



The Marist
Brothers

SPRING 2025



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TODAY'S Marist Brother

Marist Ecology Mission Trip to Belize

Students from Archbishop Molloy High School in Briarwood, New York, journeyed to Belize for a mission trip focused on ecology in partnership with Bold Hope, a nonprofit organization that connects and empowers people to transform lives worldwide.

The trip was organized and run by Richard Costa, Campus Minister from Molloy, and was chaperoned by Matthew Corrado (fellow Campus Minister), as well as Joanne Cavera (retired Science department chair from St. Joseph Regional High School in Montvale, New Jersey), and Sam King, Ecology Coordinator for the Marist Brothers USA Province.



The group stayed at the Umaya resort on a one-hundred-yard-wide peninsula along the Placencia

Lagoon, an intertidal estuary bordered by mangroves – an important storm buffer and habitat for crabs, anemones, sea sponges, and manatees, along with iguanas and herons.

With the help of Bold Hope, the group partnered with a local Mayan community, Maya Mopan, to help build the foundation for a new wall around a church and assist in construction at the village school. They also toured three local farms to learn about traditional agroforestry and the unique challenges facing farmers in a changing climate.

In one visit, a woman named Lupita welcomed the group into her intergenerational Mayan home with a thatched roof surrounded by a rich variety of fruit trees. When students first stepped onto the land,



they noticed a small Chinese plum tree blooming with little fruits.

"She didn't have a lot, and the fruits weren't even ripe yet, but she was so generous," a senior shared. "As soon as she saw that we were looking at the tree, she was ready to offer up whatever she could find."

After welcoming the group into her home, Lupita's husband, Max, led a tour around more than 30 acres of regenerative farmland with a rich variety of crops – including papaya, pineapple, oregano, banana, cassava, and guava – pausing to cut open a stalk of yellow coconuts to share with the group. He then showed the group a fish pond he had dredged from a swampland to create a habitat for shrimp and tilapia, a nutritious food and reliable source of income, and whose excrement he used as fertilizer for plants.

"He had about 3,000 fish in this pond," a senior recalled. "We got to watch a feeding where the fish were jumping in and out of the water. It put in perspective how these fish are raised in a more natural way than in America, where they use a lot of steroids and hormones in our foods."

Max shared that his community had traditionally planted on May 10 and 15 in accordance with

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FROM THE DESK OF

the Provincial

SPRING 2025

Dear Marist Family,

Easter blessings to each of you! As we celebrate this season of Christ's resurrection, let us pray that Christ's peace and love be extended to the many places devastated by wars and natural disasters across our world today.



Earlier this year, Pope Francis launched a Jubilee year for the Catholic Church with the theme Pilgrims of Hope. Our Founder, St. Marcellin Champagnat, began the Marist Mission more than 200 years ago, so that our Brothers could be such Pilgrims of Hope in the lives of every young person entrusted to our care. Today we have over 2,500 Marist Brothers and many committed Lay Marists serving in more than 80 countries around the world, where they continue to be real Pilgrims of Hope to the children we serve each day.

As Provincial of our USA Province, every day I pray in deep gratitude for the incredible blessings and support we receive from so many generous benefactors like you. Because of your ongoing contributions, the hope of the gospel truly comes alive in the hearts of the many young people we serve each day within our schools and ministries.

We are blessed to have dedicated Marist Brothers and Lay Marists who joyfully bring our mission to life each day in countless ways. Similarly, we are 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 for all of our benefactors who make these works possible. I am especially indebted to our Province medical staff for taking such excellent care of our retired Brothers —the men who helped pave the roads we now travel.

I share these few words to personally thank you again for your support and care for our Marist Mission here in the USA Province and throughout the world. We could not continue to make the dream of St. Marcellin an ongoing lived reality without your interest, encouragement, and prayers. May God continue to bless you and your families always.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Br. Dan O'Riordan". The signature is stylized and fluid.

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

Continued from cover

the Mayan calendar, coordinating efforts with neighbors so that birds could feed evenly across the surrounding lands. And yet, because of changing weather patterns, he and his community are now struggling with crop yields and planting later in the season.

"The weather is much different than it was in the '80s," he said.



