

ON THE FUTURE OF MARIANIST PARISHES



*Bro. Mike O'Grady
Assistant for Religious Life*

For more than three years, members of the Provincial Council and Provincial Chapter have discussed the future of Marianist parishes in the Province of the United States, largely due to concerns about the age of many of our parish ministers. Council members have made frequent visits to the parishes to get a good sense of the workings of the parishes.

We consider parishes an excellent way for Marianist to serve, and want to continue our parish ministry in the most effective way. Those in parishes view the Marianist parish model – with brothers and priests working together with the parish as a community – as an effective model for parish ministries.

After much prayer and discernment, the Provincial Council has decided that we will not be able to continue our work at every parish we have served in the past. The Council has made some decisions and set a direction for the future. I have summarized these decisions below.

Holy Rosary, San Antonio
St. Aloysius, Cleveland

St. Frances de Sales, Cincinnati
St. Joseph, Eldersburg, Md.

The Provincial Council believes the Province should commit itself to the following four parishes: Holy Rosary (San Antonio), St. Aloysius (Cleveland), St. Frances de Sales (Cincinnati) and St. Joseph (Eldersburg, Md.) The reason for this commitment is that three of the parishes are in areas which need support and serve the economically poor. The fourth, St. Joseph parish, located in the suburban community of Eldersburg, is a vibrant ministry for the Province on the East Coast, where we want to continue ministry.

Our Lady of the Pillar, St. Louis
Queen of Apostles, San Jose, Calif.

St. Anthony, Maui, Hawaii

We are discerning the future of three parishes: Queen of Apostles (San Jose, Calif.), St. Anthony (Maui, Hawaii) and Our Lady of the Pillar (St. Louis).

We continue to discern where Marianists can most effectively serve and where the dioceses can assist us. In parish ministry, we work with and for the diocese. In each of these three parishes, we must consider our future available personnel and we must dialogue with the diocese, because a decision by the Province to withdraw requires the diocese to assume responsibility.

Parroquia Nuestra Señora de la Divina Providencia (Misión Noell) - Puerto Rico
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Helotes, Texas
St. Mark, Denton, Texas

In April 2005, two of our fine parish ministers, Fr. Ray Middendorf and Fr. Vincent Plassenthal, told the Provincial Council that they were unable to continue their ministry at Parroquia Nuestra Señora de la Divina Providencia in Puerto Rico due to health concerns. It was a sad time for the parish, after the Marianists had served there for 53 years. Fr. Plassenthal worked at the parish for 30 of those years.

The Marianists withdrew from Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Helotes, Texas, effective June 1, 2006. OLG is a terrific parish, with many outstanding forms of outreach and service. Marianists had served there for more than 60 years.

In January 2007, we will leave St. Mark Parish in Denton, Texas, another outstanding parish with strong volunteer support. St. Mark is conducting a development campaign for a new property and church building. We have served at St. Mark for about 25 years.

Emmanuel Parish, Dayton
Queen of Apostles, Dayton

We have communicated with the Archbishop of Cincinnati about Emmanuel Parish in Dayton and agreed that Fr. Lee Sciarrotta, who has been pastor for 11 years, will continue as long as he wishes. When Fr. Lee decides to step down, we will not be able to replace him with a Marianist priest.

We also have addressed the parish community at Queen of Apostles in Dayton. When Fr. Jim Bartlett stepped down as the priest coordinator, we were not able to replace him. However, thanks to the generosity of Fr. Tom Schroer, who stepped into that position, the Marianists have continued to minister at Queen of Apostles. As long as we have a voluntary spirit such as Fr. Schroer, we will

continue to minister there. If we don't have someone to volunteer, we will cease serving that parish.

SEND US QUESTIONS, COMMENTS

We ask you to pray with us and help us with the discernment regarding the future of Our Lady of the Pillar, Queen of Apostles in California, and St. Anthony. We encourage questions and comments regarding these decisions. I will respond to the comments via a videocast. Please write to me at mogrady@sm-usa.org. Thank you for your support.

Bro. Mike O'Grady
Assistant for Religious Life
For the Provincial Council

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DECISIONS REGARDING MARIANIST PARISHES

Marianist presence to continue

Holy Rosary, San Antonio
St. Aloysius, Cleveland
St. Frances de Sales, Cincinnati
St. Joseph, Eldersburg, Md.

Discerning the future

Our Lady of the Pillar, St. Louis
Queen of Apostles, San Jose, Calif.
St. Anthony, Maui, Hawaii

Marianist presence withdrawn

Parroquia Nuestra Señora de la Divina Providencia (Misión Noell),
Puerto Rico (July 2005)
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Helotes, Texas (June 2006)
St. Mark, Denton, Texas (January 2007)

Temporary Marianist presence

Emmanuel, Dayton (until the retirement of Fr. Lee Sciarotta)
Queen of Apostles, Dayton (as long as we have a volunteer priest
coordinator)

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