



January 1, 2011

Mary, Mother of God

Dear Members of the Marianist Family in North America,

We, members of the Marianist Family Council of North America, write to you with much joy as we greet you at the beginning of this Chaminade Year! Two hundred and fifty years have passed since the birth of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade. This is a special anniversary celebration for our entire Marianist Family.

The Chaminade year – which begins on Jan. 22, 2011, reaches its high point on his birthdate of April 8 and closes on Jan. 22, 2012 – provides an excellent opportunity for all three branches of the Marianist Family to deepen and share their Marianist charism.

Along with the World Council of the Marianist Family, we encourage individual members and communities of the three branches to work together to intensify and live their particular vocations as well as our common vocation in the Marianist Family.

Mission and vocation can serve as helpful points of reference for this year. The Marianist Family shares a common mission: Mary's mission as understood by Blessed Chaminade. We can use this year to promote a deeper sense of that mission and to invite others to share it with us in all three branches, strengthening our richness in diversity.

The Marianist charism is a gift to the entire Church. Praying for Marianist vocations, working to build up the Marianist Family, and deepening our sense of common mission might be the best tribute we can pay to Blessed Chaminade during this special anniversary year.

The Marianist Family Council of North America will provide resources and materials for individuals and communities. A new Chaminade resource webpage, www.marianist.com/chaminade, lists liturgical and prayer resources that can be used in our ministries and for joint local gatherings; a bibliography of published materials on the life and charism of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade that may be distributed at

local celebrations; and sample news releases that may be distributed to the media at the time of local celebrations.

We are confident that the Chaminade Year will be a special time and grace for the wider Marianist Family. We join with you in thanking God for this gift to the Church and in renewing our varied commitments to live and share the Marianist charism.

Sincerely,



Sr. Gretchen Trautman, FMI
Daughters of Mary



A.J. Wagner
MLNNA



Fr. Martin Solma, SM
Society of Mary