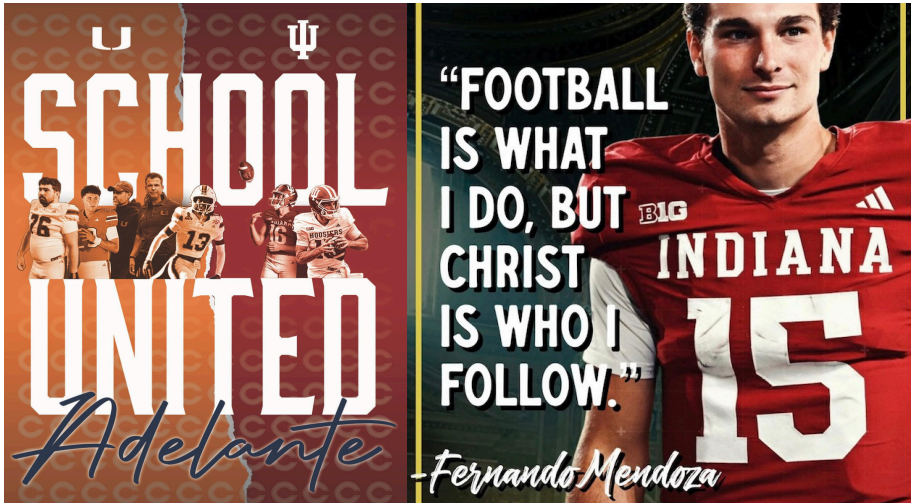




# Friday Notes

JANUARY 16, 2026

031



Best wishes to Fernando Mendoza (Christopher Columbus '22) and Pat Coogan (Marist Chicago '21) as they help lead the Indiana Hoosiers into Monday's National Championship Football Game.

Best wishes as well to head coach Mario Cristobal (Christopher Columbus '88), and assistant head coach Alex Mirabal (Christopher Columbus '88), both of the Miami Hurricanes. In total, the two teams include seven Columbus Explorers: five athletes and two coaches."

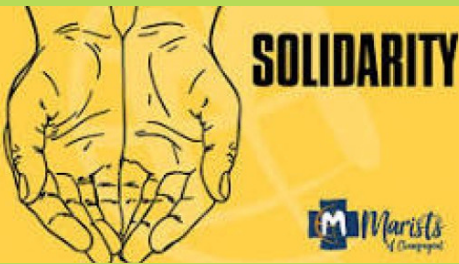
**Indiana Athletes:** Fernando Mendoza '22, Alberto Mendoza '24

**Miami Athletes:** Bryce Fitzgerald '25, Ryan Rodriguez '21, Vinny Gonzalez '25

Ellen Salmi Van Cleef and Br. Dan are leading a Mission Trip to Jamaica with members of the USA Marist Young Professionals, fostering service, reflection, and Marist community. Participants will share daily prayer and reflection, engage in opportunities for service and shared life with fellow MYPs, and visit children with special needs and the elderly through ministries led by the Missionaries of Charity and the Missionaries of the Poor in Kingston, as well as visit the Don Bosco Vocational Training Center.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- MYP Mission Trip**  
Jamaica  
January 16 -  
January 21, 2026
- Provincial Council Meeting**  
Miami  
January 21 -  
January 23, 2026
- Marist Youth Leadership Conference**  
West Palm Beach, FL  
January 30 -  
February 1, 2026
- Green Team Meeting**  
via Zoom  
February 12, 2026  
4pm EST
- Marist Youth Encounter**  
MBCE  
February 26 -  
March 1, 2026
- Sharing Our Call 2**  
MBCE  
February 22 -  
February 24, 2026



### New Solidarity Video Series

Next week, we will launch a weekly Solidarity Series featuring videos and resources on the seven Marist projects supported by the USA Province this year. Together, these stories will invite us to deepen our understanding of solidarity in action across our Marist world.

