

THE blarney stone

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



Notre Dame Preparatory School: 248-373-5300
Notre Dame Marist Academy-Middle: 248-373-5371
Notre Dame Marist Academy-Lower: 248-682-5580

An early history of Notre Dame's Marists

The Society of Mary establishes a presence in Michigan

In 2009, the Marist Fathers and Brothers combined their provinces based in Atlanta and Boston to form the Province of the United States of America (USA). This came one year after the provinces of Europe combined to form one province and nearly ten years after the former San Francisco and Washington, D.C., provinces joined to form the Atlanta Province.

Quite a busy decade for the Society of Mary (Marists), which began nearly 200 years ago in France.

The Marists had begun quite humbly in the United States with two priests: Reverend Henri Bellanger, s.m., (1823-1879), and Reverend Joseph Gautherin, s.m., (1824-1877), who came from France to take charge of St. Michael's Parish in Convent, Louisiana, on Pentecost Sunday, May 18, 1863. From that date, the Society of Mary has been a part of the American landscape in very substantial and encouraging ways.

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy is but one of many important ministries served by the Marists throughout the world. In the U.S., the Marists staff parishes from West Virginia to California. They have a century-and-a-half-long commitment to Catholic education in the United States, and serve on college campuses, in hospitals and with youth in a wide variety of ways.

The Marists who opened NDPMA in 1994 and currently operate the school are

tied to the former Boston Province. They also built and operated Notre Dame High School in Harper Woods, which educated young men on the east side of Detroit from 1954 to 2005. As the nation marked Priest-



The Venerable Jean-Claude Colin, s.m., founded the Society of Mary (Marists) in 1836 and was elected as its first superior general.

hood Sunday (Oct. 30)—a day to show support for priests with prayer, celebration and dialogue—we are presenting a brief summary of a very long history of commitment of service by the men who began their U.S. ministry on the northeast coast of America.

Portions of this article were excerpted from "Mantle of Blue – History of the Boston Province"

by Rev. Lionel F. Beaudoin, s.m., and from material supplied by the Office of Development—Marist Fathers and Brothers of the United States in Boston.

A history of NDPMA can be found on the school's website at ndpma.org.

The work of Mary calls

On July 23, 1816, after celebrating their ordination to the priesthood, twelve young men in Lyons, France, walked up the steep hill of Fourviere to the shrine of Our Lady and pledged their lives to the service of others in the spirit of Mary. This was no light matter.

On the heels of the French Revolution, priests and religious were imprisoned, tortured, and often killed for their fidelity to their faith. (Saint Peter Chanel, who became a Marist in 1831, was himself martyred in 1841 in Oceania.) Yet each young man felt personally "called" by the Church's Mother and first disciple of Jesus to live a life of compassion and mercy and to proclaim boldly the Good News of Jesus Christ during that tumultuous time.

Under the direction of founder Fr. Jean-Claude Colin, s.m., the Marists exercised their ministry at forming and sending missionary bands throughout France to help rebuild its shattered and broken Church. This method of seeking and serving those least able to help themselves became a Marist trait that came to help characterize the Society as it grew into a global missionary force centered in Marian spirituality.

The Marists came to the United States in

Please see Marists, page 3

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



**ASSISTANT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR BEGAN
HIS SPORTS CAREER AS A BROADCASTER**
(See page 4)

Desire to help others inspires grad to switch major

2009 Notre Dame graduate says NDP prepared her to realize her true career aspirations



Notre Dame Prep alum Emily Gray '09 stands near the entrance of the Weimer K. Hicks student center at Kalamazoo College.

Notre Dame Prep graduate Emily Gray '09 is in her junior year at Kalamazoo College. While excelling in “K” College’s multifaceted academic program, Gray also plays on the women’s soccer team and volunteers her time to help special needs and underprivileged children in her city. She says the academic, moral and life lessons she learned at NDP made an impact on her future career goals.

Like many NDP graduates, Gray entered her first year of college planning to study science and medicine. But she soon became fascinated with her social science coursework and the relationships she was creating through her volunteer experiences. This led Gray to discover her true passion: the humanities. In her sophomore year, she confidently declared her major in psychology and minors in sociology and anthropology. She said she plans to attend graduate school and pursue a career in speech language pathology, ideally working with children in a school or hospital setting.

