

# Society of Mary

An International Religious Congregation

*Marists in the United States*

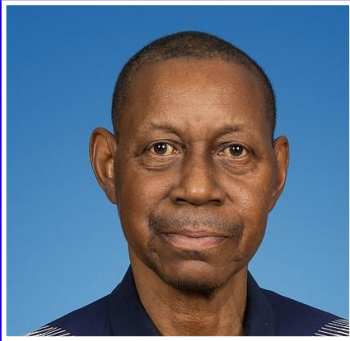


May 15, 2026

Marist School

Atlanta, Georgia

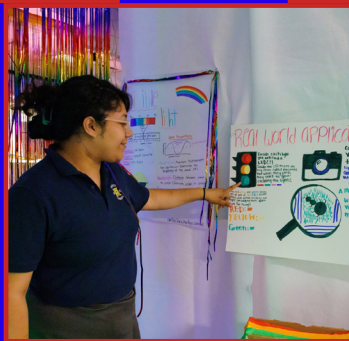
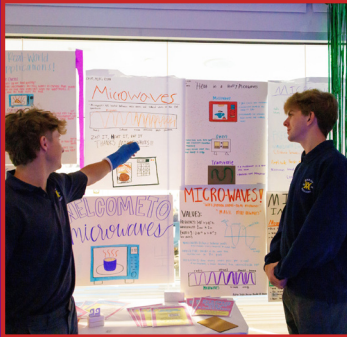
The Marist Parents Club recently hosted a special cake celebration during all three lunch periods so students, faculty, and staff could gather in gratitude and honor Marist School retirees: Mr. Charles Barnes, security officer; Mr. Jim Campbell, math teacher; Ms. Ann Ferretti, receptionist; Mr. Martin Torres, technology support specialist; and Mr. Willy Wilhelm, maintenance team member. Their faithful service, care for students, and daily presence have helped shape the spirit of Marist School in countless ways. The school community thanks them for the lasting impact they have made and wish them every blessing in retirement.



Blessing of Mary's Garden Marks a Sacred New Chapter



The Immersive Theater in Marist School's Goizueta Center for Immersive Experience and Design transformed into a hands-on science showcase as physics seniors debuted "The EM Spectrum Adventure". Designed with young learners in mind, the student-built exhibits broke down complex concepts into interactive, engaging experiences for children ages 6–12. Visitors could trace the full electromagnetic spectrum through creative demonstrations that made the invisible visible. Each display reflected thoughtful design and a clear goal: Make science accessible, memorable, and fun. The project began as an idea from science teacher Ms. Sarah Conn. It came to life through collaboration with Mrs. Kelly Mandy '96, director of global and humane studies, and former teacher Mrs. Jillian Bauersfeld. Mrs. Betty Motter, science teacher, and Ms. Emilie Cross, physics teacher, guided students as they brought their concepts to completion. It was a full-spectrum success!

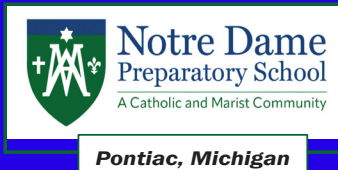
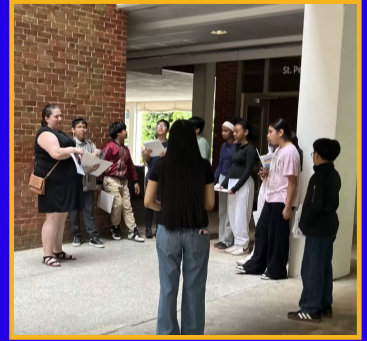


The Sing-Off has taken center stage in the Marist School Arcade each spring since 2015, bringing the school community together through music, creativity, and fun student expression. This year's performances delivered energy and heart across every note. The Kelly ClarkTones took the crown with "Since U Been Gone," earning top honors from students, faculty, and staff across all lunch periods. The Neon Freaks lit up the room with "Everybody Talks", while the Marist Singers showed great style with "Funky Uptown Girl." Directed by Ms. Rebecca Simantov, each group performed a cappella with microphones and student-created choreography. Mr. Tim Johnson and Mrs. Anna Lee Lanning powered the production behind the scenes. The Sing-Off is Marist at its best with talent, teamwork, and confidence on full display.





Reach for Excellence recently welcomed its newest cohort at the end of April! The Reach for Excellence community had a wonderful morning with the newest 40 scholars, sharing important information about the upcoming Summer Sessions and enjoying ice breakers with our rising 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers.



NDP congratulates the 10 valedictorians of the Class of 2026, recognized as the top scholars in the senior class based on cumulative GPA.

