



**ISSUE # 69**  
**September 2002**

**THE MARIST FAMILY PICNIC  
 MOUNT SAINT MICHAEL ACADEMY  
 BRONX, NEW YORK  
 SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2002  
 NOON TO FIVE PM  
 \*\*BRING A DISH TO SHARE\*\*  
 EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

From **VINCE POISELLA**, Editor: I am grateful for the opportunity to assist the staff of Marists All by serving as editor beginning with this issue. Borrowing a metaphor from the sports world, I would like to set up some ground rules:

1. The value of this vehicle for news and views is the very fluid list of writers and readers, steeped as you are in the Marist Spirit. It not only lives, but also endures, because of the written contributions of each of you over the long run. There is no such thing as too many letters. There is no such thing as an unworthy sharing of your thoughts and feelings.. The sincere desire to communicate with the rest of the Marist Family gives each contribution great worth. Please continue to write!
2. Every bit of material to be printed in Marists All will be edited. Rarely, the editing may have to do with sensitivity or appropriateness. But more often, it may be due to unnecessary length, extraneous tangents, or irrelevant material. Please be patient with this editor's attempt to be faithful to the writer's intent and feelings, while being loyal to our Marist Family readership.
3. Mistakes will be made. One of my fondest memories during the year I cooked at Marist Prep in Esopus was Br. Gabriel Vincent advising this young monk that when someone criticizes, sincerely respond by saying, "Correction noted, thank you!" So, please forgive.
4. For those who wish to make a monetary contribution to cover expenses of the publication of Marists All, kindly make checks out to David Kammer, Gus Nolan, or myself. Please do not make checks payable to Marists All. The bank does not recognize the very unusual spiritual network that brings us together. Thank you! (24 Brooklyn Mountain Road; Hopatcong, NJ 07843; 973-398-5477; vtpoisella@yahoo.com)

A view of the beginnings of *Marists All*, from **GERRY COX**:

"...I found myself thinking about how the newsletter got started. I was the first secretary for the group in the process of becoming the GMC. I would send out minutes from our general monthly meeting and from any sub-committees that had something to report or recommend. As others (especially former FMSs from outside the mid-Hudson area) heard about our emerging group, I'd add them with

their permission to our mailing list and would include in the next set of minutes news items supplied by confreres with whom such contact was made. As Peggy and I got caught up in the parish life of our children, we loosened our involvement in the GMC. I passed the secretarial duties on to Larry Sullivan. Somewhere in time Larry turned that role over to Gus. Of course, by then, the frog had turned prince. There were no more minutes or committees. But there was a regular newsletter."

from **DAVID KAMMER** ('42), Editor Emeritus:

In every past issue of *Marists All*, I have been encouraging, even cajoling, our readers to write for this newsletter. Now, our new editor has asked me to write something for his first issue.

What of substance do I have to write about now? Being involved in publishing *Marists All* has been not the smallest of many abundant blessings that have come my way. From the very inception of the idea of the newsletter in 1986, Gus Nolan and I were wonderfully encouraged by the Marist superiors, by many of the Brothers, and by the wider Marist group of people who gathered for the September '86 picnic at the FDR park in the mid-Hudson region. It soon became clear that the newsletter was an activity worth pursuing and maintaining. So many letters spoke of how *Marists All* helped to keep the Marist spirit alive for them, and how it helped them maintain contacts with their friends of earlier years. Many told of being edified and encouraged by the stories of lives that continued to be devoted in service to people in need. Many have demonstrated their belief in the value of sharing personal news among friends, not only by writing, but also by helping with costs. And the congregation itself has fed us its publications. Blessings galore! We are most grateful for the backing we have had.

Throughout these past sixteen years Gus and I have consistently relied on one another and have been able to work together harmoniously with mutual respect. That has been a blessing for which I am particularly grateful. With the help of a variety of local volunteers, Gus and Liz have been unflagging in promptly handling the tedious work of mailing printed copies of the newsletter, often more than four times a year. In more recent times Rich Foy has been most amenable to our every wish by creating and expanding the *Marists All* web site.

