



North American Center for Marianist Studies

NACMS NEWSLETTER October 2024

Correction: Our most recent newsletter listed an incorrect date for the Feast of Our Lady of the Pillar which is, in fact, October 12. The date has been corrected in the newsletter below. We apologize for any confusion and for the error.

This October we're excited to celebrate our Marianist Family and to highlight a few formative opportunities. Read on to learn about:

- Celebrating the Marianist Sisters' 75 Years in the USA,
- Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month,
- Reflecting on Our Lady of the Pillar,
- Program Highlight: Spirit of Saragossa Retreat,
- The "Spectacle of Saints" *Community Meeting Kit*,
- Recent Recordings,
- And Bookstore News.



Celebrating the Marianist Sisters' 75 Years in the USA

The Daughters of Mary Immaculate (FMI) formed their first community in the United States in early October 1949. This first foundation 75 years ago was spearheaded by three Spanish Sisters who came to the US to learn English and the American system of education. During that time, several young women met the Sisters and joined their community, including the first four American Daughters of Mary Immaculate: Laola Hironaka (Sr. Mary Laura), Marie Abmayr (Sr. Mary Chaminade), Dorothy Hagan (Sr. Ellen Marie), and Grace Luther (Sr. Mary Ann). *Ancestors of Courage: A History of the Marianist Sisters in the United States* describes the experience of these early Sisters:



Grace Luther
(Sr. Mary Ann)

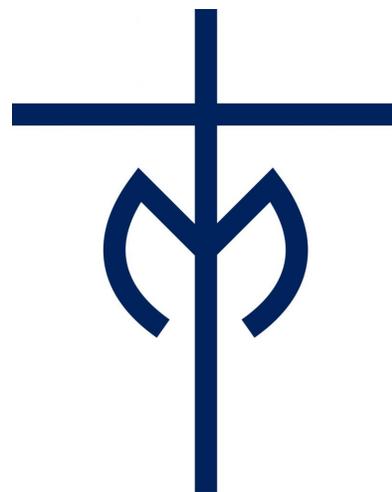
Marie Abmayr
(Sr. Mary Chaminade)

Dorothy Hagan
(Sr. Ellen Marie)

Laola Hironaka
(Sr. Mary Laura)

“Those of us Americans who came to San Antonio from the east coast, the midwest or Hawaii felt like we were coming to another country – even though we were still in the United States and the community was already established at that point! ... It surely was a ‘leap into the darkness.’ The legacy these Sisters left us were their spirit of faith, dedication to Mary Mother of Jesus, focus on Her ministry of leading others to Her Son, and an intense prayer life. Their loyalty to their community was steadfast and never wavered. They came to implant the FMI in the United States and gave themselves completely to this mission.”¹

Today the Marianist Sisters in the US have communities in San Antonio, Texas and Dayton, Ohio. They serve in education, social justice ministry, pastoral ministry, and many other professions. Their mission is to participate in faith communities; help build a Church and society where all are included; respond to the poverties of our time, especially economic poverty; remain active with concerns of women; and maintain a global perspective while educating themselves and others regarding the interconnectedness of our global society.² We are grateful for the continued commitment and contributions of the Marianist Sisters within the Marianist Family.



To learn more about the Daughters of Mary Immaculate, visit the [resources at nacms.org](https://nacms.org). If you would like to hear a first-hand account of the Sisters’ early years in the United States, listen to [Sharing Our Marianist Stories Episode 7: Go to Europe, Become a Sister](#) with Sr. Marie Abmayr.

1. *Ancestors of Courage: A History of the Marianist Sisters in the United States*(San Antonio: Daughters of Mary Immaculate, 1999), 5–6.

