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Homes of Light 2

Caring for Life

Generating New Life

**Mary, transparent to the Light – 1 of 3**

“In the heart of the Church, Mary shines forth”1. With these beautiful words, Pope Francis introduces a section on Mary in his recent Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*. After making various references to her life, the Pope concluded by saying, “Today, (this young woman) Mary is the Mother who watches over us, her children, on our journey through life, often weary and in need, anxious that the light of hope not fail. For that is our desire: that the light of hope never fail…”

From our very beginnings, our Good Mother has held a special place and a key role in the life of our Institute. She continues to do so today, the same as ever. On more than one occasion I have spoken about “the great gift that Marcellin left us, in giving us the name of Mary. It is both invitation and commitment to let her heart beat in us”. Br François expressed it beautifully in the following words, “The holy name of Mary is what gives life to the Congregation”.

I wonder if we Marists of Champagnat have sufficiently understood what it means to bear the name of Mary. We are familiar with and refer to very clear descriptions of Marcellin and his relationship with Mary, descriptions that remain very revealing for us today. It is interesting to remark that the last Circular of Br Seán Sammon (*In her arms or in her heart: Mary, our Good Mother; Mary, our source of renewal*) and the first of Br Emili Turú (*He gave us the name of Mary*) took up this marian theme.

Over recent years, especially in personal conversations with many brothers and laypeople around the world, I have been impressed by the stories and experiences they relate regarding the presence of Mary in their lives. I consider these a gift to the Institute, a type of spiritual patrimony, inasmuch as they reflect real-life experiences and testimonies of specific individuals. What has been your experience of Mary over the years? How has she inspired and sustained you? How has she featured in your spiritual quest and journey?

The questions for us today are:

“*Who is God calling us to be*?” and “*What is God calling us to do*?”

The reflection from *Homes of Light*, Br Ernesto Sánchez Barba (Superior General).

<https://champagnat.org/en/circulares/homes-of-light-caring-for-life-generating-new-life/>

Saint Joseph, you are that just man,

that wise and loyal servant,

whom God called to lead the holy family.

With a husband’s love you cherished Mary,

and with fatherly care you loved and educated Jesus.

May we also experience your loving

and watchful care in our lives

and families and in our work.

Watch over this school with the same

care that you watched over the child Jesus. Amen.

Mary, our Good Mother, pray for us.

St Joseph, pray for us.

St Marcellin Champagnat, pray for us.

Pope Francis in the Apostolic Letter *Patris corde*: With a Father’s Heart, recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a “Year of Saint Joseph” from today, 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021.

St Joseph is the Principal Patron of the Marist Brothers.

**Feasts of St Joseph:**

19 March – St Joseph, husband of Mary

1 May – St Joseph the worker

**Champagnat Marist Spirituality and Charism:**

**God’s Presence and Love ✠ Trust in God ✠ Love of Jesus and His Gospel**

**Presence ✠ Simplicity ✠ Family Spirit ✠ Love of Work**

**In the Way of Mary**