

# The Marianite

Fall 2023

A publication from  
The Marianites of Holy Cross



1849  
✦  
2024

FAMILY  
OF  
HOLY  
CROSS

*Le Mans to Louisiana*

## *a message from our* **Congregational Leader**



The Mission Statement of the Marianites states:

*United with Mary standing at the foot of the cross, we Marianites of Holy Cross, are apostolic religious, women of prayer and compassion. Our mission, energized by our life in community, is to incarnate the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. Called to be a prophetic presence in an ever-changing world, we resolutely stand with those who are excluded.*

I have been meetings in the last week where we have used the Mission Statement on three occasions. Today, as I reflect on the arrival of the eight members of the Family of Holy Cross in Louisiana on May 1, 1849; I believe that their spirit of courage and zeal was truly grace in action. There was no Mission Statement as they arrived in Washington, LA and immediately traveled to New Orleans. They were about the Mission! In the coming months, we will be doing a series of emails telling the story of these young men and women and those who committed to these 175 years in a format known as **MISSION MOMENTS**. If you would like to receive a copy, send us **your name and Email address to [data4msc@marianites.org](mailto:data4msc@marianites.org)**. There will be a celebration at the St. Louis Cathedral on April 28, 2024, at 11am Mass. All are invited to the celebration as **YOU** are part of the ever-evolving mission of the Marianites.

I ask you to pray with the 79 Marianites as we continue the Mission visioned by Blessed Basile Moreau and Mother Mary of the Seven Dolours:

- Sponsorship of the University of Holy Cross is an honor and a privilege as we seek ways of being a prophetic presence to first generation students and their families.
- The compassion of Jesus is the daily mantra of Marianites who both minister and volunteer at Prompt Succor Nursing Facility and C'est La Vie residence.
- Marianites minister in educational settings as they incarnate Christ in our ever-changing world.
- Spiritual Directors journey with those who wish to develop a deeper relationship with God and embrace the mystery of grace.
- Service to the poor and vulnerable continues to be a priority as we see the face of Jesus in day to day encounters of all creation.

*In the coming months, we will be doing a series of emails telling the story of these young men and women and those who committed to these 175 years in a format known as **MISSION MOMENTS**.*

Each of us daily stand with Mary at the foot of the Cross praying for our world and embracing a future that calls us to stand with the excluded of society.

May our God fill you with peace and courage,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sr. Ann Lacour, MSC".

Sr. Ann Lacour, MSC  
Congregational Leader

### On the Cover

**The Marianite**, a publication of the Marianites of Holy Cross, is published quarterly. For additional information please go online: [www.marianites.org](http://www.marianites.org)

### PHOTOGRAPHERS:

names  
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SEPTEMBER 14

# Exaltation of the Holy Cross

By Dr. Sandra L. French

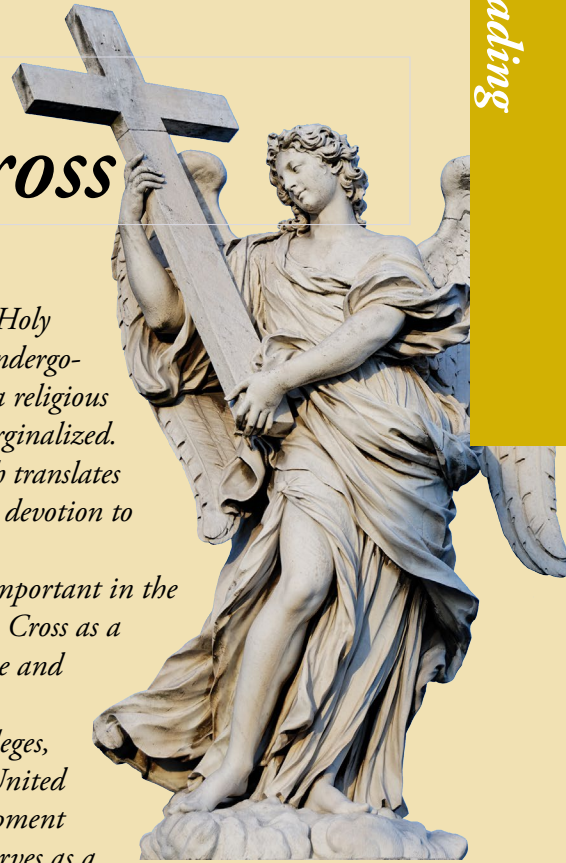


*Fr. Basil Moreau (1799–1873) founded the Congregation of Holy Cross in the early 19th century, during a time when France was undergoing significant political and social changes. He sought to establish a religious community dedicated to education, especially for the poor and marginalized. The motto of the Holy Cross order is “Ave Crux, Spes Unica” which translates to “Hail the Cross, Our Only Hope.” This motto reflects their deep devotion to the Cross as a symbol of hope and redemption.*