2. “Who We Are: The Daughters of Mary,” *The Marianists*, November 28, 2017, <https://www.marianist.com/FMI-identity>.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month at NACMS

During National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 to October 15), NACMS is celebrating the contributions of



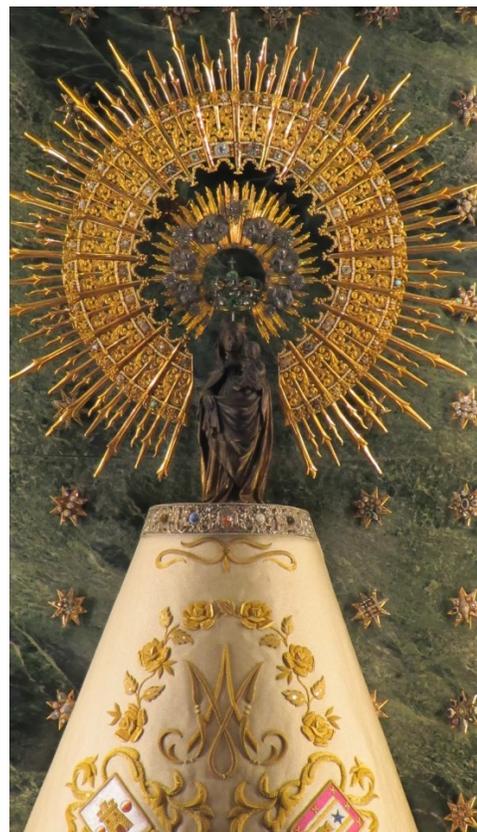
Hispanics and Latin Americans within the Marianist Family. Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to learn more about people who are enlivening the Marianist movement and the Church by sharing their rich Hispanic heritage.

Also, visit nacms.org for additional resources, including the following:

- Material on [Our Lady of Guadalupe and Our Lady of the Pillar](#),
- [Saint Juan Diego as an Icon of Mary's Evangelizing Mission and Model for Laity](#) by John Samaha, SM,
- [The Society of Mary in Mexico](#), by Robert Wood, SM, and
- [Community Meeting Kits](#) on the topic of immigration.

Reflecting on October 12th's Feast of Our Lady of the Pillar

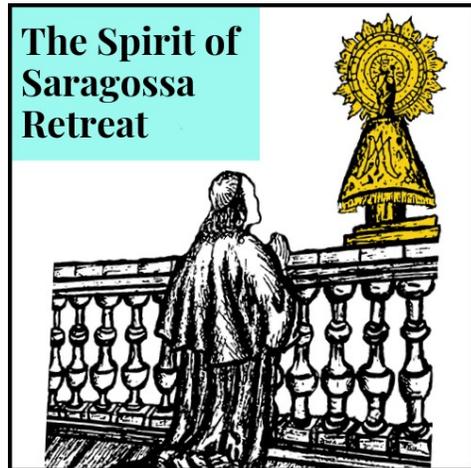
After many turbulent years amidst the French Revolution that included the government's suppression of faith and the exile of priests who would not profess their loyalty to the government, Father Chaminade was exiled from France and went to Saragossa, Spain. There he encountered the Shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, which commemorates Mary's apparition to St. James that occurred while Mary was still alive. In his book, *Chaminade's Message Today*, Fr. Eduardo Belloch, SM states that "from the time he returned to France in 1800 at the age of 39, we see William Joseph Chaminade changed. He is not the same person who went into exile. He is decisive and knows where he is going. He has a personal missionary project and becomes extraordinarily creative. His life is not the same as it was before going into exile. Something clearly happened at



Saragossa."³ Perhaps there was something about Chaminade's experience at Our Lady of the Pillar and the vibrant, tangible expression of Catholic faith in Saragossa that fueled this change Fr. Belloch references.

