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## **Greater Marist Community Picnic**

*Mount St. Michael Academy*

*September 6, 2008*

*Join with us from noon to five pm to continue the tradition of coming together to share food, drink, and Marist Spirit. Bring a dish that will feed yourselves and another as well as your beverage of choice. Visit with some old friends and see some new faces. We offer in advance a special "thank you" to the Brothers at Mount St. Michael, our gracious hosts. We're on, rain or shine!*

**From JOE GLEASON '60:** A note from David Kammer fell under my radar and just appeared, moments after I spent an hour hungrily reviewing the entire contents of the latest *Marists All*. I

cannot yet begin to express in words all it brought back, all that is still alive of our common Marist experience. In the past, I did receive two letters from John O'Connell by snail mail, and they were exceedingly welcome, although I did not act on them. I did attend Rich Foy's reception at Marist several years ago, making quiet unobtrusive visits to the cemetery in Esopus on two occasions and spending an Irish language week in Esopus, which afforded me the unexpected pleasure of meeting up with Brothers Don Nugent and Dennis Hever (May he rest in peace!). I don't know to what extent you fishermen will succeed in reeling me back in, but as I write to you, I'm experiencing an awesome tide of emotions.

I very much appreciate the efforts to reach me. If you need further contact information, or if anyone would want to know anything else about me, or my family, or my activities, I'd be happy to oblige

I offer warm greetings to anyone who may remember me. (2772 Court Street, Bellmore, NY 11710-2818; 516-826-5999; [jaynemo@hotmail.com](mailto:jaynemo@hotmail.com))

**From VINCENT BUONORA '68:** I remember members in my group from 1964 through 1968 -- forty years ago, such a very long time. **John Hunt:** John and I chopped down dead trees in Esopus. Unfortunately, one fell on his leg and broke it. John spent much of the year in a cast. I think John was interested in sociology. We had good times together. **Tom Hunt:** very intellectual and well-read, he could inspire others into understanding the meaning of plays and essays. **Bob Sweeney:** Bob was a natural leader with his outgoing sense of humor and artistic sensibilities. He taught us postulants how to sing and if we didn't learn, it wasn't his fault. One of his generous gifts was to give us classes on opera and classical music. Bob was more Italian than most Italians! **Pat Ryan:** Pat was always witty and kind. He became a therapist from what I remember. I ran into him at Hofstra later on. **Ed Ryan:** Eddie was really a good guy and a pretty good baseball player. **John Valentine Sheehan:** His name is as large as his talents. John seemed to have mastered everything: chemistry, photography, carpentry, painting and especially acting. His performances in the theatre guild were outstanding. John also had an enormous wit. I was very appreciative of the time he painted my old set of drums. When the first color didn't work, he redid it until it was right. **Chips Kubat:** Chips was like John V. in the sense that he also seemed to have learned every practical skill in life, including repairing cars and teaching driving while studying physics! Chips was known for his focused and responsible demeanor. He was also well read, especially in theology. Chips was always open to a serious conversation of issues. He also had a dry, knock-down sense of humor, especially when he was looking for someone to teach driving to others: requirement, "lack of a nervous system." **George Biolsi:** George was a natural historian and kept notes better than anyone else in Br. William's history class. I called him "scribe." He was kind and never gave me a nickname. **Al Senes, M.D:** Al was simply a prodigious talent in music, languages, stage performance, and now medicine. **Joe Hall:** Please forgive me if the name is not correct, but Joe sang in our minstrel folk group. He had a great "Johnny Mathis" voice. But Joe's outstanding talent was his diplomatic skill. He had the ability to communicate ideas to those above him. Joe belonged somewhere in the White House being chief of protocol making the big arrangement for the dignitaries. Joe also loved English history, especially studying the family trees of the English royalty. **Mike Perrino:** Mike was a novice when he showed me as a postulant all the Esopus rules. I believe he now lives in New Jersey. **Tom McGovern:** Though behind me, I remember him clearly. I read that Tom had a recent illness. If you have time to write, please do. **Paul Levandusky:** Paul was a great guy, always open to discussion. **Paul Woods:** very much like Paul L. (5963 Woodway Dr., Houston, TX 77057; [vbuonora@yahoo.com](mailto:vbuonora@yahoo.com))

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**From GENE ZIRKEL '53:** As a result of the last *Marists All*, Jack Noone and I have been discussing the pictures of the Blessed Virgin Mary that Br. Nilus had placed in the Marist College chapel. They faded away and no one that we know of has any pictures of them. Could we put

an appeal in the next *Marists All*, asking if anyone does have such a picture or pictures? They would be a great addition to the chapel web site.

