



The Marist Brothers

SPRING 2021



A Lumen Award-winning publication of the Province of the United States of America

# TODAY'S Marist Brother

## Marist Brothers Elect New Province Leadership



**T**he new Marist Brothers USA Provincial, Br. Dan O'Riordan, has been a Marist Brother for over 29 years. After graduating from Archbishop Molloy High School in Briarwood, NY, he earned a bachelor's

degree from University College in Cork, Ireland, and an MA from Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY.

Br. Dan entered the Marist Brothers Novitiate in 1992 and took his perpetual vows in 1998. He grew up in Whitestone, NY, and was a member of St. Mel's Parish. He also spent much of his youth living and playing sports in Ireland. His parents, Connie and Rita O'Riordan, were devout Catholics and passed on their faith to him as his first teachers in life.

Over the years, Br. Dan has served as a teacher, coach, counselor, development director, and campus minister at numerous Marist high schools around the United States. He also served the USA Province as one of the vocations directors and spent the last six years as vice provincial.



Br. Dan has coordinated more than 100 mission service trips allowing many young people the opportunity to serve the least favored in communities around the world. He has led numerous pilgrimages and continues to be a featured speaker on youth retreats and youth gatherings, where he encourages young people to find ways to answer God's call and use their gifts and talents to respond to the many needs of our world. Br. Dan is also the recent author of two books, "A Plan B Camino 2020: A Pilgrim's Prayer Journal for Future Spiritual Camino Seekers" and "Never too young to change the world: Inspiring true stories of young people".



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FROM THE DESK OF

# the Provincial

SPRING 2021

Dear Marist Family,

Easter Blessings to each of you. As we celebrate this season of Christ's resurrection, let us be grateful that even in this long year of great suffering by so many due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we can look forward with hope, knowing that even in the darkest of days, Christ is with us on our journey. Let us remember in a special way the many frontline medical workers, who like Simon on the road Jesus walked to Calvary, willingly helped so many who have suffered and died over the past year from this terrible cross. Likewise, we remember our three Marist Brothers and the many extended members of our Marist Family who have died from COVID-19. May their souls and the souls of all of our faithful departed, happily rest in the peace of Christ.



As I begin my three-year term as Provincial for our USA Province, I do so with a grateful heart. We are so blessed to have many generous and supportive benefactors like you, who partner with us in our mission to make Jesus Christ known and loved, especially among young people and those most neglected.

We are also blessed to have dedicated Marist Brothers and Lay Marists who joyfully bring our mission to life each day in countless ways. We are similarly graced to have the prayerful witness of our many retired and infirmed Marist Brothers who dedicate much of their day to praying for the many works of our Province and all our benefactors that make those works possible. I am especially indebted to our Province medical staff who take such excellent care of our retired Brothers, who helped paved the roads we now travel.

So many families have been devastated over this past year and we have often seen it firsthand. Many parents of our students have lost jobs as well as loved ones as a result of this continued pandemic. Our Marist schools have done a tremendous job in meeting the needs of their students, and it has not been an easy task for our Marist educators, who have had to adapt and overcome great challenges to ensure the needs of all our young people are being fully addressed. Our founder, St. Marcellin Champagnat, made it clear that our focus should always be on those precious young people entrusted to our care. He often stated, "It's all about the children."

I write to personally thank you again for your support and care for our Marist mission in the United States and in the world. We could not continue to make the dream of St. Marcellin an ongoing lived reality without your interest, encouragement, and prayers.

Our Marist life and mission is rich with folks who pray, work, and reach out to others, no matter how old or what challenges they face. I see it on a daily basis in the various ways we minister to make a difference through our significant presence in our Marist schools, in our spiritual retreats, our camps, our work with refugees on our southern border, and in other creative ways to make Jesus known and loved.

Happy Easter, all year long....in the hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Champagnat.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Br. Dan O'Riordan".

Br. Dan O'Riordan, FMS  
Marist Brothers USA Provincial



Continued from cover page

In early April, Brother delegates met at San Alfonso Retreat House in Long Branch, NJ (adhering to COVID-19 safety guidelines) and other joined via Zoom meeting for the 2021 United States Provincial Chapter meeting. One of the main duties of the Brother delegates elected to attend the Provincial Chapter meeting is to elect new Provincial Council members to support the Provincial, and to brainstorm ideas that can be worked on throughout the new three-year term.



