

NACMS NEWSLETTER
April 2025

As we enter the final weeks of Lent, we are excited to share some spring updates. Keep reading to learn more about:

- “At the Foot of the Cross: A Good Friday Reflection” by Bro. Erick Otiende, SM,
- Dennis Doyle’s Presentation for Marianist Specialists–in–Training,
- *Stations of Easter Meditations*,
- Our Request for Google Reviews,
- Recent Recordings, and
- Information on Our Good Friday and Easter Monday Closure.



At the Foot of the Cross: A Good Friday Reflection

By Bro. Erick Otiende, SM

The Calvary scene from the Gospel of John, which depicts Mary at the foot of the cross, holds special significance for our Marianist Family. Mary’s presence at the foot of the cross confirmed her faith and belief in what God had promised her at the Annunciation, even when things felt impossible. At this moment, everything seems to have been lost; her son has been accused, sentenced to death, and nailed to the cross, where he struggled for breath. We can only imagine the emotions and thoughts running through her mind, but she doesn’t collapse in a heap. She is not a dejected woman. She stands courageously



beneath the shadow of the cross because she knew this had to be. Pope

John Paul II noted:

The “yes” spoken on the day of the Annunciation reaches full maturity on the day of the cross, when the time comes for Mary to receive and beget as her children all those who become disciples, pouring out upon them the saving love of her Son.¹

As she did at the beginning of Jesus’ life, Mary “treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Lk 2:19). Like Mary, we should be hopeful, especially when situations seem desperate. For us, Mary models hope, perseverance, and contemplation as we seek to understand and be transformed by Jesus’ saving actions. We are called to imitate this faith during the Easter Triduum.

At the foot of the Cross, by the command of our blessed Lord, the Apostle John received Mary as his mother. John represents us and the whole Church. All of us received the divine gift of having Mary as our mother. These days, as we ponder Jesus’ Passion, it is a moment to receive anew the gift of Mary’s maternal care for each one of us. Jesus gives us Mary as our mother. “Son, behold your mother...” (Jn 19:26–27). May Mary always bring us closer to Jesus.

With this reminder at the forefront of our minds this month, we encourage you to reflect on the following questions:

- How does Mary’s witness influence you to embrace hope, perseverance, and contemplation this Easter Triduum?
- How is Mary guiding you closer to Jesus as we encounter his passion, death, and resurrection?

If you’d like to reflect further on Mary at the Foot of the Cross, we encourage you to utilize [Lenten Meditation #4: Three O’Clock Prayer Guided Meditation](#).



Bro. Erick Otiende, SM (Region of Eastern Africa), is one of the three [Marianist Specialists-in-Training](#) during the 2024–2025 academic year.

¹ Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, § 103. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html

² Art by Bro. Charles Wanda, SM, 1935–2016, from the collection of the National Archives Marianist Province of the US.

**Dennis Doyle Presents on Vatican II
to Marianist Specialists-in-Training**



From left to right: Bro. Tim Phillips, SM; Fr. Renny Markose, SM; Bro. Erick Otiende, SM; Dr. Dennis Doyle; Fr. Bosco Shin, SM; Dr. Caitlin Cipolla-McCulloch

Dennis Doyle, professor emeritus in the Religious Studies Department at the University of Dayton, joined our **Marianist Specialists-in-Training** to facilitate a discussion on the implications of Vatican II for our Marianist Family. His three books, *The Church Emerging from Vatican II*, *Communion Ecclesiology: Vision and Versions*, and *What Is Christianity? A Dynamic Approach*, illuminate his ability to engage theology in a spirit of dialogue and service to the Church. In this session with Doyle, the Marianist Specialists-in-Training explored Jesuit Fr. John O'Malley's *What Happened at Vatican II* and Marianist Fr. Jack McGrath's *Reading the Signs of the Times, Speaking to a Changing World* (available for purchase in our bookstore) to share how Vatican II was received within their cultural contexts. Thanks to Dennis Doyle for sharing his experience of US Catholic Vatican II history with us.

Stations of Easter Meditations



Our *Lenten Meditations* series took listeners from the desert to the cross on Good Friday. Our *Stations of Easter Meditations* series picks up where those left off and helps listeners deepen their relationship with Jesus through the Easter season. These seven meditations, each about five to eight minutes long, take the listener on a journey of encounter with the risen Christ. Each station was developed, written, and narrated by Tom Redmond, SM, with additional narration by Gabby Bibeau. We hope these

reflections will guide you deeper into the mystery of Jesus' resurrection and your relationship with him.

These meditations are under *Sharing Our Marianist Stories*, available wherever you listen to podcasts, including our [YouTube Channel](#) and our [website](#).

Request for Google Reviews

Submit a **Google review** of NACMS during the month of April and be entered in a drawing for your very own Chami doll and a copy of the second edition of *The Marianist Family Prayer Book*. Google reviews increase our visibility when individuals search for Marianist resources. They also increase understanding of the resources we offer and how individuals or communities utilize NACMS. Individuals must submit their name with their review to be eligible. If the selected winner already has a copy of *The Marianist Family Prayer Book*, they can instead win a \$15 gift certificate to NACMS.



"Hope can be about imagination. Through hope, we see more than reality. From hope, we see alternatives; because of hope we keep images in front of us that motivate us out of bed every morning, not just to walk through existence, but to approach life with enthusiasm and vitality."

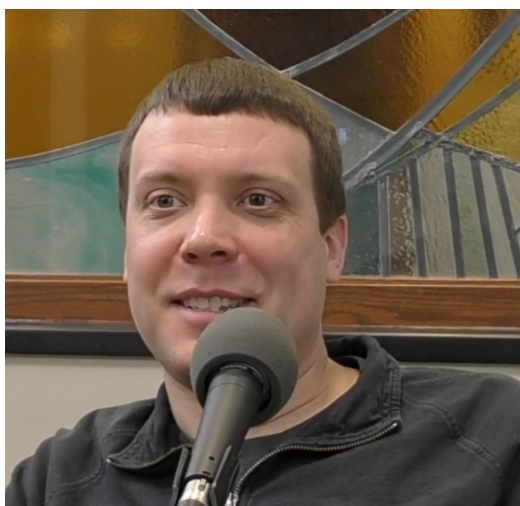
- Carol Ramey, former Director of NACMS



Continue to keep an eye out on our **Facebook** and **Instagram** accounts as we share quotes on hope from prominent Marianist scholars, including the Marianist Founders, in celebration of the 2025 Jubilee.

Carol Ramey, "Mary, Symbol of Hope," Lecture, Food for the Soul Program, Dayton, March 10, 2009.

Recent Recordings



Thanks to Matt Naveau for visiting our Lawrence J. Cada Recording Studio in March and sharing about his devotion to Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon. Matt is a Lay Marianist in the Table Flippers and Spiritus Communities. We hope to utilize his interview for an upcoming podcast episode. If you have a person or topic you'd recommend for an upcoming episode of *Sharing Our Marianist Stories*, email Mike Bennett, Media Administrator, at mbennett3@udayton.edu.

Good Friday and Easter Monday Closures

The NACMS office will be closed on Friday, April 18, and Monday, April 21, in observance of Good Friday and Easter Monday. We wish you and your loved ones a Blessed Triduum and Easter season.

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North American Center for Marianist Studies | 4435 East Patterson Road | Dayton, OH 45430
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