

THE blarney stone

A PUBLICATION FOR THE COMMUNITY
OF NOTRE DAME PREPARATORY SCHOOL
AND MARIST ACADEMY

What is the Marist Way?

Notre Dame Preparatory School: 248-373-5300
Notre Dame Marist Academy-Middle: 248-373-5371
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Marists from around the world increasingly use the phrase “The Marist Way” to indicate that lay people and religious belong to one big family trying to live the one Marist way of life. NDPMA’s vice president takes a look at how the school is putting this into practice on a real level.

By Andy Guest, vice president for advancement, Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy

At Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy, we are blessed with the presence and oversight of the Marist Fathers and Brothers, who have dedicated themselves to educational and mission work since the creation of the Society of Mary in 1816. In 1836, the Society of Mary was officially recognized by Rome as a religious teaching order. Since that time, the Marists have worked diligently, as disciples of Christ, to propagate the teachings of the church to all people, but with particular devotion to the young. In fact, in 2005, the Society of Mary published an official worldwide declaration reaffirming their mission toward the



education of youth.

As the school here in Pontiac and Waterford has developed, we have worked hard to instill The Marist Way into the culture of our faculty and staff, but you may ask yourself, “what exactly does that mean?”

According to the Marists, the key precepts of a Marist education include:

- regard for authority
- understanding the ways of individual children
- quality in teaching skills
- being a good personal example as a teacher
- watchfulness when it comes to trouble
- sharing in activities with students

The school begins each year with a retreat for all faculty and staff to discuss these important Marist precepts and we

recently decorated many of the school walls with sayings and quotations from the teachings of the venerable Jean-Claude Colin, the Founder of the Society of Mary. However, this only partially describes what is meant by The Marist Way. The Marist Way is really about how each and every teacher, staff and student

See Marist Way, page 4

NOTRE DAME PREP WELL REPRESENTED IN PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Three 2009 graduates of Notre Dame Prep joined thirteen other NDP alumni as recipients of college scholarships given over the years by the prestigious Russ Thomas Scholarship Foundation. The Russ Thomas Scholarship Fund was created in 1991 in memory of the late Detroit Lions player and general manager to provide financial assistance to deserving young adults who exhibit outstanding characteristics and values. More ND Prep students have received this scholarship than any other Catholic school in the area.

NDP scholarship recipients are:

- Tiffany Calderon '09
- Orlando Castro, Jr. '09
- Molly Horal '09
- Elizabeth Battiste '08
- Brandon Johnson '08
- Angela Ciosek '08
- Michelle Ankley '07
- Antonio Zambito '06
- Danielle Lewandowski '05
- Marcos Colon '04
- Paula Gialdi '04
- Danielle Kidder '04
- Kate Reimann '01
- Dominic Russo '01
- Kelly Cole Patterson '99
- Amy Florka Tanner '99

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy provides its economically diverse student body a Catholic-Christian and internationally recognized college-preparatory experience of lasting value.

NEW TRAINING AND FITNESS CENTER
MOVES FORWARD
(See page 4)

Law student learned to reach higher at NDP

Peter Halabu graduated from ND Prep (2004) and Oakland University before landing in Cambridge to study law

What are you currently studying? Why did you choose this field of study?

I'm in my final year studying law at Harvard Law School. I decided to become a lawyer for a couple of reasons. I debated at NDP and enjoyed the argument. Law is also a field where you can really help people and affect their lives positively, which I want to do. Finally, being a lawyer helps me to make a good living and support a family.

What was the application process like for Harvard?

I had to take the LSAT, which was nerve-racking, but I took a prep course that helped a lot. The application form was pretty standard. For me, writing a personal essay was pretty hard. I wrote about my time coaching debate at NDP during my senior year of college, which was one time when I felt that I was accomplishing something really significant. I sent all of it in, and eventually I got a phone call telling me I was admitted.

Where did you earn your undergrad degree? What field?

I went to Oakland University, and graduated in 2007 with an English degree. I also graduated as a member of the Honors College, which became my "home away from home," and I was involved in campus groups and club sports as well.

What is the most challenging thing about attending a school like Harvard?

For me, knowing, one of the most challenging things is being confident in my plan to practice law in Michigan after I graduate. It seems like most people here go to New York or Washington D.C., and the easiest jobs to find are there too.

Do you feel that Notre Dame Prep prepared you for life after high school? In what ways? Definitely. NDP was really effective at



Peter Halabu '04 at Pope Benedict's mass at Yankee Stadium in April 2008. Above right: Halabu with girlfriend Carolyn Beyer '03 (NDP) at the 2008 Harvard-Yale football game.

preparing me for college, in particular – the “kind” of learning I did at NDP was more or less exactly the kind of learning I did at Oakland.