*The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is particularly important in the spirituality of the Congregation of Holy Cross including the Marianites. They see the Cross as a central symbol of their mission to serve and educate others, mirroring the self-sacrifice and redemptive mission of Christ.*

*In the context of education, the Family of Holy Cross has established schools, colleges, and universities around the world, including the University of Notre Dame in the United States. These institutions emphasize not only academic excellence but also the development of character, moral values, and a sense of service. The Exaltation of the Holy Cross serves as a reminder of the foundational principles and values that guide their educational mission.*

*So, while Fr. Basil Moreau himself may not have a direct historical connection to the specific event of the discovery of the True Cross by St. Helena in 326 AD, his emphasis on the Cross as a symbol of hope, his dedication to education, and the mission of the Congregation, all tie into the broader themes of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in the Christian faith.*



I congratulated my Aunt Judy on the preceding paragraphs which she had written as a succinct and inspirational article for the feast.

With her blue eyes twinkling, she confessed she had not written the article nor had any other Marianite sister. The 260 plus words were a product of Artificial Intelligence (AI) that she was experimenting with to share with the 8,000 households that receive The Marianite magazine.

As we discussed this further, it was apparent that she felt that the magazine readers may find the use of this new technology both interesting and disturbing. As AI becomes a more central part of each aspect of life, it is important for us to consider its benefits and drawbacks.

How do Artificial Intelligence systems like Chat GPT work? It has been trained on a wide range of data put into its system. It does not access the internet, it is not capable of providing real-time information (like a hurricane warning), and the last training data set is from September 2021 so it cannot provide any information on any event that occurred after that time. Other AI systems are finding ways to work around these constraints, but at the time of this writing, Chat GPT is the most popular AI system, and thus our focus in this article.

Artificial Intelligence is here to stay, and so the Church must come to terms with its use. How do we use this technology to further our mission, and when should we push

back against its use? You may feel overwhelmed listening to the news, or even to your children or grandchildren, talking about how to use Artificial Intelligence options like Chat GPT (<https://chat.openai.com/>) to help with their homework, craft a resumé, or write a paper. How will educators address the potential pitfalls of plagiarism which come with the use of AI in schools? Some have decided to ban it completely, while others are finding ways to incorporate its use and demonstrate its limitations.

As we contemplate the centrality of the Cross in our lives, all this new technology can sometimes lead us to despair and crave a simpler time. Friends, artificial intelligence does not take our God by surprise! Like many other technological tools, we can find applications for good, such as using artificial intelligence to assist with medical diagnoses and resist those that lessen our humanity, such as encouraging our children to relinquish their critical thinking skills. Even as AI systems become more refined, they will never have souls or be made in God's image. In summary, we need to prayerfully consider how new technologies can be incorporated into our lives without diminishing our human connections.

Contributor: Dr. Sandra L. French, Professor of Communication, Radford University, Radford, VA and niece of Sister Judy Gomila, MSC

# September 15 – Our Lady of Sorrows

By Sr. Elvira Brown, MSC



During September we celebrate two feast days that are very important to the Congregation of Holy Cross. On September 14 the Church celebrates

the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and on September 15 we celebrate Our Lady of Sorrows. When Fr Moreau founded the Congregation of Holy Cross over 180 years ago, he dedicated the Priests to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Brothers to St. Joseph, and the Marianites to Mary under the title of Our Lady of Sorrows.

Those of you whose association with the Marianites began prior to 1967 will remember our beautiful black habits with white cap and collar. A silver heart imprinted with seven swords hung from the collar and long black beads looped from the waist and hung over the left hip while a blue corded cincture hung on the right. We also had smaller beads, similar to the Rosary, that were carried in our pocket and prayed daily, often while walking the grounds of Holy Angels, Our Lady of Holy Cross or wherever we were missioned.



The Seven Dolor Beads are sets of seven beads with a single bead separating each septet. Like the rosary a Hail Mary is said on each of the seven beads and an Our Father on the bead in between. While praying each septet we reflect on the seven sorrowful events Mary experienced as the Mother of Jesus as recorded in the Scriptures. As we remember these sorrows of Mary, we pray as Jesus did for those suffering similar sorrow, for those who may have caused our suffering and for those who work to alleviate suffering in our world.

**1st Dolor: The Prophecy of Simeon (Lk 2:23-35)** We pray for those receiving medical diagnosis, those suffering from dementia or other debilitating illness; for all their caregivers, and for those who work to find ways to alleviate this pain.