At the 2021 Provincial Chapter Meeting, Brother delegates voted to elect Provincial Council members to support Br. Dan throughout his next term. After voting, Br. Owen Ormsby was elected as Vice Provincial and a member of the Provincial Council. The five other Brothers elected to the Council include: Br. Sean Sammon, Br. Steve Schlitte, Br. Dominick Pujia, Br. Todd Patenaude, and Br. Hank Hammer.

The new Provincial Council will continue to explore vocations and vowed membership, the meaning of vocations in ministry, the Marists of Champagnat, sustainability of Province ministries, and bridge-building with those on the margins of society.



# ESOPUS CORNER

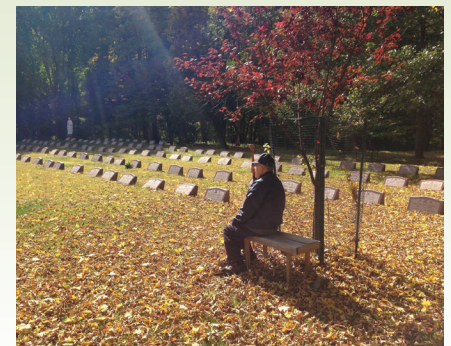
The past year at the Marist Brothers Center in Esopus has been very different. We could not host groups for retreats, summer camps, and meetings. By turning to our belief in God's grace, we have stayed strong as a Marist family and taken the extra time to work on various projects and updates around the MBCE property, so we will be ready when we are able to again host young people from around the USA Province.



Strengthened by a tangible sense of family spirit, many young people have discovered their best selves here. Others have been graced with an awareness of how to use their God-given talents to make the world a better place. Our

vision statement says very clearly what we wish to preserve for the future: "In this sacred space, on this holy ground, God's grace touches hearts in many ways."

More than ever it is evident that God's grace is at work here in Esopus. Grace is a vital part of our mission. Hearts are touched, lives changed, and Jesus is made known and loved.



# Promoting Vocations in a Pandemic (and Beyond!)

Written by: Br. Brian Poulin, FMS

Promoting vocations to religious life typically involves a great deal of travel. Vocation ministers seem to alternate between living out of their cars and accumulating air miles as they travel to various communities, apostolates, and conferences. This is certainly true in our Province that includes Marist-affiliated ministries on both coasts of the USA and communities of Brothers stretching from El Paso, TX, to Lawrence, MA. Vocation ministry has also always involved phone calls and written correspondence as means of accompanying and dialoguing with those in discernment. Now, our digital age allows men from absolutely anywhere to reach out and inquire about discerning with us, regardless of whether there is a Marist presence nearby.



Br. Michael Telewah from Ghana, Postulant Ryan Richter, and Br. Owen Ormsby modeling our "Be a Brother to All" face masks.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought significant change to all aspects of life. Travel restrictions and social distancing replaced service trips and in-person retreats. For most of the past year, I could no longer welcome potential discerners to visit our house for an experiential "come and see" weekend. Nonetheless, God continues calling men to join the Marist Brothers, and so the ministry of encountering, inviting, and journeying with

potential candidates has had to adapt to the times rather than enter a deep hibernation. As in-person activities gradually resume, some pandemic-era innovations will continue to play a role in our vocation ministry for the foreseeable future.

Some of this past year's vocation outreach efforts have been virtual implementations of events that could normally happen in person. At Br. Rob Clark's invitation, I used Zoom to serve as spiritual director for a busy Longhorns Retreat at the University of Texas, and also co-hosted a virtual information session for 40 members of my local parish in the Bronx, NY, to help them learn more about consecrated life. Br. Sam Amos participated in a virtual vocation panel for a youth group at another parish. However, the use of virtual technology meant that I did not have to travel to Austin during a busy week and that an unusually large number of parishioners listened to my presentation in the Bronx because they could do so from the comfort of their own homes. Without Zoom, Br. Sam would not have been able to speak on the youth group vocation panel at all because it was held 1,000 miles away from his home!