One of the many books that Gus has shared with Judy and me is *Jesus the Teacher Within* by Laurence Freeman, OSB. Running through the book is Jesus's question, "Who do you say I am?" with an emphasis on the "you." Freeman thus makes the point that we must ask ourselves, "Who do you say you are?" Now Editor Vince comes along and asks me to write about "What did you get out of working the newsletter?" Easy answer: those abundant blessings, and more mileage on a road I have been traveling. One of the simpler lines I have copied, in three times reading Freeman's challenging book, refers to "the bubbling soup of DNA that we all splash around in and from which our treasured individuality arises." It seems that in my blood there is a newspaper DNA.

When I was a child, my mother rolled up parts of old newspapers so that I could make believe I was a paperboy; the poor neighbors got delivery of those random sheets! By the time I was in the eighth grade and throughout high school, I delivered newspapers to 35 morning customers and to 125 evening customers. At CCHS in Wheeling I was sports editor of the *Centralite*. In the off-year between Wheeling Central and St. Ann's Hermitage, Poughkeepsie, I wrote

sports for an Ohio Valley freebie. At the Scholasticate one of my term papers was on the production of a newspaper from linotype to rolling press. At St. Ann's Academy, the Sodality and I produced a one-page newsletter. In Tyngsboro, however, a different element of my DNA grew apace. Then in retirement there was the prospect of "nothing to do!"

As I sat down to write this, I had no idea what I would come up with. When I retired from teaching, I had no idea what I was going to do. However, things do tend to come about. I have a deep conviction about the source of idea and ability and DNA; to that Source be all praise and gratitude! (476 La Playa; Edgewater, FL 32141; 904-426-6349; kammer@tds.net)

from **MANNY LOPEZ ('63)**: Life finds me happy and content. This, in spite of a bout with mental illness. I was out of work for five years, collecting disability. But now I am working part time, thanks to a wonderful agency called Fountain House. The mission of Fountain House is the recovery of men and women stricken with mental illness. Opportunities are provided to live, work, and learn, while contributing talents through a community of mutual support.

I have also joined Courage, a diocesan-sponsored support group for gay men and lesbian women who wish to remain celibate. The emphasis is on social friendships.

I am also an unofficial member of the Third Order of Preachers (Dominican).

At this time I am beginning to look for full time employment. My background is in financial services and construction. I am currently a supervisor in the messenger center of a major advertising firm. I have a bachelor's degree from Hunter College in classical studies and archaeology. I'm considering the possibility of going back to school to get a degree in Spanish, with a minor in education. There are lots of possibilities, and I am looking forward to the challenges.

By the way, I am a Eucharistic minister in my local parish. I am particularly grateful for the grace and privilege of distributing the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ to the congregation present at each Mass.

Ray Armstrong, Ted Gray, Dennis Hartnett, and Tom Crimmins: give a call! Many thanks! (1493 Shore Parkway, 3B, Brooklyn, NY 11214-6329; 718-373-3482)

from **FRANCIS GUDYANGA**: A note to indicate that I am alive and kicking. Am in touch with Isidore Sabeta now and then. He sends greetings. It is now easy to access *Marists All* from the web site. Your pioneering work has borne tremendous fruits. Savouring the fond memories of my visit to Marist College in 1998. My visit was very enjoyable. Warmth. (Zimbabwe)

from **JIM MULVEY ('62)**: I am writing to express my sympathy and sadness over the death of Br. James Damian Brady. I attended St. Helena High School. Br. James Damian took over the command of the 'ship' in my last two years there. He was a kind and very friendly person. Years later, as a Marist Brother assigned to Molloy, it was wonderful to have Br. James Damian as principal and director. I shall always remember his great sense of humor. He always knew when we needed a 'break' from the daily routine. 'Cripes, we need a party!' May he rest in peace. (3 Birch Lane; Milford, NH 03055)