**2nd Dolor: The Flight into Egypt (Mt 2:13-15)** We pray for all refugees and immigrants, families displaced by war, terrorism or natural disaster; for those who seek to dominate others, and for those who assist others in resettling.

**3rd Dolor: Jesus is Lost in the Temple (Lk 2:43-51)** We pray for children who have been abducted trafficked, abused or imprisoned, parents who have no idea where their children are; for those in such pain that they inflict this pain on others; parents, teachers, scout leaders, coaches who mentor children to be their best selves.

**4th Dolor: Meeting Jesus Carrying His Cross (Lk 23:27)** We pray for parents everywhere who bear the vicarious pain of their children who suffer malnutrition, bullying, gang warfare or addictions; for those who inflict these pains, and for those who work to alleviate them.



**5th Dolor: The Crucifixion (Jn 9:25-27)** We pray for all who have lost loved ones as victims of others' crimes; for those who cause the senseless death of others, and for those who steadfastly care for those who are sick and dying.

**6th Dolor: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross (Jn 19:38)** Pray for all those who grieve the loss of a loved one and struggle with the changes thus thrust upon them; and for those who counsel and walk with others in this painful process.

**7th Dolor: Jesus is laid in the Sepulcher (Jn 19:36-42)** We pray for those who struggle with loss of persons, property, or self respect; and for those who compassionately work for peace and justice in our world.

As we reflect on these events in the lives of Jesus and Mary and the sorrows that continue to affect all in our world may we be led to follow Mary's example of strength and compassion as we strive to be present to others in their suffering today.

*Sr. Elvira Brown has served the Church as a Marianite for over 65 years. Here she shares her devotion to Mary's Seven Dolors.*



# TRANSFORMED THROUGH EMBRACING THE MIGRANT

By Mary Baudouin



In December 2022, an exceptionally cold month, I was in El Paso, Texas for three weeks, living and volunteering at Sacred Heart Parish, the Jesuit church located 3

blocks from the US/Mexico border. Since it was founded 125 years ago, the parish has been a beacon of hope and safety for immigrants, providing not only sacraments and religious formation, but education, food, citizenship classes, and strong community ties.

Sacred Heart is a church that struggles financially; most parishioners are poor or immigrants themselves. But when a flood of immigrants began crossing the border into El Paso in that frigid December and showed up at Sacred Heart in search of help, the parish did not hesitate to respond. Bishop Mark Seitz asked parishes in the area to open up and shelter and feed those coming into the country. Even though they had limited financial resources, Fr. Rafael Garcia, SJ, said their call was “very clear. We didn’t do much of a discernment – we had to open up our gym to these immigrant brothers and sisters.”

The first night that the shelter opened was chaotic, but it was clear that God’s hand was guiding the efforts. Seventy-five people, mostly men from Venezuela and Nicaragua without any kind of papers or any idea of where they would go once they got into the US, came into the warm gym. They were given blankets to spread on the floor, and were fed a soup that was cobbled together by parishioners who showed up to volunteer. Most were exhausted from months of journeying to the border only to be refused entry to the US and forced to sleep in makeshift camps and shelters on the Ciudad Juarez side of the border. Many only had the clothes on their backs and shoes that had been worn through; very few had socks or a change of underwear. At least half of them were

sick with colds, flu, and upset stomachs.

The next night over 100 people, including women and children, came into the shelter. With only two bathrooms and a total of 6 toilets and 6 showers, quarters were tight. But the immigrants themselves showed remarkable amounts of generosity and patience. They waited patiently in lines for food, clothes, toiletries, and towels. They were forgiving of those of us who had limited Spanish and struggled to understand them. Some of them came into the kitchen to help cook. They helped wash the tables after eating, and cleaned the bathrooms before they left in the morning.

In the nights that followed, hundreds of people showed up at the doors of Sacred Heart seeking shelter from the cold and the harshness of the streets. Since no more than 140 people could be allowed into the shelter on any given night, women and children were allowed in first. Some mothers held tiny babies in their arms and tried to keep their other children entertained. The men who had to stay outside were given blankets and food and slept outside, often huddled together for warmth. One night as I was leaving the shelter, I was surprised by 6 men sleeping under blankets in the bed of a pickup truck.

The numbers being sheltered at Sacred Heart stretched the capacity of the physical space that they were in. But as their numbers grew, so did the capacity of the parishioners showing up to volunteer or drop off donations. I’ve worked in social ministry in the Church for over 45 years and have never seen this kind of generosity and love in action. What was most remarkable was that it was coming from people, many of whom were poor themselves and had been new immigrants at one time.

