



TODAY'S *Marist Brother*

ADVENT 2009

A publication of the Province of the United States of America

Lourdes Experience

Life-changing experiences aren't ordinary occurrences in everyday life. Is it possible that a school could really prepare you for life? A group of students, faculty, and alumni of The St. Marcellin Champagnat International Service Society of Archbishop Molloy High School set out to answer that very question and to see if our school motto, "Non Scholae Sed Vitae," meaning "Not for School but for Life" was really true or just a cliché.

This is how we prepared: during the year we did fund-raising by baking and selling our tasty treats during lunch hour. Sundays had us sitting outside of church asking people to help us serve the sick and disabled of Lourdes, France. Yard sales, car washes, and begging were all part of this adventure. One student even calculated that if he could collect 40,000 empty cans or bottles he could pay his way. We had a day of reflection and prayer services so that we would not lose our focus.

Time went by. All of a sudden it was the last week of July, and we were all standing in the international flights terminal of JFK airport waiting for our flight. We were ready to go now—the preparation was done and the experience was before us. Listen to how it touched us:

"Going to Lourdes helped me realize what a universal church I belong to."

"Walking through the grotto, I was overwhelmed with emotion and faith and was surprised to find myself crying. Situated right in front of the statue of Mary, I watched people who could barely move their limbs stretch with all their strength to touch the grotto walls."

"This trip has had a profound impact on the way

I look at life now. My personal faith has deepened and my day-to-day life has been put into perspective. It was an unforgettable experience that I will always carry with me for the rest of my life. I will go back again."

"The last night in Lourdes is what did it for me. We had an hour to reflect on the last days, and that was the most overwhelming hour of my life. I climbed down a little hill and sat by the river. The drizzle that night gave it a weird feel, and when I looked up at the cathedral something happened inside of me. I was warm all over and in my mind I felt like I was glowing. I was thinking of the ups and downs of my life and all the opportunities I let slip away. I thought of the song that I had sung in my mind as I was helping a woman at the train station: "Let It Be" by the Beatles. I began to cry. "And when the night is cloudy, there is still a light that shines on me, shine until tomorrow, let it be." I looked up at the statue of the Virgin Mary in the grotto, a mixture of tears and rain pouring down my face, when I felt someone behind me. It was a girl from the trip, and all she did was hug me, and that was all I could have ever wanted. Non Scholae Sed Vitae."

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the provincial

Dear Members of our Marist Family,

It is my pleasure to write to you as the new Provincial of the Province of the United States and to thank you for your support of our Marist mission. While I am aware of the challenges and opportunities that face us as we move towards the end of this first decade of the twenty-first century, I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm, and with confidence in the guidance of Jesus, Mary, and Saint Marcellin. I also count on your good will and generous spirit as we move forward together.

The recently concluded 21st General Chapter of the Marist Brothers challenged the Brothers and our lay colleagues to form “new hearts for a new world.” These words from the prophet Ezekiel echo the General Chapter’s call to be open to the Spirit and to allow the Spirit to nurture a change of heart in each of us as we address in faith all that our lives and the Marist mission demand of us. The challenge at hand is how do we as Marist pilgrims “make Jesus

Christ known and loved” among poor children and young people in these times? The answer, I believe, can be found in looking to Mary.

Saint Marcellin called Mary our “Ordinary Resource” and “Our Good Mother,” and encouraged his “Little Brothers of Mary” to embrace her as their model because she heard God’s word and kept it. Advent gives each of us the opportunity to prepare our hearts for God’s Word. We are reminded again and again that this season is about *letting* God come to us. We do the letting and God does the coming. And the whole mystery of our faith is that God is not reluctant to come into an unusual relationship (like Mary and Joseph’s) or to be born in the poverty of a makeshift stable. The mystery of the

Incarnation was at the heart of Saint Marcellin’s spirituality, and as a people deeply moved by the charism of Marcellin, we, too, are called to reflect on Mary’s “yes” to her God. Advent is letting God’s will be done in our hearts and in our everyday lives.

As we enter the season of Advent, let us pray that the Lord will continue to bless us and our mission to the young people who need us the most. Be assured of my good wishes and prayers for you and your loved ones.

Sincerely,

Br. Ben Consigli, FMS
Provincial

Advent gives each of us the opportunity to prepare our hearts for God’s Word.

