



The Marist  
Brothers

# TODAY'S *Marist Brother*

ADVENT 2024



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

## New Brothers in the USA Province

**A**t the Marist Youth Leadership Camp in Esopus over the summer, Brothers Luis Ramos, Robert Dittus, and Ryan Richter took part in a ceremony to renew their vows as Marist Brothers. Later in August, Br. David Freiler and Br. Miguel Garcia professed their first vows as Marist Brothers during a liturgy at Mount St. Michael Academy in the Bronx, NY.



Following their first vows, Br. David shared that "becoming a vowed member of a religious community is the greatest achievement of my life. I can now live out my mission with the focus and help of the Marist Brothers, the Church, and of course God." Br. Miguel elaborated by adding "in the inner-workings of our faith, we can find God completely, especially through the gentle guidance of our Good Mother Mary, who always said 'Yes.' Her example inspires us to be present and to show love in its simplest form, reminding us that just being there for others can make a profound difference. I love to always believe that God is in us, and we are in him."



Our Brothers renewing vows also had much to say about their journey as Marist Brothers. Br. Luis explained that his "renewal of vows was a happy and grounding moment. It was

a joy to share it with the Marist Youth. Having them there reminded me of the origins of my own vocation." Looking back at his first year as a professed Brother, Br. Ryan says that it "was filled with blessings, challenges, and a lot of learning. I couldn't be more grateful to my South Texas community of Marist Brothers, Marist educators, and especially my students for teaching me how to \*be\* a Brother this year."



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FROM THE DESK OF

# the Provincial

## ADVENT 2024

Dear Marist Family,

Advent Blessings to each of you. As we prepare to again celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, let us pause to reflect on the miraculous gift that God bestowed on our world. Let us be grateful for the witness, courage and faithfulness of Mary and Joseph, who God called to assist in His divine plan of gifting our world and lives with His Son. May our hearts and lives, like Mary and Joseph, be open to bringing God into our world.



The four traditional themes for each of the weeks of Advent are Hope, Faith, Joy, Peace. I pray that this Advent season will allow both Hope and Peace to be restored to so many areas of our troubled world that live in such despair from ongoing wars and too much despair and suffering. As we live these days of Advent, may we faithfully allow God to truly live in our hearts and be witnessed through our actions. May we each live the Joy of knowing that God came into this world for each of us and that He loves us deeply.

As I share these few lines, I do so with a grateful heart as we are so blessed to have so 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 among 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's shoulders we now stand on as we continue their legacy of growing our Marist Mission.

I wish to personally thank you again for your support and care for our Marist mission in the USA Province and in the world. We could not continue to make the dream of St. Marcellin an ongoing lived reality without your support, 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 by 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.

I pray these Advent Days will prepare each of us to again be filled with wonder, peace, and love as we journey toward the miracle of Christmas morning with new hope that Emmanuel will again be born. May God bless each of you. Please know that we are praying for you this Advent and we will be entrusting your intentions and those of your families to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, Joseph and Champagnat.

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

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



# ESOPUS CORNER



ur 2024 Mid-Hudson Valley Camp season was a tremendous success with every camp having a unique and fun time together!



Adult Vacation went on a Eurotrip for camp this year; visiting France, Germany, Greece, and Italy. They had a fashion show in France, enjoyed pretzels in Germany, visited a “winery” in Italy, and ended their tour with a dance filled with tales of their travels. Many memories were made and they can’t wait for next year.

Special Kids 1 had SUPER week as campers followed the story

of Super Kay as she defend her home city of Esopopolis from the forces of evil. The campers completed an inflatable super-training course, designed their own super suits, and celebrated with a carnival and dance party.

116 incoming freshmen from Archbishop Molloy High School spent a whole week getting to know each other, current students, faculty, and staff through a jam-packed week of fun. They went bowling and on a hike to Mohonk Mountain and ended their week with a game of Flag!