Go to <http://library.marist.edu/archives/MHP/index.html> or to the chapel pages at: <http://library.marist.edu/archives/MHP/chapel/chapel.html>

**From ERNIE MIDDLEMISS:** I spent the past week exploring on the Internet many Marist sites, musing about days gone by, the time I spent during 1963-1965 at Marist Preparatory, Cold Spring, NY, and then the two months I spent at the Tyngsboro Novitiate in the fall of 1965.

During this web adventure, I realized it had been forty-five years since I first arrived at the juniorate. Probably one of the most significant events was watching the Tyngsboro property change hands. Since my life experience included an exposure to the banking and real estate industry, knowing how to get around local real estate records has made research about Tyngsboro easier. Records indicate that the Marists transferred the property to the Wang Institute in June of 1979. In February 1989, the property was transferred to Boston University, and on July 1, 2008, it was transferred to the Innovation Academy Charter School.

I recall the time I spent in Tyngsboro -- the third floor dormitory, the second floor classrooms, chapel, the ground floor recreation hall with the adjoining music rooms, swimming in the quarry, and wandering the grounds in meditation. I had spent the summer between junioriate and novitiate working in the inaugural year of the Headstart Program for the City of Lawrence, during which time I began to realize that having a family was an option. So, in the fall of '65, I took my leave and returned home to Lawrence, MA, a mere twenty miles down the Merrimack from the novitiate.

During the ensuing years I would periodically drive by the property and gaze in with fond memories of my Marist experience. Then, during the mid-nineties I had the opportunity to attend a banking seminar at the BU facility then located on the property. It was a warm, awesome experience to drive in via the front gate and experience the changes that had occurred to the main plant. A large addition had been added to the front of the building: classrooms and conference rooms. The facility was abuzz with learning: adults rejuvenating skills and others learning new ones. And then, during the spring of 2008, new things were announced for the property. A local public charter school planned to expand their programs and needed more space than they could acquire in neighboring Chelmsford.

Unfortunately, there had been some concern about the charter school's acquisition of the property, as the following article from the *Boston Globe* suggests: "...a Chelmsford public charter school is planning to relocate to town.... The Innovation Academy Charter School of Chelmsford signed a deal with Boston... Innovation Academy Charter School is a tuition free Massachusetts public charter school, serving students in grades five through nine. Currently, the school serves 350 students from over ten Massachusetts communities including Chelmsford, Lowell, Billerica, Arlington, Groton, Tewksbury, Tyngsboro, and Westford. The Innovation Academy Charter School, which is currently expanding to include a high school, has served fifth through eighth grade students for the past eleven years in Chelmsford. The middle school program is commonly referred to as the Murdoch Middle School in honor of the late Linn Murdoch, school founder and Chelmsford educator. The school will add one grade per year until the school has grades 5-12. Their website: [www.innovationcharter.org](http://www.innovationcharter.org). (86 Dorchester St, Lawrence, MA 01843; 978-975-0862; [emiddlemiss@verizon.net](mailto:emiddlemiss@verizon.net); Marist Prep (Hall); Cold Spring, NY Class of '65)

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**From GUS NOLAN, '48:** I would like to share with the readers of *Marists All* an enjoyable experience ten or twelve "snowbirds" have each winter in Florida. It is called "Theology Day"

and is sponsored in Naples by the theology department of St. John's University, Collegeville, MN. The event serves as a fundraiser as well as an information day for family and friends of the university in Florida. (I have two personal connections with St. John's: my brother is a Benedictine monk, and I have a master's degree from the university.) Each year the event takes place sometime in the second week of March and is hosted by a couple, "friends" of St John's, in the community room of their building located on the Gulf of Mexico, a beautiful scene.

