

Society of Mary

An International Religious Congregation

Marists in the United States



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My Marist Life in the USA: Learning English and Something More

by Fr. Miguel Angel Contreras Llajaruna, SM, Superior for the District of South America

Some people ask me, what does it mean to be Marist? My answer is always the same: it means to be Family, and Mary is the one who presides and guides. In the words of Fr. Jean-Claude Colin, Mary is our Mother and Eternal Superior.

My ~ 2-month stay with the Marists in the United States re-emphasized this meaning of Family. The purpose of my visit was to advance my English skills before attending the Marist international Annual Review Consultation (ARC) meeting in Rome in May with the other Marist Superiors from around the world. In order for me to understand a language it is important that I understand the culture. This came naturally through the warm hospitality I received throughout my visit in the United States.



Visit to the Cherry Blossom Festival

While in Washington, DC I attended English classes at the [International Center for Language Studies](#) (ICLS). ICLS was founded in 1966 to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) and foreign language training. The school offered a good program for different levels of English and topics. My class was four days a week for 4 hours a day, I had a different teacher for each hour: one for one for listening, one for speaking, one for grammar, and one for reading/writing and group dialogues. My classmates were from different parts of the world: Armenia, Brazil, Columbia, Chile, China, Mali, Mongolia, and Russia. In helping to understand the American culture and to get to know my classmates better, I participated in outings planned by ICLS to: [National Air and Space Museum](#), [National Gallery of Art](#), [National Museum of Natural History](#), [National Museum of American History](#), Cherry Blossom Festival, and [Eastern Market](#). For additional English practice, two afternoons a week I studied at the Provincial House with Elizabeth Avila, the Communications Coordinator for the Province.



Visit to the National Museum of Natural History

In my free time some of the places I visited included: The [Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception](#), the [Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America](#), [Washington National Cathedral](#), [United States Capitol](#), the [White House](#), [Botanic Gardens](#), [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#), [National Museum of the American Indian](#), [Washington Monument](#), [Thomas Jefferson Memorial](#), [Arlington National Cemetery](#). I also took a day-trip to Baltimore, Maryland where I visited [The Basilica of the Assumption](#), [Cathedral of Mary Our Queen](#), and the [National Aquarium](#). Through my exploration of Washington, DC, Virginia, and Maryland, I became an “expert” with the public transportation system!



Visit to the U.S. Capitol



Visit to Arlington National Cemetery with the sisters

I also had the opportunity to visit the Marist communities in Atlanta, Georgia and Boston, Massachusetts. I always experienced the Marist “Family Spirit” and never felt like a stranger.

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My Marist life...:continued from previous page

At the conclusion of my studies, the Marist Community in Washington, DC organized a luncheon in recognition of my accomplishments. The Sisters at the Provincial House (Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Our Lady of Guadalupe) prepared a delicious meal.



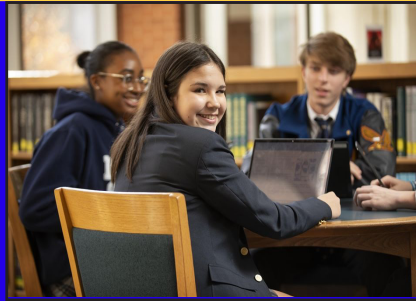
Luncheon at Provincial House

I appreciate very much the welcome from everyone during my visit – who were always patient and ready to help. Not only did I improve my English during my stay, but I also learned about the culture, customs, values, stories, and different famous places in addition to being a time of personal renewal and reflection.

Thank you to the Marists of the U.S. Province! May God continue to bless you and may Mary our Mother always protect you.



Sacred Care of the Marist Mission



President's Circle Reception Illuminates Donor Impact on Education



MacGinnitie Award-Winning Faculty Drive Innovation at Marist School



Faith, Fun & "Free Bird": Marist Celebrates St. Peter Chanel Day



Love and Legacy at Center of Marist Grandparents



Marist Fine Arts Students Flourish in Spring Showcases



Alumni Women's Luncheon Celebrates Art and Community





At the final Saturday Session for this school year, Reach for Excellence recognized scholars in two categories: the highest SSAT scores, and perfect attendance. The SSAT highest score awards went to Buruk and Aleena!

A very large group of Reach scholars earn perfect attendance awards for the 2023-2024 Saturday sessions - which says a lot about the program and the scholars' commitment!



Annual Senior Retreat at St. Benedict Catholic Church (Johns Creek, Georgia)



Kindergarten Come Have Lunch with My Class



2024 Junior/Senior Prom



May Crowning at Lower School Mass



Mother's Mass and Brunch



Senior Barbeque 2024



For the Feast Day of St. Peter Chanel (April 28th), students from Pre-K through 12th grade participated in the last all-school liturgy of the school year. After Mass, underclassmen from all three schools lined the halls of NDP to “clap out” the Class of 2024!



Spring Band Concert



A Safe Campus is Job 1



**IB Diploma Program
Candidates Honored in
Ceremony at NDP**



Swimming with the Sharks



Space-Age UV Protection



Annual Art Show



**7th Grade Trip to Yosemite
National Park**



**8th Grade Reflections
Overnight Retreat**



OLA's Newest Stephen Ministers

Eight new Stephen Ministers will be commissioned at Mass on May 5th. Stephen Ministers are lay members of the OLA community trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation. Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life, but they all share a passion for bringing Christ's love and care to people during a time of need.



