

SOCIETY OF MARY

Marists in the United States

November 20, 2020

Justice & Peace Alert



"Physician Heal thy Self"

**by Fr. Tony O'Connor, SM, Pastor,
San Felipe de Jesus, Brownsville, Texas**

Here in Brownsville, Texas we are close to being a "hotspot" for COVID again. As of November 19, 2020 there were about 25,000 confirmed COVID cases about 1000 deaths. Some people, frustrated and with pandemic fatigue forget the protocols. On weekends they have their unmasked "cook-outs" with all the extended family. Some youth are out in the streets daily playing ball without masks. A majority of people are fearful and are reluctant to leave home.



Above: Honduran migrants in Monterrey, Mexico

The fear of the effects of COVID on self and loved ones leads to consequences in their mental health. For example, Paula, and 8 year old, was brought in by her desperate mom. Paula was in the full stages of a panic attack flaying her arms, speaking of the devil, standing, and sitting, terrified. I put my arms around her. She calmed, then her arms started flaying again. "Breathe Paula," I said. She listened for a moment, not long enough for her supply of oxygen to stabilize.

We walked to the church. Then before the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe she calmed down. Back in the office we prayed and I anointed her with the oil of the Good Samaritan. This seemed to relieve her anxieties.

A panic attack is a difficult experience for anyone – especially an 8-year-old – it's terrifying. Let's hope that Paula learns that although this was a scary experience, it came to an end, and her mom can help her to remember the importance of taking deep breaths and calming herself.

COVID has certainly shown a dark side in terms of people's mental health. A lady of 70, recently talked of the same experience as Paula. Another person phoned seeking an exorcist! Sometimes I wonder about how fear takes us into a dark place. These may seem extreme cases, but they are not uncommon. I have been challenged too. Everyone seems to express certain feelings of emptiness and loneliness. It is important to remember that hope is there as we yearn for the day when "normality" will return even though it will be an entirely new type of "normal."

Here in the parish we try to meet the challenges related to COVID. For the rest of this year we have planned to put enthusiasm into small new initiatives – finding ways of cheering the people up in the parish, the city, in Matamoros and in the villages in Mexico up the river. We all need to remember to laugh, feel good and reach out to our neighbors, taking one day at a time as we heal ourselves and others.

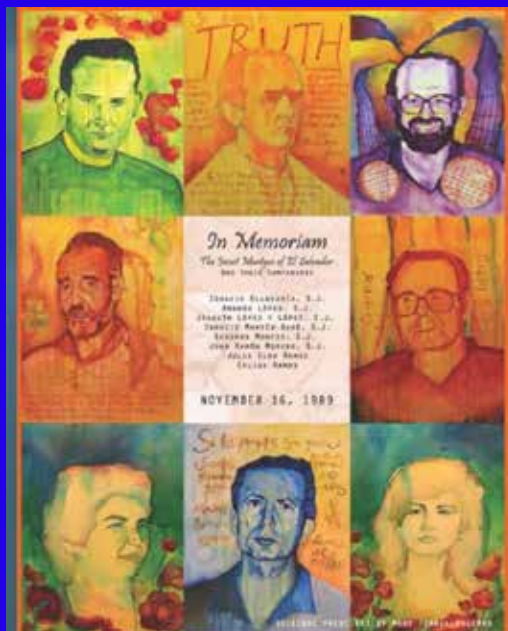
Right: Remembering the deceased



Above: Helping our neighbors



Above: Mariachis – entertainment to lift our spirits



On November 16, 1989, Ellacuría, S.J., Ignacio Martín-Baró, S.J., Segundo Montes, S.J., Juan Ramón Moreno, S.J., Joaquín López y López, S.J., Amando López, S.J., Celina Ramos and Elba Ramos were killed.

May their persistent witness for justice in El Salvador which cost them their lives continue to inspire work for justice in the United States and around the world.

Read more about their lives and legacy...

- [The Jesuit Martyrs of El Salvador](#)

- [Jesuit Post: The Jesuit Martyrs of El Salvador: Lessons to the Faithful](#)

Marist School

With Thanksgiving around the corner, we give thanks to all in the Marist School (Atlanta, Georgia) community who serve others. Community service is an important Marist School value and an integral component of each academic year. Below are two brief reports on recent student-led service projects that are making a difference.

