

# Society of Mary Marists in the United States



May 28, 2021

## Instituting the Ministry of Catechist

A reflection by Elizabeth Piper (National Formation Leader for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd; Co-Leader of World Lay Marist; Director of Faith Formation, Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church, Atlanta, Georgia) on Pope Francis preparing to formally institute the "ministry of catechist."

On Tuesday, May 11, 2021 the Apostolic letter by the Supreme Pontiff, Francis was released Instituting the Ministry of Catechist, "Antiquum Ministerium". This document recognizes the work of men and women laity that have led a life of evangelization and formation by instituting the ministry of catechist. This formalization of the role of laity in the Catholic Church as teachers and evangelist in the home and communities where they live, and work give formalization to work that has been done for centuries.

*Catechists are called first to be expert in the pastoral service of transmitting the faith as it develops through its different stages from the initial proclamation of the kerygma to the instruction that presents our new life in Christ and prepares for the sacraments of Christian initiation, and then to the ongoing formation that can allow each person to give an 'accounting of the hope within them' (cf. 1 Pet 3:15)*

The Marists understand the importance of laity in the church by recognizing the laity as one of the branches of the Society of Mary. This lay branch was developed to proclaim the word of God in their homes and work not only through the gospel but through how they lived their life. The Pope calls catechists to be a witness, teacher and companion of the faith. They are to carry out this mission through prayer, study and participation in the life of the community. Lay Marists live this mission in their home and community.



*Catechesis of the Good Shepherd groups*

What the ministry of Catechesis gives lay men and women catechists is the support from the church in their call as teacher of the faith. It gives catechists the authority, in the church, as teachers of the faith that has been reserved for those who are ordained. Now, laity can exercise their baptismal call with this authority. Parishes, through this ministry, should focus resources to the formation of the laity, supporting them in their mission and recognition of their role in the parish as teachers of the faith.

*Those called to the instituted ministry of Catechist be Lay men and women of deep faith and human maturity, active participants in the life of the Christian community, capable of welcoming others, being generous and living a life of fraternal communion. They should also receive suitable biblical, theological, pastoral and pedagogical formation to be competent communicators of the truth. It is essential that they be faithful co-workers with priests and deacons prepared to exercise their ministry wherever it may prove necessary and motivated by true apostolic enthusiasm.*

The creation of Ministry of Catechist by Pope Francis welcomes lay people into the community of church leaders given authority by their priests and Bishops to fulfill their baptismal call.



## Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month

by Susan J. Illis, Archivist, Archives of the Society of Mary, US Province

In May, the United States celebrates Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month (also proclaimed as Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month). The Society of Mary has worked with the people of these regions both in their homelands and in the United States. Marist Saint Peter Chanel is the patron saint of Oceania and the Marists were the first missionaries to travel to that area.

We are happy to highlight the work of our Marist parishes in Atlanta, Georgia and Tampa, Florida with the Asian American communities.



### The Indonesian Community at Our Lady of the Assumption Atlanta, Georgia

The Indonesian community has worshiped at Our Lady of the Assumption (OLA) since 2000. The Indonesian community held their first Mass at OLA in June 2000, under the pastorship of Rev. James McGoldrick, SM (1941-2015). Since then, they have held Mass every Sunday. While the COVID-19 has changed their worship schedule, they typically have weekend activities including Bible study, rosary prayer, community service, charismatic prayer and RCIA in addition to Mass said by either visiting priests who speak Indonesian or English-speaking priests from OLA or the Atlanta Archdiocese.

Fr. Jim Duffy, SM, the Society of Mary and OLA parish members have been shepherds and supporters of the community for more than two decades.

*Yearly Station of the Cross at Stone Mountain (Georgia), 2021*



*OLA Indonesian Gala Dinner, 2019*



*Indonesia Independence Day Celebration, 2015*



*AAPI month, continued on next page*



## The Filipino Community at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church (OLPH), Tampa, Florida

by Alfredo Figueroa, OLPH Parish Secretary and Members of the OLPH Filipino Community

The presence of the Filipino community at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Ybor City had been sporadic prior to the formal devotions that followed in the 1990's. This consisted of a few individuals who were mostly nurses that worked at Tampa General Hospital.

The formal participation of the Philippine community started with Filipino-American Tampa residents, Angel and Joji Vicedo, who were devotees to Sto. Nino del Mundo, along with a few others who held private devotions at the residents of Alice Bartolazo and at the St. Michael Shrine in Tarpon Springs.

As Joji remembers, it was in 1991 when she and her husband, Angel were looking for a church that could house their Sto. Nino del Mundo Prayer Group.

