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<http://academic2.marist.edu/foy/maristsall/>

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### Writers for this issue:

[Patrick Gallagher](#), 1953, shares his thoughts on the phasing out of the Marists All publication and thanks the editors for their work in maintaining the contacts with so many of us.

[Augusto Hacthoun](#), who studied with the Marist Brothers in Cuba from 1951 to 1961, asks our help to locate Cuban Marists who studied at Marist College in the early sixties.

[Brother John McDonnell](#), 1959, thanks MaristsAll donors towards the scholasticate in Kenya and updates us on the progress there.

[George McGuire](#), 1952, notes the death of his brother John McGuire, 1954, on January 1, 2011.

[Joseph McMahon](#), 1951, mourns the closing of Marists All and suggests continuation in a new format.

[Brother Steve Milan](#), 1987, announces a new promotional video by the Marist Young Adult Program

[Augustine Nolan](#), 1948, announces work by the editors to furnish lists of B/brothers buried in Poughkeepsie, Esopus, and elsewhere to be found in the [essay](#) section of this website

[Bill Reger-Nash](#), 1961, tells us how much he and his wife enjoyed visiting "Oke" O'Connell and Ray Landry at their meetings held this summer in New England.

[Vincent Poisella](#), 1958, *Editor*, shares his thoughts on his recent experiences as editor of MaristsAll.

[Brother Seán Sammon](#), 1966, shares his thoughts with us on the occasion of the 125 anniversary of the arrival of Marist Brothers in the United States.

[Gene Zirkel](#), 1953, reminisces on the many benefits of Marists All and hopes the publication can continue in some way.

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From **VINCE POISELLA, EDITOR:** Over the last few months, I have had the honor of participating in five distinct activities involving Marists and former Marists.

In August my wife and I drove north to join John "Oke" O'Connell's gathering of Brothers and former brothers at Ray Landry's residence in Methuen, MA.

In September the Greater Marist Family met again, as it has been meeting for almost twenty-five years, at Mount St. Michael for a picnic in the garth.

Later that month, at the Marist College Homecoming event, the Brothers and former Brothers who had been graduated from the college fifty years ago were honored at the Heritage Dinner held in the Cabaret at the Student Center.

Two weeks later, a Mass celebrated at St. Jean Baptiste Church in Manhattan marked the 125th anniversary of the Marist Brothers' presence in the United States.

At each of these events, the excitement, bonding, and common experience that we call "Marist Spirit," begun by Marcellin Champagnat, a French priest, now a saint, stirred the participants in a special and tangible way and spread among the Brothers themselves, their families, friends, and students as well as the former Marist Brothers and their wives.

The theme of the anniversary celebration tied together all of those experiences: "We Remember. We Celebrate. We Believe."

How wonderful! How special!

As we near the ending of *Marists All* as we know it, I pray that we can continue to connect in some way over the years to come. As of now, we are searching for the proper vehicle to continue over the transition period of the next few issues.

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From **PATRICK GALLAGHER (1953)**: Some thoughts on the forthcoming phasing out of *Marists All* Yes, I could see that it was getting a little difficult to elicit newsy contributions, possibly because almost all of us are becoming more inactive in our various phases of retirement. There might not be that much to share with others.

Ten, fifteen, and twenty years ago there was much to tell about our careers and families; readers, I would think, avidly showed interest in how those we taught with and lived with over the years were faring with families and the necessary transitions to new life styles. Possibly even higher interest levels were accorded those memories of the monks, of the years of training, of our shared activities, and of the instances when Marist humor and solid laughs were front and center.

In reflecting on those episodes, I cannot but say how lucky I was to know and have worked with so many dedicated guys, who in their later lives, either as a Brother or brother, were remarkable for the quality and ingenuity of their involvement

in doing good with the strongest dedication and commitment. It seemed to me that those who stayed in the Marists were known for their values lived out in the full scope of Marist life. I was always amazed that those who chose a different road showed those same values in their careers, proving that while no longer in the Marists, the Marists were always in them.

