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Greater Marist Community Picnic

Mount St. Michael Saturday, September 12, 2009 Noon - 5 pm

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at the annual picnic. Come with spouse and/or other interested friends of the Marist Family. Bring your own

beverage and a potluck dish for a shared meal. All Brothers are most welcome to join in. Thanks to the director and the community of the Mount for welcoming us.

* * * * *

Readers: May 2010 is our projected one hundredth issue of Marists All. What David Kammer (and God) hath wrought, we continue. David's introductory proposal for a newsletter appeared in January 1987, with the first issue appearing in May of that year. This quarterly publication has served as evidence these twenty-two years of a bond that began over a half century ago when young men in their formative years experienced a spiritual awakening anchored in the Marist tradition once begun by the now saint, Marcellin Champagnat. We continue this spirit through the vehicle of print and Internet, dependent on contributions from our readers. I ask you to consider sharing something of yourselves in writing as we approach that very special hundredth issue.

Rich Foy, our web master, has asked that those of you who write something for Marists All kindly attach a digital photo with the email or send a printed photo via regular mail. Those sending notes by regular mail may include a traditional photo for inclusion at the website. Because of the limitations of the editor, we will not be using photos in the printed version at this time.

Thanks to those who continue to contribute to the financial status of our publication, especially Jim Friel and Paul Maloney.

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Reflections on Witness and the Marist Spirituality Weekend July 10-12, 2009

From **JOHN ('57) AND JOAN BRADY:** After many years of gracious invitations to participate in the Marist Spirituality Weekend, we finally answered the call to "Come apart and rest awhile." Our son, John, who lived with us until he was twenty-seven, left our home in 2001 to join a group home in Tinton Falls, NJ. Prior to that major adjustment, finding weekend respite care was never easy, and after that change, we finally had time to travel, visit, care for aging parents, and generally catch up with our lives. In 2009, we asked ourselves how we would feel if we joined the Marist group in July since these folks had been meeting annually for fifteen years. Would we be the uncomfortable "new kids on the block," even though "new kids" hardly describes either our age or life experience.

The theme of the weekend was "Witness," particularly as this concept relates to Marcellin Champagnat and Marist Spirituality. Our personal, and powerful, experience of witness was the group's warm welcome to us. We were immediately embraced as brother and sister, and that set the tone for the weekend of recharging our spiritual batteries. Through reflection and prayer, liturgy and song, presentations, laughs, and sharing experiences and insights, we came away refreshed in body, mind, and spirit—and with a wonderful sense of community.

To us, this weekend provided the opportunity to witness Marist Spirituality in action. We were honored to become part of a group of people who have come to respect, love, and be deeply concerned for one another—and who then return to their everyday lives and, by example, spread this uniquely Christian message. We look forward to 2010 and to seeing everyone again! (3 Brookside Avenue, Hazlet, NJ 07730; 732-739-3911; JEJPBrady@aol.com)

From **GENE (LOUIS FRANCIS) ZIRKEL ('53):** I have just returned from another wonderful GMC weekend held each July at Marist College. Outstanding this year was the

keynote talk by Br. Ben Consigli, the new provincial. After all these years there is still more to learn about Father Champagnat and Marist spirituality!

This year we initiated a book of intentions wherein attendees listed some of their concerns and people they wanted to pray for. Every morning and evening we prayed for one another's intentions, and we placed the book on the altar at our Masses. Believing in the power of prayer, it was consoling to know that everyone present was praying for my family and friends who needed help as I was praying for their intentions. I will continue through this coming year to keep my fellow attendees in my heart and their intentions in my prayers.

It never ceases to amaze me each year to see the tremendous changes on campus. It is definitely not the same place where I studied more than fifty years ago. (472 Village Oaks Lane, Babylon, NY 11702; 631-669-0273; genezirk@optonline.net)

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Dr. George Sommer

**In Memoriam
John Alexius, FMS**

Mark Moran

From **GUS NOLAN** ('48): Dr. George Sommer is a name very familiar to many Marists All readers. I think it is fitting that the notice of his death be marked by this publication. I visited George in the Harwich Nursing Home in October '08. He had already failed in health but was still able to talk with me for over an hour about his career at Marist. Below is the Marist College announcement of his death:

***George Sommer** passed away July 10, 2009 in South Dennis, MA, where he had resided with his wife Anne during their retirement years. George joined the Marist faculty in 1951 and taught literature for thirty-nine years. He was the second non-Marist Brother to teach full time at Marist College, then known as Marian College. In 1957, when Marist opened its doors to laymen, he was appointed the first chairman of the English department and continued in that role until 1971.*

George is also remembered for founding the Mid-Hudson Modern Language Association. For sixteen years he directed its conference at Marist and annually drew several hundred English and foreign language scholars from throughout the country. Upon his retirement, alumni, colleagues, and friends honored him with the establishment of the annual George J. Sommer Lecture on Literature. The seventeenth lecture will be held this fall

A graduate of Manhattan College, Dr. Sommer held a master's in English from New York University and a doctorate in English from Fordham University. He was a Chaucer and Shakespeare scholar but also taught numerous and varied courses in English and American literature. Upon retiring in 1990, George estimated he had taught more than three thousand students in an excess of three hundred courses. After Marist, he taught for more than ten years at the Academy for Lifelong Learning on Cape Cod.