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Marist Educators

Isabel Lopez-Healy, St. Brendan High School, Miami, Florida



My name is Isabel Lopez, and I can proudly affirm that I am Marist. I was born in Puerto Rico and am of Cuban

descent. I was exposed to the Marist tradition during my teenage years. The Puerto Rican Marist School is known for the well-rounded education they offer. As a teenager, I loved to attend their weekend carnivals and sport tournaments. Many times I wished I could be part of that school—part of their strong, spirited and united community—but at that time, they only accepted boys.

I moved to Miami in the year 1986. The spirit of Mary moved with me, in me. My second pregnancy proved to be a difficult one. I was the victim of three car accidents. I

could not sleep or eat. I was terribly worried about the health of my son. I forgot that I am not the one in charge of my life. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only one in charge. I forgot that with Him all is possible, and without Him nothing is.

I have been working at Saint Brendan High School for ten years. Nine of those years have been under the principalship of Br. Felix Elardo, a Marist Brother. I am, finally, part of that family of my teenage years. Br. Felix came to us with all of these ideas of love and understanding, as expressed by his favorite saying: “to teach children you must love them, and love them all equally.” His vision has become our mission, which is a mission of love. Our mission gives us the ultimate responsibility of teaching ALL students, smart and not so smart, with

the Catholic vision of Christian love.

I discovered that my life has been a lifelong journey towards Mary. Through divorce, death of loved ones, and cancer, one constant in my life has been the presence of Mary. I know as a fact that I will never,

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only one in charge. I forgot that with Him all is possible, and without Him nothing is.

ever be alone. Mary will always be with me, will always understand, will always forgive, and will always love me. No matter how many times I take the wrong turn or try to “play God” and take control, Mary is always there, patiently waiting for me to come back to her.

Maureen Hagan, Roselle Catholic High School, Roselle, New Jersey



My story begins with my YES, albeit a reluctant one. In 2000, I was heading to graduate school to pursue

a Masters in Social Work. I needed a job to pay for this venture and was planning on applying for an assistantship. At that point, Br. Owen came to me and asked if I might consider becoming the Campus Minister at Roselle Catholic (RC). My first response, I have to admit, was “No.” Well, Br. Owen did a fine job of convincing me that the job would indeed entail social work. So I said “Yes” and began my experience of Marist ... or at least my conscious experience of Marist. And like Mary, my “Yes” has brought me to places of which I had never quite dreamed.

The ideas of family spirit and hospitality were evident long before I joined the staff at RC. As Campus

Minister, Br. Owen always invited and indeed encouraged us to come as a family to the Esopus retreats. He knew the value of our students seeing their faculty in the role of parent as well as teacher. The welcoming atmosphere at Roselle Catholic is evident to everyone who enters our building, so much so that even relative strangers make a point of commenting on it.

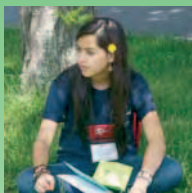
I found the service activities at RC to be more than just service. They are opportunities for our young people to learn, in a concrete way, not only that they are the love of God embodied, but also to learn to

see God in others. Thus, in serving, they are also served. Service activities require us “to roll up our sleeves” and help us “make Jesus (and the gospel message) known and loved.” There is nothing more rewarding than working alongside students and being there to witness the moment when they “get it”—the moment of recognition of what this is really about. We are creating sacred space, walking on holy ground. The call of the gospel becomes so real. It becomes so easy to point out that we are ALL called; it is merely a matter of figuring out how we will say our own “YES.”

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North American Marist Youth

“Marist Youth today -



Whether you say “Mariste,” Marista,” or “Marist,” it all means the same thing. That’s what over seventy-five young people from fourteen Marist schools from Canada, Mexico, and the United States learned during the Marist Youth Leadership Conference held in Esopus, New York, over Memorial Day weekend.

The students gathered in Esopus learned about the concept of “servant leadership” and how it is the model for anyone who considers themselves a Marist leader. While students did focus on some specific leadership skills, such as effective communication and team building, they also examined other appropriate concepts—such as servant leadership, identifying my gifts and talents, sharing my gifts and talents, the importance of prayer and self-reflection, and solidarity as



The students left Esopus knowing that at its heart, Marist leadership is a call to service.

Our Award-Winning Newsletter!

The Marist Brothers are pleased and honored to have been awarded a First Place Lumen Award from the National Catholic Development Conference for our newsletter, *Today’s Marist Brother*.