The group visited another farm around Maya Mopan stewarded by Triff, whose land borders a commercial grapefruit farm. He shared that intensified rainfall had resulted in declining corn yields and prompted him

to begin using fertilizers to bolster the crops. He also led the group through his towering bamboo forest, sold for building materials, and low-hanging cacao trees, with many of the beans blackened and dried out due to a blight. Despite the declining yield, and the rising threat of wildfires, he offered the group fresh cacao beans to enjoy and explained the process of roasting them to make chocolate.

"My favorite new fruit I tried was definitely cacao," a senior shared. "They're low-hanging fruits on trees with little green pods and seeds in them covered in a sweet fruit. We watched [Triff] cut one open with a machete and give us these little seeds covered in fruit."

Visiting the farms gave students a first-hand glimpse into the close relationships Mayan communities have maintained with lands and waters for thousands of years.

"We saw how they're very in touch with the environment," a fellow senior reflected. "They do all their practices in an eco-friendly way. There's not a lot of waste on the farm."

A junior reflected on the visible impacts of changing weather patterns on these farmers' lives and livelihoods.

"They have owned their farms for a long time, at least since the '80s and '90s," she said. "Since then, they've been experiencing the environmental impacts of climate change. It was interesting to see the impacts of climate change and how it is actually affecting people."

One senior was struck by the prevalence of organic farming practices.

"A lot of the farmers said they don't use fertilizer because they already have rich soil. Instead, they use other parts of fruits to restore nutrients in the soil."

ESOPUS CORNER

The Marist Brothers Center at Esopus has remained a bustling center of activity these past few months! Several USA Marist schools have come for retreats, including Archbishop Molloy High School, Delbarton School, Fordham Prep, Roselle Catholic High School, Oak Knoll, and Mount Saint Michael Academy. Retreat groups have also been abundant, including Vida Nueva, Marist Youth USA, and Daltai Na Gaeilge all spending time at the MBCE.



Work continues to be done throughout the property, most notably being the Peter Pan Playground project! The playground officially opened on April 12, 2025, and is ready for all of our campers this summer. Lastly, Esopus Runners has announced there will be THREE different races this year—Hudson Valley, New Jersey Queens, New York, and Crawford, New Jersey!



Spring Greetings

Dear Marist Family,



As we embrace the arrival of spring, we also welcome the warmth and beauty that this season brings. Trees are beginning to bud and flowers are in full bloom, making it a joyous time of renewal and growth.

During this time of new beginnings, we reflect on the achievements of the Marist Family. Our friends, relatives, alumni, and generous benefactors have all played a crucial role in upholding the legacy of the Marist Brothers. They have dedicated themselves to providing a Christian education to young people, especially those often overlooked.

The vision of St. Marcellin to serve those most in need thrives in our schools and ministries. It continues through our impact on our students and the young individuals we serve daily. The legacy endures through the unwavering commitment of our younger Brothers who work tirelessly to make a difference, and the elderly and disabled Brothers who support our cause through their prayers.

Each of us who believes in the transformative power of the Marist Brothers contributes to this ongoing legacy.

Presently, we are in the midst of our annual Retirement Appeal. This appeal is vital in supporting the needs of our elderly and disabled Brothers. We rely on the generosity of our friends and benefactors, like you, to help us meet the increasing costs each year.

If you have not yet had the chance to contribute to the Marist Brothers, we kindly ask you to consider making your first gift today. You can use the enclosed reply envelope or visit our website at www.maristbr.org. By doing so, you will join the ranks of our loyal friends who share our belief in the future of the Marist Brothers and their mission of delivering a quality Catholic education.

As we embrace the rejuvenating spirit of spring, we humbly ask for your continued prayers and support. May the grace of Our Lord and his Blessed Mother be with you and your loved ones throughout the upcoming summer months!

My personal best wishes,

Paulette M. Karas

Paulette M. Karas, CFRE
Director of Development

USA Participates in United Nations UPR Process

The USA Province was honored to be a part of FMSI's participation in the United Nations' Universal Periodic Review process. The UPR is a mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council that involves a review – every four and a half years – of the human rights records of all 193 UN member states, providing an opportunity for each country to review and report on actions taken to improve the human rights situation within its borders, while empowering other states to make recommendations to the country under review on how best to promote the implementation of human rights obligations on the ground.



