

# Society of Mary

An International Religious Congregation

## *Marists in the United States*

February 13, 2026



### Emmaus 210 Retreat

Even surrounded by snow, the Emmaus spirit showed up in big ways! Grateful for a peaceful and meaningful winter retreat for the Juniors and Seniors!



The Marist School Peer Leader Coordinator (Marist Lock-In Edition) was a wonderful time had by all! The peer leader coordinators had the opportunity to work together and learn more about what it means to be Marist!



### Welcome Leaders Strengthen Culture of Belonging at Marist



### Sister Corita Kent Mural Inspires Marist Campus



On February 4<sup>th</sup>, the spirit of joyful competition filled campus as Marist School's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders took part in the 2026 Foundations Winter Games. This event is a beloved tradition that brings middle school students together for a day of high-energy events, camaraderie, and class unity. Designed to deepen bonds and celebrate each student's unique talents, Winter Games invites students to collaborate, compete, and cheer one another on in an inclusive and fun environment. Hunters Hill rose to the top, earning the championship title for the fourth year in a row over Cerdon, LaValla, Lyon, Suva, and Wellington. We like to think that Father Ralph Olek, S.M.—one of the Hunters Hill House leaders and the last teaching Marist priest in North America—might just be their lucky charm.



February 2, Holy Cross Catholic Church was filled with harmony and heart as Marist School's choral program presented its annual Sacred Choral Concert. Under the direction of Ms. Rebecca Simantov and Mr. Tim Johnson, the evening celebrated the spiritual power of music through performances by the Girls Chorus, Blue and Gold Choruses, Cantabile Chorus, Marist Singers, and Chorale. From the exuberant resonance of "Gloria!" to the moving "Here I Am, Lord," the program culminated in a stirring full-ensemble finale of "Joyful, Joyful." This special evening reflected the depth of student talent and the spirit of Marist made for community and faith.



The Bearing Witness Institute is grateful for a recent powerful evening marking the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Nostra Aetate at Marist School. Commemorating Nostra Aetate transformed the Church's relationship with the Jewish people and other faiths, rejecting antisemitism and calling believers to encounter one another not as rivals, but as partners in the pursuit of truth and human dignity. Co-sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and the Bearing Witness Institute, the celebration brought together faith leaders and friends committed to dialogue and shared humanity. The evening included keynote reflections from Archbishop Hartmayer, Dov Wilker and Rabbi Noam Marans (AJC), Bishop Konzen, SM, and Brendan Murphy—and especially moved as Danny Ross, member of the Bearing Witness Institute Advisory Council, received the White Rose Society Award for his moral leadership and witness. A night rooted in memory, faith, and hope for what's still possible when we walk together.





## Reach Career Day



As Reach for Excellence looks back on the beginning of Reach for Excellence 25 years ago, we honor those who were instrumental to its founding. Back in 2003, Fr. Joel Konzen (now an Auxiliary Bishop in the Diocese of Atlanta) explained the program to its first scholars in this way: “The Marists want to touch the lives of those they have somehow not been able to serve in the past.”

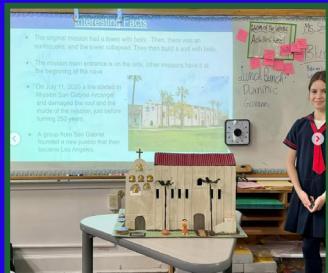
Reflecting on the program’s growth in September, Bishop Konzen said, “None of this would have been possible without Father Bill Rowland, S.M. He was the driving force who made it happen and who issued the clarion call that the Society of Mary needed to broaden the scope of what we have done in Atlanta for the next one hundred years.”

Beyond these two visionary priests, Reach has been guided by a committed board and generous supporters. Notable board leaders include Jim MacGinnitie, Wade Stribling, Bob Fitzgerald, Steve Raeber, the late Tim Cambias, and Rocco Testani, among others. Marist alumni on the board include Natalie Smith Childs '86, Lyn Connolly Schaffer '83, Brendan Dete '01, Brandon M. Fountain '15, Jennifer Thomas Gordon '87, Amanda Glover Bradley '11, Alison MacGinnitie Thompson '88, Kelly Cambias Miles '86, Wolly Mendez '09, Katherine Riley Robb '14, and Jordan Snellings '11.

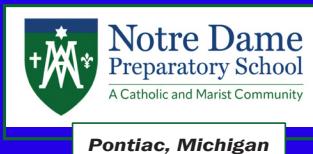
## 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School



## 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Mission Projects



## A Strong Start: Inside Notre Dame Prep's Lower School



## Big Business in Fourth Grade



### 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School

Notre Dame Prep's lower school celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school yesterday with creativity, laughter and some amazing 100-day shirts. Our students have been counting, reading, writing and growing since day one and this milestone was the perfect way to celebrate their hard work.