Young Adult Camp went “Back to School” where they had morning assembly, a Students vs. Teachers homecoming basketball game, wood shop, pottery, and driver’s ed. They closed out the week with a graduation ceremony for our campers moving up to Adult Vacation and a Friday night prom.



Sister Pat’s Kids Camp was filled with countless high notes and unforgettable experiences centered around our theme: Sister Pat’s Music Festival, where they transformed the camp into an all week music festival, including tie-dye camp t-shirts.



The 4th Annual Marist Youth Leadership Camp brought together rising Juniors from all 10 of our USA Marist High Schools for a week dedicated to forming them as Leaders for our schools and our USA Province. The skills they learned during this week home in Esopus will serve them and their local communities in the years ahead.

Sacred Heart Camp welcomed ninety campers and spent time playing sports, swimming, rock climbing, fishing, making art, and learning Jiu Jitsu. The campers and counselors created positive, lasting memories that they will undoubtedly carry with them for months and years to come.

Special Kids 2 Camp had a great week with the theme of “Let the Games Begin!” Their days included games like Family Feud, Jeopardy, Chopped, and Dancing With the Stars. “The world is a nicer place because of” these campers, a reminder for all of us to treat each other with kindness and respect.

Deaf Camp had an incredible week of making memories and having new experiences. Throughout the week campers engaged in arts and crafts, dance, gym games, outdoor adventure, and rock climbing. They tie-dyed shirts, painted by the river, and went to a Hudson Valley Renegades Game. Campers celebrated with a carnival and a dance, and are already looking forward to next summer.



# Celebrating Reflective Season of Joy and Tradition

Dear Marist Family,



As the calendar pages turn to the chapters of Advent and Christmas, we find ourselves enveloped in a tapestry woven from threads of jubilation and introspection. It is a time to honor our Savior, Jesus Christ, and cast a thoughtful gaze upon the year's events that have shaped our lives.

Through the steadfast devotion of generations, the Marist Brothers have etched a legacy of over two hundred years, championing Christian education for the young and focusing on reaching the underserved. This bold testament stands as a historic commitment nourished by countless Marists — both Brothers and dedicated lay partners — arm in arm.

In our current day, we find strength in your heartfelt support — our extended family of friends and alumni. Your collaboration is the beacon that illuminates the path for our mission, guiding new generations of eager young minds. The impactful presence of our Brothers in educational institutions, the care for our Brothers in their sunset years, and the expansion of our vocation awareness all rely on your generosity.

Year upon year, as the streams of conventional funding begin to dwindle, the urgency of our fundraising endeavors grows more profound. If your journey has not yet crossed the path of financial patronage for The Marist Brothers, we invite you to consider a gift today. Your contribution, regardless of its size, is embraced with heartfelt gratitude. Visit our secure website at [www.maristbr.org](http://www.maristbr.org) and grace us with your kindness with a simple click on Donate — an easy gesture with lasting impact.

We take this moment to express our sincere pride in your role in our shared success, and we encourage you to consider contributing to our recent initiatives. Unity is the keystone that empowers us to champion St. Marcellin's vision and forge transformative experiences for countless youths.

In harmony, all the Brothers extend wishes of a sacred Advent and a Christmas enveloped by the warmth of loved ones. May the upcoming year, 2025, unfurl as a canvas of robust health, boundless joy, and abundant happiness for you and yours.

Merry Christmas!

*Paulette M. Karas*

Paulette M. Karas, CFRE  
Director of Development



# USA Marists of Champagnat Updates

## COHORT 4 COMMITMENT CEREMONY

In June, thirty-six Lay Marists completed the 4th Cohort of our six-month Marists of Champagnat Formation Program. Today, we are blessed to have almost 200 Lay men and women who have now made a formal commitment as Marists here in the USA. They are dedicating their lives to our Marist Charism in real and concrete ways, including strengthening our efforts to bring forth our Marist Mission of Making Jesus Christ Known and Loved throughout our USA Province and beyond. So many of these remarkable men and women are fostering our mission in their daily lives and work.

The 5th cohort of Marists of Champagnat will begin their formation program on January 2, 2025.



