

Society of Mary

An International Religious Congregation

Marists in the United States



December 19, 2025

Marist School
Atlanta, Georgia

Over three days during the second week of Advent, Marist prepared for Christmas through the sacrament of Reconciliation. Theology classes across all grade levels spent time in the chapel, giving students the gift of time for quiet reflection and Adoration along with the invitation to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation with one of our Marist priests. We are grateful for our Marist priests being available to our students every day and especially in these opportunities to celebrate the sacraments on campus!



Marist students shared the joy of the season with the families of Caminar Latino at their annual Christmas party, with refreshments, crafts, and of course piñatas! Caminar Latino is a long time Marist community partner, ministering to and under the leadership of families as they work to break the cycle of domestic violence.



**New Marist Film Team Earns Recognition at
Atlanta Jewish Film Festival**



On December 9, the Marist School Band delighted the community with a joyful and polished Christmas Concert directed by Mr. Aaron Schmitt and Mr. Ben Barber and featuring the Foundations Band, Symphonic Band, and a special brass quintet performance by members of the Marist Marching Band. The evening began with a performance of “Brass Quintet no. 1 in F” led and composed by Harrison Stallings '26 and performed by Griffin Zeigler '27, Carson Algeo '27, Sam Eckstein '26, Christian Nordstrom '27, and Stallings. The Foundations Band continued the program with a festive medley of holiday classics arranged by Mr. Barber. The Symphonic Band closed the concert with three crowd favorites: “Christmas Stars”, “Santa the Barbarian”, and “Sleigh Ride”.

On December 15, Marist School’s Foundations Christmas Choral Concert showcased the talents and growth of our 7th and 8th grade singers, who filled Woodruff Auditorium with joyful music and spirited celebration. The evening began with performances by two 7th grade girls choruses, followed by the Combined Girls Chorus singing “Underneath the Tree”. The program continued with the 8th grade girls Cantabile Chorus and concluded with the boys Blue and Gold choruses. This special event was part of Marist’s Foundations program, which is designed to meet the unique needs of middle school students by helping them feel a sense of belonging and preparing them for a confident transition to high school and beyond.



On December 8, the Marist School community gathered in Centennial Center for a special school-wide Mass celebrating the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Presided over by School Chaplain Father John Ulrich, S.M., the liturgy honored Mary as both the patroness of Marist and the Americas. In his homily, Fr. Ulrich reflected on Mary’s unique place in salvation history as “God’s first loving and bountiful gift to the Church.” Framing Mary as both the mother of God and the mother of the Church, he emphasized her vital role in our Advent journey. “By her faith,” he said, “Mary is the vehicle through whom God has chosen to come to us, and still desires for us eternal life.” “Mary is really the first disciple of Jesus,” he continued. “And by her grace, we too are drawn to salvation. Mary, seat of wisdom, pray for us.” As a school dedicated to forming students in the image of Christ, the celebration of this solemn feast is a powerful reminder of our mission. Through Mary’s example, we are called to faithful waiting, joyful discipleship, and trust in God’s promise.



Marist School welcomed more than 1,000 visitors to campus on December 7, for Open House. Guests explored classrooms, laboratories, arts spaces, and athletic facilities while learning how a Marist education forms students in grades 7-12 in scholarship, service, and faith. The event offered a vivid look at what it means to be Marist made, a journey of academic excellence, spiritual growth, character formation, and purpose-driven leadership.





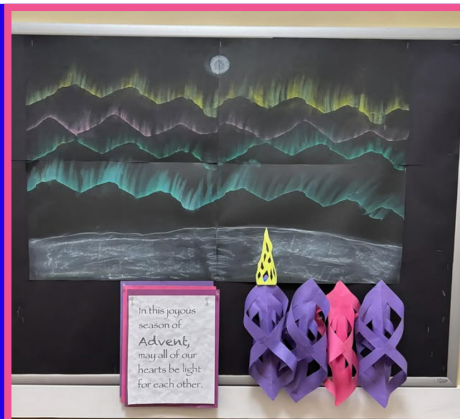
Graduation 2025



NDV students recently enjoyed an amazing day of shopping for family and friends at the annual Marche de Noel.



On December 5 the NDV community enjoyed time with Faith Families, celebrated St.Nicholas Day, and Spirit Day festivities in the afternoon!



Pancakes and Pajamas in the Lower School

NDP lower school students celebrated the last day before Christmas break in the coziest way possible with pancakes, pajamas and lots of smiles. The excitement peaked with a special visit from the jolly old elf CEO himself, spreading Christmas cheer and holiday magic throughout the hallways and classrooms for students and staff alike.



Robotics Royalty

Christmas Jukebox

Christmas Jukebox, NDP's unforgettable choir concert lit up the beautiful Flagstar Strand Theatre in downtown Pontiac on Dec. 7! From classic Christmas pop favorites to surprise appearances by Frosty the Snowman and Santa Claus, the evening was packed with joy and holiday energy. NDP choir students absolutely shined as their hard work and passion were on full display. We couldn't be prouder of these talented performers — bravo to an amazing night of music, melody and memories!



