1937-1942); Murdered by Japanese in North Solomons	Fr. Arsene Laplante (1927-1957) Fiji	Fr. Lawrence Ross (1946-1978) Samoa, Fiji
Fr. Patrick Dumais (1942-1975) Samoa	Fr. Albert Lebel (1930-1951) North and South Solomons, New Guinea, Bougainville	Fr. Lionel Roy (1944) Tonga
Fr. George Fahey (1948-1978) Fiji, Bougainville, North Solomons	Bishop Leo L. Lemay (1950-ca. 1980); Provincial of Oceania, Vicar Apostolic of North Solomons, Bishop of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, North Solomons, Oceania	Fr. Henri Seiller (1902) North Solomons
Fr. Robert Fahey (1953, 1972-1984) Australia, North Solomons		
Fr. Henry Fluet (1935-1951) Bougainville, North Solomons		

THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED AND THOSE WHO ARE SERVING



Bishop Thomas Wade, S.M. escaped the Japanese on Bougainville during World War II and arrived by submarine to the Marist community in New Caledonia. Bishop Wade was named chaplain-general to the Allied troops in the South Pacific for the duration of the war. He came from Providence, RI and understood his fellow Americans and their wartime anxieties. (Undated photo)



Fr. Paul Frechette, S.M. in Northern Peru, 1995. Fr. Frechette is photographed with children of a small village with the community's corn harvest.



Fr. John Bolduc, S.M. - Fiji, Senegal, Jamaica. Fr. Bolduc, baptizes a new Catholic in Jamaica, 2008.



Fr. Joseph Buckley, S.M., Marist Superior General (1961-1969) from Washington Province, visits missions in the 1960s.

Fr. Paul Sicard (1942-1956) Vanuatu,
North Solomons, New Hebrides
Bro. John (Raphael Slagle) (1940, 1967,
1972-1983) South Solomons
Fr. Howard Smith (1972-1992) Papua
New Guinea
Fr. Walter Smozylo (1949-1958) Fiji,
South Solomons
Fr. Bertrand Soucy (1972-1980, 1986,
1995-2008) New Hebrides, Vanuatu
Fr. Neil Soucy (1972-1980, 1986-1987,
1995-current) Fiji, New Caledonia,
Tonga, British Solomon Islands
Fr. Francis Springer (1958-1978)
Bougainville, North Solomons

Fr. Herman Therriault (1948-1973) Tonga
Fr. Edward Tremblay (1919-1951) Tonga
Bishop Thomas Wade (1922-1960);
Vicar Apostolic of North Solomons
and Titular Bishop of Barbalisso;
Consecrated Bishop in 1930; Military
delegate of U. S. Armed Forces in
South Pacific during World War II.
North Solomons, Bougainville,
New Guinea

Fr. John Walter (1928-1951) Fiji
Fr. Robert Wiley (1967-1971)
Solomon Islands





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RICHARD HENRY SMITH, S.M.: OUR FIRST AMERICAN MARIST VOCATION *By Jack Ridout, Director of Vocations*



The story of Fr. Richard Henry Smith, S.M., and the Marists intersects with the Church in 19th century America.

The American Church gained “equal rights and privileges with that of other Christians” not necessarily found in other countries at that time. Bishop Carroll (the first native Catholic Bishop) believed that the American Church was to be reflective of the new American spirit of nationalism, not the culture and influences of foreign states; that priests should be educated in America; and the promotion of the separation of church and state and religious pluralism, which many saw as a benefit of American freedom.

In a letter to the Pope, Bishop Carroll maintained that Rome should grant the Church in the United States “that Ecclesiastical liberty, which the temper of the age and of our people requires”. So it was that in 1863, the first Marists arrived in the United States to minister to French speaking Catholics, and began serving in “any missionary capacity and recruiting Americans for the Society of Mary”.

Richard Henry Smith, who would become the first American Marist vocation, was born at Bridgeport, CT, on August 7, 1868, and within a few years his family moved to Monroe, LA, the scene of the first labors of the Marists in this country.

This combination of the American view of the Church and Smith’s exposure to the Marists by attending Jefferson College was to give Smith the “cultural and spiritual background against which his love for the Marists took hold and grew”. He professed his vows to the Society of Mary on December 8, 1890, and was ordained to the priesthood on June 21, 1896.

His many accomplishments can be attributed to his ability to meld his love of the Marists with the unique character of the American Church. Fr. Smith became the first native born American Provincial of the American Province and the first Provincial of the Washington Province. He was the first Superior of Marist Seminary, and Superior of Jefferson College for 16 years. Fr. Smith was named a delegate to the General Chapter of 1921 and promoted the relocation of the General House to Rome, and became head of St. Mary’s Manor. During his tenure, 33 students were ordained Marist priests, and the Marist Mission Band was established. He died December 8, 1935.



Marist Seminary, Washington, D.C. served as the headquarters of Father Smith.