Additionally, entirely new kinds of activities have opened up. I have recently instituted a monthly Zoom session for men who are "Marist-curious." This is a recurring confidential meeting in which they can share their dreams and concerns while building community with each other and coming to better know the Marist spirit and mission. Some participants may already possess a strong Marist identity but are wondering about the possibility of religious life as a Marist Brother, while others may be seriously interested in religious life but lack previous connection with our Marist world. Regardless, this group is able to gather men from across time zones to support each

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# Br. Joseph Teston, FMS: 100 Years of Active Life and Service



**B**r. Joseph Teston, a member of the Marist Brothers of the Schools (FMS) for more than 81

years, recently celebrated his 100th birthday! He is the first Marist Brother in the United States to have reached this milestone since the Brothers established their first school in Lewiston, ME, in 1886.

Br. Joseph Teston was born in Savannah, GA. He first encountered the Marist Brothers when he entered the Marist School there at age five. He says, "I've been a Marist ever since." He entered the novitiate in 1938 and took his first vows as a Religious brother in 1940. His perpetual profession of vows followed in 1945.

Br. Joseph's educational background includes a BA in education from Fordham University, Bronx, NY (1946); MA in math from Columbia University, New York City, NY (1948); an honorary doctorate in education from De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines (1972), and an honorary degree in education from Notre Dame University in Marbel, Philippines (2008), where he served as President from 1966-1972. In 1977, he received an MA and MRE in theology from Immaculate Conception Seminary, Douglaston, NY.

Br. Joseph began his teaching career at St. Ann's Academy in Manhattan (now Archbishop Molloy High School, Queens, NY) in 1942. In 1948, he and three other

Brothers volunteered to go to the Philippines to assist with the establishment of schools on the island of Mindanao after World

War II. As more Brothers volunteered for the mission and the number of Filipino vocations to our Marist way of life increased, grade schools, high schools, colleges and universities were established in Cotabato, Marbel, Lago, Jolo, Kidapawan, and Marikina. From 1960-63, Br. Joseph was appointed leader of the Marist District of the Philippines, a designation given to a missionary establishment that would one day become its own juridical province, able to make its own decisions with regard to expansion and personnel.

After 24 years of missionary work in the Philippines, Br. Joseph returned in 1972 to New York, where he took up residence in the Brothers' community at Archbishop Molloy High School. He continued to assist the mission in the Philippines by raising funds for the work there. In 1975, he moved to Georgia to take up various teaching and diocesan assignments in Augusta and Savannah. In 2001, Br. Joseph moved to Miami, FL, where he assisted with various pastoral and training programs within the Miami Archdiocese. In 2011, he retired from active ministry and moved to Champagnat Hall, Bronx, NY, where he has the time to enjoy the rest he so deserves after 81 years of service to the Marist Brothers and the church.

# Dear Friends,

SPRING 2021



Happy spring! Hopefully warmer weather has arrived in your hometown. Here in Chicago, signs of spring are blooming all around us! So many parts of the country experienced an extreme winter of excessive cold and snow, and warm weather is certainly welcomed this year!

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives this past year, and now, with vaccines available, we can begin to look forward to returning to a “new normal” way of life. We are grateful to you, our friends and alumni, for keeping the Marist Brothers in your thoughts and prayers. We look forward to the future with renewed vigor and hope.

Even during these turbulent times, the Brothers have continued to steadily grow the work begun by our founder, St. Marcellin Champagnat, in 1817. We are most thankful for your gifts to our Annual Fund, which enable us to look forward and outward—to promote vocations to the Marist Brotherhood and to engage in special ministries which enhance the civic and spiritual development of our students. Your partnership, through your gifts to our annual spring Retirement Appeal, enables us to provide quality care for our elderly and disabled Brothers.

If you have never contributed to the Brothers, please consider making your first gift by using the reply envelope in this newsletter. You will be among so many of our loyal friends who believe, as you do, in the future of the Marist Brothers and our mission of sound Christian education.

Thank you once again for all you do for our Brothers. You are in our thoughts and prayers this spring season.

