



Ms. Marge Cavanaugh
Sr. Evangeline Escobar, FMI
Rev. James Fitz, SM
Bro. Stephen Glodek, SM
Sr. Marcy Loehrlein, FMI
Mr. Kurt Webe

Contact: Rev. James Fitz, SM
jfitz@sm-usa.org
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MARIANIST FAMILY COUNCIL MEETS IN SAN ANTONIO

The Marianist Family Council of North America met Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 4-5, 2005, at the Marianist Sisters' residence in San Antonio. The purpose of the Family Council is to encourage the implantation of the Marianist Family in North America and to facilitate the cooperation of its members in implementing the mission of the Marianist Family in the North American culture. The Council supports two major initiatives: the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative and a joint venture on Marianist lay formation.

The membership of the Council is **Bro. Stephen Glodek** and **Rev. James Fitz**, representatives of the Society of Mary; **Sr. Evangeline Escobar** and **Sr. Marcy Loehrlein**, representatives of the Marianist Sisters, and **Marge Cavanaugh** and **Kurt Weber**, representatives of the Marianist Lay Network of North America (MLNNA).

During the meeting, the Council received reports on its two major initiatives, updated each other on significant developments within each of the member organizations, discussed issues suggested by the World Council of the Marianist Family, discussed a common day of prayer for the Marianist Family in North America, and shared prayer and meals.

The Council received a report on the Marianist Lay Formation Initiative. **Joan McGuinness Wagner**, director of the initiative, had submitted a fine written report and was present by conference call to answer questions and clarify aspects of the written report. The first year of training of lay leaders began in January 2005. Twelve lay members of the Marianist family gathered for a weekend of training which was followed by continuing conversation and training during the year using Internet resources and lay Marianist mentors. The group gathered again in October 2005 to share their development during this first phase of their training. The group has decided to continue its formation on its own initiative. It is hoped that a second group of lay leaders will begin training in January 2006.

The Family Council also received the annual report of the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative and a summary of the work of its issue teams which include the Death Penalty team, the Environment and Ecology team, the Anti-Racism team, the Sweatshop Labor team, and the War and Peace team. During the discussion of the report, **Fr. Ted Cassidy**, chairperson of the collaborative, joined the Council. Beyond receiving the fine report of the collaborative, the members of the Family Council and the leaders of the collaborative continued their discussion on public policy statements on various social justice issues. A report was given on the response to the Family Council's letter on racism sent out last January.

Each year the Marianist Family celebrates its foundation during January and early February (Jan. 10, the anniversary of the death of Venerable Adele de Batz de Trenquelléon; Jan. 22, the anniversary of the death of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade; and Feb. 2, the anniversary of the foundation of the Marianist Lay Communities). Often these celebrations

involve all of the branches of the Family. The Family Council, therefore, decided to create a common prayer that can be used by member organizations during these foundation celebrations, especially when various branches gather together for prayer.

The members of the Family Council found the meeting very productive. Good progress is being made on the joint collaborative projects. The next face-to-face meeting of the Family Council will be Nov. 4-5, 2006, in St. Louis. Between meetings, the Council continues to do its business by conference calls.