This year was the third consecutive year that our group has attended: the Carolans, Kammers, LaPietras, Langs (when in town), Morrisseys, and Nolans. Each year we have heard excellent presentations on the following subjects: the Holy Trinity, the St. John Bible Project, and Catholics and Social Justice: Lazarus at Your Table. The morning presentation is followed by a Q & A session. Noontime prayer, lunch, and a Eucharistic celebration take place in the afternoon.

The group returns to the Nolans for a social hour; then at supper members of the group make various contributions: the wine, salads, main course, desserts. The day's topic is discussed and commented upon. But as is usual when our groups get together, some hilarious stories of the past are told, and even if familiar, are enjoyable. Even after over sixty years of being connected to the Marists, I hear some I had never heard before

Each year we are enriched by the insights offered by the St. John's faculty offering a source for further study. Easiest to single out is the talk on The Holy Trinity that led to the reading group of the Marist College retired faculty to read and discuss a great work, *Trinity*, by the Australian theologian, Anne Hunt.

Especially memorable was the event two years ago when Theology Day was held at the Naples Museum of Art, wherein the work being done on the St. John's Bible was explained to the group. Stunning examples of some of the pages were exhibited throughout the museum. We are enriched by this experience each year and hope that the coming years will continue to offer us such a day.

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**From JOHN MILLER '57:** It's "not the *how* I practice my spirituality, but the *why* of my practice of spirituality." When Don Mulcare approached me to share my thoughts with the participants of the Marist College Weekend of Spirituality, I had to do a double take. I wanted so much to be there in person. But the cumulative effects of a six-year battle with cancer left me unable to attend. Since leaving the Marist Brothers, most, if not all, of my days have been devoted to prayer and praise of God. The rosary has been my constant companion along with the Daily Office and daily Mass and communion when my health has permitted. God my Father gave me these opportunities along with the spiritual grace to devote over forty-five years to His Church. Actually, since 1955 when I received my calling for service, my journey has been a walk holding my Mother Mary's hand and trying to keep up with my dearest friend Jesus and what he has wanted me to do for and with His children. On some occasions I have found that Jesus can walk pretty fast.

God has always told me to practice my spirituality. Many periods of my personal, physical, and spiritual life have been filled with ups and downs. It is during these times that I have grabbed for Mary's hand and tried to shut up long enough to hear what Jesus was telling me. I think we all will agree that was the message our St. Marcellin gave to his early Brothers and the message that was passed on to all of us at Tyngsboro and Poughkeepsie in those formative years. Very honestly, I feel that I have lived as a Marist Brother all of my life by carrying with me the Marist Spirit in all my endeavors.

These last six years, though filled with pain and sickness, have been both beautiful and enriching. Three years ago, God, His Mother, and a Marist Brother led me to *Marists All* and

OB/bwat. I was able to renew many relationships and have used my "essays" to express the joy and love I have for all of you.

God has now led me to yet another ministry. He wants me to show others by my example and resignation to His Will that I can use my present health issues as ways of exposing the "seeds" of my spiritual life: that's the WHY I have it, to use it. I remember a sermon I gave years ago. I was trying to make the point that our spiritual life begins as a small seed that God plants in each of us at the time of our creation. Just as grace is freely given and out of love, so is that seed. When we initially receive the grace of the Holy Spirit at our Baptism, the water that is physically and spiritually poured allows the growth of the roots. From that time on, the rest is up to us as we begin our Journey of Faith. We are given various ups and downs to help us sprout our wings and mature. I give all the praise to God that at the age of seventy, through the blood, sweat, and tears of my cancer, I am still able to nurture my spirituality seed and bring Christ's love and compassion to others.

I am now on the final leg of my earthly journey. I eagerly await the outstretched hands of Mary, my mother, as she leads me to her Son and Eternal Bliss. Be assured that I am with all of you in the WHY of my daily Spiritual Life. Thank you for this opportunity to share.

Finally, as we begin the Church's Jubilee Year of St. Paul, May God shower all of us with His grace. May Mary watch over us and guide us as our Mother. May our Founder guide us as his Brothers. May we continue to pray for vocations to the Marists, the priesthood, and religious life.