Warm Moonbeams

NDP middle and upper school honor society students from NJHS and NHS once again brought warmth to a cold December night at Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams. By showing up at Corewell Health Beaumont Hospital for children who need comfort and connection, NDP students lived out the school's mission to act with integrity, compassion and love.



Following NDP's all-school Mass in celebration of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the gymnasium came alive with music and Christmas cheer! The upper school choirs, concert band, jazz band, and color guard delivered a festive selection of Christmas favorites — spreading joy to students across both our lower and upper schools. A beautiful way to welcome the Christmas season together!



Mrs. Mathews's and Mrs. Kellett's 2nd grade class had an amazing visit to Country Gardens— playing Christmas Bingo and creating a special Baby Jesus craft for the residents.





It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in the ND Academy Science Lab! Students brought holiday cheer to STEM with hands-on, festive challenges:

- Pre-K created snowmen and igloos using shaving cream and baking soda “snow,” exploring an endothermic reaction that even felt cold to the touch.
- First Grade practiced offline coding by navigating a reindeer through obstacles and recording their paths.
- Second Grade designed a table and chair for Santa’s cookies, then took it a step further by building a chimney and reindeer from the same materials.
- Third Grade engineered the largest ornament and tallest paper tower using only paper strips, tape, and ornaments—with some creative constraints.



On December 8th, the ND Academy community celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, gathering to pray and give thanks. During Mass, the school community also received a beautiful 20th Anniversary blessing, honoring two decades of faith, learning, and service at Notre Dame Academy.

20th Anniversary Blessing:

“Loving and gracious God,

Today we gather in gratitude for the gift of Notre Dame Academy,
celebrating 20 years of faith-filled learning...

Bless all who have walked these halls—students past and present,
parents, teachers, staff, and friends—

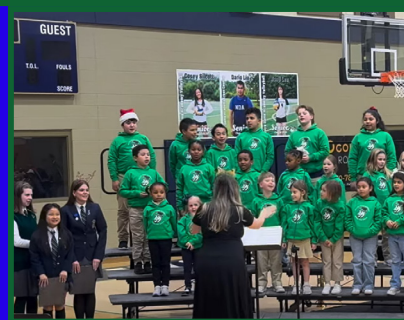
who together have built a community rooted in Gospel values.

Mary, Seat of Wisdom, pray for us.”





Annual Christmas Concert



Marist Sisters Sheila and April accompanied Fr. Gil Casio, SM, when he celebrated Mass at Maa City Jail for 'Misa de Gallo', sharing hope, faith, and compassionate presence with the PDL (Persons Deprived of Liberty) in the Philippines.

'Misa de Gallo' is a traditional Filipino novena of Masses celebrated in the days leading up to Christmas, marking a time of hopeful preparation for the coming of Christ. While this Mass could not be celebrated at dawn due to prison regulations, its spirit of hope and new beginnings was deeply felt inside the jail.



Christmas Lighting Ceremony, Blessing of the Christmas Crib



Parroquia Virgen Misionera (La Perla, Peru)

On December 8th, at the end of the youth mass, the Parroquia Virgen Misionera community lived a beautiful evening of prayer and singing in community. With great joy we headed to the tropical park, where after a moment of reflection, Fr. Roberto Medeiros, S.M blessed each of the homes, bringing the light and peace of Jesus to each family.



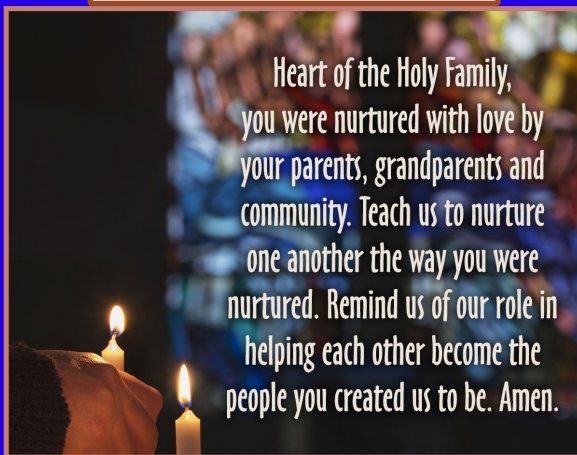
Our Lady of Guadalupe



**The Marists invite you to read
and reflect on the 2025 Provincial
Christmas Letter found [HERE](#).**



December 28th



December 29th

Happy Birthday Sr. Thea Bowman, FSPA!

"We unite ourselves with Christ's redemptive work when we reconcile, when we make peace, when we share the good news that God is in our lives, when we reflect to our brothers and sisters God's healing, God's forgiveness, God's unconditional love."