During Black History Month, Notre Dame Prep celebrates its ongoing commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. At NDP, fostering an inclusive community is rooted in the school's Catholic and Marist identity, where respecting the dignity of every person and advocating for justice are essential to student formation. The school's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee guides strategic efforts to ensure fairness, belonging and representation in policies, practices and learning environments.

Recent culture work includes a comprehensive climate survey that engaged students, families, alumni, faculty and staff, affirming NDP's strengths in safety and connection while identifying areas for growth in respect and inclusion. That feedback is now guiding focused initiatives to enhance belonging for all students.

Notre Dame Prep's commitment to broadening representation also dates back decades. In the late 1990s, student-led groups and clubs helped champion a more diverse community. That spirit led to the creation of diversity initiatives for incoming students and ongoing efforts to recruit and support students of all backgrounds.

As the NDP community honors the contributions and history of Black Americans this month, NDP continues its journey to listen, learn and act — striving to be a place where every student feels respected, valued and empowered to thrive.

### Testing Skills Beyond the Classroom



### Middle School Open House

The recent NDP middle school open house was filled with energy, thoughtful questions and genuine excitement as families experienced firsthand what makes NDP such a special place to learn and grow. From engaging classrooms and dedicated teachers to our International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program, faith-centered community and wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom, visitors left impressed by the care, challenge and support that define the middle school experience at NDP.



Duluth, Georgia

Upper School Thespian Society attended 3 day state ThesCon (Thespian Conference) in Columbus this past weekend. They saw 5 amazing shows put on by high schools around the state. They also participated in a lot of fun and educational workshops including clowning, improv, cirque, playwriting, singing, dancing and many more!





Duluth, Georgia

Mr. Greg Amaya, Curator of the National Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit for Georgia, recently came to set up the National Eucharistic Miracles Exhibit and speak with the Middle School & Upper School students. The exhibit will be on display for a couple days this week for students, parents, & grandparents to enjoy and learn more about the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist!



### International Potluck



### Bishop Miguel Angel Contreras Meets Pope Leo

Bishop Miguel Angel Llajaruna Contreras, s.m., auxiliary bishop of Callao in Peru, became famous last year being the first Bishop appointed by Pope Leo. Bishop Miguel was staying recently at the General House, as the Peruvian Bishops Conference held its ad limina visit in the Vatican. In this words to the bishops the Holy Father recalled his own pastoral life in Peru, describing the country as holding "a special place in my heart". And continued "There I shared with you joys and hardships, learned from the simple faith of your people, and experienced the strength of a Church that knows how to hope even amid trials."



### I Was Changed





The students of the 2nd STEG made an educational visit to the CECAO currency museum at the end of January. It was an enriching visit that helped the students to understand the issues of currency.



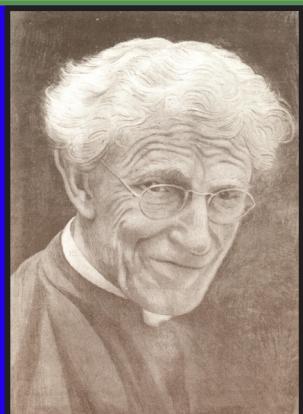
Some history from the Society of Mary Archives as we continue to recognize Black History Month. (Prepared by Susan Illis, U.S. Province Archivist)

### Our Lady of Lourdes (Atlanta, Georgia)

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, founded in 1911, was the fourth Catholic church and the first Black Catholic church in Atlanta, Georgia. Our Lady of Lourdes was a joint project of Father Ignatius Lissner, American superior of the Society of African Missions and [now Saint] Katharine Drexel, Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

Our Lady of Lourdes was supported financially and spiritually by local priests, including those at Sacred Heart, the former Marist church located only a few blocks away. Sacred Heart parishioner and attorney Jack J. Spaulding advised Fr. Lissner in his selection of a site. When the new church was blessed and dedicated on November 22, 1912, Rev. George S. Rapier, SM (1873-1956) delivered the sermon with Rev. Joseph Dangelzer, SM (1877-1937) serving as subdeacon.

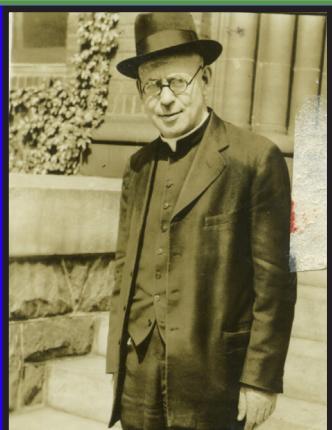
Considered the mother church of Black Catholicism in Atlanta, Our Lady of Lourdes continues as a vibrant multicultural church in the heart of downtown Atlanta.



Fr. Rapier's, SM prayer card at the time of his death in 1956.



Our Lady of Lourdes Church and School



Fr. Dangelzer, SM



*Stay tuned for the upcoming Society of Mary USA Lenten Calendar. These Lenten reflections will focus on the Marist spirituality in living the Gospel. The calendar will be available on our [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages.*



### PRAY WITH POPE LEO XIV

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