The Journey continues.... (415 Alta Vista Ave.; Glen Dale, WV 26038-1427; 304-843-1181; brojohn2538@comcast.net)

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**From DAVID KAMMER '42:** We are "Saved by the Cross"! It was only after a good number of years that it got through to me that it was not my job to improve on my spouse! It turns out to be much better to accept her as she is: lovely, lovable, and human. Furthermore, I discovered that it is best to accept all other people as they are. Even when someone offends, be that person spouse or friend, acquaintance or stranger, normally it is better to get over the offense quickly, to accept and move on. I discovered that to accept is to forgive; the only way to really forgive is to accept, no strings attached.

Of course, parents must deal with raising their children; they must correct them and guide them. Once their children have grown to adulthood, well-adjusted parents know enough to treat their offspring as adults, to accept them as they are and to love them no matter what, unconditionally.

We all recognize that the state must maintain order by civil law and rule, including the disciplines of fines and imprisonment. However, God is not into control. The Commandments, like the Beatitudes, are really directives; true, God expects obedience but the obedience of the free and generous cooperation proper to mutual covenant.

I have come to the conclusion that, though we are God's children, God does not treat us as immature children. He treats us as adults, allows us to make our own way, provides for our well-being with graces galore and loves us unconditionally. He even encourages us to accept ourselves, to accept and forgive ourselves.

I cannot believe that God treats his adult children with punishment or threat of punishment. He is certainly "disappointed" with our unfaithfulness, but he is not vindictive. He is not into retribution. We get plenty of untoward retribution from the impact of our selfish and sinful actions. Furthermore, in not cooperating as well as in sinning, we are backtracking rather than advancing further into an enhanced divine union of an eternal life.

I cannot believe that God is into payment for sins. I do not believe that Jesus' death on the cross was payment for our sin. For long, I have found it quite difficult to comprehend any liturgy that states or seems to state or imply that we have been "saved by the cross." I have interpreted such ecclesial and liturgical statements as implying a payment for our salvation. However, I now see another meaning that may be implanted by the Spirit in the expression "saved by the cross."

In living his human life, Jesus accepted the lot that came his way, the conditions of living a human life, the tragedy of being embroiled in a sinful world that led to the cross. In quietly accepting the cross, Jesus also embraced and accepted the sinful negatives of all human living of all times. In that universal acceptance, in that sacramental forgiveness, is the unconditional love with which we are loved and saved. Thus, we are, in fact, "saved by the cross." We are saved by the acceptance and forgiveness and unconditional love of the Cross.

By the Cross we are set free. And it is by the Resurrection and the divine presence and divine accompaniment that we are lifted up and led to health and growth and union with our loving God.

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**From GENE (Louis Francis) ZIRKEL '53:** I have just returned from the 14<sup>th</sup> annual weekend at Marist College. Once again it was a wonderful experience with Brothers, former brothers, wives, widows and friends who gather together each year in Poughkeepsie to help one another grow spiritually by sharing our lives and our hearts, our laughter and our tears.

This year Brother Philip Robert Ouellette was the keynote speaker, sharing with us many stories and ideas of Saint Marcellin along with the founder's dreams and his struggles. The Marist Fathers aim, to *make the whole world Marist*, was part and parcel of his Maria/apostolic spirituality which always leads to Jesus and which is clearly intended for the laity as well as for the professed Brothers.

In addition, Pat Zirkel, Vinny Poisella, and Don Mulcare gave presentations, all of which led to lively discussions, discussions which were aided by the input of Brothers Joe Bel, John Malich and Charlie Marcellin . We were unable to secure a priest on Saturday, so Barney Sheridan led a Communion Service as a fitting ending to our annual memorial service remembering those who had gone before us: people such as Lenny Voegtle, Paul Ambrose, Donny Schmidt, Frank Casey, Pat Tyrell, etc.

Each night closed with singing the *Salve* followed by socializing a la Marcellin's 'Happy Gang' while the weekend ended with Mass and *Ever Forever*.