Was there a certain teacher who inspired you in a special way?

There were a lot of teachers at NDP whose classes I enjoyed, but as far as inspiration goes I would point to three in particular: Dr. Heinbuck, who taught me chemistry, Mr. Welliver, who taught me physics, and Coach Kidder, my wrestling coach. All three of them expected more work out of their students than we wanted to give, but that just made me reach higher and become more mature. It helped me to become an adult.



What do you see as the value of your ND education and of Catholic education in general?

A Catholic education is very valuable – certainly in terms of high-level academics, but much more so in terms of faith. I learned from my time in NDP that Catholicism is held by adults and intelligent people, and does stand up to inquiry and argument. I think teenagers need to see that Catholicism is not an illogical or repressive religion. NDP education was also valuable because it gave us a chance to start being Catholic, consciously and as semi-adults, away from our immediate families.

What are your hopes, dreams and aspirations?

I'd like to raise a healthy, happy family, to provide for them and be able to spend time with them also. I'd like my work to help people to accomplish things that they need, and that they need my help to do. And I'd like to give back to my community, especially those who have helped me to get as far as I have. 🇺🇸

FIRST PLACE FOR NOTRE DAME MARIST ACADEMY

Congratulations to the NDMA 8th-grade team, which won first place in the Scholastic Olympics held recently at the school's Pontiac campus. Holy Family Regional School placed second; St. Joseph - Lake Orion placed third.



New ND Prep head football coach says believing in one's goals is the pathway to a successful season and program.

“The one thing we talk about daily is believing, and our kids truly believe they can reach the goals we have set not only for this year but also as a football program in the future,” says Notre Dame Prep’s new football coach Kyle Zimmerman.

It is also clear that not only does he believe in reaching team goals, he genu-

New football coach says believing is key to winning

inely believes in and cares for his players. He thinks it is critical in establishing the kind of rapport necessary in developing the complete student-athlete.

“My whole philosophy revolves around having a program that cares for the kids on and off the field. Once that happens, I believe that kids will believe in what we’re trying to do. So far it seems to be working.”

Athletic Director Betty Wroubel is delighted that the 30-year-old coach has joined the athletic department and thinks he understands perfectly the mission of the school. “Kyle knows the importance of a great education, first of all. Secondly, he recognizes the role that athletics play in enhancing that education—not the other way around.”

Kyle Zimmerman takes over a football program that has been through a few changes in recent history. He is Notre Dame Prep’s third head football coach in the past four years and comes in after Greg Ganfield left to take over the new Pontiac High School’s program, which was formed when Pontiac Central merged with Pontiac

Northern.

Zimmerman sounds like he’ll be around for a long time, though. In a recent newspaper article, he said, “I plan on being here a while. Before long, I want this program at a level where we are a perennial league contender every year and a squad that makes some noise come playoff time.”

The new coach brought a stellar record to NDP. Since 2002, Zimmerman has compiled a 66-14 record, including last year’s Bentley Burton High School (Burton, Mich.) team that went 6-4, winning the league championship and qualifying for the state playoffs after 13 straight losing seasons.

He says he’s overjoyed with his new position at NDP. It’s the first time he’s

been able to teach at the same school he ran the football program. “This is a great place to work,” the phys-ed and history teacher said. “It has always been

a goal of mine to be both a head football coach and teacher in the same school and I can’t imagine a better place to live that dream.”

Having a great staff of assistant coaches is also paramount in Zimmerman’s dream. His assistants all hail from the Burton-Flint area and fit in perfectly with the head coach’s philosophy.

“Blaise Glennie, Dean Leach, Bruce Carlson and Shon Hart are not only great coaches but great people as well,” says Zimmerman. “I want the players in our program to be around great people on a consistent basis and these guys have done a tremendous job helping me make clear what is expected of a Notre Dame Prep football player.”

Growing up in Marine City, Zimmerman was one of three children of parents Dean and Eileen. His family owns and operates Zimmerman’s Meat Market in Marine City. His great-grandfather opened the store in 1941 and it’s been in the family ever since.

Zimmerman graduated from Marine City High School and then Wayne State University where he played quarterback as

a walk-on. He earned a secondary education degree at WSU with a major in social studies and a minor in health.

Wroubel thinks that with his background, his winning record, his philosophy of teaching and coaching, and his dedication to the mission of the school, ND Prep has found the right guy in Zimmerman.

“His motivation is to get both the student-athlete and non-athlete to understand that all things are possible—there are no pointing fingers, no blame on others or circumstances—it is an approach of problem-solving and overcoming whatever is thrown in the way,” Wroubel said. “He puts in countless hours in preparing his team and has a very high level of energy. He sets high goals and has enlightened his troops with the understanding that if they believe and trust in themselves and their teammates, anything is possible. Kyle is one of the top young coaches in the state.”