With my very best wishes,

*Paulette M. Karas*

Paulette M. Karas, CFRE  
Director of Development

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other and explore together on a much more frequent basis than would otherwise be possible. A group chat over WhatsApp allows for participants to maintain their connection in between sessions. While these tactics do not eliminate the need for individual phone conversations or in-person community visits when possible, they do provide a helpful supplement.

On the more concrete level, Postulant Rob Dittus designed “Be a Brother to All” facemasks including the Province logo. As long as people keep wearing such masks, we hope that these—along with our “Be a Brother to All” stickers that now adorn numerous cars and other objects—will serve to raise awareness of the Marist Brothers while also encouraging everybody we encounter to simply be a bit kinder in their dealings with others.

All organizations must continually innovate in order to thrive, and this is especially true in times of rapid



to lovingly serve the young and vulnerable continues! All to Jesus through Mary!

**If you know a man who would do well to consider a religious vocation, encourage him to learn more about the Marist Brothers:**

**<http://maristbr.com/calledtobeabrother>**

change. Although the coronavirus was unexpected, it did require us to develop our creative capacities in new and different directions that will serve us well into the future. Our Marist mission

## IN MEMORIAM

*Br. Don Nugent*

Died January 17, 2021



Br. Don Nugent, FMS, a member of the Marist Brothers of the Schools for 62 years, died on January 17, 2021, in Poughkeepsie, NY, after a brief battle with complications from COVID-19. He had just celebrated his 80th birthday.

Br. Don was born in the Bronx, NY, and attended St. Helena High School. He became a postulant with the Marist Brothers in 1958 and entered the Marist Brothers Novitiate at Tyngsboro, MA, in 1959. He professed first vows in 1960 and final vows in 1965. After completing his religious and academic studies at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, he began his ministry serving as a teacher at St. Joseph Academy in Brownsville, TX, from 1963-74. He

enjoyed many years utilizing his musical talents while he served in campus ministry at Texas Southmost College in Brownsville. He also performed at many youth rallies and retreats with the talented musical group he led while working as a youth minister and pastoral assistant for St. Joseph Parish in Brownsville (1982-85). He served as Director of the Marist Brothers Retreat House in Esopus, NY, and welcomed almost 5,000 young people annually for retreats and summer camps (1980-82, 1985-2012). He continued to serve as a spiritual director to many up until the time of his death.

Br. Don is survived by his Marist Brothers of the Province of the USA and his many friends.



**Real Brothers.  
Real Stories.  
A Real Difference.**



**The Marist Brothers**  
Provincial Development Office  
4200 West 115th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60655-4397

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For more information about a vocation to the Marist Brothers, visit:

[www.maristbr.com/vocations](http://www.maristbr.com/vocations)

Or contact:

Br. Al Rivera, FMS  
Br. Brian Poulin, FMS

Marist Brothers  
Provincial Office  
70-20 Juno Street  
Forest Hills, NY 11375

Phone: (718) 480-1306  
Email: [vocations@maristbr.com](mailto:vocations@maristbr.com)

### **The Marist Brothers Mission**

To bring Christian education to young people, especially those who are most neglected.  
*(Article 2, Constitutions)*

### **The Marist Brothers**

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 413  
Worth, Illinois 60482-0413  
Phone: (773) 881-5343  
Email: [maristbr@maristbr.org](mailto:maristbr@maristbr.org)  
Website: [www.maristbr.com](http://www.maristbr.com)

**For more updates on what's happening in our Marist circles, visit [www.maristbr.com](http://www.maristbr.com).**

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Editorial Staff: Ms. Erin Gilbert. Contributing Staff: Br. Brian Poulin, FMS

## *The Marist Brothers* **Remembrance in Prayer Program**



**T**he Marist Brothers offer two different series of Remembrance in Prayer cards: Traditional and All-Occasion cards. Our signature Traditional cards feature the image of Christ and a Marial design. Both of these Traditional cards may be used as memorials to remember the deceased. Our two All-Occasion cards may be sent to honor birthdays, weddings, or anniversaries or to extend 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 our Traditional or All-Occasion cards. Please send your request through email ([maristbr@maristbr.org](mailto:maristbr@maristbr.org)) or to the mailing address at left.