### School Board Meetings

The School Boards of St. Joseph Academy and Christopher Columbus will both be meeting next week. We are grateful to all the generous men and women who serve on our Boards and help foster our Marist mission.

### From the General Council

Br. Mark Okolo Omede of Nigeria has been announced as the new Link Councilor to the Arco Norte region! **Click here** to read more details about how our new General Government plans to accompany the regions.

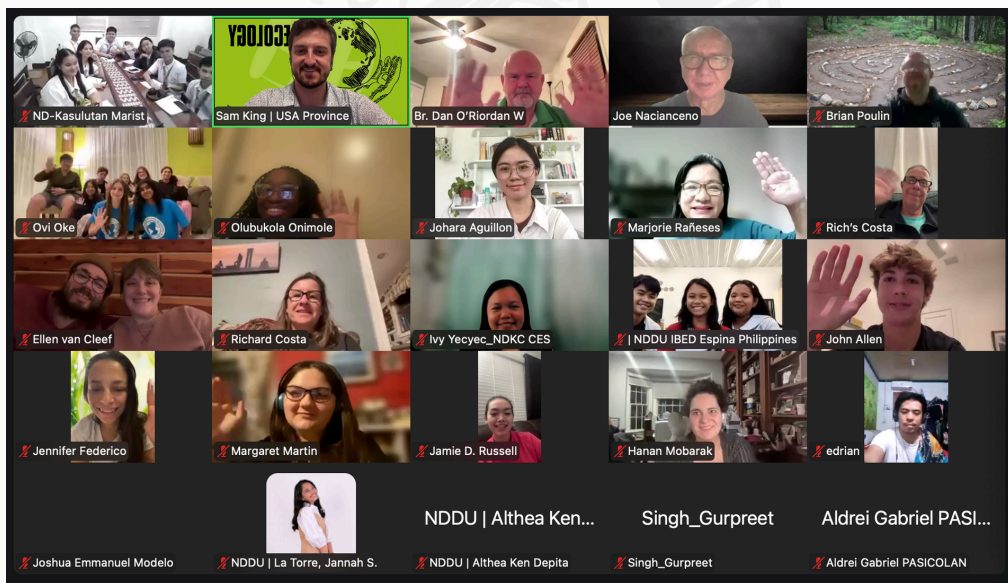


**FOLLOW US ON  
INSTAGRAM!**



Special thanks to all who joined us last month for **Sowing Seeds of Hope: An International Youth Gathering on Ecology**. It was amazing to have more than 70 people gathered from across the Marist world to share youth-led projects living out the ethics of integral ecology. Thanks again to Andres Vidal from Columbus for sharing his inspiring story of recycling electronic waste--and to Ovi Oke, Lucas Liu, Lily Kacziba, Vanessa Guilfoyle, Emily Mussalli, Alex Gonzalez, Hannah Abenante, and Oona Woods from Molloy for their insightful reflections on agroforestry, climate change, and biodiversity in Belize. You can watch the recording [here!](#)

- Check out [this recent video](#) featuring Marist Chicago's new rooftop solar project harnessing the renewable energy of the sun!
- Do you have friends or colleagues who are interested in environmental work? Feel free to share their emails with Sam King or encourage them to [sign up here](#).



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**

*2026 Green Team Meetings!*

Please note - our next meeting of the year will be held **Thursday, February 12th at 4pm EST.**



- Thursday, **March 12th** at 4pm EST / 3pm CST
- Tuesday, **April 14th** at 4pm EST / 3pm CST
- Thursday, **May 14th** at 4pm EST / 3pm CST

# MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

## Roselle Catholic High School

ROSELLE, NEW JERSEY

### BLESSING DOORS FOR THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Roselle Catholic's Religion classes celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany by blessing their classrooms, a tradition involving students writing special chalk messages on their classroom doors as a way of remembering the hospitality the Holy Family showed to the Magi and inviting Christ's blessing into their learning spaces.



### CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE

Campus Ministry held its annual toy drive to help the families of Mercy House. In total the school community collected over 150 toys that were donated. Thank you to all who supported the toy drive!