At Kalamazoo College, Gray is on the nationally-recognized “K Plan,” an undergraduate liberal arts program designed to prepare students to understand a richly diverse and increasingly complex world, to be successful within that world, and to provide enlightened leadership in the 21st century. Gray chose to attend K because

of its small student population (approximately 1,300), intimate class sizes and open discussion-based learning environment—all aspects she felt would create a smooth transition from NDP. She says she was prepared by Notre Dame Prep to create effective working relationships with her teachers and to know when to ask them for help.

Last month, Gray took time out of her active schedule to discuss her experience at Kalamazoo College and reflect on her time at Notre Dame Prep.

What made you decide to pursue an educational and career path in social sciences?

The relationship between people and our current culture fascinates me. My interest in the social sciences originated out of the classes I took at NDP. And choosing Kalamazoo College brought about great opportunities for me to widen my social and cultural perspective of the world. K’s dedication to service learning within Kalamazoo’s city borders also has greatly impacted my experience here. During my freshman year I was put into an environment where I was forced to see my community in a different light. I volunteered to help at an elementary school, which can be described as a shelter or a safe haven for underprivileged children in the community. During the ten weeks I volunteered, I learned many things about the community surrounding me, some of which have to do with the level of poverty in Kalamazoo and the hardships children face at home. From this experience as well as from my volunteer involvement in my hometown with Clarkston SCAMP (a summer day camp for children and young adults with special needs), I have come to realize that I was destined to follow a career path in the social sciences.

What has your experience been like playing college soccer?

As a junior at NDP I was recruited to play soccer at Kalamazoo. I have been a member of the women’s soccer team for three years now and am planning on playing my senior year as well. Many of the unforgettable experiences I have had at K were with my soccer team. As a freshman, I was named MIAA Offensive

Player of the Week and my team finished third in our league. We went on to compete in the MIAA Tournament where we advanced to the finals, but unfortunately fell to the opposing team on penalty kicks. As a sophomore, we also finished third in our league, reached the tournament, but lost in the semifinals. This year we plan to go all the way to the end, winning the tournament and advancing to the NCAA tournament.

Do you have a favorite memory from Notre Dame Prep?

My favorite memory from Notre Dame Prep is my entire soccer career. Now that includes a lot of memories but, if I had to pick, it would be either beating Marian 1-0 my freshman year and making school history, or beating Gabriel Richard my junior year 3-1 in the regional semi-finals. Scoring one of the goals, playing through the rain, and experiencing the commotion created by the fans from the opposing team (which eventually ended the game early) combined to form an unforgettable event. The friends I made—many with whom I’m still in contact—and the achievements I earned define so well my years spent at Notre Dame Prep.

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

The teachers and staff who affected me the most were Mr. Simon, Ms. Thayer, and Mr. Polsinelli. To them I would like to say thank you. I enjoyed every conversation and lesson, and took to heart every piece of advice they gave me. Individually, they each helped me grow into the person I am today and I cannot thank them enough.

Miss anything about ND?

I miss the homework load [editor’s note: !!] and the Friday night football games. I miss the teachers and the staff members. But the things I miss most about Notre Dame Prep are my soccer teams, coaches, trainers and the fans. I had four great years at Notre Dame Prep and I hope that I impacted others’ experiences as much as they impacted mine. I look forward to my younger sister attending NDP next year and to the experiences and relationships she receives as a result. I hope that her four years there will be as unforgettable as mine were. 🙌

Marists, from page 1

1863, in the midst of the Civil War, to serve the needs of French-speaking minorities in Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota and California. In the U.S., Marists were part of an immigrant Church struggling to survive and prosper in a sometimes anti-Catholic landscape.

They opened a school in Georgia where Catholics were a very small minority. They undertook missions to the rural poor, especially in West Virginia and Georgia, and some Marists focused their energies to support poor working people struggling to secure just wages and safe working conditions.