from **BR. VINCENT JEROME ('51)**: Greetings to everyone. I am now retired in Miami, having joined the 89th Avenue Community of Brothers Bernard Nolan, Richard Michael, Joseph Teston and Michael Brady. After having spent several weeks in the hospital in New York because of a heart condition and blood situation that put me at high risk for a stroke or heart attack, it was thought best that I follow a less stressful life in the Sunshine State. All is going along well and the doctors here have given favorable reports. Hopefully, those reports will continue! (2790 SW 89 Avenue; Miami, FL 33165)

from **BR. JOE MAURA ('54)**: In preparation for the union of the two U.S. provinces, a question has arisen in surveys concerning the name for the new province. Several responses mentioned Br. John Berchmans. This led me to speculate what an entire province would be like if its spirit were inspired by "Berky."

He was a man who was never elected to the General Chapter, any provincial chapter, or even the provincial council.... You get the idea: he was not big on meetings. Those he did enjoy took place before the evening meal.

The new province would be deeply spiritual, but not noticeably pious. I recall that back in Tyngsboro (c. 1953), Berky would freely join in celebrations. Having earlier imbibed in the organized festivities, John would later delight the novices and postulants by balancing on his chin for an extended period one of those large green wooden lawn chairs! Later on, John would be observed walking up and down the basketball court area receiving a lecture on religious decorum from a pious Brother. John would show sincere interest, but would not buy into any of it. Our new province, hopefully, would be heavy on spontaneity, and light on self-conscious piety.

I hope the new province will value humility, simplicity, and modesty - but the way John lived them. The root word for humility is the Latin "humus," which refers to earth, soil. It is also the root for the word humor. Being down-to-earth and having a love of laughter would be an excellent *modus operandi* for our new province. The word "simple" also derives from the Latin -"simplex" meaning "without bends." It does not mean being a "simpleton." Rather, when applied to a Marist, it would mean a man who acts well and does good things, but does not "bend" it all back on himself. He does not consciously strive to edify others by giving "good example." Rather, he does good without realizing it.

Modesty, for John, was having self-knowledge. Knowing ourselves well, we know we have much to be modest about. Recall how the Founder loved to quote: "Unless the Lord build the house...."

A province united under John's spirit would espouse a way of listening to others the way John did: being sincerely interested, really listening, with eyes that said, "right now you are the only young man on the planet."

While in Esopus, we used to kid John about why he spent time in a nearby hardware store, which happened to be the domain of a rather attractive woman. I think women saw in John a man who was pure of heart. But this never put John into the "despise the body" school of thought. I hope our new province will be one that welcomes friendship with women and does not equate chastity with fear of women.

As a novice you never had to obey John in the canonical sense of the word. You were so concerned with not wanting to disappoint him that you did whatever he asked. His authority stemmed from his person and not his position. Leadership in the new province should be like that.

When it came to poverty, John had few material needs. He was always concerned that those in training had what they needed for both work and play. John created the first development office in the Marist world. It was run from his room and was amusingly called "the raffle." John's raffle had very low overhead, as there were no tickets, no drawings, no prizes. People simply sent John some money. End of raffle.

The patron chosen for the new province of the United States is the Holy Family. This is a choice rich in meaning for many of us, both those who are Brothers in the canonical sense, and those who are still Marist Brothers in their heart. John was always sought out while in Esopus by former Marists, and was delighted to meet them. I hope the new province will continue "to share our call" with former monks and their families.

Finally, if John had lived in India, I think he would have been thought of as "Mahatma" Berchmans, since that title means "great soul." There was nothing small or petty about Berky. He was, and is, great-souled - magnanimous. Let us pray that the new province of the U.S. will be the same. (3000 SW 87th Avenue; Miami, FL 33165; 305-221-0834)

from **BR. RENE ROY ('60)**: *(The following reflection of Rene's was inspired while he was attending the on-site Mass celebrating the 50th Jubilee of Marist Presence in Rwanda, and the 50th anniversary of the Byimana Science School where he taught from 1995-1999. ed.)*

I sit here in a land so far away from my own, yet in one which has become my own. The four years I spent here have grafted my heart to those of these Rwandans who welcomed me so gently and gradually upon my first arrival. But now, on this second visit, they have overwhelmed me with long, strong, warm, loving, enthusiastic embraces. And so I am moved with a profound sense of gratitude and a sense of awe at the mysterious plan of God that has unfolded since my first contacts with the Marist Brothers as a young boy. I was the "kid brother" of two older siblings who came home from Central Catholic in Lawrence and beguiled us with stories of the Brothers who were their teachers.