The Lumen Awards were created to acknowledge excellence in the ministry of fund-raising and to enrich the Catholic development community through sharing this excellence. The Latin term *lumen*, meaning “light,” was chosen as the name of the award to represent the vision and clarity fund-raisers must strive for while promoting their missions.

The Lumen Award, a candlestick, celebrates the visible efforts of those doing God’s work in the world. Those holding the light set an example to follow and enlighten the Catholic fund-raising community through their good works.



Leadership Conference

— Marist always”

a hallmark of Marist leadership.

The students left Esopus knowing that at its heart, Marist leadership is a call to service, and that the best models of servant leadership that we have are Jesus, Mary, and St. Marcellin.

The 2009 Marist Youth Leadership Conference was created and organized by Brothers Hank Hammer, Al Rivera, and Steve Milan, and guided by a young adult team composed of graduates of Marist USA high schools.



2009

Champagnat



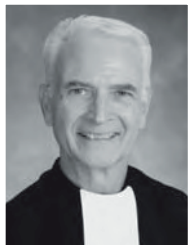
Brother Alfred George

The words Brother, friend, and happiness come to mind whenever the Brothers speak of Br. Alfred. We can hear him saying, “OK Buddie,” or “Suppa,” as in Super, but we seldom hear him say “No.”

Now, at the ripe young age of 80, after thirty-five years as an active missionary in the Philippines plus time in our mission in Liberia, and twenty more years making mission appeals in many Dioceses and Archdioceses in the United States, Br. Alfred is retiring. It is estimated that during these twenty years he has been to over 250 parishes and has spoken at over 1,300 Masses. His message to the parishioners has always been: “Thank you for your generosity, thank you for your prayers. For without your prayers and financial support, our missions would never have been as fruitful as they have been.”



Dear Members of our Marist Family,



Br. Hugh Turley, FMS

Christmas Greetings!

Our feelings as we sit to write to you, our many friends and benefactors, are those of thanks. Thank you for the generosity you have shown to the Marist Brothers, the care you express for our elderly and disabled Brothers, and your enthusiastic support of our educational and evangelical work with youth.

These times we are living in are not easy ... we know that. The current state of the economy and family finances make charitable giving decisions difficult ones. We know that you are interested in many worthwhile causes, and we want you to know that the Brothers are most grateful for your support.

Your gifts to the Marist Brothers Annual Fund each year generously provide a groundwork of general support, as well as support for those special projects that need funding during the year.

Ongoing concern for our elderly and disabled Brothers is a duty which St. Marcellin Champagnat considered a blessing. You may have the experience of caring for an elderly loved one in your own family and know the diverse and sometimes pressing needs

that can arise. We have the same needs, and your blessings of support through our annual retirement appeal greatly help us meet those responsibilities.

As Christmas approaches, we want you to know that through your unselfish support, we know we are not alone. We are surrounded by your care and concern. You have become members of our extended Marist Family, and like all families, we care for each other. Please know you are remembered in the daily prayers of all our Marist Brothers.

Our very best wishes for a blessed Advent and Christmas season. Surround yourselves with the peace, love, and joy of family and friends. And may the New Year ahead be filled with happiness and good health.

Merry Christmas!

Br. Hugh Turley, FMS, CFRE
Co-Director of Development

Paulette M. Karas, CFRE
Co-Director of Development

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IN MEMORIAM

Brother

Teacher

Mentor

Caregiver



Br. Alphonse Louis Dubois

Brother Alphonse Louis Dubois was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1925. He entered the Brothers in 1940 and began his teaching career at St. Joseph High School in Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1947.

From that point on, Br. Alphonse Louis taught in a variety of Marist schools, including St. Ann's Academy in

New York City, Mt. St. Michael in the Bronx, Resurrection-Ascension in Rego Park, St. Joseph School in Laredo, Texas, and several Marist schools in Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Guam, and the Philippines. He retired after a final thirteen years at Christopher Columbus High School in Miami, Florida. Br. Alphonse Louis died quietly at Champagnat Hall in the Bronx on May 5, 2009, a true Marist missionary and devoted teacher.

New Superior General of the Marist Brothers



On September 26, 2009, the 21st General Chapter of the Marist Brothers, meeting in Rome from September 8 to October 10, 2009, elected Brother Emili Turú (pictured left) as Superior General of the Marist Brothers and Brother Joseph McKee (pictured right) as his Vicar, both for a period of eight years.