When I returned to the shelter at the end of January, it was a trans-

formed place. Staff were hired to help organize the shelter and help migrants apply for asylum and find places to settle in the United States as they awaited the long process of getting an asylum hearing. Volunteers organized the clothing supply rooms. The shelter has moved from only providing services overnight to offering shelter 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, mostly for women and children. Area churches and community groups bring in meals and snacks. Financial donations continue to come in to keep the shelter running.

Instead of seeing this ministry as a burden, Fr. Garcia has experienced it as a huge gift to the parish. “We have been transformed – it is a beautiful thing. This is a space of encounter, where we see the poor face-to-face, and where in the midst of so much suffering and fear, we find hope and love.”

*Mary Baudouin is the Provincial Assistant for Justice and Ecology for the Jesuits of the US Central and Southern Province.*



*Migrants gather outside Sacred Heart Church in El Paso, Texas on a cold December day.*

*Migrants find safe shelter, food and camaraderie at Sacred Heart Parish in El Paso, Texas.*



# TRICK OR TREATING

Plump pumpkins in all colors, scary skeletons, and witches – from the edible to the decorative – have been on store shelves for weeks. Yet October and All Hallows Eve's Trick or Treat is still more than a month away!

Looking ahead on the Liturgical Calendar, the month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. This tradition originates from Pope St Pius V who wanted to dedicate a feast to ***Our Lady of the Holy Rosary*** following the victory at the Battle of Lepanto against the Turkish fleet on the 7th of October 1571.

In the Church, October has long been associated with mission. The month starts with the feast of St. Thérèse of Lisieux and draws to a close with ***World Mission Sunday*** (the next to last Sunday in October) a special day of prayer and global solidarity celebrated in all Catholic parishes from Alaska to Africa. It was 1926 when Pope Pius XI instituted Mission Sunday for the whole Church.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, National Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith from 1950 to 1966, inaugurated a ***World Mission Rosary*** during his radio

Pope Francis has invited all the faithful to recite the Holy Rosary, that “sweet chain that links heaven and earth”, during the month of October. Furthermore, his theme for World Mission Sunday, October 22, 2023 is ***Hearts on fire, feet on the move*** (cf. *Lk 24:13-35*).

The urgency of the Church's missionary activity calls for an ever closer missionary cooperation on the part of all her members. This is an essential goal of the synodal journey that the Church has undertaken, guided by the key words: *communion, participation, mission...* not a turning of the Church

*“We must pray, and not for ourselves, but for the world,”...*

address, The Catholic Hour, in 1951. “We must pray, and not for ourselves, but for the world,” he exhorted. “To this end, I have designed the World Mission Rosary.”