The number is legion, but I think of three: Barney Sheridan, Rich LaPietra, and Mike OShea. Their Marist experience imbedded in them those qualities, I feel, which led them to tackle the range of projects that have touched so many needy people. Many others learned so much in their Marist years about good teaching and continued on for their careers to exemplify the best in the classroom.

I always felt so buoyed up by the news, by the very tangible feeling for one another, but also by the even stronger ties that grew with the passage of time.

Last week at the picnic I felt so very close to the monks from Champagnat who were living their lives out in the Marist way; I felt closer to them in their casual telling of some health problems. I marveled at how some still wanted to contribute to the Marist work despite flagging energy and mobility.

It has been sixty-one years since I first arrived in Esopus. That year began my close fraternal association with the Marists, and I am more proud of that connection than anything else I have achieved in later years. Few people are blessed to spend so much time, to remain in close contact through their youth, their middle years, and now in those golden years, with such really good guys.

In the near future, *Marists All* will cease to publish, but it certainly has achieved its mission to keep that family together for mutual support. As the Romans would have said it: *Euge, euge, or well done*, to Dave, Gus, Vinny, Rich, Rob, and the others. (P.O. Box 310, Springtown, PA 18081; 610-346-6637; [gpatrickgallagher11@verizon.net](mailto:gpatrickgallagher11@verizon.net))

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From **JOSEPH MCMAHON (1951)**: It is with regret that I read that *Marists All* will be closing shop. Let me run an idea before you for your consideration. I have just launched an interactive web site called Vision Exchange, which is an adjunct to the web site [www.visioncircles.net](http://www.visioncircles.net).

The mechanics of Vision Exchange are similar to Facebook; however, as the name Vision Exchange indicates, the aim is different. On Vision Exchange members can set up their own groups. I think that it would be easy to shift the membership of *Marists All* to Vision Exchange so that the dialogue could continue. The group could be private with the option of inviting in new members. In short, Vision Exchange could be used to keep the Marist dialogue going. (36-11 217 Street, Bayside, NY 11361-2212; [jjmcmj@aol.com](mailto:jjmcmj@aol.com))

*(Joe McMahon offers a vehicle for the continuation on-line for Marists All. This is a very viable possibility to allow Marists All to continue by providing a conduit of connectedness for our readers. We are continuing our exploration. Editor.)*

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From **GENEZIRKEL (Louis Francis) (1953)**: I turn eighty this year. Therefore, I understand all too well the concerns of those who produce *Marists All*. But, as a recipient of the multitude of benefits that I have received from *Marists All*, I strongly urge that it continue in some form (and not be taken over by something else).

Through *Marists All* I was connected to the annual Mount picnics and the July retreats in Poughkeepsie. Now that I have moved to Florida, I will certainly miss both events. I would hate to miss the newsletter, also. Through this trinity of newsletter-picnic-retreat, I was reconnected with many people whom I admired and loved while I was a Brother.

Also, I was connected to many whom I did not previously know and to their wonderful wives — daughters-in-law of Marcellin, as Betty Perreault so aptly put it.

Many friendships flowered, and many memories were relived. But more important, these new friends helped me to grow spiritually. They helped me to realize that I was still a Marist, a brother with a little **b**. I discovered just how much, how deeply, my time with the Brothers influenced my life.

Maybe *Marists All* has to be smaller; maybe it has to come out less often; maybe it has to be emailed only. (Though I hope not!) But I pray that it continues until those of us involved are down to our last Marist.

I extend fond regards to all my friends, especially Dave, Gus, Vinny, Rich, and Rob. I thank you for all that you have done for me over the years. You are in my thoughts, in my heart, and in my prayers. (Pipers Glen Estates, 6068 Golf Villas Drive, Boynton Beach, FL; 631-655- 6426; [genezirk@gmail.com](mailto:genezirk@gmail.com))

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From **BR. JOHN McDONNELL (1959)**: In a recent edition of *Marists All*, I updated you on our Marist work at the MIC, our scholasticate in Nairobi, Kenya. Since then, many readers have assured us of their prayer and have helped us out financially. Please accept our hearty, heartfelt thanks for this generosity. As I mentioned, every penny donated goes directly to assist the very poor kids our Brothers are working with in Nairobi. We bring our benefactors to our God each morning at Eucharist.