In addition to his wife, who worked at Marist for a number of years, his four children and nine grandchildren survive him. His son Bob is a member of the class of 1974. Messages of condolence may be sent to Mrs. Anne Sommer, 44 Cyprus Road, South Dennis, MA 02660

Services were private. Memorial donations may be directed to Marist Brothers Development Office, 4200 West 115th St., Chicago, IL, 60655-4306, for the care of the elderly Brothers.

From **GUS NOLAN** ('48): There is no doubt that one of the saddest experiences in life is the occasion of the death of a child. Second to that is the death of a spouse. When a teacher hears of the death of a former student, this is another occasion of sadness. It just does not seem to be the right order. And so, on hearing of the death of **Mark Moran** early last month, I could not help but feel the pangs of loss. Although it has been a number of years since I last talked to Mark, the memory of a jovial, happy person immediately came to mind. That he maintained a rather unique charisma in friendship was evidenced by the turnout of old classmates who studied, worked, and played with him in the Marist Novitiate in Esopus, NY. I trust that he has been received into Paradise and that he has joined the chorus of angels singing the praises of God.

From **DAVID KAMMER**: May **Br. John Alexius** rest in peace. Messages of condolence may be sent to the Molloy community and to Br. John's brother, Mr. Roland Poirier, 30 Leyland Avenue, Haverhill, MA 01830.

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Rich Foy and David Kammer edited and submitted the following biographical accolade of Br. Ronald Fogarty. Their respect for this Australian Marist jubilarian shines through the words. Our Marists All website contains photos of Brother Ronald and the other jubilarians. Editor.

Brother Ronald Fogarty, Marist 75 years, age 96



Many of our American old timers will fondly remember Brother Ronald Fogarty of Australia. He spent several years in the United States. Around the mid-1960's he lived in our Chicago residence while he was a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Chicago. He was an important presence at the General Chapter sessions held in Rome in 1967 and 1968, as both David Kammer and Rich Foy can attest.

As the Marist Brothers in Australia celebrated jubilees this year, Brother Ronald was honored for his seventy-five years of life and service as a Marist. Brother Nello Facci gave the speech. The following are liberal adaptations of the remarks made about Ron on the occasion:

Ronald Fogarty was born in Broken Hill in 1913, turning ninety-six this past October. Ronnie joined the Marist Brothers in 1933. For many years he was the master of scholastics in Sydney and in Melbourne where he trained young brothers how to study and how to teach.

Ronnie is an awesome academic. He has numerous degrees from universities in Melbourne, Sydney, and Chicago. He has gained many awards, including a Fulbright scholarship in the USA. He has even found the time to write a number of books on education and on the religious life.

In 1978 Ronnie went on a new path. He specialized in lecturing and counselling in religious communities all over the world. He travelled to the United States, Ireland, England, South Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Africa, New Zealand, and around the South Pacific, as well as throughout Australia. The common theme of most of the letters he receives is gratitude for saving congregations from collapsing and for the saving of individual vocations; each letter is full of the immense love they have for this amazing person.

Last year Ronnie had a very nasty, serious fall during his regular evening walk. He suffered major injuries, which included a broken nose and broken bones in both hands. Typical of his great sense of humour, he said, "A puff of wind blew me over." I got into Ronnie's address book and wrote to eighty-seven people and religious communities in twelve countries about his accident. I received hundreds of letters, emails, and phone calls in response. When I told Ronnie that I had a metre high of letters for him, with a wicked grin he replied, "Was that all? I expected at least two metres."

Ronnie is now being wonderfully cared for in the nursing home in McLeod where he is very content and happy while entertaining the staff and patients with sessions of his brilliant music, but he misses community life. We often bring Ronnie to Templestowe for tea so that he can have time with the brothers and staff. One of the first things he does is to attack the piano with great gusto.

Apart from his huge library from which he has prepared his many lectures, Ronnie has no interest in possessions or money. Last year he asked a brother to tidy up some of his books. The brother found wads of money in various books, money that had been in the books for years - American dollars, British pounds, Asian, European and Australian notes. I took the money to the bank to be converted and the pile came to about \$4,000! Without knowing it, Ronnie has helped us survive the recession!

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From **JIM FRIEL** ('52): A group of former brothers gathered in Esopus recently for their seventh annual get-together. The weather was perfect and so was the company, and we had a wonderful time. I have had the pleasure of attending each gathering. One of the things we do is sit around the living room and talk about old times and what we are up to now.