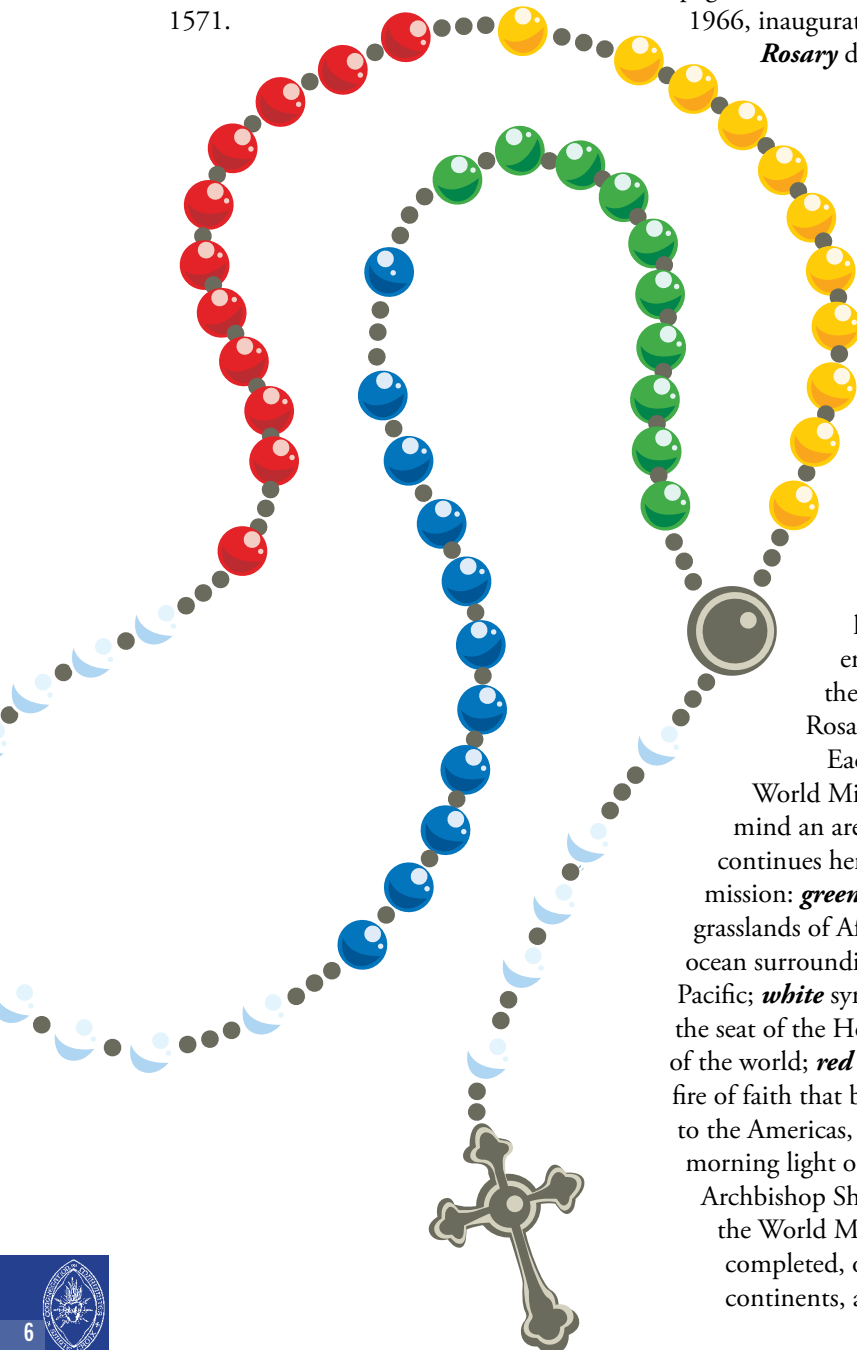
Each decade of that World Mission Rosary calls to mind an area where the Church continues her evangelizing mission: ***green*** for the forests and grasslands of Africa; ***blue*** for the ocean surrounding the islands of the Pacific; ***white*** symbolizing Europe, the seat of the Holy Father, shepherd of the world; ***red*** calling to mind the fire of faith that brought missionaries to the Americas, and ***yellow***, the morning light of the east, for Asia.

Archbishop Sheen said, “When the World Mission Rosary is completed, one has embraced all continents, all people in prayer.”

in upon herself; nor a matter of human preferences. Rather, it is a process of setting out on the way and, like the disciples of Emmaus, listening to the risen Lord. Since our Baptism, Jesus comes among us to explain the meaning of the Scriptures and to break bread for us, so that we can, by the power of the Holy Spirit, continue and be intentional about his mission.

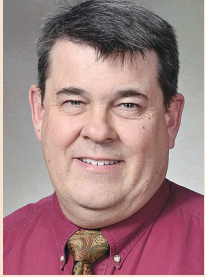
Just as the two disciples of Emmaus told the others what had taken place along the way (cf. *Lk 24:35*), so too our conversations and witness is a special kind of “treating” that will be a joyful telling of Christ the Lord's life, passion, death and resurrection, and the wonders that his love has accomplished in our lives.

Let us set out again with burning hearts, with our eyes open, and our feet in motion. Perhaps we will find ourselves up and down the aisles of Halloween goodies for “Trick or Treat” for the kids but we do so --- missionaries all in Jesus' Name.





# Catholic Relief Services Launches Climate Campaign



By Kevin Fitzpatrick

A few weeks ago while driving back from dropping off my youngest child at college in Indiana, I was listening to a radio report stating that the Heritage Foundation is now recommending legislators no longer deny that Climate Change is real and caused by humans.

Rather, the Heritage Foundation is advocating that climate change is really not so bad. I guess that is a start. But try telling that to my wife's wilting plants suffering under record heat and lack of rain in New Orleans. Who has ever heard of summer in New Orleans without rain?

While we swelter under record heat waves in the United States, people in countries around the world with fewer resources are being forced to migrate, especially island nations where the water is encroaching so fast that they have to flee the Island. Even our own Hawaii has had forest fires which are claiming lives. Since the beginning of his papacy, when Pope Francis visited Lampedusa, Italy, he has drawn attention to forced migration due to climate conditions.

All this while Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has been at the forefront of addressing the conditions caused by climate change by delivering food to those most in need, by drilling water wells so people can stay in place, and terracing the land to help distribute water more efficiently so local people can grow crops where it was not possible just a few years ago. I was fortunate enough to see the terracing in action in Ethiopia in 2019. Not only do activities like terracing provide more access to food, but it can also bring families and tribes together for a common goal when tension used to exist among them due to scarce resources.