While their academic achievements are certainly worthy of celebration, what makes these students truly exceptional goes far beyond grade point average. They are leaders, athletes, artists, mentors, servants and role models who have helped shape our school community in countless ways.

The NDP community is proud of all of the Class of 2026 seniors and look forward to celebrating them at Commencement this on May 17<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony will be livestreamed at 12:00pm (ET) on NDP's [YouTube channel](#).

### Class of 2026 • Valedictory Court



### The Lasting Impact of a Notre Dame/Marist Education



### Upper School Students Earn National Recognition on Spanish Exam



This week NDP welcomed members of the North Oakland chapter of Wild Ones to campus for a tour of the Melissa Kozyra Greenhouse and Botany Learning Lab. The organization, which promotes the education and use of Michigan native plants, learned more about NDP's garden club, horticulture and botany classes, and the native garden beds located behind the greenhouse.

Sophomore Ryan Warburton and junior Lillian Stolzenfeld, both student leaders in the NDP Garden Club, helped guide the visit and shared how students are gaining hands-on experience in environmental stewardship, native gardening and sustainable growing practices.

Founded in 2010, North Oakland Wild Ones is part of a national organization dedicated to supporting biodiversity and encouraging the use of native plant species that provide essential wildlife habitat and ecosystem benefits. The chapter hosts educational presentations, field trips and native garden walks throughout the year for the public.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to connect with organizations that share our commitment to science education, sustainability and care for the natural world," noted Laura Elwood NDP'10, biology teacher and greenhouse manager at NDP.



The youngest members of the NDP's theatre troupe recently performed *Twice Upon a Time*, a lively and imaginative children's play that reimagines classic fairy tales with hilarious twists. NDP's talented lower school students poured their hearts into every moment of this performance.



Last week NDP's lower school gathered for the annual May Crowning Mass, a cherished Catholic tradition that honors Mary, the mother of Jesus, during the month of May. Students brought flowers as an expression of prayer, gratitude and devotion. After Mass, those flowers were arranged into bouquets for women served by Grace Centers of Hope in Pontiac. The Mass also celebrated NDP's new First Communicants as they marked this important step in their faith journey. It was a meaningful morning of worship, generosity and community.



## Bloom in Faith

Families from all three NDP schools gathered on May 3<sup>rd</sup> for the annual Mothers' Mass and Brunch. Fr. Juan Gonzalez, s.m., celebrated Mass in the cafeteria, followed by a catered brunch that brought students, mothers and families together in faith and community. Senior mothers were also recognized in a special way as part of the morning's celebration. It was a memorable day honoring the bond between students and their mothers.



The ND Academy community was honored to celebrate the May Crowning Mass alongside Bishop Konzen as they crowned Mary and reflected on her example of grace and devotion. A special highlight of the day was the blessing of plants—symbolizing growth, renewal, and the bright future of Notre Dame Academy

This celebration was even more meaningful as the school community welcomed many who were instrumental in opening the school's doors 20 years ago - laying the foundation that continues to shape the school's mission today.



The ND Academy community continued its celebrations of Mary during the month of May with the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade-Led Living Rosary of the Glorious Mysteries, a time-honored tradition at the school.



# First Grade Mother's Day Mass



ND Academy's International Thespian Society recently performed Willy Wonka KIDS to rave reviews! The talented Middle and Upper School cast and crew spent the past five months working tirelessly to bring this colorful, imaginative production to life. From rehearsals to set design, every student played a part in creating a truly memorable show for the school community.



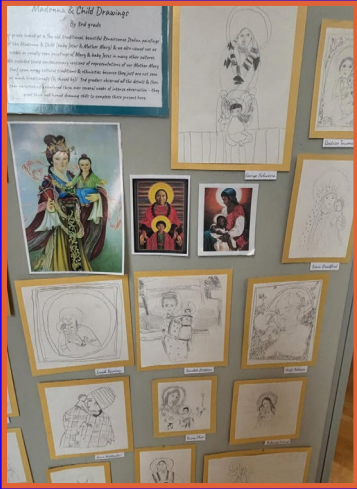
NDV was proud and honored to receive the California Blue Ribbon Award at the Happiest Place on Earth with Mickey and Minnie!



On April 28<sup>th</sup>, NDV celebrated the feast of St. Peter Chanel, one of the first members of the Society of Mary. The NDV community was grateful to have Fr. Rene Iturbe, SM as our presider for Mass as he shared with us the history of the life of St. Peter Chanel. The NDV kindergarten class led the school community in prayer.