### R.O.A.R. YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS

Started by a group of junior students, recent weekly meetings included making Advent wreaths of hope, reflecting on things they were hopeful for this Advent season, as well as a Christmas card making service project to make cards for those in need of a little Christmas cheer.

- On Tuesday, January 13, Brother Hank Hammer and Matt Fallon conducted a morning of Marist reflection with the faculty of Roselle Catholic High School.

### CAMPUS MINISTRY WRAPPED: 2025

Over **50%** of Roselle Catholic students participated in retreats and volunteered their time to help others in both their school community and local communities in 2025!





# BUILDERS OF A NEW HERMITAGE

The Message of the 23rd General Chapter, *Builders of a New Hermitage*, was published on December 8. The next several editions of Friday Notes will include the presentation of each of the 5 Calls as they appear in the text which you can access [here](#).



## SECOND CALL: To Be Builders of a Living Spirituality

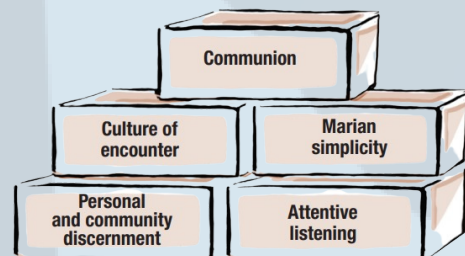


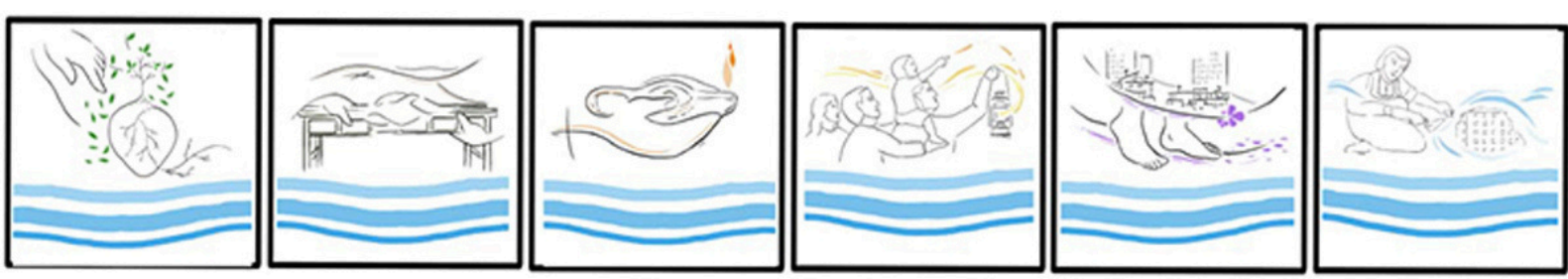
God calls us today to live an incarnated **SPIRITUALITY**, centered on Jesus Christ, in the style of Mary and inspired by the bold and committed vision of Marcellin Champagnat. In a world yearning for connection, healing, and hope, let us foster a transformative spirituality and journey together as brothers and sisters.

### BRICKS / FOUNDATIONAL VALUES →

This call invites us to a conversion of heart and mind where we:

- Move from an inward-looking spirituality to one centered on Jesus Christ.
- Nurture an integrative spirituality, attuned to the lives of today's young people.
- Deepen affective and relational spirituality, beyond external practices.
- Leave behind individualistic visions of spirituality and live it as a journey shared with others.
- Move beyond theory and embrace a faith grounded in lived experiences.





## **STRATEGIES:**

As Marists of Champagnat, Brothers, and lay women and men together we stand as builders of a New Hermitage, called to raise walls of hope, open doors of welcome, and lay foundations of faith for the generations to come. Each call of this Chapter offers us a set of tools - carefully crafted and entrusted to us- not for ourselves alone, but for the flourishing of the global Marist family.

The strategies that follow are not simply plans or tasks; they are instruments for shaping a common dwelling where the Spirit breathes life.