And now CRS is asking for your help. There are three items CRS is asking U.S. citizens to advocate for with our legislators and senators. The first is to maintain funding levels for international aid for fiscal year 2024. Many people are under the impression that a large portion of the U.S. budget is dedicated toward international aid. The truth is that we spend roughly 50 percent of our budget on Defense. One of the best defenses against terrorism and migration is to provide aid to hard hit areas so that people do not need to flee or engage in a race to the bottom for scarce resources.

The second request is to support the Farm Bill which will be seeking authorization this Fall for another five years. While the Farm Bill is a huge and complicated bill, the simple reality is that it helps farmers in the United States while addressing hunger at home and abroad. CRS also asks that the Farm Bill be passed without work requirements in order to receive Food Stamps or SNAP benefits. SNAP benefits are

one of the most effective anti-hunger initiatives we have at our disposal as well as one of the least abused by recipients. Many people may have heard of the infamous "Welfare Queen", but she exists more in myth rather than in fact.

The third request is to call, write, or e-mail your legislators and senators to find out what they propose to do about climate change. CRS is in this conversation for the long haul, so they do not have specific legislation for addressing climate change. You will also want to share with the legislator or their aides why this issue is so important to you. Do not be afraid to name your religious convictions. Legislators know that people with strong faith are more likely to vote and more likely to stay engaged in conversation, so they are much more likely to take us seriously when we name our faith as part of our motivation.

On our local radio, I often hear "Just One Thing", a short public service announcement which speaks to small actions we can take to address climate. Reaching out to our elected

officials can seem like a monumental task, but if we think of it as "just one thing" we can do, it feels more accessible. I hope you are inclined to take the step to do this "just one thing".

*Kevin Fitzpatrick is the Director of the Office of Justice and Peace at Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, where he serves as Diocesan Director for Catholic Relief Services.*





# THE UNIVERSITY OF HOLY CROSS RESIDENCE HALL: *A Prophetic Presence*

By Christopher Rhodon, PhD



*Dr. Christopher M. Rhodon serves as the Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and University Advancement. Chris is a graduate of UHC and has over 20 years of experience working in the energy industry and higher education.*

The University of Holy Cross (UHC) Residence Hall stands as a shining example of how institutions of higher learning can become more than just academic centers; they can be beacons of inclusion and have a meaningful impact worldwide. Rooted in the mission of the Marianites of Holy Cross, the UHC Residence Hall strives to be a prophetic presence, embracing and empowering members from all walks of life in an ever-changing world. This article explores how this residence hall plays a crucial role in advancing the mission of the Marianites and fostering an inclusive community.

## **The Mission of the Marianites of Holy Cross:**

The Marianites of Holy Cross are a religious congregation committed to serving the marginalized and underprivileged since its inception in 1841. Founded by Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau, the Congregation's core values revolve around compassion, justice, and the belief in the dignity and the worth of every individual. In alignment with Catholic Social Teaching, the Marianites believe in reaching out to those who are marginalized and excluded, uplifting them, and empowering them to reach their fullest potential.

## **The Prophetic Presence of UHC Residence Hall:**

The UHC Residence Hall embodies the spirit of the Marianites by being a prophetic presence on campus. It is not just a place where residents live; it is a community that actively seeks to transform the lives of its residents and engage with the wider campus community. The residence hall's core mission is to create an environment that fosters inclusivity and embraces diversity in all its forms.

## **1. Promoting Diversity and Inclusion:**

UHC Residence Hall ensures that every resident, regardless of background, race, ethnicity, gender, or socio-economic status, feels welcomed and valued. By actively recruiting students from diverse backgrounds, the residence hall encourages cross-cultural learning and understanding. This creates a more empathetic and compassionate community and provides backgrounds and provides opportunities for intercultural engagement, nurturing future leaders who are prepared to tackle the world's challenges with an open mind.

## **2. Supporting Underprivileged Students:**

Recognizing that education should be accessible to all, UHC Residence Hall offers various financial aid programs for students who might otherwise struggle to attend the university. By supporting underprivileged students in their pursuit of education, the residence hall fulfills its mission of advancing the values of the Marianites and working towards a more just and equitable society.

## **3. Fostering a Culture of Service:**

UHC Residence Hall encourages students to actively engage in service projects. Through volunteering and community outreach, students gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced in our communities and work towards meaningful solutions. This hands-on approach to social issues instills a sense of responsibility and activism in students, preparing them to be agents of positive change in the world.

## **4. World-wide Impact:**

As a prophetic presence, the UHC Residence Hall has now housed not only UHC students but also residents both domestically and internationally. In fact, over the last year, the residence hall has welcomed travel nurses from the Philippines and Nepal as well as residents from California to Georgia. This diverse population has resulted in a more cross-cultured campus, and in turn, we hope that each resident takes at least a piece of the Holy Cross heritage with them.

