



## Marist Worldwide Missions

Christmas 2021

Dear Marist Mission Office Friend,

As we celebrate this Christmas season, the priests and brothers of the Society of Mary give thanks for the blessings our Heavenly Father has provided us including the opportunities to bring our ministries to where they are most needed in the world. Our ministries would not thrive if it were not for your support and prayers.

We are also reminded, especially looking back on the year, of the challenges and increasing needs in our world. As Marists, missionary in character, we reach out to all people with an open heart in Mary's quiet way, led by our desire to see God's mercy expressed in the dignity of all human beings. Marists believe that Mary accompanies the Church at all times and thus we must emulate her spirit as we continue the work that was begun by our founder, Ven. Jean-Claude Colin in 1836.

I want to share with you some of the work being done in the Marist missions in the District of South America, specifically in Bahia, Brazil in the Diocese of Caetité. This mission began in 1987 after time had been spent looking for a Diocese in Brazil where Marists could offer support in both parish ministry and to the diocese as a whole. The Marists currently minister in parishes that are among the poorest in the Diocese of Caetité, in the towns of Iuiú and Malhada on the banks of the São Francisco River, as well as to about 80 rural communities in this diocese that are only accessible by dirt roads. In addition to serving in the parishes the Marists teach a theology course for laity Caetité, coordinate youth ministry programs for the whole diocese, assist in agricultural related projects and work with other religious and diocesan clergy to promote vocations.

Two current projects in this mission, as shared by Fr. Patrick O'Neil, SM, a missionary in the Diocese of Caetité, are the completion of the Pastoral Center at Santa Luzia in Iuiú (a project that began in 2017) and the expansion of the Church of the Holy Cross in Malhada. The work related to both projects was impacted by the restrictions of the pandemic, however progress is slowly resuming. The newly constructed Pastoral Center, a \$90k+ project with the majority of funds raised by the parish community, will include an administrative area, a Catholic library, a resource room, and rooms for Catechetics and other pastoral formation. As part of this project, the parish hall and kitchen will also be renovated. The second project, the doubling in size of the Church of the Holy Cross in Malhada, is to accommodate the increase in people coming back to the Church, a result of the missionary work in this parish. This project will also include the addition of a new parish administration area.

The Marist missionary work in Brazil is a glimpse of the important work occurring at our missions around the world. It is through your generosity that we are able to continue to serve in these missions and carry out the "work of Mary."

I ask for your continued prayers for all our Marist missions and in a special way for vocations with the recent launch of the Marist Vocation Year by the Superior General of the Society of Mary - a year dedicated to nurturing a rich culture of vocations, reflecting on vocations to the Marist way of life and encouraging Marists to reflect on the mystery of their own vocation. I also invite you to submit your prayer intentions using the space provided on the back of the remittance slip or on our website [www.societyofmaryusa.org](http://www.societyofmaryusa.org). I ask you to please consider doing what you can this Christmas to help us financially so that we may be able to continue our ministries in these global missions.

Be assured of our prayers and gratitude to you. Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year. May God bless you abundantly.

Shalom!

Rev. Walter Gaudreau, SM  
Director, Marist Missions Office of the U.S.



## Marist Worldwide Missions



**Yes!** I want to help further the work of Mary and the Church  
through the Marist Missions Office

**Donate Online at:** [societyofmaryusa.org](http://societyofmaryusa.org)

*(Your gift is tax deductible.)*



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**Thank you for your generosity!**



# Marist Mission in Bahia, Brazil



**Marist Community in Bahia**  
From left to right: Fr. Alfred Rösener, SM (Germany), Fr. José Maria da Silva, SM (Bahia, Brasil), Fr. Lauro Ferreira, SM (Bahia, Brasil), Fr. Leandro Martins, SM (Acre, Brasil) and Fr. Patrick O'Neil, SM (New Zealand)



**Expansion of the Church of the Holy Cross in Malhada**



Fr. Lauro and Fr. Leandro



**Pastoral Center at Santa Luzia in Iuiú**



## The Power of Prayer

Through prayer, we are joined together with those who support our mission.

If you would like us to pray for your loved ones or any special intentions, please submit a prayer request at:

[www.societyofmaryusa.org/connect/prayer-request/](http://www.societyofmaryusa.org/connect/prayer-request/)