At press time, the NDP varsity team record was 6-1 overall and heading to the Prep Bowl C-D championship game at Ford Field to play Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard. Coach Zimmerman says the team’s success this season will help keep building on the solid footing created thus far.

“Our kids have done a great job setting the foundation for all the players who will be a part of Notre Dame football well into the future.”





ABILITIES AWARENESS WORKSHOP

Notre Dame Marist Academy counselor Karen Weaver explains to then sixth-graders, from left, Logan Brown, Drew Gaboury, Zach Cipa, Gus Guthrie, Ryan Moreno and Eric Leduc how manipulatives are used when working with autistic children. Last spring, NDMA hosted an Abilities

Awareness Workshop, an all-day event that provides general awareness and promotes a more empathetic understanding of how difficult and complex daily living can be for individuals with disabilities.

\$50,000 SUPER RAFFLE WINNER AT OKTOBERFEST

NDPMA parents Dale and Denise Kirk happily accepted a check for \$50,000 as the grand-prize winner of the 2009 NDPMA Super Raffle at Oktoberfest. For the second year in a row, our grand-prize winner offered to donate \$10,000 back to the school. Thank you to the Kirk family for this generous gesture!




Oktoberfest and the Super Raffle was the culmination of a very successful week of activities for the school, including a fun-filled (if rainy) student Walkathon.

Marist Way, from page 1

conducts his or herself. It is about fighting against the pulls of mainstream society and choosing to be a person of Christian character and regard.

It is also representative of the future of the Society of Mary, where lay people work hand in hand with religious to form a family of mission-centric teachers. It is a movement, much like in the early days of Christianity, to bring more people closer to God, primarily through the quiet and understated examples of Mary.

So, when people ask you what makes Notre Dame so special, you can talk about our track record of educational success, the plethora of athletic, arts and social opportunities for students, the introduction of the prestigious IB program, or you can simply answer, "It's The Marist Way—would you like to learn more?" 



New training and fitness center project moves forward




The old weight room is demolished to make room for the new training and fitness building. The new facility will contain space for weightlifting, plyometrics, stretching, rehabilitation and a training room.

Ground was broken in October at NDPMA's Pontiac campus for the new Betty Wroubel Training and Fitness Center. The 4,000 square-foot facility, which is named for and dedicated to the school's longtime athletic director and coach, will house fitness equipment in a more spacious environment more conducive to athletic training, weightlifting and general fitness and is located near the auxiliary gymnasium and music center. Construction has been going well with expected completion in the first quarter of 2010.

The project itself is fairly modest, but will provide much needed fitness space for NDPMA's student athletes. The entire project is being funded through private

donations and is not part of the school's operating budget and does not affect tuition or financial aid.

In a groundbreaking ceremony held October 21, Fr. Leon Olszamowski, s.m., presented Wroubel with a plaque recognizing the school A.D. "for nearly 30 years of service to the young men and women of Pontiac Catholic, Oakland Catholic, Notre Dame Prep and Notre Dame Marist." 

NDMA gains after teacher loses battle with “Him”

Now in his second career, Notre Dame Marist Academy middle division religion teacher Mark McGreevy says it’s the best move he’s made after a 25-year first career as an architect. The Notre Dame High School (Harper Woods) alum credits his first visit as a parent of a prospective student and a losing battle with God as factors in his mid-life career switch and ultimately, his NDMA job. McGreevy answers a few questions from the Blarney Stone:

Why did you become a teacher?

Oh, for the money of course! (laughing)

Was NDPMA your first teaching job?

No, teaching wasn’t even my first career! I spent 25 years as an architect, but my first teaching job was at St. Anne’s in Warren. My eighth-grade English teacher, Thom Engel, remembered me and hired me for seventh grade. I guess being a good kid paid off. That was in 2003. After that, it was to NDPMA where I’ve been ever since. Although I was originally hired to teach at the lower division, I moved to the middle division when an opening became available about a week before school began.

How did you handle your first teaching experience?

My first teaching experience went quite well actually. I was offered a contract renewal—that’s a good thing! I was in my mid 40s, though, and had plenty of experience working with kids through coaching prior to making this career change. In a sense, I had already been teaching kids in a part-time fashion for nearly ten years. So the jump to the classroom wasn’t overwhelming.

What was your first impression of NDPMA?