If learning how to better follow 'Our Good Mother' (Champagnat's *Notre Bonne Mere*) interests you, why not plan on coming next July 10<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup>? You will not be disappointed. (472 Village Oaks Lane, Babylon, NY 631-669-0273; or Jan - Apr, 516-220-5819; genezirk@optonline.net)

*(The following item is taken from a presentation given by Pat Zirkel at the recent Marist Family weekend at Marist College. The entire presentation may be read on our website.)*

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**From Pat Zirkel:** "The Virtue of Inclusion": One of the ways we can let our sun shine on all is by practicing Marist inclusion, which incorporates, but is not limited to, hospitality. I think that the real key to acting as a Marist is to be inclusive. This is both an attitude and a way of life, and of course refers to the idea that every person is in some way a member of my (Marist) family.

However, as an attitude of life, inclusiveness can go deeper than this. As human beings we sometimes instinctively operate by excluding, by saying, "I am not" rather than "I am," by saying, "Thou shalt not..." rather than "I shall..." Our laws tend to exclude, rather than include. We instinctively see problems rather than opportunities. But a change in my attitude may uncover some chance for good that was not previously apparent.

I have three stories about Marist inclusion:

The first goes back many years. My husband Gene and I, our approximately two year old son George, my mother, and Gene's sister Gloria were on our way home from a weekend spent with friends upstate when we found out we had no brakes. One moment we braked to let me out to go to a rest room, and the next, Gene put his foot down on the brake pedal, and there was nothing there. We turned out to have a leak in the brake line, and we had used the last ounce of fluid stopping that one time. We were lucky, or blessed, or both, that we weren't killed. At any rate, the Thruway service station diagnosed the problem, taped up the hose, filled up our brake fluid, and told us to go to the car dealership in Kingston (NY). The dealership knew how to fix the problem but needed to order a part, which would not arrive until the next day. They gave us a loaner car, and then we needed a place to stay. Gene said, "Let's go to Esopus; the brothers will put us up." I looked at him as if he were truly nuts. He had not been a Marist Brother for several years and had had little contact with the brothers in general. (I could no more imagine my going to my former community, the Sparkill Dominicans, with such a request than I could imagine my knocking on a stranger's door.)

We did go to Esopus, and of course, they did put us up. They also sat us down to dinner with the brothers, and Brother Henry Charles brought us a six pack of beer for our evening's entertainment. They couldn't have been nicer. It was my first encounter with the idea that once a Marist, always a Marist. But it didn't really sink in.

Later I had a somewhat different, and more personal, experience of Marist inclusion. At one time, after I had spoken up (somewhat out of turn) at a meeting in Poughkeepsie, NY, Brother Luke Driscoll took me aside and encouraged me to keep speaking, to keep sharing. It was a very affirming act on his part, as I felt that I had perhaps overstepped the bounds as a newcomer. (My remarks had not been gentle.) In encouraging me as he did, Luke brought out the best in me and put me on a course of being more involved in the group.

Later, I heard Luke giving the same encouragement to someone else, including that person in his world as he had included me! The best Marists (like Luke) exude a sense of 'being at home' in the world and invite me to share in that world. They welcome and encourage others to feel as they do.

I also think that inclusiveness is related to compassion. When we make an effort to feel with others, it is difficult to exclude them from our circle of caring.

Recently, I was at a resort on vacation. It turned out to be a rather noisy place, and I hate noise. There was constant music at any of the restaurants and calling back and forth from friend to friend and from worker to worker. All very friendly, but I felt assaulted by the constant sound. To add to this, six Europeans moved in and took up their places on the beach very near to us. They all spoke at once – everyone talking to everyone else at the same time – and chattered constantly and loudly. I was in despair.

Then I made an effort to open my mind to them, perhaps to open my heart to them a little. About the third day they were there, I passed them on the path and they were relatively quiet. It struck me that they looked relaxed, finally. At the same time I realized that they had not been relaxed up to that time. I recalled that when I first saw (and heard) them, that they appeared to be *trying* to relax. They did all the relaxed things – sat on the beach in lounges,

etc., but seemed ill at ease and out of place. Suddenly I felt for them. What are their lives like? How often do they get a chance to relax?

After that time, I felt better disposed toward them. This was because I had let them into my world instead of excluding them from it, because I had opened my heart to compassion. ([pzirkel@optonline.net](mailto:pzirkel@optonline.net))

[click here](#) for the full article on inclusion, located in the essay section of MaristAll web.

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