



News Release

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MARIANISTS APPOINT PROVINCIAL- ELECT OF UNITED STATES PROVINCE

Rev. Manuel Cortés, SM, superior general of the Marianists (Society of Mary) in Rome, has appointed **Rev. Martin Solma, SM**, provincial-elect of the Marianist Province of the United States. Father Martin will serve an initial term of five years beginning July 1, 2010.

Father Martin, 61, grew up in Cleveland and has ministered in Eastern Africa since 1982. The U.S. Province office is located in St. Louis.

“Father Martin . . . brings many gifts to the Office of Provincial,” said Father Cortés. “He has a deep sense of his vocation as a Marianist. He is a man of prayer. His long experience in Africa has sensitized him to the differences of culture and to the poor. It has also provided him a fertile field for understanding change and for faithfully developing Marianist life and apostolic action.”

Over the next several months, Father Martin will work closely with current Provincial **Stephen Glodek** and other members of the Provincial Council to ensure a smooth transition.

“I am deeply grateful to the members of the Province who have written and promised their support and prayers. I look forward to serving the Province,” said Father Martin.

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Father Martin Solma
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Father Martin met the Marianists while attending St. Joseph High School (now Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School) in Cleveland. Upon graduation in 1966, Father Martin entered the Marianist novitiate at Marcy, N.Y. He professed first vows in 1967 at Marcy and perpetual vows in 1973 at Mount Saint John in Dayton. Father Martin was ordained in 1978 in Dayton.

He received a bachelor's degree in philosophy and English in 1971 from the University of Dayton and a master's degree in religious education in 1975 from Boston College. In 1979 Father Martin received a master of divinity degree from the University of St. Michael's College in Toronto.

Father Martin's ministry experiences have taken him from Kalamazoo to Kenya. He began his career teaching religious education and English at Msgr. John Hackett High School in Kalamazoo, Mich. (1971-1975), and Purcell Marian High School in Cincinnati (1979-1982). In 1982 Father Martin began more than 25 years of ministry in Eastern Africa serving as assistant novice director at the Marianist novitiate in Ekpoma, Nigeria. He became director of the Marianist novitiate in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1985.

Father Martin was appointed regional superior for the Marianists' Region of Eastern Africa in 1992, a position he held until 1998. He served five years (1999-2004) as director of the Marianist scholasticate in Nairobi before being appointed to a three-year term as district superior of Eastern Africa in 2004. Father Martin currently serves as director of the Marianist scholasticate and at Our Lady of Nazareth Primary School in Nairobi where he has been actively involved in the school's development for more than 13 years. OLN is a school for 1,800 children from the Mukuru kwa Njenga slums.

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The Society of Mary (Marianists) is an international Catholic religious order of priests and brothers, with more than 600 serving in the Province of the United States, which includes Ireland, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, India, Eastern Africa and Mexico. In the United States, the Marianists sponsor three universities (University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio; St. Mary's University in San Antonio; and Chaminade University of Honolulu) as well as 18 high schools, eight parishes and several retreat centers. Blessed William Joseph Chaminade founded the Society of Mary in France in 1817. The order has had a presence in the United States since 1849, when the Marianists came to Cincinnati.

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