

NACMS NEWSLETTER
May 2024

In May, the Catholic Church celebrates Mary as the Mother of God and Mother of the Church. Keep reading to learn about some specific Marian feasts in May and exciting news and developments happening at NACMS, including:

- Caitlin Cipolla–McCulloch Named Program Administrator,
- A new *Community Meeting Kit* for Mother’s Day,
- Celebrating Marian Feasts in the Month of Mary,
- Marianist Travels with Andrew Kosmowski,
- Recent Publications,
- And Happenings with the NACMS Staff.



Caitlin Cipolla–McCulloch Named Program Administrator

Welcome to NACMS, Caitlin Cipolla–McCulloch. Caitlin joins the NACMS staff as the Program Administrator and brings a broad and diverse formation in the Marianist charism with her.

Caitlin, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Dayton, has lived and ministered with the Marianist Family in Peru, been part of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate in the United States, and visited the Marianist Family in countries across North and South America.



Her Marianist background also includes serving on the National Leadership Council of the Marianist Lay Community of North America (MLC–NA) for three years and being a member of Ahava, a Marianist lay community, for over a decade.

Caitlin’s emerging research areas for her doctoral dissertation engage the intersections of Latin American studies and theology, Mariology, and the Marianist charism. Her dissertation is tentatively titled “Mary as Nurturer:

A New Model for Contemporary Times.”

Look for exciting Marianist programming offerings from Caitlin in the months ahead!

Celebrating Mother's Day: "A Mother's Love"



Our newly released *Community Meeting Kit*, “A Mother’s Love,” explores how the models of Mary (Mother of God), Elisabeth de Vincens de Lamourous (mother of Marie Thérèse de Lamourous), and Baroness Ursule de Peyronnencq (mother of Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon) resonate with our lives today. As Mother’s Day approaches, this resource—filled with rich content, reflections, and prayers—makes for an easy go-to for an upcoming community meeting.

View this free *Community Meeting Kit* and others at [our website](#) under publications.

Celebrating Marian Feasts in the Month of Mary

There are many Marian feast days in May because it is the month of Mary, the Mother of God. We invite you to explore a few feasts that are particularly significant for our Marianist Family.

May 12: Mary, Mother of Graces and Mediatrix

This feast day celebrates Mary as mediator of Divine Grace. According to Father Robert Backherms, SM, “When we want something from another, we often have a mutual friend intercede for us. This person becomes a mediator. Jesus, the God-man, is the mediator between God and man; the Mother of Jesus is the Mediatrix between Jesus and us. Mary is both the Mother of Christ and our Mother. No wonder she is such a perfect mediatrix.” In 1921, a papal indult permitted the Society of Mary to celebrate this feast, in commemoration of Pope Gregory XVI’s Decree of Praise in 1839 and Pope Pius IX’s Decree of Approbation of the Society of Mary in 1865, which were two key steps in the Vatican’s recognition and approval of the Society of Mary.

May 25: Mary, Help of Christians

While it has been a Marian Feast in the Catholic Church since 1814, a papal indult granted the Marianists special permission to celebrate the Feast of Mary, Help of Christians to commemorate the founding and papal recognition of the Daughters of Mary. Father Backherms states, “Mary is the help of the world, of countries, of states and cities, of communities and families...all may claim her special help.”

May 31: The Visitation

The Feast of the Visitation, an official Marian feast in the Catholic Church since the Medieval Era, commemorates Mary's visit with her cousin, Elizabeth. Both women were overjoyed by the other's pregnancy, and Mary praised God with her Magnificat. The Magnificat continues to be an influential prayer for the Marianist Family and our relationship with Mary. Father Backherms says, "It is a beautiful example of humility Mary gave us. She who was God's Mother became the servant of another."



To utilize Marianist prayers for these feasts, see *The Marianist Family Prayer Book, (2nd Edition)*, available for purchase in our online bookstore. You can also learn more about Mary's Magnificat and its implications for Marianists today through our [Magnificat Series videos](#). The quotes are from Robert E. Backherms, SM, *Sparks from a Marian Flame: Meditations on Mary's Principal Feasts* (Dayton, OH: Marianist Publications, 1953).

Marianist Travels with Andrew Kosmowski

Brother Andrew Kosmowski, SM, NACMS Librarian, spent two weeks traveling the United States to assist Marianists with developing and transporting important Marianist collections. A large portion of his travels included delivering new collections from Dayton and St. Louis to the Marianist Archives in San Antonio. These materials included the sketchbooks of Brother Joseph Barrish, SM, and memorabilia from Mount St. John's Queen of Apostles Community and Meyer Hall. While in San Antonio, Brother Andrew also visited the Archives of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate and attended an eclipse watch party with the Marianist brothers. He also collected the papers of Father Théodore Koehler, SM, for the University of Dayton Library and obtained some new materials for the NACMS Library.

New Publications

Podcast Episode 41: An Irish Perspective (with Susan Buckley)

Susan Buckley is a lay Marianist living in Dublin, Ireland, where the Marianist Family has been present since 1967. In this episode of *Sharing Our Marianist Stories*, Susan talks about her engagement in a virtual Lay Marianist



Community with others in the United States and her experience at the 2023 International Lay Marianist Assembly in Madrid. She also sheds light on what it is to be a lay Marianist in Ireland amid the current context of the Catholic Church there.

Podcast Episode 40: A Presidential Transition (with Tom Mengler and Winston Erevelles)

In June, Tom Mengler will conclude twelve years of service as the president of St. Mary's University (San Antonio), and Winston Erevelles will begin his tenure as the university's next president. This episode provides a brief look into their lives. They each share about how they came to the Marianist Family, the impact the charism has had on their lives and work at St. Mary's, and the significance of Marianist universities for Catholic higher education.



Keep an eye out, especially on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts, for updates on new episodes we'll release in April and new e-publications we have in the works. [Did you know we're on LinkedIn as well?](#)

Staff Happenings



In late April, the NACMS staff had the opportunity to spend some time out of the office for a celebratory luncheon. Initially scheduled for the Feast of

Epiphany, we were glad to spend the time together and celebrate Easter.

The staff also gathered for a Scholars' Seminar on the topic of Marianist Leadership. George Lisjak, NACMS Director, facilitated the seminar, which provided a space to discuss leadership in the Marianist tradition and how that leadership extends to our work in the world.



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NACMS Office Hours by appointment only until further notice.
To make an appointment please call 937.429.2521.

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