To reflect further on this important feast day for our Marianist Family, check out Bro. Tom Redmond, SM's "[A Reflection on Saragossa.](#)"

Program Highlight: Spirit of Saragossa Retreat in Daily Life



Looking to experience a deep Marianist retreat but struggling for the time? Adapted from the 30-day retreat for vowed religious, the Spirit of Saragossa Retreat allows busy individuals to experience the richness of prayer and spiritual direction over several months. Throughout the Spirit of Saragossa retreat, participants pray and reflect on four Marian mysteries found in Scripture: the Annunciation, the foot of the cross at Calvary, the Upper Room at Pentecost, and the wedding feast at Cana. Participants are

accompanied by a spiritual companion with whom they meet and talk regularly. These conversations can take place either virtually or in person. The hope of the retreat program is to strengthen and confirm each participant's commitment to living the Marianist charism through daily personal prayer.

Learn about [Kay Tally-Foos' experience as a participant in this retreat in our latest YouTube video](#). For more information about this program, visit the [Spirit of Saragossa Retreat in Daily Life page](#).

"A Spectacle of Saints" *Community Meeting Kit*

Our newly released *Community Meeting Kit*, "A Spectacle of Saints" explores the Marianist candidates on the path to sainthood and how we are blessed with ordinary saints in our lives today. As we approach All Saints' and All Souls' Day, this meditative and prayerful resource is a wonderful way to engage your community with the themes of Christian sainthood.



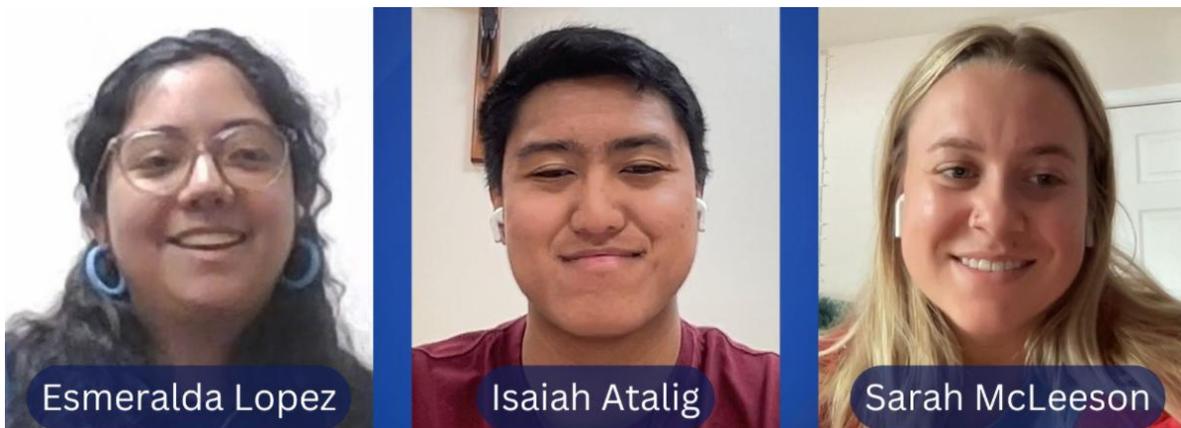
View this free *Community Meeting Kit* and others at nacms.org.

Recent Recordings



Thanks to Fr. George Cerniglia, SM and Bros. Tom Giardino, SM, Esteban Reyes, SM, Bill Schlosser, SM, and Fred Silbereis, SM for visiting the Lawrence J. Cada Recording Studio in September.

We're also grateful to Esmeralda Lopez (St. Mary's University), Isaiah Atalig (Chaminade University), and Sarah McLeeson (University of Dayton) who joined us virtually to record their experiences of the LEAD with Mary immersion, which was a collaboration of the three Marianist Universities and held in May 2024 for undergraduate students.



Look for these recordings in upcoming episodes of *Sharing Our Marianist Stories*. Is there an individual from the Marianist Family who would be a great guest on *Sharing Our Marianist Stories*? If so, send their name and contact information (if possible) to **Mike Bennett** so he can invite them for an interview.

Bookstore News



Due to staff schedules, any orders placed after Thursday, November 7 will not be processed until after Monday, December 2. If you need immediate assistance please contact nacms1@gmail.com.

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