Sr. Thea Bowman



***Due to the holidays, this will be the last
Society of Mary USA E-Newsletter for
2025. We look forward to sharing more
news about our Marist ministries with
you in 2026!***

***Wishing you a safe and Blessed
Christmas and New Year!***



PRAY WITH POPE LEO XIV

View the Holy Father's monthly
prayer intention [HERE](#).

2025 Advent Resources

Society of Mary USA Advent Calendar



Marist Way Council of England's Advent Reflections



Marist Laity NZ – December Reflection: Advent 2025



The Gift of Prayer

I know how it feels to be on the receiving end of the gift of prayer. The fear and anxiety it relieves are replaced with peace and sometimes even joy. I've been offering this to others, and when I am on the phone with a friend, and she tells me a story of her frustrations, I say, "Can I pray for you, right now? On the phone?" Not later, not on my own time, but there together. And we both feel God's presence and peace and comfort together. We feel closer to each other and closer to our God, who can take care of it all.

What a gift.

(~ Excerpted from "[The Gift of Prayer](#)" by Shemaiah Gonzalez)

Explore Advent

Watch the *Arts & Faith*: Advent video for the Third Sunday of Advent



Read Sacred Time by Tim Muldoon



The Child Interrupts



Praying with the Season's Songs



Pax Christi 2025 Advent Reflections and Resources



Laudato Si' Movement: Advent Pilgrimage – Walking the Path of Laudato Si' Virtues



Vocation Corner



The Society of Mary gives thanks to God for the recent ordination of Fr. Charles Sangul, SM in Port Vila, Vanuatu. The officiating bishop was Most Rev. John Bosco Barnes SM, Bishop of Vanuatu. Let us pray for Fr Charles in his new ministry and Marist ministries in Vanuatu.



Mission in Marconia, Italy

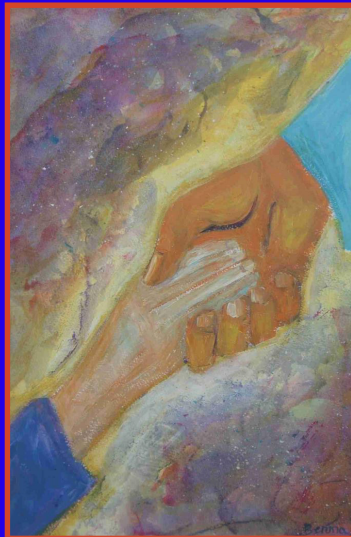
Marists from the International Theologate in Rome, spent two weekends on mission to Marconia, Southern Italy. There, they spoke with local youth and young adults about vocation and faith. The parish in Marconia was formerly staffed by Marist Fathers till 2020. The Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary SMSM are still present in this community.



**Laypeople find their place in
vocation ministry**



**Pope Leo to Australian youth:
Say “yes” to God’s call for you**



**Reflections on Key Elements of Marist Spirituality
by Fr. David Kennerley, SM**

The [article](#) found at the link below is the fifteenth in a series of 20 reflections on Marist Spirituality for educators by Fr. David Kennerley, SM. Fr. Kennerley originally created these reflections for teachers meeting at lunch. The idea was that they would have material to reflect on once a week across the school year. This series of reflections can be useful for any small group or personal reflection interested in deepening their knowledge of key elements of Marist Spirituality.

Fr. Kennerley was formerly Novice Master for the Society of Mary and later as the New Zealand Provincial. He is currently involved in spirituality in Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand.

Part 15: The Whole World Marist

(Printed with permission from Fr. David Kennerly, SM)



Marist Vocation Prayer

Jesus, Good Shepherd, we ask you to look on this family of Mary, your Mother, with eyes of mercy.

Lord, we ask you to enrich the Marist world with the fire of your Holy Spirit.

May Mary's subtle and delicate presence enable us to breathe her spirit. So that, committed to our own vocation, we will be credible witnesses of your Gospel.

And, renewed and strengthened with the fire of your Spirit, we may help bring to life the seed of a vocation which you have implanted in the hearts of the young.

Enable us to accompany them in the fulfillment of their personal vocation. Lord Jesus, give us vocations according to your heart. Amen.

Jean Claude Colin
– Pray for us.

Oración por las vocaciones Maristas

¡Oh Jesús, Buen Pastor! Dígnate a mirar a esta familia de María con tus ojos misericordiosos.

Señor, te pedimos que enriquezcas el mundo marista con el fuego de tu Espíritu Santo.

Que la presencia sutil y delicada de María nos conduzca a respirar su espíritu. Así, comprometidos con nuestra propia vocación, seremos portavoces creíbles de tu Evangelio.

Y, renovados y fortalecidos con el fuego de tu Espíritu, podamos ayudar a dar vida a la semilla de la vocación que has implantado en el corazón de los jóvenes.

Permítenos acompañarles en el cumplimiento de su vocación personal.

¡Oh Jesús, danos vocaciones según tu corazón! Amén.

Padre Juan Claudio Colín, ruega por nosotros.