



**December's Insight is from Marist Youth Intern
Monica Estrellado**



As she finishes her year as an intern, she reflects on her overall experience!

Before starting the Marist Youth Internship Program, I had a good amount of understanding as to what the Marist World was. I was involved as a Marist Youth then continued on a Marist Young Adult and like many others, was greatly impacted by the programs provided by both. Going into the internship, I knew that I was in for a lot of learning about what the broader Marist world entails.

2020 has been a year of uncertainty and adjustment, to say the least. Many were affected or were in a constant state of worry. I know I sure was. I remember texting Matt Fallon and asking him if the internship was in jeopardy as we couldn't have many of the events that were planned. He replied with "No! We have a lot of work to do!". Going virtual was and still is hard in the field where an important part of youth ministry focuses on being and connecting with each other. It was a challenge finding ways to make events virtual and finding new ways to provide our entire Marist Family opportunities to meet other people and practice their faith.



Before the pandemic, one of my favorite parts was getting to visit some of the schools and Brothers communities. We also had the opportunity to experience living in community at the Leavitt Street community for a weekend where the Brothers welcomed us. One of my favorite memories was enjoying a night in, having deep dish pizza, and having conversations with Bro. Brice, Bro. Hank, and the rest of the community.

In Chicago, Billy and I had the opportunity to spend the day with the campus ministers at Marist High School. Here in NJ, I had the opportunity to help Joseph LoGiudice, campus minister at Saint Joe's Regional with an outdoor freshmen retreat. I realized the important work campus ministers do for the students at their schools. However, I grew a deeper appreciation for our unique job of connecting all the Marist Youth from all the schools. It was our job to find ways to give students the opportunity to meet others and discover their broader Marist Family.

I am forever grateful for the wonderful group that I had the opportunity to work with. Maureen Hagan, Matt Fallon, and Billy Carvalho have truly become one of my support systems that keep me going. This year has been especially hard and they have been there for me through it all. They were some of the first ones to know that I wasn't going to have a college graduation to happy moments like moving into my first apartment! Support within the Marist Family is nothing new. However, support within our workgroup is something that I truly value- from supporting each other's events to simple text messages or phone calls to check in.

I have seen God work in so many ways this year. God doesn't have to be working in a way that's set in stone. I value the opportunities I had as an intern from spending quality time with some of the Brothers to supporting campus ministries in their work. Confucius once said "Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand." Being involved as a Marist Youth Intern, I had the opportunity to understand the important work that goes behind Marist Youth



Ministry. It's about reaching out to others, showing your support, and letting them know that they are part of something way bigger.

Thank you to Matt Fallon, Maureen Hagan, and the Marist Brothers for giving me this opportunity. I will cherish the lessons, memories, and love that I received not only as an intern, but being part of the Marist Family.