Beginnings of the Boston province

By the 1880s, so many Marists had arrived in the United States, that Pope Leo XIII gave the Society permission to establish an American Province (1889). This happened to coincide with a steady influx of French-Canadian immigrants into the New England states—immigrants who had come to farm the land, mostly in Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire, and to earn wages in the thriving mills and factories throughout the



Rev. Adolphe Rabel, s.m., was appointed the first provincial of the Boston Province in 1924. Rabel, ordained in 1903, was born in Brittany, France, in 1878.

region. They had an especially strong presence in Massachusetts, within the Merrimack Valley (cities of Lowell and Lawrence) and south coast (Fall River and New Bedford).

The French Marists responded in droves to help serve the burgeoning franco-phone faithful who were settling into New England; some Marists came from their

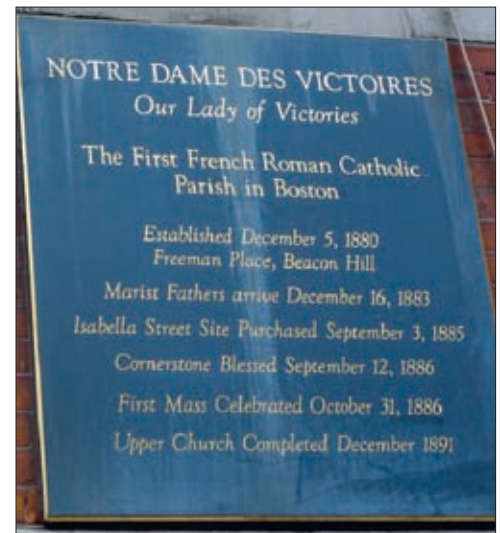
first U.S. missions in Louisiana, others from Canada and France. The French identity within the New England Marist ministries became so strong at one point that there were only two Marist foundations in New England where Marists who knew little or no French could provide effective service: St. Mary's College in Van Buren, Maine; and Immaculate Conception Parish in Westerly, Rhode Island. Over time, Marist service to French-speaking Catholics flourished throughout New England, from northern Maine, in Van Buren, where many Marists were born and raised, to Providence, Rhode Island, where several future Marists hailed.

Though the cleavage was not absolute, non French-speaking families were found mostly in the south and Midwest of the U.S., while French-speaking people lived mostly in the New England states. The fact that many of the Marists were from France or of French descent seemed, for many, to be sufficient reason to establish a "French-speaking" province which would encompass particularly the area inhabited by that ethnic group. The parishes and schools "up north" served, almost exclusively, the heavy concentration of native and immigrant French-speaking people.

After 60 years of growth since its inception in 1863, the success of the American Province of the Society of Mary led to the necessity of forming two more manageable provinces from the single, large province. And so, in April of 1924, the Washington and the Boston Provinces were created.

St. Anne's Parish in Lawrence, Massachusetts, was the "mother parish" of all Marist-operated parishes in New England. Founded in 1882, some 40 years after the city of Lawrence was planned, St. Anne's was followed by the establishment of Marist-run missions that became four French-speaking parishes in the Greater Lawrence area: Sacred Heart (Marist-operated for 101 years), St. Joseph (85 years); Our Lady of Mount Carmel (78 years) and St. Theresa (61 years). Outside these key centers, the Marists served in and established several strong parishes throughout New England. In some cases, they built and maintained these parishes for over a century before passing them over to the New England dioceses. St. Anne's in Lawrence closed in 1991.

If St. Anne's Parish was the mother of Marist New England parishes, Our Lady of Victories in Boston is certainly its crown jewel. The oldest Marist establishment in the former Boston Province, Our Lady of Victo-



Sign outside of Our Lady of Victories Parish in Boston. OLV is the oldest Marist establishment in the northeast United States.

ries began as a chapel near the State House on Beacon Hill before the Marists purchased land at its present location and constructed the first French Roman Catholic parish in the city.

Located at the corners of Boston's Back Bay, Bay Village and South End, OLV opened its doors in 1886 to serve the people of its immediate area and those living in Brookline, Dorchester and Roxbury, where a considerable number of French-speaking families had settled. Unlike the French-speaking immigrants in Merrimack Valley and Maine, these families were not just Canadian, but also French, Belgian, and Swiss—all sharing the common denominators of their Catholic faith and French language.