Most of us are happy to have been Marist Brothers, and we talked about both the good times and the difficult times. We also talked about many things in the world today, especially the role of the church in today's world. In many ways, the gathering is a tribute to the many fine brothers we have known over the years. I'm one of the senior people, having been graduated from Marist in 1956. Most of the group is younger. As we sat around the table for a few hours, people were quite honest. One person spoke about how he is a recovering alcoholic and about his success. Another member, Bill Shannon, is a runner and had to leave part of the day for an orienteering race.

Others who had experienced serious medical setbacks spoke of their recovery. We all traced a major part of our lives back to the Marist Brothers. For all of us, that relationship was a major point in our lives.

This gathering is open to all. Other groups can arrange their own get-togethers, at Esopus or elsewhere. Not only did we speak of the past but also where we thought the church should be going today. Despite the disagreements, we were able to learn from each other. We know we are among friends. I know that the others are out for my interests. I share my life and views, and I return home a better person.

From **BILL DESCHENE** ('53): (Bill sent the following letter on September 19, 1954 to his parents. It was his first letter home during his initial year at Marian College. Ed.

Dear Mom and Dad. When I left New England, I must have left the sun behind too. It has rained practically all week, and that's not such a drastic change from the

week before. I've been blaming this wet weather on the fact that we are in New York, and what could you expect from New York? Of course, not everybody agrees with me, but I get my remarks in anyway. I'm afraid the New Yorkers are getting on me, though. I've been catching myself speaking the way they do. It's hard to keep your New England accent when everyone else speaks a different one. Anyway, my motto is: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." You have to adapt yourself to the ways of the people where you are...

As extra-curricular activities I have the pigs for morning employment and the chickens on Saturdays and days off. I watched them kill six pigs last week. The screaming is the worst part, but dragging them into the barn isn't so bad. We have over eight hundred chickens that lay about six hundred eggs a day, and that means a lot of grading and candling and packing. This takes up most of my time between 4:30 and 5:15 pm. We clean the coup on Saturdays, and in a couple of weeks we'll be killing a hundred birds. Last week we were cleaning a coup that had been left empty for a while, and lo and behold, within five minutes, we were covered with mites. Had to take three showers that day. We are not finished and have to wait another day. I hope the coup doesn't walk away in the meantime.

All in all, everything is fine at this end. I'm healthy and happy to be a Marist. By the way, devotion to Mary is very keen up here. On the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, our Br. Master said that Mary has been the inspiration for people down through the ages and that many have not been afraid to tag Mary onto their other name. He said, "We have our Malias from China and our Marys and our Mauras from the U.S. I love you both. (184 Bryant Ridge Road, Grand Falls Plantation ME 04417; 207-290-1886)

A note from **Jim Gargan** announced a small gathering in memory of the twentieth anniversary of the death of Terry (John Joseph '56) McMahon to be held beginning at 2:30 pm on September 29 in Donovan's at 57-24 Roosevelt Avenue in Woodside. If interested in joining the group, contact Jim at 917-495-3265 or garganlaw@msn.com

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From **DAVID KAMMER** (42):

REFLECTIONS ON THE MASS: "This is my Body!"

Our Lord is there on the altar!

His whole life is there

- not just the Crucifixion

- not just the last Supper.

All his self-giving is there

- his self-giving on the Cross is there

- his self-giving in bread and wine is there

- his past self-giving to Martha, Mary, Zacchaeus

- his present radial empathy with all of us is there

celebrating with us, mourning with us, helping, always giving.

He is there

sharing his truth, his wisdom, his way of life, his very life, his Spirit.

*There - is his eternal gratitude and openness to the loving, embracing Father
and his forward, realistic coming-to-grips with each step of his destiny of earthly life.*

*His consuming us is there
taking us into his openness, his selflessness, his love and trust
that we - aided by his energy - may live in him, with and through him.*

*As we become deeply aware of at least some of this presence
we will certainly react in our own personal way with amazement...*

*and our hearts and words will spill out in gratitude
as we say "Yes." Yes, Lord, I'm with you. We are with you.*

*We are willing to try to deal with our time and space
with its opportunities, its difficulties, complexities, diminishments
with its dying and rising.*

*We know you'll always be with us; we rely on you; do help us,
We trust you'll see us through.*

*Others have done it, done it well, most not even canonized.
Some need special help, those among our families and friends
even the Pope... and presidents; do help them.*

*I must go now, to live that life, have loving contact with your family
have contact with neighbor, with those down the street ...
with those in need, especially.*

*Go with an intent,
an intent to stay in touch, to be alert to leads, to respond readily,
expecting, relying on help.*

*Go with intent
to cultivate a growing, healthy mind-set
to cultivate a deeper attitude, a deeper spirit.
Go with an intent to know, love, and depend
on Jesus who is there ...and here, God with us.*

*Go ... Ite, Missa est! The Mass is!
The Mass exists; the Mass has meaning!*

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