There was Br. Joseph Robert, whom I later came to know as 'Joe Bob,' the caped Latin teacher at Marist College in the sixties: 'I'll see you at two, thank you.'

Then, Brother Peter Leonard, revered by his students and utterly worshipped by the seven year old boy who met him "on project," building the Central gym in '48, and who left it all behind to become a missionary in the Philippines. He came into my life again at Tyngsboro one summer, where his respect for the distance between the professed brothers and the novices kept him silent; but where his actions, especially his pace in the hayfield tossing bales on the truck, spoke volumes and added to his legendary stature. Living with him in Oglala removed the pedestal. But, being embraced by him before leaving for Rwanda, and receiving his blessing in the names of the slain Rwandan brothers - Edward, Gaspard, Fabien, Canisius, and Joseph- brought me to tears, restored Peter to the pantheon of the greats. He even wrote to me and collected money to help the Rwandans.

Yes, the plan of God put these Marists in my path, calling me to be one of them. The wonder of it, the mystery. The "yes" that brought me to West Virginia, Cold Spring, South Dakota, Chicago, and finally Rwanda.... If I had not said that initial "yes", I would not be sitting among all these friends, family. I was a link in the education of hundreds of these alumni gathered to celebrate the golden jubilee. My life would have been so much less. It struck me that there were so many Marists, who, in their own "yesses", helped form and shape me: Michael Vincent Kelly, Martin A. Lang, Kenneth Robert, Linus Joseph, Timothy Joseph, Paul Celestine, Augustine Joseph, Michael Kieran, Gregory Delanoy, Tim Gerard, Clem, David Kammer, Joseph William, Jude Driscoll, Luke Driscoll, Kieran Thomas, John Malachy, Eric Anderberg. Where would I be without them? As my Rwandan students surround me with joy and gratitude, so do I extend my own gratitude to God for the Marist men who molded and shaped me and helped me to continue the vision of Champagnat into another century, into another continent.

The week after the Jubilee, five Marist Novices professed their first vows. How satisfied are the generative urges in me to see that these Marists will carry the vision even further! How humbled I am. How full of gratitude. Thanks, Lord. Thanks, Marists, All! (4509 Eoff Street; Wheeling, WV 26003)

from **GERRY COX ('51)**: Minutes ago our summer solstice occurred. It's the eve of their Assembly 2002. By late afternoon Brothers will gather in clusters at the sign-in tables. The cool air-conditioned rotunda will be a haven from the June sun on this first day of summer.

I'm amazed that a whole year has passed since I had the privilege of welcoming the Brothers to the campus. I was days away from retiring from the position of Marist College's chief student affairs officer. There I stood on the podium. It would be my last official public act as a vice president. I was happy to have been asked to offer the welcoming remarks because my class, my group, was celebrating its golden jubilee in the brotherhood. I was extremely proud of those who had grown and prospered as brothers though all fifty years.

As I finished my comments and made my way to the exit, someone called out, "What are you going to do now that you're retiring? No one ever leaves the college, do they?" Truth in jest? I had already agreed to return to teaching and to tending to our students' theater world. (Although I had just completed 22 years as the chief student affairs person during 34 years at the college, never had a semester gone by that I didn't offer at least one course.)

But that was then. This is now. Assembly 2002 is about reunification. Making two into one sounds like a marriage. But reunification of provinces calls for a different kind of union. It asks for a return to something close to the fraternal cohesion of a past remembered only vaguely by too few. It's not easy. Communal challenges may be easier to discuss and dissect. The real risks may be more personal than communal.