Today, for its proximity to numerous Boston hotels and a bustling business area, Our Lady of Victories continues to be a center of worship for a small group of neighbors and many workday commuters, tourists and business travelers, who bring a variety of native tongues and traditions into the church. A number of Marists with connections to the former Notre Dame High School in Harper Woods currently reside at the OLV parish, including Fr. Gerard Demers, s.m., Fr. Clifton Moors, s.m., Fr. J. Armand Robichaud, s.m., and Fr. Edward Sheehan, s.m.

The Marists break new ground in Michigan

The very first stirrings on the question of building a high school near northeast Detroit were felt in 1948 when Rev. Leo Huver, pastor of St. Veronica Parish in East

Please see Marists, page 5

Assistant AD says athletics help promote school mission

Marty Simmonds began career as a sportscaster

Marty Simmonds is assistant athletic director and varsity girls golf coach at NDPMA. His career has had a few twists and turns, but he's always been connected with sports.

Now five years into his tenure at Notre Dame, Simmonds says the sense of community and family at the school has been inspiring. "Being a part of NDPMA has been incredible for me," he said. "Our students and alumni are doing amazing things every day and I believe that is a direct result of the commitment to the school's mission by the administration, faculty, staff and community. I love the fact that we celebrate mass together in addition to the many other activities that draw us together—be it a school event or a social event."

Simmonds, 48, grew up in Genesee Township, a small Michigan farming community located northeast of Flint. He attended St. Mark Lutheran School in Flint and then Genesee High School before earning an undergraduate degree in communications from Ohio University and a master's in athletic administration from Wayne State University.

In high school, Simmonds played football, basketball and baseball. He says his baseball and basketball teams won league and district titles and he counts as former high school team mates Tom Gores, whose Platinum Equity firm now owns the Detroit Pistons, and Jim Masserang, who currently coaches football at Dearborn Divine Child.

But it's his early career in broadcasting that brought a certain current Notre Dame coach to Simmonds attention early in both of their respective athletic endeavors.

"I began my career as sports director at WHLS/WSAQ radio in Port Huron and worked for radio stations in Flint, Saginaw and the Detroit area," he said. "In addition, I was able to do some television work with cable stations in the Detroit area. It was a wonderful experience."

But it was Simmonds sportswriting work for the Port Huron Times-Herald newspaper that gave him the opportunity to see current NDP varsity football coach Kyle Zimmerman play in high school at

Marine City. "He was a pretty good quarterback!"

Simmonds work in broadcasting also led to an invitation to get involved with the Catholic High School League's new "Update" video show as an on-air announcer. "The main idea for the show is to promote the CHSL to southeast Michigan through game highlights and interesting stories from around the league," he said. It's a work in progress, but I think the product is improving every year."

Simmonds move to athletics administration from broadcasting took place about 15 years ago and he has since worked at Macomb College, University of Michigan—Dearborn and as athletic director at Bloomfield Hills Andover High School. Now in his fifth year at Notre Dame, he says athletics have been on his radar from the get-go.

"My dad was a physical-education teacher, coach (football, basketball, baseball, track) and athletic director at Genesee and Grand Blanc high schools. Ever since I can remember, I was always going to practices and playing whatever sport was in season at the time. All of my professional career has been centered around athletics in some capacity and when the opportunity came up to become an athletic administrator, I jumped at it. I really enjoy working with coaches and student-athletes and providing them with as many tools possible to be successful."

Working with Notre Dame student-athletes, however, was an even better opportunity for Simmonds. "What struck me right off the bat when I got here was how committed the entire staff was to doing the best they could toward educating the students. And it's amazing how strong the administration's desire is to provide our kids with as many co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities as possible."

When asked about significant changes he's witnessed since coming to Notre Dame, he says the addition of the IB program has put the school on the cutting edge of education and will certainly draw more students to our school. "In addition,"



he says, "all the renovations to the athletics complex, including the Grimaldi Center, the baseball and softball fields as well as the Wroubel Fitness Center have been very instrumental in our athletic successes."