The University of Holy Cross Residence Hall exemplifies





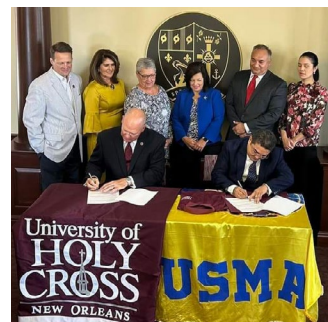


the essence of the Marianites' Mission by actively embodying the values of compassion, justice, and inclusivity. As a prophetic presence on campus, it serves as a transformative force, enriching the lives of its residents and the wider community. By embracing members from all communities in this ever-changing world, the UHC Residence Hall paves the way for a brighter, more transformative future. As we witness the positive impact of such initiatives, we are reminded of the profound influence that institutions of higher learning can have in shaping a more just and compassionate society.

*Hot Off the Press!*

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIP

The University of Holy Cross (UHC) announced its first international student exchange program in partnership with the University of San Miguel Arcangel in Honduras (USMAH) paving the way for more than 60 Latin American, African and Asian students to continue their studies at UHC in New Orleans. UHC and USMAH officials today signed a comprehensive student exchange agreement for educational cooperation at UHC's Algiers campus that will allow the participating exchange students from all over the world to earn degrees from both universities. The educational student exchange partnership is a result of a recent successful trade mission involving UHC officials and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana.



The first-of-its-kind student exchange agreement between both universities will facilitate international academic exchange, develop academic and scientific relationships and support collaborative research activities between the two universities. The student exchange agreement was signed on August 7, 2023 by University of Holy Cross President Dr. Stanton McNeely III and University of San Miguel Arcangel in Honduras President Jorge Lopez Santos, who flew to New Orleans for the signing and the Hispanic Business and Trade Show by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana.



## SYNOD MOMENT

The Synod on Synodality (SOS) opened in October, 2021 with a Mass at St. Peter Basilica. This synod includes the total People of God and lasts until 2024. The first session of the General Assembly will take place in Rome October, 2023. The Synod Process is known as Conversation in the Spirit.

### WHAT IS "CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT"?

In its concrete reality conversation in the Spirit can be described as a shared prayer with a view to communal discernment...[prepared for] by personal reflection and meditation. They...[share] a meditated word nourished by prayer, not an opinion improvised on the spot.

The dynamic...[has] three fundamental steps. The first is... [a person speaks] from his or her own experience...[prepared in prayer]. Others listen... [knowing that] each one has a valuable contribution...[there is no] debate or discussion.

Silence and prayer help to prepare for the [second] step, in which each person is invited to open up within his or herself a space for others and for the Other. Once again, each person takes the floor...to express what from their listening has touched them most deeply and what they feel challenged by most strongly.

The third step, in an atmosphere of prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is to identify the key points...to build a consensus...faithful to the process...[and representative of all]. It is not enough to draw up a report listing the most often mentioned points. Rather, discernment is needed, which also pays attention to marginal and prophetic voices and does not overlook the significance of the points on which disagreement emerges.

### HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

**PRAYER:** Pray daily to the Holy Spirit. The Vatican website offers a variety of prayers.

**STUDY:** Read about the SOS. Articles are online, in Catholic newspapers and periodicals. Websites: the Vatican: [Synod 2021 - 2024](#) and the USCCB: [Synod 2021-2024 | USCCB](#).

**ACTION:** Talk about the SOS with family and friends. Offer to give a presentation to Senior Citizens, Youth Group, Parish or school.

Use the process of "conversation in the Spirit" in your daily life.

Source: "Instrumentum laboris" of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops



msc|associates

## A NEW YEAR begins



By Sr. Joel Miller, MSC



Remember school bells? August 10 marked our first day of school, 2023-2024. What fun watching everyone coming back and seeing their friends! We began our day with Mass -- always the BEST way to begin a new school year.

I've been involved in Catholic Education for 54 years in 7 Catholic Schools as a teacher, principal, and staff member. Each year has been a gift for me.

It has not always been easy but the positive far outweighs the negative. To see children grow and advance is super exciting. My companionship with teachers and staff has been so invigorating. God is always our ROCK.

I'm delighted to say that a number of our faculty here at Our Mother of Peace (and in other schools, I have been in ministry) have become part of our Marianite Associate Program. They have an appreciation for Blessed Basil Moreau and Holy Cross spirituality and that gives us another common bond.