The calling of this 21st Chapter has brought together 83 capitulants representing more than 3,700 Brothers, and some 43,000 lay collaborators spread through 79 countries educating more than 660,000 children and young people. The Marist Brothers' work brings the Marist charism of St. Marcellin Champagnat to centers of social care, schools, and university centers.

Chris Santoro — Our New Postulant



"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

— Lao-tsu, Chinese philosopher

On September 8, 2009, the Feast of Mary's Nativity, the Marist Brothers welcomed Christopher Santoro into Initial Formation as a postulant in a simple Rite of Welcome.

For Chris Santoro, the first step of his journey began in the late 1990s while he was a student at Marist College. To his own admission, he'd never met any Brothers at all—never attended Catholic school. Aside from knowing his parish priest, he never felt connected to people in a religious order.

Those feelings of disconnection faded away at Marist College as Chris became involved in the college's campus ministry programs, particularly City Plunges where Chris visited various Marist-run, inner-city grammar schools during his school breaks. During these City Plunges, Chris lived and worked with the Brothers, and through these positive experiences he

"first got the idea in his head that [religious life] might be something I want to consider."

After graduation from Marist, Chris worked with kids in a day treatment program in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area and in a homeless shelter in Denver.

When asked, Chris agrees that working with children has had an influence on his journey toward the Marist Brothers. "In a sense, I think if I'm able to inspire young people with some of the values of the Marist Brothers to respect others and to seek God in their life and to live up to their full potential ... I could really help them to be better people and to really make an impact on society. And I will learn as well, and it will help my faith," he said. "There is more hope and more inspiration in working with younger people—that is something that I find intriguing, and it drew me towards the Marist Brothers."

There is more hope and more inspiration in working with younger people ... and it drew me towards the Marist Brothers.

Poet Minister Friend
Chaplain



Br. John Alexius Poirier

The death of Brother John Alexius on July 25 caught the Brothers of the Province off guard. This kindly Brother who was so lovingly associated with Archbishop Molloy High School was born on October 19, 1928, in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

Br. John entered the Brothers in 1942. His first teaching assignment was at Mt. St. Michael Academy, followed by several years at the then-St. Ann's Academy

in New York City. After a brief stint at Holy Trinity in Poughkeepsie, Br. John returned to the new Archbishop Molloy High School in 1958. With the exception of two years at St. Joseph School in Laredo, Texas, the remainder of Br. John's Marist ministry was spent at Archbishop Molloy High School. While still an active teacher, Br. John spent many summers as a prefect at Camp Marist in Center Ossipee, New Hampshire.

Br. John died suddenly on July 25, 2009, and was buried in our cemetery in Esopus on July 29, 2009.



The Marist Brothers

Men of
Prayer

Men of
Community

Men of
Service

**Are you interested
in making
a difference?**

For more information,
please contact

Br. Michael Sheerin, FMS
1241 Kennedy Boulevard
Bayonne, New Jersey 07002
Phone: (201) 823-1115
Email:
vocations@maristbr.com

The Marist Brothers

Provincial Development Office
4200 West 115th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60655-4397

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 413
Worth, Illinois 60482-0413

Phone: (773) 881-5343

Fax: (773) 881-3367

Email: maristbr@aol.com

Website: www.maristbr.com

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PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
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Chicago, Illinois 60655-4397

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For more information about the history of the Brothers, their spirituality, their mission and ministries, as well as current events, please visit our website — www.maristbr.com.

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Editorial Staff: Br. Hugh Turley, FMS, CFRE, Mrs. Paulette Karas, CFRE, Br. James McKnight, Br. Hank Hammer, Br. Michael Sheerin, Br. Pat Hogan, and Mr. Travis Kessel.

The Marist Brothers' *Remembrance in Prayer Program*



The Marist Brothers offer two different series of prayer cards. Our signature card features the image of Christ and a Candle and Cross design. These traditional cards may be used as memorials to remember the deceased. Our all occasion cards may be sent in honor of a birthday, wedding, or anniversary, or to send get-well greetings. All cards carry a special promise of remembrance in prayer from the Marist Brothers.

We would be delighted to send you a complimentary packet of cards. Please request them through email (maristbr@aol.com) or send your request to the address on this newsletter.