Simmonds, assistant athletic director Megan Thayer, athletic director Betty Wroubel and the entire department have many things on their collective plate. For him, one of his most essential tasks is coordinating practice and game schedules for all of the teams (grades five through 12), in addition to scheduling and confirming game management workers, officials, game times and locations. "If those things don't get completed in a timely fashion, there are usually a few unhappy people," he said. "Going to a game on the wrong date, location or with no officials is not a pleasant experience for anyone and it's a major operation to keep that from happening!"

Simmonds, who lives in Chesterfield Township with his wife of 17 years, Katherine, and their three children, Riley, 11, Ryann, 6, and Raymond, 9, believes that sports is an important piece of the overall education of Notre Dame students and is a critical part of the school's mission.

"To be a member of a sports team teaches discipline for sure," Simmonds said. "In addition to their classwork, our athletes are typically involved in their sport for 15-20 hours a week, which leaves precious little time to waste. Also, competitive athletics place student athletes in situations where not only must they learn new skills, but they must perform those skills under pressure. In addition, they learn to respect all individuals involved in the game—opponents, teammates, officials—and they learn to play according to specific rules. Most of our athletes also reach out to those in need through a myriad of community-service activities, which is just as important as their time on the field or the court." 🏈

Marists, from page 3

Detroit, began to mull over the idea of a secondary school for parochial school graduates in the area. Six parishes were interested in the project and willing to get involved financially: St. Veronica; St. Jude (Detroit); Guardian Angels (Detroit); St. Joan of Arc (St. Clair Shores); Our Lady Queen of Peace (Harper Woods); and Assumption Grotto (Detroit). The first step taken by Father Huver was to call on the Holy Cross Fathers at the University of Notre Dame to run the school. The second step was the approval and blessing of Cardinal Mooney, archbishop of Detroit at the time.

Buying the property on the advice of the neighboring pastors was the third step. The last step was to reaffirm the interest of the six pastors and form a board. During the intervening years, these concerned priests met often to discuss various phases of the project, sometimes with the cardinal, at other times among themselves. When the Holy Cross Fathers could not undertake the project, other congregations were sought until the Marists based in Boston offered some hope in the matter.

The early-to-mid 1950s was a time of expansion for the Marists in Michigan. They assumed management of the National

Shrine of the Cross in the Woods in Indian River, and from 1951 to 1956, operated Cathedral Central High School in Detroit. But once they agreed to get involved with this new school in Harper Woods, one of the first things they did was form a corporation called "Marist Fathers of Detroit, Inc." The articles of incorporation were drawn up, signed on February 9, 1953, and filed with the State of Michigan. After being given a free-and-clear deed to 15 acres of land in Harper Woods, the Marists agreed to build a high school big enough for at least 750 boys and to expand those facilities as their finances permit. There were adjustments and readjustments to the original plans and the estimated costs, but construction began in the fall of 1953.

Notre Dame High School opened its doors to a freshman class on September 7, 1954. The following year, Regina High School, a new establishment for girls, was built adjacent to Notre Dame High School. The first Marist staff at Notre Dame consisted of: Fr. Austin E. Verow, s.m., superior; Fr. Robert Graham, s.m., vice-superior; Fr. Robert Champagne, s.m.; Fr. Raymond Ouellette, s.m.; and Fr. James Kiley, s.m.

Current NDPMA president Fr. Leon Olszowski, s.m., grew up in St. Clair

Shores and graduated from Notre Dame High School in 1965. He says what really drew him to become a Marist himself were the priests at Notre Dame High School. "They encouraged my vocation, invited me to vocation days, invited me to visit the Marist seminary in Framingham, Massachusetts, and seemed to live such a happy and fulfilling life together," he said. "I've had the opportunity to get a great education, thanks to the Marists, and it was fate, I believe, that has allowed me to continue the Marist ministry of education here in Pontiac."

Fr. Joe Hindelang, s.m., current principal of Notre Dame Preparatory School and vicar-provincial of the U.S. Province of Marists, also saw the Society of Mary as a caring and friendly group of priests and brothers. Hindelang attended NDHS in Harper Woods and graduated in 1968. He said the Marists were concerned about the boys in the school as people, not just as students. "They seemed happy as priests and seemed to enjoy the ministry they were doing for others. It is in part what drew me to the Society of Mary in the first place."