"One day we were driving around Ybor City, and luckily we saw this beautiful church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help", Joji recalls. "We attended Sunday Mass and afterwards we met two Marist priests, Fr. Thomas Stokes and Fr. Robert Fahey, and introduced ourselves. We asked them if they do a Novena for OLPH, and we were informed that it was being done in the morning by the Ladies Guild group. We noted our desire to have our Novena every Wednesday night at 7PM. Likewise, we mentioned to him about Sto. Nino del Mundo Prayer Group activities that entailed bringing the statue to families weekly for the family prayer meetings and OLPH Novena."



Fr. Thomas Stokes with  
Gloria and Gerardo Biaquis

"We also asked Fr. Stokes if we could have a special Mass for Sto. Nino in the month of October at 3pm, with a procession outside the

church following the Mass," she continued.

"They agreed to everything. From then on, every year a Mass is celebrated in October for the feast of Sto. Nino. It is always well attended by the Filipino community of Tampa Bay, devotees to Sto. Nino, Mama Mary, Holy Family and OLPH parishioners."



Filipino ladies with Mama Mary (May 2021)

Since being welcomed at the parish, the Filipino community has established a more permanent presence at OLPH, actively involved in the weekly services, participating in all its events and fundraisers, including significant contributions for the construction of the OLPH parish hall (now Stokes Hall).

In 2002, Filipino-American Nwick Ramiro Pacis was hired to form and direct the OLPH Ladies Choir which consisted of about 90% Filipinos. The choir provided the music for the Sunday English Masses and special feast days. A year later, Filipino baritone Vic



OLPH Ladies Choir

Omila, Jr. was also asked to cantor the Saturday anticipated Masses. This revival of the OLPH Music Ministry also paved the way to various musical events like fundraiser concerts, house-to-house caroling during Christmas and yearly celebration of Simbang Gabi (Night Masses), a Philippine traditional novena to herald the celebration of Christmas.



*OLPH Simbang Gabi reception (2015)*

In 2004 the Filipino-American devotion began to San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila, a Filipino saint who was canonized in 1987. Filipino-American Gloria Biaquis, who was also a member of the Filipino prayer group at OLPH, witnessed the canonization in Rome and was inspired to bring the devotion to OLPH. She and her husband, Gerardo, have been housing a statue of San Lorenzo in their home in Tampa after a recent visit back home in the Philippines. Upon the recommendation of the Filipino Prayer Group, the promotion of the devotion to Sal Lorenzo Ruiz started. In 2005, with the support of Fr. Stokes, San Lorenzo was formally enthroned at OLPH and his feast day is celebrated at the last Sunday of September every year.



*Gerardo & Gloria Biaquis at St. Lorenzo Ruiz celebration*

The Bukas-Loob sa Diyos - BLD (Open in Spirit to God) Ministry, was formed in September of 2010, when Evan and Joie Pangilinan, Joe and Vangie Francisco, and Norma Lacsamana (all Filipinos who were friends from the same mother ministry) moved to Tampa and found each other in the city. To date, BLD holds a weekly praise and worship service every Thursday and coordinates a Healing Mass every 1st Thursday of the month. The ministry also holds yearly Life in the Spirit Seminars (LSS) and Marriage Enrichment (ME) retreats for OLPH parishioners and other parishes. BLD now has a multi-cultural membership but is predominantly Filipino.

The presence of the Filipino community at OLPH continues to thrive to this day. At the regular Sunday English Masses, Filipino-Americans volunteer as readers (Melly Hubbard and Dae Simeon), altar servers (Larry Cruz), coordinators (Francia and Ernie Roque) and even projector operators (Michelle Simeon and Evan Pangilinan). They also serve as elders in the Parish Council. Although temporarily discontinued due to the

COVID-19 pandemic, the weekly novena Masses continue to be celebrated at the OLPH Chapel on Wednesdays, the annual celebrations of the Feasts of Sto. Nino and San Lorenzo Ruiz and tribute Mass to Mama Mary in May continue to be celebrated and the Filipino presence of OLPH's music ministry is evident at its weekly Masses.



Duluth, Georgia

## An 8th Grade Tradition at Notre Dame Academy

by Angela Winchester, Middle School Religion Teacher at Notre Dame Academy

At Notre Dame Academy we have an annual 8th grade tradition to close out our last month of school, Mary's month of May, to enjoy a refreshing deep dive into our Marist Way curriculum.

We begin each seminar with prayer, scripture readings, fellowship, and conclude with group discussions and contemplative self-reflection. Our young ladies and gentlemen are divided into small faith groups and are gently invited to slow down the business of their lives to taste and see a generous helping of "A certain way."