Perhaps the time and effort given to this reunification will put in motion measures inching our way to another reunion, another coming together, of the membership of the greater Marist community. Maybe it will foreshadow an embracing of all Marists whose life-prints trace the spirit of Marcellin and the call of the "Little Brothers". For now we patiently share the Brothers' aspirations and support them with our prayers.

Does anyone recall what it was like to be identified as one of Brother Edmund's "monotones"? Those who do, those who form with me a special band of brothers, know what it is to sit and wait. Sit quietly; don't try to sing. That was to be our contribution to the spectacle, the outward sign of ritual. What a wonderful role with which the Spirit could play.

Ad multos annos to all the 2002 jubilarians! (83 Remsen Avenue, So; Wappingers Falls, NY 12590; Gerard.Cox@marist.edu)

**The Eighth Marist Family Institute of Spirituality  
July 11,12,13,14 2002**

from **GENE ZIRKEL** ('53): I have just completed a wonderful retreat/reunion at the eighth annual Marist Family Institute of Spirituality in Poughkeepsie. More than two dozen brothers, former brothers and their spouses gathered at Marist College for the extended weekend. Participants were asked to comment on their experience. Here are a few of their responses:

*The sharing was exceptional... Interacting with all of you is my annual retreat... Edification - seeing the love flowing from married couples... Brotherhood - a distinct sense of belonging to a very loving group... The liturgy!... As always, the wonderful individual and personal examples of Marist spirit exhibited by each participant... Ed and Valerie's talk: they showed God at work in real life... I enjoyed the talks and discussions and felt they were 'right on,' mainly because they came out of personal experience... Our prayer time together, beautiful touching music, well-chosen Scripture readings, good foundation and closure for each day... The easy reestablishment of a sense of community and loving friendship: it happens so quickly and easily.*

Why not treat yourself next July to a wonderful weekend? Mark your calendar now for Thursday evening through Sunday noon, July 10-13, 2003, and if you haven't yet got next year's calendar, put it on the last page of this year's. (6 Brancatelli Court; West Islip, NY 11795-2502; 631-669-0273; [genezirk@optonline.net](mailto:genezirk@optonline.net))

from **ED TOWSLEY** ('62): It's been over two weeks since the conference ended, and I am still awe struck at the impact that Br. Stephen Minoque's talk had on me. His comforting words regarding 9/11 brought solace to me in ways I had not imagined were even needed. Some of those present had been wounded more than others. They received a new degree of consolation and comfort from Br. Stephen's words. A great blessing.

I was also blessed in a special way by Br. Luke Driscoll's thoughts regarding the weekend as a whole. In his simple and humble manner, he pulled together each moment to offer each of us deeper insight from what we had heard.

The Liturgies celebrated by Father Ed Keel and Father Owen Lafferty blessed us all with a strong manifestation of God's word and a rich outpouring of His love for us. (28 Revere Road; Fishkill, NY 12524; 845-896-7540; [edtowsley@peoplepc.com](mailto:edtowsley@peoplepc.com))

from **VAL TOWSLEY**: The weekend was a great blessing to me. There was much love and sacrifice and an open exchange of faith and ideas throughout the weekend. I especially benefited from Br. Stephen Minoque's presentation on the impact 9/11 has had on each of us.

Over the course of the weekend, I came to an increased understanding of what is meant by "Marist Spirituality," and to feel very comfortable with what that represents.

from the **EDITOR**: The only regret I have in attending the eighth Marist Family Institute of Spirituality is the fact that more of the Marist Family were not present over this beautiful weekend at the well-maintained Marist College campus which harbors so many memories for many of us.

The experience of the weekend is not fully expressed by the word "Institute." The first July weekend eight years ago was touted as a retreat/reunion. The most recent gathering of professed Brothers, former Brothers, spouses, widows, and other members of the Marist Family certainly had characteristics of all of this.