As artisans of this shared dream, we are invited to take up these strategies with courage and creativity. May they be for us not only blueprints but also signs of communion, so that together we may build a hermitage where all feel at home, and where Christ is joyfully at the center.

1. Promote a spirituality that consciously recognises God's presence in every aspect of life and therefore leads to a contemplative approach to daily living. Develop ways for integrating reflection on inspiring Marist texts, such as the Rule of Life, the Formation Guide and Laudato Si, into personal and communal prayer.
2. Promote 'circles of spirituality' as community and intergenerational spaces where brothers, lay people, young people and older people can share and explore their spiritual experiences together, strengthening their sense of community and shared faith.
3. Establish structures to accompany children and young people spiritually, especially the most vulnerable, through a caring and active presence, inviting them to express their faith in ways that connect with their reality and language.
4. Develop training processes in Marist spirituality, interreligious and intercultural dialogue, using creative media such as videos, podcasts and visual narratives to facilitate access and participation.
5. Promote a spirituality of the heart, that is affective, relational and that opens us to transformation.

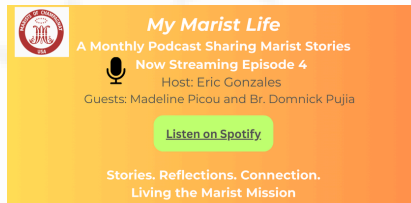
Through Spirituality, we anchor our work on the cornerstone of prayer and discernment, ensuring that every brick we lay is aligned with the Gospel.

# More Marist News...

## Episode 4 of the 'My Marist Life' podcast has been released!

In this episode of My Marist Life, Madeline Picou and Br. Dominick Pujia reflect on how their relationship has grown through shared work and mission. Rooted in kindness, openness, and mutual trust, their journey together reveals how relationships can build genuine community, uncover shared gifts, and lead to a deeper understanding of Marcellin Champagnat and his living mission.

Listen now on Spotify. New episodes will drop the first of every month.



## Marists of Champagnat: Formation Year 6!

A beautiful opening prayer marked the beginning of Cohort 6 and the second year of Pathway 1 on January 2, the Feast of the Foundation of the Marist Institute. More than 100 participants gathered on Zoom, including Brothers, previous cohort members, mentors, and companions, as the prayer—offered in English, Spanish, and French—joyfully welcomed more than 30 participants from Canada. Special thanks to Ellen Van Cleef and the Formation Committee, Neila Pereira and Jonathan Druin for their translation support, and Lindsay Irwin and the Membership Committee for their dedicated work with registration and companion pairings. These are exciting times for our Province as the Spirit continues to grow the movement of making Jesus known and loved in the USA Province.

## National Assembly 2026: Beacons of Joy

**SAVE THE DATE** for the National Assembly, July 14-17, at San Alfonso Retreat Center in Long Branch, NJ.

We are honored to welcome Sister Bernadette Mota, FMA as our keynote speaker, who will help guide and inspire our reflection as we gather as *beacons of joy*.

Cost is \$400/ person plus travel. Many options for financial assistance will be available. Stay tuned for more details.

## LOOKING AHEAD:

**May 1-3:** Deepening Our Call, an in person retreat held at the Marist Brothers Center at Esopus.

**Dates TBA:** Local group spring retreat. Held in each local area and on Zoom for those not near the school hubs. Join in to explore the calls of the General Chapter.

**Lent, 2026** - Our annual Hearts in Action province-wide service initiative. Watch for more details.

**July 1-5:** USA Province Pilgrimage to L'Hermitage in France. Join other Marists to walk in the footsteps of Champagnat. More details here.