Recently, Lincoln Parker '21, along with his family and the Bok family, organized Trick or Treat Hunger, an event where food was collected for the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Lincoln and his family started the project 11 years ago, and since then they have collected food for 74,582 meals. This year, the Foundations (7th and 8th grade) theology teachers turned the project into a service-learning opportunity. Their classes studied poverty and hunger in America, and students were invited to join the Trick or Treat Hunger effort in their neighborhoods. Marist School served as one of the collection sites, and 47 barrels of food were collected here for the Atlanta Community Food Bank!

On Friday, November 13, 2020, members of the Marist Environment Club worked together to clean up Nancy Creek, a stream in northern Atlanta, Georgia. More than a dozen students picked up trash and refuse along this waterway that winds through part of Marist School's campus.

The vision at Marist School is to provide a world-class education that prepares students to lead and serve with compassion, integrity, and a sense of purpose. We are thankful for these highlighted students and others at Marist who embody the Marist spirit and values through their service!





NDV Students Get Out the Vote!

by Desiree Almendares and Bernadette Lorda
Ecole Notre Dame des Victoires

The Student Council at Ecole Notre Dame des Victoires (NDV) in San Francisco, California sponsored a mock presidential election on Friday, October 30, 2020. In keeping with NDV's learning expectations to be responsible citizens, the students in grades 2 through 8 participated in the virtual election. The mock election provided teachers and students with a forum to discuss the history of voting rights, the election process, and the importance of respecting and listening to opposing points of view. The right to vote and the responsibilities of voting provided an important lesson for the school to build on civics education.



FAITH SPEAKS TO UN75

Members of the Religious at United Nations (RUN) are Catholic Religious NGOs who are accredited to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This [video](#) presents their congratulations to the United Nations on its 75th Anniversary!

"Jubilee for the Earth" is a podcast mini-series about biodiversity and our sacred story produced by the Missionary Society of St. Columban. Over the course of six episodes, you will explore the beauty of biodiversity and the threats it faces around the world. Grounded in Catholic Social Teaching, this podcast shows how caring for our common home is fundamental to our lives as people of faith and as global citizens.

JUBILEE FOR THE EARTH

A Podcast on Biodiversity & Our Sacred Story



November is Black Catholic History Month!

The Marists recognize many black Catholics who have contributed to the Catholic faith around the world.

We invite you to listen to the following podcast of Sr. Thea Bowman, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration and Servant of God. She was the first Black woman to address the US Conference of Catholic Bishops in 1989 and a critical and valued voice for everyone in the Catholic Church.



From 1990 until 1996, Marists ministered to the Lakota people on the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota. They served five parishes in an area approximately the size of Rhode Island. The Marists encountered issues such as poverty, alcoholism, unemployment, and limited access to basic services (such as stores and medical care). During their relatively brief time in this mission, the Marists witnessed to the Gospel and worked to bring greater unity to the Native- and European-Americans in the area. *(Historical Marist content & pictures provided by Susan J. Illis, Archivist, Society of Mary US Province)*



St. Aloysius Church and Hall, Bullhead, South Dakota. This church served 50 families, with 479 Catholics.



Community of Bullhead, South Dakota. The large building in the photo is St. Aloysius Church. Approximately 50 dwellings provided housing for 600 people. There were no businesses in the community, just one small store, forcing residents to travel 30 miles for other services.

In 2017 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, American bishops unanimously approved pursuing the cause for canonization of Nicholas William Black Elk, Sr. A member of the Oglala branch of the Lakota Sioux, Black Elk was born around 1865 on the Little Powder River in what is now Wyoming. Through his interaction with Jesuit priests, he converted to the Catholic faith and was baptized on December 6, 1904, the feast of St. Nicholas. The bishop said that for 50 years Black Elk led others to Christ often melding his Lakota culture into his Christian life. [View](#) this short video by New Group Media to learn more about this Servant of God, Nicholas Black Elk.