## VOLUNTEERING IN SOUTH AFRICA

This summer, Dorothy Denoto, one of our Marists of Champagnat, became the first USA Volunteer at our Marist Three2six project in South Africa, which is dedicated to serving the many refugee children in that country.

Ms. Dorothy DeNoto, a longtime faculty member at Archbishop Molloy High School and a Marist of Champagnat (Cohort 1), spent the end of her summer serving as an International Marist Volunteer in South Africa. She worked with the Three2six Program, a Marist project serving refugee children. Dorothy's service is a wonderful example of our global Marist charism at work and the impact Lay Marists can have worldwide. Before her trip, Dorothy shared:



"Jesus taught us to love our young people and to love them all equally. This becomes especially important when dealing with youth who are on the margins of society, such as 13-year-old refugees being

taken in by the Marists in Johannesburg, South Africa. When I found out that I was going to have the opportunity to mentor these refugees who were struggling in school, I knew immediately that this mission from God was meant to be." "My thought is to simply be Marist to each and every one of the young people under my direction, loving them all equally with compassion and acceptance! I leave tomorrow, August 12th, for South Africa. In addition to my spiritual readiness, I carry with me two symbols. One is my 'Marist of Champagnat' cross, and the other is a pair of rosary beads, blessed by Pope Francis. They were given to me by Br. Dan O'Riordan to pray with while in South Africa. I am thankful to all who made this possible, including the Marist Brothers, my school Administrators and faculty, and to my family and friends! What an incredible blessing I've been given to be able to pave the way for others in the future who may want to embark upon service throughout our world! Please pray for all those who will be sent to me from God while in Africa! Peace to all!" --- Ms. Dorothy DeNoto, Spiritual Director, Marist of Champagnat (Cohort 1).





### **PILGRIMAGE TO L'HERMITAGE**

Over the summer, twenty-nine USA and Canada Marist pilgrims (including nine Marist Young Adults and Marist Young Professionals!) traveled to Lyon, France to begin their week-long pilgrimage as part of our Province's celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the building of l'Hermitage - where Saint Marcellin Champagnat set up his first community of Marist Brothers and is still home to many Brothers today.

The pilgrimage consisted of visiting many locations with great significance to our Marist history and the life of St. Marcellin Champagnat, such as the Memorare in the Snow, The Dying Boy, La Valla, and many more. We also joined the community of Taize for their midday prayer.



### **DEDICATION OF FIRST EVER MARIST-OWNED SCHOOL IN LIBERIA**

Over the past two years, students in our ten USA Marist schools, raised significant money to help build the first ever Marist owned school in Liberia, West Africa. In 1985, four USA Marist Brothers began our Marist mission in Liberia. Our community there has overcome and endured

many struggles including civil wars and dire poverty. Through our Solidarity efforts, the building project was completed this summer and our Marist school opened its doors in September to its first students. On November 1, the school hosted a special dedication of the new school. Our USA Provincial, Br. Dan O'Riordan, attended the recent dedication.



### **LINK COUNCILORS VISIT TO THE USA**

For three weeks during the month of October, Br. Ken McDonald and Br. Joao Carlos Do Prado, two members of the Marist Brothers Institute's General Administration in Rome visited our USA Province.

During their visitation, they joined in several Province level meetings including the Annual Meeting of all Marist Community Leaders, a Meeting of the USA Lay Council and a Meeting of the USA Provincial Council. They also visited a number of Marist Ministries and Communities across the USA. They gave presentations to students at Archbishop Molloy High School in NY, Mt. St. Michael Academy in NY, St. Joseph Academy in Texas as well as Central Catholic High School in Lawrence, MA. Likewise, they delivered well received presentations to our Brothers in Champagne Hall in the Bronx and two Zoom presentations to all Members of the USA Province. They spent time at our Formation House in NY as well as in our ministry will refugees on the border in El Paso and at our Retreat house in Esopus, NY.



