

## **Marianist Family Council of North America Meets in San Antonio**

The annual meeting of the Marianist Family Council of North America was held Nov. 14 -15 in San Antonio. The Council is comprised of the leadership of the Marianist Sisters, the Society of Mary, Province of the United States, and Marianist Lay Communities.

Attending were Gretchen Trautman, FMI, Evangeline Escobar, FMI, AJ Wagner, Kay Stone, Stephen Glodek, SM, and James Fitz, SM. They were joined by Tony Fitzgerald, who facilitated the Vision Statement part of the meeting.

Reports from each of the branches outlined significant events and influences that each group has dealt with since the last meeting.

The Family Council spent significant time discussing a document entitled *Vision and Goals of the Marianist Family in the United States for 2020*. This document is one of the contextual background sections of the Strategic Plan of the Society of Mary. The participation, discussion and suggested revisions of the Family Council to this work have been viewed as critical from the beginning of the SM process. Tony Fitzgerald, facilitator of the SM Strategic Plan, facilitated this discussion and the resulting revisions.

The Family Council supervises two projects of the Marianist Family: the *Marianist Lay Formation Initiative* coordinated by Pati Krasensky of the Philadelphia office of the North American Center for Marianist Studies; and the *Marianist Social Justice Collaborative* chaired by Brenda Fitzpatrick of New Orleans. The Family Council met by phone conference with each of these groups to review their work.

The Marianist Lay Formation Initiative is forming its fifth group of leadership participants. This leadership training has helped to initiate several new lay communities and has provided re-tooling and revitalization of the leadership of existing communities.

The Marianist Social Justice Collaborative continues its excellent work in coordinating various social justice initiatives according to interest groups across the country. The amazing outreach of the collaborative can be viewed at [www.msjc.net](http://www.msjc.net).

The year 2011 will mark the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Blessed Chaminade. Jim Fitz has been investigating materials and resources that will be made available to the Marianist Family in North America for this celebration. In August 2010 a news release outlining the materials and contact persons will be sent to everyone.

The Marianist Social Justice Collaborative will sponsor a workshop entitled "A Seamless Garment Dialogue," March 5 - 7, 2010, in Baltimore. This groundbreaking workshop will bring together in dialogue Catholics concerned with the social justice issues of abortion and euthanasia with those deeply committed to issues of peace, poverty and the death penalty.

The weekend will be an opportunity to explore ways to build bridges of understanding and respect and greater possibilities for collaboration. The keynote speaker will be John Langan, SJ, The Cardinal Bernardin Professor of Social Thought at Georgetown University. The Family Council reviewed the brochure and promotional materials for this workshop with the MSJC Executive Committee.

The next meeting of the Family Council will be by conference call in March 2010. The next face-to-face meeting will be Nov. 20 - 21, 2010, in St. Louis at the Provincial Office.