This deep dive into our charism allows us to gather as a community of believers to discover what it means to not only wear her name, Notre Dame on their uniforms and spirit wear, but to receive the awareness that they are graciously called by our blessed Mother to her patient and loving heart.

They are invited to make personal connections to what it means to enter into a mystical communion to think, feel, judge, and act in ways that allow the light of Christ to shine through them. They recall who in their lives served them as instruments of mercy throughout their tender years. Each year it makes my heart smile when they quietly whisper to themselves our beloved principal's name, "Mrs. Derucki."

In turn they realize how in their spiritual maturity, they are now called to carry their charism out into the various places their paths may take them, even long after they leave our care.

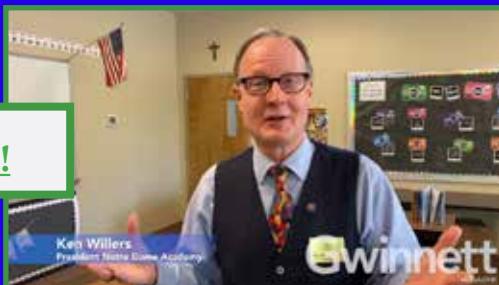
To conclude our unit, we enjoy a modest tradition of gathering in Mary's garden behind our school. We begin with student led prayer and then students are asked to make a single connection to which charism resonates most in their heart. I then ask them to gather a simple smooth rock found below an outdoor cross, the same place they gathered to share in their traditional living rosary at the beginning of May. How appropriate that we return to this same quiet space to conclude our journey together.

They take their carefully selected rock and decorate it with the charism they find is most dear and personal. They are then asked to place the beautifully decorated pebbles at the feet of our Mother Mary as a lasting love offering, their prayer, their personal intention before departing.

Please enjoy these beautiful pictures of our children in the garden, tasting and trusting that God will continue to bless them and hold them in the palm of His hand.



**The Best-Kept Secret in Education!**



**Congratulations to the Marist School Class of 2021 and  
your families!**

As you go out into the world, remember to "be Marist" and follow this advice from Sean McVay '04, Los Angeles Rams head coach, Marist School Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, and the 2021 commencement speaker: "Have joy in the journey."



Pontiac, Michigan

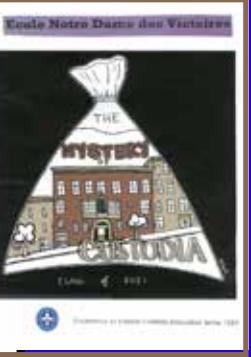


**NDPMA's Baccalaureate Mass and  
Twenty-Seventh Commencement**



**NDV's 8th grade musical, The Mystery of Custodia, premiered on May 14, 2021. This was NDV's 40th annual musical, 2nd virtual musical, and first Zoom musical.**

**[Click HERE to watch.](#)**



**Highlights from a very fun cast party and premier of the 8th grade musical!**



## Marist Year of Vocations

On November 15, 2021 the Marist Vocation Year will be launched. The Think Tank for vocations is preparing this year, and has now launched the logo.

Central is the Marian monogram, referring both to Mary and to the Society.



The letters are set in a circle, symbolizing the fullness of life. The vocations year is not only about seeking religious vocations but also enriching, encouraging and assisting both confreres and young people in their search for the fullness of life promised by the Lord.

The crescent moon, as in Patristic tradition, refers to the mysterium lunae: dying (waning), generating (waxing) and giving birth (full moon). Mary as the God-bearer is identified with the Church, called to be maternal and life-giving.

The crescent moon also represents a net, referring to our call to be fishers of people. The flame represents the Holy Spirit coming down on us.

### Marist History and Spirituality for the General House Staff

Recently the members of the General House staff attended their first class on Marist History and Spirituality. Some of the employees have been working many years in the General House, others have joined more recently. All were invited to this series of meetings led by Fr John Harhager, SM to enrich their familiarity with Marist history and spirituality. The initiative for the meetings was welcomed with enthusiasm and gratitude by all.



Monica Sebastiani, Sophie Janssens, Giovanni Manozzi, Giselle Verzo, Paolo Mancinelli, John Harhager, Aline Gamberale, Ronaldo Quindoza, Johanes Verzo and Gabriella Pierrelouis.



### May as the Month of Mary: A Reflection from Monsignor Vito Buonanno

The month of May is a designated time for the faithful to honor Mary in their devotions and celebrate her queenship. Though the exact origins are unknown, this tradition dates back centuries. As we recognize Mary in a special way this month, Monsignor Vito Buonanno answers some common questions about Marian devotion.