## STAY CONNECTED:

**New England:** [Chris Sullivan](#)

**NY/NJ:** [Alice Miesnik](#)  
[Maureen Hagan](#)

**Miami Area:** [Daniella Rodriguez](#)

**Brownsville:** [Mary Beth Martin](#)

**Eugene:** [Alice Meyer](#)

**Chicago:** [Erin Kelly](#)

**Virtual:** [Madeline Picou](#)

# JANUARY Birthdays

FRIDAY, JANUARY 2  
Br. James McKnight

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4  
Br. Philip Degagne

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7  
Br. Luis Ramos

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13  
Br. Armand Lamagna

## NEW READING THIS WEEK



# *This week, please remember in your prayers...*



- **Jill Bernhardt, daughter of Jim Bernhardt, a long-time Christopher Columbus benefactor and board member, who died this week after a long battle with cancer.**
- **Mrs. Peg Kelly, mother of Br. Frank Kelly, who is recovering from a broken hip.**
- **Teresa Kelly, wife of Mike Kelly (Tyngsboro, 1965).**
- **Saoirse McGarry, 23 years old, who has been diagnosed with stage 4 lymphoma.**

- Br. Rick Shea and Br. Jim Adams, who both are rehabbing at De LaSalle Hall in Lincroft, NJ.
- Steve Mason, brother-in-law of Rick Martin, who is recovering from surgery.
- Mrs. Terry Paul, who is in the hospital.
- David Irwin, who continues to need treatment for a brain tumor.
- Ronald Kappes, brother of Br. Steve Kappes, who is experiencing the beginning of Alzheimer's disease.
- Pope Leo XIV: We ask God's blessings on his journey ahead in leading our Church.
- Our Blue Marists in Syria and members of the Fratelli Project in Lebanon.
- All victims of the ongoing wars in the Middle East and in the Ukraine.
- All victims of gun violence in the USA and around the world.
- All of our Brothers in residence or rehabbing at Champagnat Hall, particularly those dealing with significant health concerns: John Herrmann, and Pat Hogan.
- Bros. Charlie Filiatrault, Jim Halliday, Bernie Nolan, and Rene Roy who are all receiving care outside of Marist community.
- Br. Frank Garza as he continues to recover from a fall-related injury.
- Bros. Phil Degagne and James Maher, who are recovering after recent hospital stays.
- Bill Taylor, brother-in-law of Br. Ken Curtin, who is recovering after a heart attack.
- Dan Waters (former Marist Brother) who is recovering from a stroke.
- Mrs. Paulette Karas, Province Director of Development, who is undergoing cancer treatments.
- Tom Rubbone, a long-time Camp Marist volunteer and benefactor.
- Mrs. MaryAnn Safrey, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- Elaine Pellicciari, who is recovering from surgery and intense rehabilitation therapy.
- Mrs. Sue O'Keeffe, as she struggles with pancreatic cancer.
- Jason Wolf, a 22-year old cousin of John Venturella, who was recently diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor.
- Laura Gural as she regains the use of her left side while recovering from a stroke.
- The husband of Eyda Alegret in Miami, who is recovering after a stroke.
- Patrick Hughes, nephew of Sean O'Leary (Mount St. Michael '90).
- Vince Andiorio in Chicago.
- The young son of Br. Jim McKnight's niece, Jacqueline, who is being treated for leukemia.
- Rosemary Shields and Margo Andrew, cousins of Br. Michael Laratonda.
- Mike Encke, husband of Jean Dalton (niece of Br. Jim Devine) who has cancer.
- Angel Herrera, a sophomore at Mount Saint Michael Academy.
- Bishop Timothy McDonnell as he battles stage 4 cancer.
- Frederick Marinelli, father of Michael Marinelli and husband of Carmen Marinelli in Miami.
- Patricia Hayes Franzem, who is recovering from surgery.
- Luis and Irma Segura, as Luis continues to deal with a serious illness.
- Mrs. Olga Dunning, sister-in-law of Br. John Dunning, who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- Lourdes Melendez, godmother of Br. Al Rivera, who is undergoing chemo treatments for ovarian cancer.
- Laura Blando, sister of Br. James Norton, as she is beginning a new round of chemotherapy.
- Fr. Kevin Duggan, SM who has had a recurrence of cancer.

*and let us remember... to pray for each other!*