On a personal note, I returned to the USA for medical checkups after last September's cancer surgery. Unfortunately, I'm not able to return to Kenya due to some serious medical problems that necessitate treatment. (Ah, the "Golden Years"!) Though disheartened because I can't return to a ministry I love, I'm blessed with Christ's inner peace, and I can't wait to see what grace our God of Surprises has in store for me next. In seventy years, God has never disappointed me.  
([johnmcdonnell58@hotmail.com](mailto:johnmcdonnell58@hotmail.com))

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From **BILL REGER-NASH (1961)**: My lovely bride and I just returned from a weeklong pilgrimage to Maine and Massachusetts. We joined John Oke OConnell and a raft of former brothers in and around Booth Bay Harbor, Maine, for some of the best scenery, seafood, and camaraderie in the United States. Although I had not seen Oke since 1965 when we canoed Lake George, he barely missed a beat in extending a Maine version of *aloha*. He and his wife Sandy could not have been more gracious hosts. They wined, dined, and toured us in a selfless manner.

Thereafter, we traveled to Methuen, Massachusetts, to the residence of cook/poet Ray Landry, who provided an idyllic lakeside setting and good food. The Marist Spirit was blatantly evident in Oke, George Bagnell, George Conboy, Artie Lavigne, Ray Landry, Pat Murphy, Frank Backus, Ernie Beland, John Brady, Al Doerr, Moe LaChance, and Vince Poisella.

Oke had been encouraging me for years to join in on the fun. I am glad that I finally did and am happy to report that my wife enjoyed the experience as much as I.

Wherever you are in your life journey, I encourage you to join Oke and Ray Landry in August 2012 for another taste of the Marist Spirit. (304 Dream Catcher Circle, Morgantown, WV 26508; 304-293-0763; [wreger@hsc.wvu.edu](mailto:wreger@hsc.wvu.edu))

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From **GEORGE McGUIRE** (Joseph Gilmary) **(1952)**: My brother, John McGuire (Br Thomas Andrew 1954) died of lung cancer on January 1, 2011.

After graduating from Marist College, John taught at Mount St. Michael and Cardinal Hayes. After leaving the Marists, John obtained a masters degree in mathematics from NYU and taught in Massapequa, Long Island, high schools until his retirement.

John married Carol Brown, who also taught in the math department. John and Carol have three children and six grandchildren.

John was an avid boater, berthed at Northport, Long Island, and for many years spent spring vacation sailing in the Virgin Islands. Al Doerr and Eddie Myles remained close friends and shared some adventures sailing in the Islands. John also remained close to Des Kelly and the Kelly family. John felt great respect and affection for many of the Brothers he had known in training and in the schools.

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From **BR. STEVE MILAN (1987)**: The Marist Young Adult Program is proud to announce the release of its new promotional video, "Keeping the Marist Connection." The video, featuring interviews with Danny Bradley, Chris Clesca, Matt Fallon, Jacklyn Fortich, and Katie Murphy, highlights the spirit and purpose of the Marist Young Adult Program. The video is available on You Tube as well as on the Marist Young Adult website: [www.MaristYoungAdult.com](http://www.MaristYoungAdult.com).

The Marist Young Adult Program continues to keep Marcellin's dream alive by inviting interested young adults between the ages of eighteen and thirty to further explore their Christian faith. Through spiritual, social, and service activities, both online and in person, young adults can experience an alive and vibrant faith rooted in the Marist tradition. (Box 197, Esopus, NY 12429 [smilanfms@aol.com](mailto:smilanfms@aol.com))

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From **AUGUSTO HACTHOUN**: Thanks for the opportunity to reach the wider Marist community. By the way, I hope that *MaristsAll* continues its informative and gallant run in some form -- for at least another twenty-five years.

I often say that I was brought up by the Marists. I studied at Colegio Champagnat in Havana, Cuba, from 1951 to 1961. That last year, I left the country; soon after, my school was nationalized and my teachers expelled. The story is familiar to you.

It is, after all, a big and caring family. Perhaps you met and still remember twelve Marist Brothers who came from Cuba



and were guests of freshly named Marist College in 1961. If you do remember any of them, or stories about their stay at the College, please let me know.