Our Province invited three groups within the USA to hold listening sessions to raise

concerns and challenges within our country in relation to issues of human rights, with a particular emphasis on the rights of children and young people in the most vulnerable conditions. These three invited groups consisted of our USA Marist schools (more than 250 young people from our USA Marist schools participated in listening sessions), those working with migrants and refugees at the Encuentro Project in El Paso, Texas, and the Mid-Hudson Valley Camps in Esopus, New York, which have operated for the past 54 years and serve a number of our most diverse and marginalized populations, including mentally and physically disabled children and adults, children with cancer as well as impoverished children from the inner cities.

From the perspective of students from USA Marist schools, the key issues and concerns relating to the rights of children within our

country, with a particular emphasis on those in the most vulnerable conditions, are the following:

1. **Immigration**—including the deep fears of many young people about their family members or themselves being arrested or deported.
2. **Mental health**—the many contributing factors that have led to incredibly high levels of anxiety, depression, and suicide among young people.
3. **Drug and substance abuse among young people.**
4. **School violence**—frequent occurrences of school shootings, ongoing bullying, gang violence, and violent crimes in most urban areas have sadly become desensitized in the USA.
5. **Social media**—increased usage by young people and the impact it is having on their lives.

Marists working directly with migrants and refugees in El Paso see the key issues and concerns relating to human rights of those in the most vulnerable situations as:

- Challenges faced by asylum seekers
- Human rights violations
- Impact on migrant children

Marists working with our marginalized populations at our Mid-Hudson Valley Camps in Esopus see the key issues and concerns relating to the rights of the populations they serve as:

- Emotional and mental health struggles
- Access to proper education
- Social isolation
- Economic inequality
- Healthcare and medical services



Celebrating Jubilarians

As the average age of the Marist Brothers in the USA has been increasing, it has become more difficult to do Province-wide Jubilarian celebrations each year. Over the winter, Br. Dan O’Riordan, Provincial of Marist Brothers USA, joined the Pelham Community in New York for a special dinner to celebrate the 60th Jubilee of Br. Fred Sambor. He also gathered the Brothers of Queens to celebrate the Jubilees of Br. Rick Shea (70th), Br. Kevin Brogan (60th), Br. James Norton (60th), Br. Larry Lavalley (50th), and Br. Michael Sheerin (50th).



Br. Fred Sambor and the Pelham Community



Queens Jubilarians celebration

First Sharing Our Mission for Counselors, focused on student mental health

The first-ever Sharing Our Mission for Counselors, focused on student mental health, was held this winter at the Marist Brothers Center at Esopus. Fourteen attendees from seven of our ministries around the USA participated with great enthusiasm and eagerness to better meet the mental health challenges of today’s students. Focus on mental health is not only an expression of “making Jesus known and loved,” it also meets a clear and basic need of young people today, without which the goals of education are greatly impaired. In the group’s time together, they focused on viewing mental health support through a Marist lens, with the intent to launch a grassroots-based Province-wide support network for this work. The group began building mission-centered relationships together, and collaborated by sharing struggles, successes,

and best practices around student mental health. At the conclusion of the conference, the group committed to an ongoing networking relationship to continue to support and develop this key service of our schools and their missions.



IN MEMORIAM

Br. John P. Nash, FMS

June 17, 1940 – October 27, 2024



Br. John P. Nash passed away peacefully on October 27, 2024, at De La Salle Hall in Lincroft, New Jersey. He was 84 years old and in his 66th

year of Marist religious life. Br. John was born in the South Bronx in St. Luke's Parish. At the age of 15, he entered the Marist Juniorate in Esopus, New York, and in 1958, he began his postulancy at St. Joseph Novitiate in Tyngsboro,

Massachusetts. He received the habit in 1959 and made his first profession of vows in 1960.