It was a reunion: all of this year's attendees had come at least one other time to the Institute. It was a retreat: we stepped out of our routine for a long weekend to think, pray, and share about the way we needed to respond to God's will in light of the Marist Spirit. And yet, it was also an "Institute": the presenters were well-prepared, focused, and on-target.

But what makes this weekend special is the experience of sharing with others who have a common background and common goal founded in Champagnat's view of Christ's life and teachings. The liturgical and prayerful gatherings throughout the weekend became extensions of personal caring and sharing. A sense of community arose from the group even as plans were being made to return next year.

The team working together to make next year's program both relevant and inspiring for all participants, includes: Larry and Jan Keogh; Pat and Gene Zirkel; Manny Lopez; Vince and Jane Poisella; Barney and Anne Sheridan; Don Mulcare; Ed and Valerie Towsley; Br. Charles Marcellin. The next meeting of the team will be held at the picnic at Mt St. Michael on Saturday, September 14th. Plan to be with us next year!

**Access *Marists* All information and other Marist-related websites on your computer:**

**[www.ecommerce.marist.edu/foy/maristsall](http://www.ecommerce.marist.edu/foy/maristsall)**

From the Committee for Heritage Classes at Marist College - **GUS NOLAN, BR. RICHARD RANCOURT, RICHARD LA PIETRA.**

During the annual Homecoming/Reunion Weekend which takes place October 11-13, the group which received the Marist habit in 1948 and graduated in 1952 will be honored as the class that graduated from Marist College 50 years ago. It does not matter when the diploma was actually received, nor from what college; all that took the habit in 1948 are invited to this class reunion. Marist College graduates of 1952 from other profession groups are, of course, included in the 50th reunion celebration. The whole group and their spouses are invited as guests of the college to a special luncheon in the President's Dining Room on **Saturday, October 12, at 12:30 p.m.**

Marist College has designated graduating classes from 1947 - 1966 as "Heritage" classes. Each year all the Heritage classes are invited to Homecoming, with major recognition of the 50th anniversary class and special recognition to classes at prior five-year intervals (i.e. 45th, 40th, etc.). The



Heritage Committee for Homecoming Weekend is making a major effort to achieve a great turnout of these classes.

Questions or comments may be referred to Gus Nolan, Br. Richard Rancourt, or Richard La Pietra through the Marist College Office of Alumni Affairs, 845-575-3283, or Alumni@Marist.edu.

from **GUS NOLAN ('48)**: In this first issue of *Marists All* under the new leadership of Vince Poisella, I thought it fitting to write a note of appreciation to David, the founder and editor of *Marists All*, and to his wife Judy who worked so closely with him both in giving quiet advice and in proofreading, folding, stamping and sealing so many issues. An awe-inspiring fifteen full years and sixty-eight issues of *Marists All* have passed since David's initial proposal in December of 1986, to create a newsletter and the publication of the first issue in May, 1987

This would have been monumental work if he had just stayed at his desk and turned out the material. But as a first-hand observer, I know that David spent endless hours on the phone getting copy, or in his car driving to Poughkeepsie from Harwinton, Connecticut, to pick up printed copies and take them home to mail. Only later, when he moved to Florida, did I get involved with the mailings. His phone bill for regular Saturday morning conferences must have been awesome; but the time - and expense - to get each issue out were gladly given with the same generosity that he gave to publishing the letters and notes sent to him. For the first ten years, and more, David painstakingly produced each issue on a manual typewriter before investing in a computer and mastering its mysteries, eventually moving beyond paper to go "on line" by seeking the help of Linus Richard Foy and his team of Brian Desilets and Jack Noone.

Was all this effort worthwhile? I think it would be impossible to calculate the good done through this publication. The reconnections of friends, the updatings of what so many of the brethren - and their wives and families - have done.... But most of all, the genuine community that seems now to exist between the Brothers and those who served as Brothers is really a credit to David Kammer, the originator and first editor of *Marists All*. a wonderful spirit reigns now in the Marist World.

Thank you, David! (50 South Randolph Avenue; Poughkeepsie, NY 12601; GusNolan@aol.com)