A very small group of us old boys brought up by the Marists have been depositing collected and collective facts, photos, and recollections in a private blog, much like you have been doing with *Marists All*. Meaningful savings, we think. Thanks to the diligence of Brother Brice Byzynski at Esopus, and the fidelity of Brother Rafael Martin at Miami, I have now a reliable list of the Marists who came from Cuba to Poughkeepsie half a century ago. I believe only three of them taught at my school, but they did not teach me or my band of friends. Even so, their Marist lives informed our student days and need to be part of that spiritual, intellectual, and psychological reckoning most of us do at some time, perhaps all the time.

The list below has given names and surnames and, in brackets, their religious names. Br. Brice kindly told me of his teaching days alongside Francisco Narganes and of his untimely death. His eulogy appeared in *Marists All*. I have corresponded with his widow and with another one of his Marist colleagues. I have no information about the rest. These four Brothers continued their Marist careers; the last one died in Ecuador in the late nineties: Enrique Angulo Arroyo [*Enrique Gabriel*]; Feliciano Arroyo Lozano [*Gregorio Miguel*]; Agustin Guezmes Garcia [*Ildefonso Raimundo*]; Teodoro Merino Alcalde [*Teodoro Maria*] + Loja, 1997. Recently, I reached out to the three Brothers who live in El Salvador and hope to hear from them.

The following eight brothers withdrew from the Congregation. That year is noted: Manuel Luis Ibanez [*Sixto Maria*] 1963; Jose A. Laso de Prado [*Pedro Heraclio*] 1964; Ignacio Garcia Alaez [*Ignacio Vitalino*] 1972; Alfredo Molinero Olea [*Alfredo Miguel*] 1973; Felipe Ruiz Alfonso [*Angel Gregorio*] 1976; Francisco Narganes Merino [*Emilio Santiago*] 1976; Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1997; Ignacio Lobo Puebla [*Basilio Ignacio*] 1977; Manuel Sigaran Turcios [*Manuel Maria*] 1978.

I hope that reviewing the list and informing me of your recollections is not burdensome. I look forward to your

comments. (a.hacthoun@gmail.com; 130 Academy Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601)

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**Excerpts from a Reflection Delivered at the Eucharistic  
Liturgy Celebrating 125 years  
of Marist Life and Mission  
in the United States  
St. Jean Baptiste Church, New York  
October 8, 2011  
Seán D. Sammon, FMS**

Marcellin Champagnat was a man in love with God who at age twenty-seven brought to life a dream that he had carried in his heart ever since the time he and some fellow seminarians made a promise at the chapel at Fourvière in Lyons, France. They vowed to establish a movement made up of sisters and priests, brothers and lay men and women, a movement aimed at giving a Marian face to the Church of post-revolutionary nineteenth century Europe and teaching the true meaning of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

As part of this larger vision, Marcellin was intent on establishing a community of brothers whose sole task would be to tell children and young people just how much Jesus Christ loved them. How did he begin? Modestly, to say the least! He had an old house, two uneducated recruits, and no money. And yet the dream of this simple country priest and saint has grown so that today there are just shy of 4000 brothers and approximately 40,000 lay men and women working with 650,000 young people each year in 79 countries. Yes, with hard work and the will to do so, dreams do come true, giving us the hope that we can change our world.

Some insist that the present moment in religious life in this country is marked by diminishment more than anything else: fewer members and ever advancing age. I see it differently and believe that the dream of Marcellin Champagnat continues to unfold in new and surprising ways. First of all, recent years have given us the great gift of lay partnership, and we are so

much richer for it. Lay partnership has always been there, and perhaps we have been late to recognize its presence, but these post-Vatican II years have taught us all that the charism that came into our world through Marcellin Champagnat belongs to the Church at large and not solely to the Marist Brothers. So many lay men and women share the dream that gave life and breath to the founder and his mission.