Merry Cella



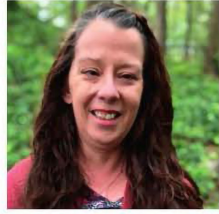
Donatus Ekwueme



Terri Mannino



Augusta McCarthy



Crystal Schissel



Sue Soha



Rachel Walsh



Kathy Williams



On May 1st, OLA Parish and School were honored to host officers and civilian personnel from the Brookhaven, GA Police Department at the annual Blue Prayer Service. Some of the officers even toured the school and had lunch with students! As part of the service, Fr. Kevin Duggan, SM blessed challenge coins with "Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called children of God" engraved on them. Then the altar servers gave them to the officers.



Marist Celebrations for the Feast of St. Peter Chanel Around the World

Monteverde, Rome



Musaga, Bujumbura, Burundi



Postulat Mariste Saint Pierre Chanel, Nkolbison, Yaoundé, Cameroon



St. Teresa Parish, Dublin, Ireland



Colegio Parroquial "San Jose" Callao, Peru



St. Peter Chanel Formation House, Davao City, Philippines





Father Raphael Ramila, SM writes: “Last week we lived days of extraordinary vitality. A team of the Marist Family (three Marist priests: Louis Niyongabo, Jimmy McElroy and myself), two Marist Missionary Sisters (Helene Diouf and Guéma) and one Marist Sister (Tery O’Brien) led “a Marist Week” Encounters with the young people, moments of fellowship with teachers and catechists, Holy Mass Pierre Chanel... The Marist seed was sown in the youth’s coeru. It’s up to us to pray that she grows up... The Holy Virgin keeps picking children and God keeps calling too....”



Preparing Marist Schools in Ireland for the Future

In Ireland, responsibility for the patronage of Marist schools is in the process of being transferred from Marist religious to lay leadership. Passing on Marist values, attitudes and perspectives is essential for this transition to successfully continue Marist patronage in the coming years. To assist in this process, ten directors and affiliates of the newly formed legal body in Ireland, Marist Education Authority Schools (MEAS) gathered for three days in La Neylière to explore Marist origins and spirituality and to relate them to the education context in the Ireland today. The sessions were led by Fr. Martin McAnaney (chair of MEAS), Fr. Larry Duffy, Mrs. Mary Forde and Mr. Frank Dowling. Naturally, the event included an opportunity to honour Fr. Colin at his tomb, and the founding generation at Belley and the shrine of Fourvière. The exceptional hospitality of the La Neylière community and personnel was key to the success of the event. The current challenge to ensure that the founder’s intentions continue to be front and centre of the education mission is well underway.



The Marist Asia Foundation (Ranong, Thailand) organized a three-day seminar-workshop on Teacher Professional Development from April 24-26, 2024, at the Harmony Centre. The lively seminar was facilitated by Inclusive Education Foundation-TeacherFOCUS, an NGO based in Mae Sot.

The seminar-workshops involved the following: LEGO Ideal School Activity, discussions on Teacher Professional Development, Child Safeguarding, Teaching and Learning, School Leadership, Reflective Practitioner Teacher (RPT), Introduction to the SEA Observation Tool, and Introduction to the Learn-Choose-Use Teacher Toolkit.

The seminar-workshops will hopefully contribute to developing the teaching knowledge and skills of MAF volunteer teachers.



Balay Pasilungan is excited to share the latest developments regarding the Balay Kalambuan Program. “Balay Kalambuan” is a transitional care program designed to support the children at Balay Pasilungan (ages 16 to 18 years old) as they prepare for independent living. It serves as a half-way house providing a safe and nurturing environment for these children during this critical transition phase.



The dedicated planning committee recently convened for a brainstorming session. Led by Fr. Gil Casio, SM (Executive Director), Leonel Bueno, (RSW - Registered Social Worker, Program Manager), Cedie Camelote (Finance Staff) and Anthony Sabularse (Volunteer Program Moderator) the team explored innovative ways to create a sustainable project for the children under their care.

Mr. Anthony Sabularse, RSW, a passionate volunteer who has generously offered his services to assist with the Balay Kalambuan’s plan. His expertise and commitment will undoubtedly make a significant impact on the program’s success.



Matti, Digos, Philippines

Our Lady of Fatima (OLF) held a four-day Summer Formation Seminar for Catechists on April 24-27, 2024. Forty-seven catechists attended the seminar. Each day there were guest speakers and on the final day of the seminar, Fr. Long Mechavez, SM, (OLF Vocation director) joined the catechists for their Recollection.



**Marist Laity New Zealand –
 May 2024 Reflection**



Synodality Corner . . .

The Synod on Synodality is a three-year process of listening and dialogue that began in 2021. The first session of the Synod in Rome concluded at the end of October 2023.

Until the next session begins, let’s remember some highlights of this first Synod session from Pope Francis.

“One message that Pope Francis repeats whenever he talks about synodality is that everyone, by virtue of their baptism, is called to take part in the discussion of how the Church of the future will be shaped. It’s easy to lose sight of our role and to leave decisions up to the “professionals.” But the pope insists that in this process, the gift of our baptism has given us the right to be heard. Some may have more professional experience and training than others, but that doesn’t lessen the power and impact of each individual voice. There are different gifts but the same Spirit, Paul reminds us. What better way to put our gifts to good use than united in communion?”