Below are thoughts I gleaned from our teachers and students about "A New School Year":

### EDUCATORS

- Seeing everyone's smiles on the first day absolutely warmed my heart. *(Stephanie Hargroder – 3rd Grade)*
- Coming back to school is so exciting. To witness the powerful prayers of our students and to know that



we are teaching future saints ~ saints-in-the-making. *(Heidi Richard- Religion)*

- I'm so excited and grateful to be back. I have completed 50 years in education. I taught in public school for 33 ½ years and have completed 16 years at OMP. I'm always happy to bring my love for teaching, for God, and for the Church together. *(Evelyn Dohmann - K Paraprofessional)*
- My commitment within the walls of Catholic Schools is to promote knowledge and practice Religion through our Catholic faith. *(Linda Larson – 5th Grade)*
- This is my first-year teaching at OMP. I am delighted to be here. The beginning of the year retreat was refreshing. The Mass, speeches, small groups, and fellowship was wonderful! Bring on the students! *(Yvette Tyler – Grades 6th-8th)*
- Coming back to school is exciting. I get to meet a new group of students and have a fresh start to a new year. *(Debbie Fontenot – Grades 6th, 7th, 8th)*
- The new school year always comes with excitement and a bit of nervousness. I want to make my students feel loved, safe and important individuals who have something to contribute to make our school a better place. *(Tess Stanford – Math Lab and Athletic Director.)*
- I always feel excited and yet nervous. I ask God and myself if I made the correct choice. God always answers "Of course you did." I would not want another job. *(Nichole Bellow – Grades 6th, 7th, 8th)*
- Returning for the new school year is like being a child

again. Our school faith community holds a special place in all our hearts. We are surrounded by God, prayer, and peace. There is truly no better place to be or a better feeling than by being on the campus of Our Mother of Peace surrounded by so much love. *(Genny Fitzpatrick – Principal)*

### STUDENTS' VERBAL COLLAGE (1st-8th Grades)

Excited to see my friends... want to be good... nervous... teachers not yelling... met a new teacher... had fun... like working together...made new friends...learned new things... love PE...time to learn...fresh new start...putting on my thinking cap...having new teachers and classroom...refreshing my brain...excited to learn...happy to get back to sports... am anxious or nervous...bumpy ride...excited...happy to start new year with Mass...reconnect with my friends.







*“A teacher affects eternity;  
You can never tell where your  
influence stops”*

Henry B. Adams

*Sr. Joel Miller is on staff at Our Mother of Peace in Church Point, LA. She is noted for her love of students, sense of faculty faith community, and her unique sense of humor.*

*(L-R) Christine Bellard, Evelyn Dohmann, Heidi Richard, Johnette Privett, Maghan Savoy, Sandy Richard, Sr. Joel, Linda Larson, Lindsay Thibodeaux, Sarah Andrepont, Debbie Fontenot, Genny Kirkpatrick. MISSING ARE: Estelle Wimberley, JoAnn LeJeune, Rachel Boutin*

## EDITOR'S NOTE:



## *In Remembrance*

We mourn the loss and celebrate the life of our long-time friend and co-editor, Sr. Clarita Bourque, MSC. A woman of many accomplishments, she demonstrated her love in action on behalf of the poor, the marginalized, the vulnerable, and the cause of all women. The Marianites have been notified that UNITY OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS, where Sr. Clarita ministered and nurtured her long-term heart for the homeless, will be naming the building at 2407 Baronne Street, New Orleans in her honor. THANK YOU! Here are a few of her favorite editor photos to put a smile in your heart.



Stay in touch at [www.marianites.org](http://www.marianites.org)

Order Guild cards. • Keep up with Marianite activities. • See where Mass is said for you.  
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## Marianites of Holy Cross

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*"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."*

— Matt. 18:20



# ALL CLASS REUNION BRUNCH

Saturday, October 28, 2023

11:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.

**Chateau Golf and Country Club**

REGISTRATION IS ON-LINE. No paper forms; electronic only!  
Individual seats are \$50.00. Tables of 10 are \$500. Less than 10  
registering together, will be seated at the same table with others to make  
a table of 10. We will do our best to keep graduating classes together.

EVENT LINK ~ AHA Brunch

<https://marianites.app.neoncrm.com/event.jsp?event=1&>

### OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST:

*The ever-popular Memorial  
Service, Prayer Basket, 50/50,  
Marianite Guild Cards, Cash Bar,  
and Door Prizes will all be  
available.*

### THE BRUNCH BUFFET MENU:

Mixed Green Salad  
Seasonal Fresh Fruit  
Scrambled Eggs  
Biscuits and White County Gravy  
Grillades and Grits  
Hickory Smoked Bacon  
Praline Cheesecake  
Coffee and Tea

