

Moving Forward

Strategic Plan for the North American Center for Marianist Studies

Preamble

In early 2013, NACMS was asked by the Society of Mary's Province of the United States, to undertake a strategic planning process. We hired Maureen Gallagher, from *The Reid Group*, a nationally recognized consulting firm, to direct this process. The SM Province, our primary sponsor, has funded this project.

Over the years, our strategic planning has been based on a vision of NACMS as a center that offers an array of services to connect the Marianist Founders' inspiration, spirit, wisdom, and organizational genius to contemporary efforts to understand, appreciate, and share the fruits of the unique charism given to Blessed William Joseph Chaminade. Our mission is the mission of Mary. Marianist spirituality gives us a "precious insight into that mission—Mary's way of making us one with Jesus, as she continues to generate his transforming presence in the world.¹ As we often say, she played a primary role in forming Jesus, and she now forms us in significant ways.

NACMS has experienced success over our thirty years as we endeavored to live up to the vision and mission. We realize, however, we must revisit the elements that produced our successes and evaluate how we can best adapt and alter our methods to meet today's realities. Henri J.M. Nowen wrote "Vision and mission are so central to the life of God's people that without vision we perish and without mission we lose our way. Vision brings together needs and resources to meet those needs and shows us new directions and opportunities for our mission." His words sum up the intent behind the development of our current Strategic Plan—*Moving Forward*.

The common characteristics that flow from the mission are unchanging—Faith, Mary, Community, Mission, and Inclusivity still frame all that we do. However, the ways we educate and form our audiences about the charism's gifts are always adapted to address the needs of the times. An example of this is our commitment to fostering change in structures which create or condone injustice—a consciousness that was not expressed in its current meaning at the time of our Marianist Family's foundation.

In this Strategic Plan we hope to honor our Founders by remaining true to the spirituality and apostolic approaches that have been entrusted to the Marianist Family. We believe the Plan will guide NACMS in this enterprise over the next five to ten years.

¹ Quentin Hakenewerth, SM, *A Manual of Marianist Spirituality* (Dayton, NACMS, 2000), p. 18

Mission.

Vision.

Values.

Mission

The North American Center for Marianist Studies creates and provides excellent and innovative education and formation resources to assist the Marianist Family to incarnate the Marianist charism in the changing Church and world.

Vision

NACMS assists the Marianist Family to make a positive impact on the Church in an increasingly complex world by providing significant customized services, resources and publications. The new facility's design is based on the axiom that "form follows function." A premier collection of Marianist books and periodicals is housed here as well as the infrastructure for an online library. The Center is a hub for electronic dissemination and dialogue among members working to find pioneering ways to empower the mission of the Marianist Family to be authentically lived in contemporary society. The satellite center in Philadelphia continues to support our mission by offering tailored services to its unique geographic area.

NACMS is an intergenerational model of a ministry. New and seasoned scholars, translators, and staff join Marianist lay and religious in all stages of Marianist life to engage in collaborative study, research, and formation with a special emphasis on creating fresh and relevant materials. NACMS is connecting globally, working in collaboration with other Marianist zonal centers. With the aid of knowledgeable volunteers, the staff is conducting webinars and video conferences to connect people both across the country and internationally who are members of the Marianist Family or would like to learn more about the Marianist charism.

Bonds are being strengthened which promote the Marianist charism within the multifaceted ministries, organizations, and leadership bodies within the Marianist Family. NACMS is a learning center which reaches out virtually, as well as in traditional ways, to all parts of the Marianist Family. The center itself is designed using appropriate technology to demonstrate the commitment to sustainability of the earth's resources. A "Think Tank" and research institute are emerging from increased collaborative efforts within the Marianist Family and in the larger Church and world. Alongside face to face faith-based lay communities, the Lay Marianist movement is growing and being supported in its effort to form virtual communities who connect regularly online and deepen their knowledge of and commitment to living out and spreading the Marianist charism.

NACMS is moving into the future through support from the Society of Mary's Marianist Province of the United States and ongoing assistance from other vowed and lay Marianists.

Values

Collaboration

Working in inclusive collegial partnerships

Innovation

Discovering creative ways of responding to the signs of the times within the context of the Marianist charism and producing engaging resources

Knowledge, Scholarship and Research

Deepening our understanding and response to the needs of the Family through research and scholarship, leading to the authentic interpretation of the Marianist tradition

Leadership

Providing faith-based guidance and direction to read and evaluate the signs of the times in light of the Gospel

High Quality

Creating professional products, practices, and services which embody a compelling understanding of Marianist history, spirituality, and apostolic approaches

Service

Providing customized resources to meet the diverse needs of all parts of the Marianist Family, discerning these needs through active listening and dialogue with our audiences.

Stewardship

Using the earth's resources, human resources, and all our assets with integrity to promote sustainability



Goal 1

To promote the Marianist charism by enhancing and expanding effective ways to engage others who have specialized expertise and related interests to the mission and vision of NACMS

- A. Provide ongoing formation resources and educational opportunities for both religious and lay members of the Marianist Family
- B. Develop partnerships with all levels of Marianist educational institutions, associations, ministries, and individuals to form and enlist scholars and to enhance the research, writing, and publication capacities of NACMS
- C. Tap the gifts and energy of active, retired religious and lay members of the Marianist Family to involve them in creating resources and ways and occasions to share their wisdom
- D. Collaborate closely with the Office of Sponsorship and the Office of Formation for Mission to fulfill the future needs of the SM Province sponsored ministries
- E. Provide for the continuation of a state of the art library with staff trained in acquisition, cataloging, research, and reference services to assist with new NACMS publications

Goal 2

To enhance the use of technology to serve today's Marianist Family, the Church, and other interested audiences.

- A. Enable a critical number of staff to be skilled and comfortable with current technology and future technological advancements as they unfold
- B. Research *Best Practices* and, in a user friendly manner, implement appropriate technologies into the production, distribution, and use of resources, particularly through the NACMS website
- C. Engage a younger and broader audience in the mission by making use of such vehicles as webinars, *YouTube*, podcasts, blogs, and social media, adapting to the ever changing nature of these vehicles and the development of new options

Goal 3

To build a sustainable, dynamic and mission-driven organization

- A. Develop the concept of a NACMS Board to present to the Provincial Administration for their consideration
- B. Ensure that funding for NACMS is a priority for the entire Marianist Family
- C. Clarify relationships with the entities NACMS serves to avoid duplication, enhance visibility, and promote the value of NACMS
- D. Explore ways to develop long-term financial stability, including but not limited to a fully funded endowment for Marianist studies and research (Income from NACMS's Yoshimuru Endowment helps reduce the subsidy from the SM Province)
- E. Develop staffing and succession plans based on the needs surfacing in the evolving Strategic Plan
- F. Explore the possibility of a working relationship with *Ediciones SM*
- G. As feasible, expand the intern program as well as other human and financial resources
- H. Provide regular professional development opportunities for staff to improve and expand all NACMS services

Goal 4

To develop a comprehensive approach to planning communication and promotion strategies which enhance awareness of and advocacy for the mission of NACMS

- A. Employ a variety of technology and social media to advance use of NACMS's resources within and beyond the Marianist Family
- B. Articulate the charism in ways that are meaningful to both current members of the Marianist Family and those who could be invited to "come see" and join
- C. Create points of entry where a large audience has access to NACMS and its resources
- D. Conduct research/study into branding: name, logo, etc. to achieve outreach both within and wider than the Marianist Family
- E. Establish an advertising budget and sales plan for NACMS products, services, and resources