My first impression of NDPMA came when my oldest son, Eoghan ‘06 (NDP), needed to move from his current school to somewhere that he could get away from bullies. ND Marist was never on my radar. In fact, we had recently moved to Beverly Hills to be closer to U of D High because that was where I planned on sending my boys. My wife Carol, though, suggested we look at Marist since it was close to Chrysler where she works and it would be more convenient. I actually argued with her about it, but agreed “to look” at it. I wouldn’t consider it, but I’d look.

We came in unannounced and went to the Marist middle office and met Mrs. Favrow who talked to us about the school, etc. We discussed the bully issue and then something happened that changed everything. Mrs. Favrow took us to a classroom completely unannounced and told the kids, “This is Eoghan and he is thinking of coming to our school next year.” The kids literally got up from their seats and put their arms around Eoghan and

showed him around the class. My wife and I never saw anything like it. Carol nearly began to cry. I was speechless. I never saw anything like it anywhere else. This has been a special place for me ever since.

What are the most significant changes to the school since you first started?

The most significant change has been the implementation of the IB

program. This program takes a lot of work by a lot of people and, I think, we have made great strides in accomplishing the requirements. Parents don’t realize the behind-the-scenes work of the coordinators, the trips the teachers have gone on, the effort to do new unit plans, all while keeping the school humming along and achieving things like Top 50 Catholic High Schools awards repeatedly. These people are really amazing. It says a lot about the staff and faculty of all the divisions.

What do you think is the most important part of your job?

Responsibility, in a nut shell! I was never so intimidated as when I was asked to teach religion. Not because I didn’t think I could do it, but because I would suddenly become so responsible for such an important aspect of my students’ lives. I could make a mistake in history, but in religion – are you kidding!! My soul would pay for that for eternity! There is a path from my room to Fr. Strasz’s office, so when St. Peter says, “Hey, what did you do to all those kids?,” I can point to Fr. Strasz and say, “I asked him if it was okay!”

What role do you think the classes you teach play in fulfilling the school’s mission?

Currently, I am teaching eighth graders in “History of Religion.” I take this class very seriously, so much so that I am currently enrolled at Sacred Heart Major Seminary studying Theology in the master’s program. I was given the task by Mrs. Favrow to “make it interesting!” I hope I have succeeded in making it interesting,



ND Marist teacher Mark McGreevy and two of his children: Maiti, left, a seventh grader at ND Marist, and Ruairi, a sophomore at ND Prep.

“I believe the religious aspect of their education is paramount.”

Mark McGreevy

See McGreevy, page 6

News from the Booster Club

Special night of DEE-TROIT BASKETBALL!

Join your fellow “Fighting Irish” at the Palace of Auburn Hills on Sunday, January 31, to watch the Detroit Pistons vs. Orlando—or Sunday, March 7, when the Pistons host the Houston Rockets. Special ticket pricing has been obtained: \$10 for upper-level seats and \$35 for lower-bowl seats. Proceeds from tickets sales will go to the NDPMA athletic department special-projects fund.

There will be a kick-off assembly and prizes given on December 9 at the Pontiac campus with the Pistons mascot Hooper and the Flight Crew in attendance. Prizes include: Pistons ball boy/girl opportunity; four meet-and-greet passes; Palace suites; Piston items (jerseys, bobbleheads, posters, etc.); and complimentary tickets to upcoming Pistons games.

Please check the “Athletic Boost-

ers” link on the “Athletics” section of the NDPMA web site for updates and information on purchasing tickets.

Brick Paver Program

Purchasing a personalized brick paver from the NDPMA Booster Club benefits all of our sports programs. Give a lasting gift to your child, graduate, grandparents, parents or a friend. Honor a special coach, teacher or team. You can do this any unique way you wish.

Forms are available from the Booster Club or go to the NDPMA web site: www.ndpma.org/forms.

Prices are \$100 for a 4 in. x 8 in. brick and \$150 for an 8 in. x 8 in. brick. For more information, call Pat D’Agostini at 248-650-8601. 🇺🇸



McGreevy, from page 5

but my goal is to expose the students to the “why” we do what we do. I have always found “why” the most enlightening part of any education, so why not with religion. When students begin to get an understanding of why Catholics do what they do, then they have something they can cling on to. At that point the high school can begin to reinforce their curiosity. A main focus of Christianity was not to force someone to become Christian, but to show them why it is good and give them the freedom to choose it for themselves. That’s what I try to do in my class. I present the material and let them decide. I believe the religious aspect of their education is paramount; “With God, we form Christian People.”

What would you choose for a job if you weren’t a teacher?

Whatever He wants me to be next! I’m tired of fighting Him. I fought Him for 25 years as an architect. God led me here and I am very happy—so who am I to tell Him what I want. (But a travel agent has its perks!!) 🇺🇸

A higher grade of learning

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