Second, today the process of renewal invites us once again to become involved with the Holy Spirit. In taking up that challenge, though, let us not forget that Marcellin's troubles began when he allowed himself to be caught up in the Spirit of God. For taking God seriously is never easy and depending upon what the Almighty has in mind, it can change our lives. Nevertheless, the founder gave God free reign, and in time the indwelling of the Spirit of God became his charism, and he began to do things that surprised everyone. For example, he built the Hermitage when he had no money and few recruits. More than a few wondered if he had gone mad.

Today, unfortunately, some of us who publicly profess our firm resolve to live radically the gospel message as the aim and purpose of our lives cite prudence, counsel caution, discretion, and good sense; we call attention to economic realities, and we worry about retirement. One must wonder: who has gone mad! And so, this afternoon we need to ask ourselves this question: Do we really believe that the Spirit of God, so active and alive in Marcellin Champagnat, longs to live and breathe in you and me today? And if we do believe it, are we willing to give God's Spirit free reign?

Marcellin founded his Little Brothers to make Jesus known and loved among poor children and young people in particular. Having experienced first-hand the love of Jesus and Mary, the founder wanted to give that gift to all whom he met but especially those beginning the journey of life.

And his approach to education was revolutionary. Wanting his early brothers to make a significant difference in the lives of the young people entrusted to them, he encouraged them to form a type of relationship with those entrusted to their care

that was uncommon in early 19th century France. "Love your students," he said, "pray for them, and work to earn their respect."

This afternoon, these same challenges go out to all of us associated with the Institute, brothers and lay partners alike. And so, we must ask ourselves: are the institutions and other works in which we serve committed to helping young men and women to make Jesus the center and passion of their lives? We can only achieve this end if we are in the midst of young people, willing to give them our time without counting the cost, and doing it in Marys way: with simplicity.

The qualities of zeal, a spirit of faith, endurance, and the absolute audacity to take on great challenges were surely evident in the life of Marcellin Champagnat and during the founding days of the Marist project on this continent. They need to be equally visible in each of us today: brothers and lay partners alike.

For the last forty years, we have used one human means after another in our attempts to renew our way of life. But facilitation, pastoral plans, and feasibility studies are but means to an end. For it is a profound revolution of the heart and faith alone that is needed to get the job done. Religious life was never meant to be balanced, professional, with regular hours, clear job descriptions, and all sorts of guarantees. Rather it was meant to entail enough sacrifice to be worth the gift of our lives.

And so today as we mark these 125 years of Marist life and mission in the United States, let us pray that the Spirit of God lights in us the fire of renewal. Let us pray, too, for the courage to be as bold, as daring, and as in love with God as was the simple country pastor and son of Mary named Marcellin Champagnat. May we, like him, be fire upon this earth, making Jesus known and loved among poor children and young people. Amen. (3399 North Rd, Kieran Gate House, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601; 845-575-3233) *(The full reflection can be found on the Marists All web site. Editor)* [Click here](#) to move to the complete edition.

From **GUS NOLAN (1948) and RICH FOY (1946)**: *Our Marists All editors have agreed to provide for our readers a list of those Marist Brothers who have died and are buried in either Poughkeepsie or Esopus. An addendum to the printed copy and a complete listing in the essay section on the Marists All web site will offer our readers a ready reference. [Click here](#) to move to that web site.*

**News briefs arriving too late for insertion in the printed newsletter.** [Brother Victor Serna](#) (27 May 1924 - 28 Nov 2011) and [Brother Raoul Molnar](#) (5 Nov 1940 - 28 Nov 2011) both died this Monday. They had resided at Champagnat Hall, Bronx NY. No information yet about wake, funeral Mass or burial. . Check the obituary section of the MaristsAll site, by clicking on the highlighted name to go to a brief obit.

“Oke” O’Connell reported that James Zanni (Eugene Philip ’58) died August 22, 2011, at the age of 71.

Brother Valerian Doiron ’31 died 9 December 2011 at Champagnat Hall, Bronx NY. Brother Valerian was the dean of the United States province. No details available as of 9 December 2011.

Brother Edward Vollmer ’44 died the morning of 10 December 2011 at Champagnat Hall, Bronx NY, after a long illness. Last year, Eddie celebrated his 67th year as a Marist Brother. No details available as of 10 December 2011.