# NDV 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Art Show



A Marist Family gathering took place in the North of Italy gathering representatives of the Marist Family in Italy, including Laity. There were five short talks about how living in today's world as Marists. Discussions and questions followed and in the afternoon there was a symbolic activity of 'building a Marist house' and looking at furnishing it. Fun in the evening! Sunday morning was dedicated to developing some concrete ideas to foster unity and collaboration in the future. Participants were struck by the unity of spirit along with a healthy diversity, and the gathering took place in an atmosphere of great joy and fraternity.



**Matti, Digos, Philippines**

## Procession for the Virgin Mary held the day before the feast of the Virgin of Fatima.





## Runners Finish Strong at Run for Hope 2026

Participants crossed the finish line of Run for Hope 2026 on May 9<sup>th</sup> at Rancho Palos Verdes in Crocodile Park, Maa, Davao City, Philippines after completing the different race categories organized by Balay Pasilungan. The charity fun run gathered runners, families, fitness enthusiasts, and fur parents in support of the foundation's 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and its continuing mission to help children under its care.



## Parroquia Virgen Misionera (La Perla, Peru)

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, parishioners of Parroquia Virgen Misionera gathered to pray the rosary together in remembrance of this Marian month of May.



## Opening of the Marian month of May at Colegio Parroquial "San José"





In celebration of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, the Society of Mary takes a look back at its 60 years of ministry to the Hawaiian Islands. The Fathers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, also known as the Picpus Fathers, had served on the islands for a century with such success that in 1941 the Holy See established the Diocese of Honolulu and appointed the Most Reverend James Joseph Sweeney as the first bishop. Because the number of Picpus Fathers was inadequate to serve the growing Catholic population, in 1944 Bishop Sweeney invited the Society of Mary to work in the newly formed diocese. Bishop Sweeney, a San Francisco native, knew the Marists from their work with the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and Notre Dame des Victoires Church in San Francisco.

The war had made much of the existing Marist missions in Western Oceania unsafe, so the Marists accepted this new territory. Reverends Joseph Callaghan, William Collins, Joseph Robeck, and James Gilbride, SM traveled aboard a refrigeration ship, along with forty laypeople and 5000 cases of liquor, from San Francisco to take over two parishes on Kauai.

One of these parishes was St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus, located in southwestern Kauai. When Fathers Robeck and Gilbride arrived, there was no rectory, so the priests resided in the sacristy and bell tower.

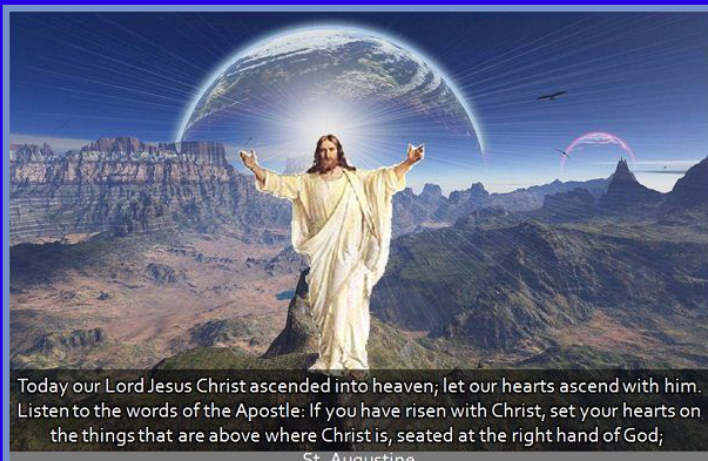
(Content and pictures shared by Susan J. Illis, Archivist, Archives of the Society of Mary, U.S. Province)



Fr. Robeck, far left, on a later trip to Hawaii



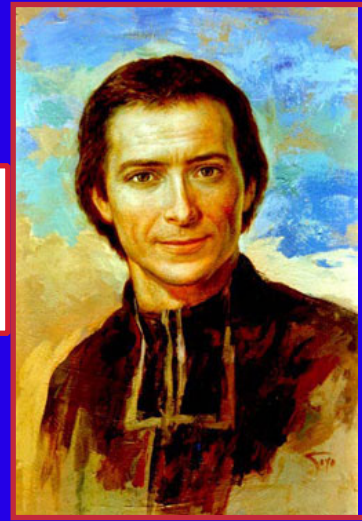
Church and rectory of St. Theresa's in Kekaha, Kauai



**Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord**  
**- May 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Happy Birthday St. Marcellin Champagnat, FMS  
born on May 20, 1789!**

**St. Marcellin Champagnat .... Pray for us**



The World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development is celebrated annually on May 21<sup>st</sup> to promote cultural diversity, highlight the importance of intercultural dialogue, and encourage sustainable development. For more information and resources click [HERE](#).



**US bishops' consecration of nation  
to Sacred Heart of Jesus affirms  
'our reliance on God'**



**PRAY WITH POPE LEO XIV**

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