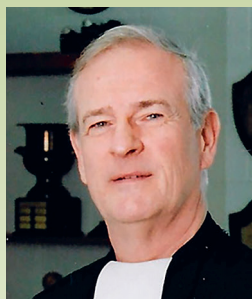
Br. John then went to the Marist Brothers Scholasticate at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York, where he earned a BA in Biology, later earning an MA in Theology from Manhattan College, an MSED in Pastoral Counseling from Iona College, and a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology. He was a licensed psychologist in New York State and a certified EMDR therapist. He served as a teacher and campus minister in New

York from 1963-1985. He participated in the Marist Second Novitiate renewal program in Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1980.

From 2015 until 2023, he was the archivist for the USA Province of the Marist Brothers. During this time, he completely reorganized the archive system, began the digitization material of the province, and instituted the Marist Heritage Project. Thanks to his organizational skills, easy access to the history and patrimony of the province became possible. Br. John loved angels, gardening, and genealogy.

Br. Joseph L. Matthews, FMS

December 24, 1941 – December 20, 2024



Br. Joseph Matthews, FMS, passed away at the Champagnat Hall Community in the Bronx on December 20, 2024. He was 81 years

old and just four days away from his 82nd birthday. He was in his 60th year of Marist religious life.

A native of Kingston, New York, he graduated from Kingston High School in

1961 and Marist College (Poughkeepsie, New York) in 1965 with a BA in Math (he later earned an MA in Math from Wesleyan University). After graduating from Marist, he entered St. Joseph Novitiate (Tyngsboro, Massachusetts) and professed his first vows as a Marist Brother in 1966 and his final profession in 1976. From 1966 until 1996, Br. Joe served as a teacher, assistant principal, and principal at various schools in the Northeast and Texas.

Br. Joe became a member of the staff at the Marist Brothers Center in Esopus, New York, in 2007, where he served in

many capacities. In 2012, he moved to Champagnat Hall to volunteer in the Province Finance Office and returned to Esopus in 2015 as finance officer for the MBCE. He moved to our Marist community at Eden Terrace in Poughkeepsie, New York, in 2020, where he was a great support to the Brothers from other countries who were doing graduate studies at Marist College. He loved telling stories about the history of his native city of Kingston. An avid numismatist, he especially enjoyed working on his coin collection. He retired to the Champagnat Hall Community in the Bronx in 2023.

Br. Aquinas Richard, FMS

November 14, 1929 – February 18, 2025



Br. Aquinas Richard, FMS, died at De La Salle Hall in Lincroft, New Jersey, on Tuesday, February 18, 2025. He was 95 years old and in

his 77th year of Marist religious life.

Br. Aquinas entered the Marist Brothers Novitiate at St. Ann's Hermitage (Poughkeepsie, New York) and received

the Marist habit in 1948 before pronouncing his first vows there in 1949. He attended the Scholasticate at Marian College (now Marist University), completing a BA in Biology in 1952 (MA in Biology, Fordham University, 1959). He made his perpetual profession of vows in 1954 and pronounced the Vow of Stability in Briarwood in 1964.

He spent most of his active ministry years teaching biology and coaching cross country and indoor/outdoor track at Archbishop Molloy High School in Briarwood, New York, and spent many

summers working at Camp Marist. He moved to a Brothers community near Marist College in 2020, where he provided excellent support to visiting graduate student Brothers from other countries.

Br. Aquinas' life was spent helping young people of New York City acquire an excellent Christian education and develop into as good athletes.

In 2018, Br. Aquinas retired to De La Salle Hall in Lincroft, New Jersey, where he lived until the time of his death.

Real Brothers. Real Stories. A Real Difference.



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

www.maristbr.org/vocations

Or contact:

Br. Sam Amos, FMS

Marist Brothers

Provincial Office

70-20 Juno Street

Forest Hills, NY 11375

Phone: (718) 480-1306

Email: 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, IL 60482-0413

Phone: (773) 881-5343

Email: maristbr@maristbr.org

Website: www.maristbr.org

For more updates on what's happening in our Marist circles, visit www.maristbr.org.



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

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Editor: Ms. Erin Gilbert, Director of Communications. Contributing Staff: Ms. Summer Bourlier, Mr. Richard Costa.

The Marist Brothers Remembrance in Prayer Program



The Marist Brothers offer two 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) or to the mailing address at left.

