

Society of Mary

Marists in the United States

Justice & Peace Alert

November 17, 2023



Reflection: Volunteering with the Feeding Servants Ministry Program at OLPH

by Jane Messina

We all know Jesus' exhortation to care for the needy: "For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink..." In the hustle and bustle of daily life, sometimes it seems we are constantly accosted by people in need of something: a job, a home, medical care, food, to the point where they almost become invisible. The Feeding Servants ministry at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Ybor City, Tampa, Florida is the perfect opportunity to reopen our eyes to the presence of Christ in everyone, and the joy of ministering to Him through humbling oneself.



Jane Messina



The church is located in a once-vibrant portion of the city that was developed by immigrants from Cuba and Italy and built around the cigar industry in the early 1900's. Today, it is surrounded by lower income areas and somewhat plagued by poverty and need. Each week, a small but dedicated group of men and women drive in from all around the city, laden with food, and serve a home-cooked meal to 20-30 men and women in the Father Stokes, SM Parish Center. All of our volunteers prepare and buy the food and supplies themselves,

aided with donations from parishioners and friends. We strive to provide essentials to cover more than just one meal: fruit, hard-boiled eggs, water, pastries, plus a hot meal of meat, vegetables, and a starch.

After beginning with prayer (I've learned to say the Ave Maria!), large bags are passed out in to-go fashion. While we have our "regulars," some of the faces, as well as ages, and backgrounds vary every week. There's "T", who loves to start the prayer ("if you think it's hot in Tampa today, you should see what hell will look like if you don't repent"), "L" who lives on the grass across from the police station but always escorts a companion who is on dialysis and is visually impaired, and a Spanish woman who always asks for food for her bedridden husband "if there's any left over." After working 10 hours, some days I wonder whether I've prepared enough to serve, or whether I'll keel over from fatigue during the feeding. WITHOUT FAIL, there is always exactly enough food and I leave with a renewed sense of energy and God's love coursing through my heart. This is no miracle, it's God telling us loud and clear that He loves us, and by feeding his people, we are honoring the immensity of riches he bestows on us.



Province Archivist Susan Illis recently attended the inaugural CROSS (Catholic Religious Organizations Studying Slavery) conference at the Cardinal Rigali Center in St. Louis, Missouri. Sponsored by the Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists (ACDA), the conference, “Open Wide Our Archives: Truth, Transparency and Access,” took as its inspiration the USCCB’s pastoral letter against racism, “Open Wide Our Hearts.”



Susan Illis

The conference featured presentations and talks by archbishops, archivists, and descendants of slavery. In his keynote address, Archbishop Shelton Fabre, archbishop of Louisville, emphasized the Catholic respect for life and innate dignity of every person, quoting Pope Francis on the opening of the Vatican archives: “The Church is not afraid of history.” Archbishop Fabre reminded those of us gathered that we must search for and share our painful stories; if we don’t, someone else will and they will not tell our story for us, but rather about us.



The Society of Mary did not enslave people; however, Marists served in areas where people had been enslaved and where racism continued to adversely impact people of color. Speakers at the conference encouraged all archivists to make available their resources documenting enslavement and in the absence of such records, to encourage diocesan archives to make sacramental registers. Bishop Joseph N. Perry, chair of the USCCB Ad-Hoc Committee Against Racism, stressed that the mission we are tasked with is very Catholic and essential for reconciliation and healing.

Chapel of St. Vincent de Paul, Cardinal Rigali Center, Archdiocese of St. Louis.

‘This is a journey’: Catholic archivists talk slavery at inaugural conference



Archivists, descendants share experiences with slavery research in the Church at first CROSS conference



Prison Awareness Sunday Special | The Marists in Prison Ministry

On Sunday, October 28th, Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Matti Digos, Philippines recognized Prison Awareness Sunday.

Marists started the Prison Ministry in Digos in 2003 during the time of Fr. Joe McLaughlin, SM. That time the Marists lived in the Clarion house, they were the National High School chaplain themselves and Fr. Joe started with the Marist Association. They have mission every Saturday at Provincial Rehabilitation Center (PRC), Capitol Compound, Barangay Matti, Digos City. One of the Laykong Marista's who started this time in the Prison Ministry is Emmalyn Ando, who is currently the Prison Coordinator. For Marists prisoners are one of the poorest people in society. Marists are also serving not only PRC but also BJMP.



During their visit to prisoners, it involves conducting faith sharing for strengthening the faith and hope of our brothers in prisons and the practice of the Mass hymns for the Holy Mass. Each December, our brothers in prison create hand-craft bags or purses that contain their desired Christmas day gifts such as grocery items, new treats and more. Their works will be shown and plastered in the parish. Those who wish to purchase or own such product that also want to help our brothers in prison, they should follow what is written within their acquisition. Meanwhile, in PRC, they already have a chapel where they hold the Holy Mass.

Let's always remember and pray for our prison brothers and sisters that God's love will always embrace them and fill them with hope.

(Narration by: Fr. Patrick Muckian, SM; Photos: Emmalyn "Gemma" Ando - Prison Ministry Coordinator)



Trick or Treat Hunger Food Drive led by Foundations students and families for Atlanta, Georgia Food Bank



On November 5th, 150 Marist School students, faculty, and family members participated in Marist's 3rd annual One Walk for JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation). Marist students who are living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) shared a little of their experience and gratitude with everyone. While T1D impacts their lives on a daily basis, it does not limit or define who they are, thanks to the support of friends and family as well as the life-changing research being done by JDRF. Earlier this year, the Marist & St. Pius X volleyball teams raised \$4000 for JDRF at their annual Claws for a Cause game, and Sunday's One Walk at Marist raised nearly \$4000 more.



Annual First Responders Luncheon

ND Academy welcomed local first responders to have lunch at the school and to thank them for serving the community.



Greenschool

NDP's lower school E-Club completed a recent plastic bag collection and delivered the bags to a local church for repurposing. The E-Club is looking forward to finding more ways to recycle, reduce waste, repurpose materials and educate the school community about environmental responsibility throughout the year.



Reg Pettibone, a champion pow-wow dancer from the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin, visited NDP Middle School on November 14th in honor of Native American Heritage month. He reminded the middle school community to love our earth and take care of all living things around us.



Mrs. Byrd's seventh grade religion classes are making blankets for [Grace Centers of Hope](#).

During the month of November NDP students in Sra. Aguilar's middle school Spanish classes are celebrating Día de Los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, by creating special altars (ofrendas), which are structures dedicated to the deceased. They also made "sugar skulls," decorated cookies, mixed up Hispanic hot chocolate and ate special bread among many other projects.



A Eucharistic Life



Education for Hispanic Immigrants



Indigenous tribe works to establish marine sanctuary along California coastline

Interview: Pope Francis' presence at COP28 climate conference in Dubai is 'without precedence'



**Q&A with Sr. Geraldina Céspedes
Ulloa, living a theology that listens
to humanity's cries**



**Tragedy unfolds in the land
where Jesus walked**

**Creation Care Recipe of the
Month**



**Webinar on the Middle East
Conflict**



**War doesn't end wars – time
for a true armistice**



**Synodality is impossible without
women's voices and vote**



**'Beyond Homelessness' shows the
problem is more than housing**

Happy Thanksgiving!

**As Thanksgiving approaches,
the Marists thank you for your
support and prayers this year.
We're so grateful!**

**May you have a Thanksgiving
full of blessings.**