The Marists today

While the world today is vastly different from

Please see Marists, page 6

NDPMA's Offer inducted into hall of fame

Notre Dame's associate dean of admissions Kathleen Offer was inducted into the Shrine High School Hall of Fame on Saturday, October 8, 2011, in a ceremony held at the school's Royal Oak campus.

Offer, who graduated from Shrine in 1992, currently serving in her fourth year as associate dean of admissions at Notre Dame and coaching the freshman girls basketball team, was All Catholic in 1990 and 1991 and All State in 1991. In soccer, she was All Catholic in 1990, 1991, and 1992; and All State in 1992.

She was a four-year starter in basketball at Yale University (1992-96) where she finished her career ranking first in all-time assists and steals; and sixth in all-time free throw percentage (.757). She ranked third in Ivy League all-time assists (546).

Two from Notre Dame earn scholarships

Notre Dame Prep seniors Berenice Flores and Eduardo Codera Vilchis have been awarded scholarships from the Ric Gonzalez Memorial Foundation.

The RGMF was formed after the passing of Ric Gonzalez, co-founder of automotive- and aerospace-supplier Gonzalez Design Group, which is based in Madison Heights.

Since 2004, when the scholarship was established, the RGMF has been providing scholarships to deserving Hispanic youth in southeast Michigan planning to attend a college or university of their choice.

This is the fifth year in a row that Notre Dame Prep students have been awarded RGMF scholarships. Last year, Brooke Borowski and Daniel Santos received RGMF scholarships.

Super winnings for Super Raffle winners

At Oktoberfest 2011 on Saturday, October 1, winners of the NDPMA Super Raffle were announced.

1st Place (\$50,000): Peter and Josie Savagian (ticket no. 030233)

2nd Place (\$10,000): Michelle Bosway (ticket no. 003317)

3rd Place (\$5,000): Mark and Jennifer Gust (ticket no. 013034)


Congratulations to the winners—all NDPMA parents!



Super Raffle grand-prize winner Peter Savagian, left, with head of school Fr. Leon Olszowski, s.m.


that of the first Marists, it is in many ways similar. Priests and religious, including some Marists, have been tortured or killed for their beliefs in some places around the globe.

However, new challenges confront the world today: the widening gap between rich and poor; a young adult population seeking faith in a world alien to their religious aspirations; a multicultural world linked more closely than ever by communication and resources yet far apart in understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

But the Marist Fathers and Brothers, with provinces in the U.S., Australia, Europe, Mexico, New Zealand, Oceania and Canada, continue relentlessly in their venture to renew the spirit and mission of the Church as a place of collaboration and true spiritual enrichment. And through their academic institutions across the globe, Marists continually work to make sure young people are formed in the image of Christ, following the ways of Mary in a tradition that reaches back to the 1800s and to the founder of the Society of Mary, Fr. Jean Claude Colin. 



Notre Dame earns Prep Bowl championship

Notre Dame Prep defeated Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard 38-7 in the Catholic High School League Prep Bowl held October 22, 2011, at Ford Field. The Irish (9-0) finished its regular season undefeated, the first time in school history. NDP also earned Prep Bowl championships in 2006 and 2007. As this edition of *The Blarney Stone* went to press, the team was looking forward to a second-round state playoff game against Marine City after defeating Marysville in the opening round, 47-13. 



NDPMA is on Twitter! (twitter.com/NDPMA) Get the latest news and updates on your cell phone by texting "follow NDPMA" to 40404. Scan the QR code at right with your smartphone QR-code reader to get to instructions.
NDPMA also is on Facebook! Find link on the NDPMA web site: ndpma.org.



A world of education

The Blarney Stone is published five times per year by the Advancement Office of NDPMA. Contact *The Blarney Stone* at 248-373-2171 or mckelly@ndpma.org.
School web site: ndpma.org

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy is an International Baccalaureate World School



2005 2007 2008 2009



Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy
1300 Giddings Road
Pontiac, MI 48340

NOTRE DAME



Non Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Royal Oak, MI
Permit 615