

The Sobremesa MLC: How the founding members came together

By *Luis Guerra*

For Jen, growing up in the St. Joseph Catholic Community of Eldersburg, Maryland, was key. Not knowing what all it meant that the parish was Marianist, the pastor asked Jen to take students to Marianist LIFE Pacific. Jen has not stopped discovering her Marianist identity since this important introduction in 2007. Her reason for being a founding and committed member of the Sobremesa Community is simply her desire to live and learn more about what it means to be Marianist as well as her faith in general.

For Luis, his inspiration dates back to Marianist LIFE South 2000. LIFE planted a seed, unbeknownst, that has bloomed in a plethora of ways. Luis has since worked for the Marianist LIFE program as well as several Marianist high schools. While serving as an aspirant with the Society of Mary in Cincinnati, he became acquainted with the Marianist Movement; this inspired him to believe that the Marianist Laity must take a more conscious and active leadership role in working for justice and peace. This is his catalyst for being a founding and committed member of the Sobremesa Community.

For Clare, living in community has become her lifestyle. After attending the University of Scranton, Clare volunteered in Ecuador with *Rostró de Cristo* (Face of Christ) from 2004-2006. This experience of the Latin American culture coupled with her Jesuit and Marianist backgrounds (she is a 2009 UD grad) have given her the inspiration to be a founding and committed member of the Sobremesa community.

The community was formed in August 2011 by Clare and Luis. After much mutual discernment, Jen joined the group in February 2012. Discernment continued as the three tried to remain open to the grace of the Holy Spirit and the call of Chaminade; in July, in an attempt to follow Mary's "yes," things became formalized. In addition to writing a mission statement and a covenant, the community picked the name Sobremesa: "*Sobremesa*" is a Spanish word with no known direct English translation. In Latin America, it refers to the time spent around the table after a meal—before the dishes are cleared, before companions disperse—the time when loved ones share in conversation, with no hurry and no worry about what comes next. It is social, relaxing yet energizing, it is communal. The *sobremesa* is sacred time.

The Sobremesa mission statement reads as follows: *We give of ourselves wholly to the pursuit of education, ministry, and challenge of ourselves and others, rooted in a faith that lives justice. Through our work, personal choices, shared daily life and continued discernment, with Mary as our model we strive to offer a radical hospitality. We aim to serve those most in need, witness to and inspire in others an openness to God's will, and communicate Grace.*

Sobremesa continues to explore this manifestation of following Mary's example and the way in which they live community in San Antonio. They look forward to further developing and growing as a community, and what the future will bring for lay Marianist life in Southern Texas. For more information on Sobremesa and lay Marianists in San Antonio, please email the community at sobremesamlc@gmail.com. You can also keep up with them by reading their blog at www.sobremesamlc.wordpress.com.