

## NORWEGIAN CENTENARY

On 1 May the Marist community in Strømmen, Oslo celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the Society of Mary in Norway. I represented the province of the celebrations and Juan Carlos Piña represented the Superior General.

The first Marist to work in Norway was Jacob Mangers from Luxembourg who arrived by boat in Stavanger on 22 June 1925. After several decades of work, he was named the first resident Catholic Bishop in Norway since the Reformation. Over the last hundred years 15 Marists have worked in the mission, most coming from the Netherlands and several from Ireland. The community today is made up of Jo Neve (Netherlands), Rory Mulligan (Ireland), Andreas Rupprecht (Germany), and the Norwegian Marist Erik Ruud.

The confreres were surprised by the hundreds of people, lay people and priests, who turned up for Mass with the Bishop of Oslo presiding. *In conversation, the Bishop shared how the Marists had contributed mightily to the building up of what is now a small but flourishing international Church in Norway.* He mentioned how they had built up parishes and handed them on, and their continuing work in the ministry to youth and retreats. He appreciated particularly that *the Marists live in community.*

An interesting discovery in the biographies of the Marists who worked in Norway was the Polish Marist Piotr Bzdyl. At the age of fifteen, he read a life of St Peter Chanel and decided he wanted to be a Marist missionary in Oceania. With the permission of his parents, he travelled alone to Paris and presented himself to the Marists there. After studies in the Netherlands, he was ordained the same year as Jacob Wangers sailed to Stavanger. A year later, in 1926, the young Polish Marist set sail, not to a tropical island in the Pacific, but to Scandinavia for a very different missionary adventure...

*Kevin Duffy, sm*



From left to right: Marists fathers Paul Walsh, Jo Neve, Rory Mulligan, Erik Ruud, Andreas Rupprecht and Patrick Muckian who contributed to the mission in Norway.

## HABEMUS PAPAM

I think we would have to be a province of the Society on another planet if we didn't mention the death of Pope Francis and the election of his successor Pope Leo. I think we have all been struck by the hugely positive reception given to Pope Leo not only by Catholics but by the secular media in our different countries. Clearly, many people, and not only believers, turn to the church for light in a world with many looming threats. When the delegates of the General Chapter in September go to the Piazza of St Peter, on behalf of us all they will be saluting a new occupant of the chair of St Peter and assuring him of our prayers and availability to serve "on any shore of the world", as Fr Colin expressed it.

*Kevin Duffy, sm*

## PRAYER INTENTION:

that the Holy Spirit will guide Pope Leo XIV in his mission

## CHOOSING TO WORK WITH THE MARIST FATHERS



I am Stanislas de Rougé. I work as an estate and property manager for the Society of Mary in France. This choice was never part of my career plan. After working for the Diocese of Paris, I was happy to continue working in some religious context.

The Church needs external help to face challenges of all kinds: legal, financial, fiscal, real estate. Regulations are becoming increasingly numerous and complex, so contributing my expertise to the Church is a natural choice.

I didn't know anything about the Marists. Getting to know them, what strikes me most, time and again, is the kindness that reigns there. *Kindness between the Fathers, with the lay people who work for and with them, and towards outsiders. I feel that this is the key word.* The work is the same as elsewhere, but it is done in a peaceful environment where performance is not the main focus. What matters is advice, expertise, lifelong guidance and support for the work. The decisions are not ours to make; they are made by the Fathers, and that's fine.

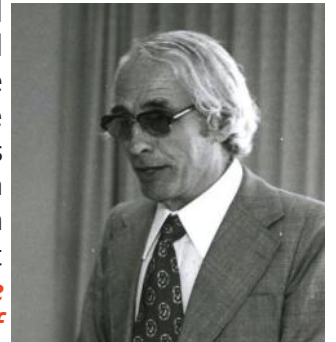
The human aspect is important; we live alongside elderly Fathers who are ageing and in poor health. This teaches us humility, reminds us of our mortality and makes us reflect on the meaning of life and the meaning we want to give it.

Working for the Marists means sharing their life in its most beautiful aspect: transcendence towards God in human weakness. So yes, I do not regret my choice.

*Stanislas de Rougé*  
*Estate and Property Manager for the French region*

## THE HIDDEN HEROES OF THE NAZI OCCUPATION

Father Jean Adrien, born in Nice in 1905, joined the Marist congregation in 1927 and was ordained a priest in 1934. During the Second World War, he was a teacher and then headmaster of the Sainte-Marie Catholic school in Saint-Chamond. In 1943, he took in and protected Werner Epstein, a German Jewish refugee wanted by the Nazis, offering him a teaching position under a false identity. Despite the enormous risks he faced, Father Adrien helped the young man integrate, even teaching him Catholic practices to avoid suspicion. Epstein remained in hiding until the liberation of France in April 1944, later learning that two other Jews had also been saved at the same school. *In recognition of his bravery, Yad Vashem (International Institute for the Remembrance of the Holocaust) awarded Father Jean ADRIEN the title of Righteous Among the Nations on 17 March 1977.* The place that bears this memory is the Square des Justes in Villeurbanne (69100), France.



The attached document in English [Justes2024\\_EN](#) and in French [Justes2024\\_FR](#) also highlights other Marist figures involved in protecting Jews and members of the Resistance: Father Joseph Thomas, public defender of the persecuted; Father Auguste Béranger, who saved Jewish children by taking them to Switzerland; Father Jean Dupont de Dinechin, interned for acts of resistance; and Father Vigoureux, who organised the rescue and education of young people expelled from Lorraine and Alsace, while hiding Jews and members of the Resistance, including a nephew of Léon Blum.

*These actions, often carried out in silence, reflect the deep commitment of these priests, recognised or not, to saving lives during the Nazi occupation.*

*Fanny Millet, Archivist for the French Region*