# IN MEMORIAM

## Br. Joe Herrera



Brother Joseph Herrera, FMS, passed away at the Laredo Medical Center in Laredo, TX on June 18, 2024. He was

77 years old and in his 58th year of Marist religious life.

Brother Joe attended the Marist Juniorate at Esopus and Cold-Spring-on-Hudson, NY (1962-1965). Upon graduation, he entered the Marist Brothers Novitiate in Esopus. He received the habit on August 15, 1966 and made first profession of vows on August 15, 1967. After

his first profession, he went to the Scholasticate at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY and graduated with a BA in Chemistry in 1970. He made his final profession of vows in Laredo, TX in 1975. Later on he did graduate studies at St. Mary's University in Texas and completed an MA in Theology in 1982.

He began his teaching career at St. Joseph Academy in Laredo, TX (1970-1973). When the school closed, he taught at J.W. Nixon High School in Laredo (1973-1984) and then went on to work as a Youth Minister for the Diocese of Corpus Christi, TX (1984-87 and 1987-1995). In 1987 he participated in the Marist Brothers Second Novitiate Renewal

Program in Fribourg, Switzerland. He returned to teach at J.W. Nixon High School in Laredo (1995-1999) and then ministered in the Youth Cursillo Retreat program of the Diocese of Laredo (1999-2002). He spent the next several years as a teacher at St. Augustine High School (2002-2007), Dr. Leonides G. Cigarroa High School (2007-2009) and Raymond and Tirza Martin High School (2009-2017), all in Laredo. Brother Joe retired from the Laredo Independent School District in June, 2017.

A faithful member of St. Martin de Porres Church, Brother Joe continued to journey with others as a spiritual director after retirement.

## Br. Paul Meuten



Brother Paul Meuten, FMS, passed away peacefully at the Lawrence Hospital in Bronxville, NY on September 16, 2024. He

was 87 years old and in his 69th year of Marist Religious Life.

Brother Paul entered the Juniorate of the Marist Brothers in Furth, Germany in 1949. In 1952 he went to the International Juniorate in Grugliasco, Italy. After receiving the habit in 1955 in Bairo, Italy, he made his profession of first vows there in 1956. In the same year, he began his scholasticate at Marist (then Marian) College in Poughkeepsie, NY and received a BA in History in 1960. He made his profession of final vows at Marist College in 1961.

From 1960 to 1962 he was a teacher at Archbishop Molloy High School in Briarwood, NY, during which time he also completed an MA in History from St. John's University. From 1962 until 1979, Brother Paul served in several capacities in the Philippines. He was a teacher, high school principal, college instructor, dean, university president at the following Marist Brothers establishments: N.D. of Marbel, N.D. of Jolo College, N.D. of Kidapawan College and N.D. of Dadiangas College. He also served in the planning office of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines. During this time, he professed the vow of stability in 1972 in Marbel, Philippines. In 1979, he made his Second Novitiate in Fribourg, Switzerland and from 1980 to 1982 he did graduate studies at St. John's University, Queens, NY. He returned to the Philippines in 1982 to the Marist

School in Marikina City and in 1987 did a renewal program at Hawkstone Hall in the UK. From 1987 to 1990 he was at N.D. of Marbel University and then served at the Marist General House in Rome, Italy as Director and as social secretariat from 1990 to 1995.

He returned to the Philippines from 1995 to 1998 where he worked on the Philippine Library Materials Project. The Library at the University of Notre Dame of Dadiangas is named the Brother Paul Meuten Library in his honor. Brother Paul moved to Bayonne, NJ in 1998 and served as Assistant Provincial Treasurer there until his retirement in 2010. He officially transferred to the Province of the United States in 2004. In 2019, he moved to the Marist Brothers Champagnat Hall Community in the Bronx, NY, where he pursued his love of history and music right up 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.com/vocations](http://www.maristbr.com/vocations)

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### The Marist Brothers Mission

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

### The Marist Brothers

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



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## The Marist Brothers Remembrance in Prayer Program



**T**he 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](mailto:maristbr@maristbr.org)) or to the mailing address at left.

