Br François 11



**First synthesis of Marist Spirituality - The Circular *On the Spirit of Faith***

In Brother François’ communication with the whole Institute, the Circulars stand out. They deal with a wide range of subjects, from family news, the dead, instructions, aspects of discipline and congratulations. One of the most important is the circular *On the Spirit of Faith*, written between 1848 and 1853, and delivered in four sections. It presents the first synthesis of the spirituality of the young congregation.

“It is to be a Christian and to live as a Christian, that is, to think, speak and act according to the Gospel and in accordance with the Gospel”.

Like Jesus, “let us love what he loved, let us value what he valued, let us despise what he despised and act as he acted.”

“As religious teachers in the first place, we are responsible for our state to teach the truths of the faith to our pupils, to make them know and love Jesus Christ, for we wish to make them good Christians.”

“The knowledge and teaching of religion will always be the aim and end of all our studies and of all our lessons, for we must learn and teach the profane sciences only in order to be able to spread with more authority and fruit the science of religion.”

“Let us add, the spirit of the Little Brothers of Mary, their distinctive character must be a spirit of humility and simplicity, which leads them, after the example of the Blessed Virgin, their mother and their model, to have a particular predilection for the hidden life, for humble work, for the poorest places and classes, which leads them to do good everywhere without noise and without glitter, which endears them to a modest and reduced, but solid and religious education.”

“There are four means: assiduous reading and meditation of the word of God, the spirit of prayer, frequent communion and the sacred exercise of the presence of God.”

<https://champagnat.org/en/to-be-marist/marist-saints-2/br-francois-rivat/>

**A Christmas Carol Poem** - Gilbert Keith Chesterton, 1874-1936

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,

His hair was like a light.

(O weary, weary were the world,

But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast

His hair was like a star.

(O stern and cunning are the kings,

But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,

His hair was like a fire.

(O weary, weary is the world,

But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood on Mary's knee,

His hair was like a crown,

And all the flowers looked up at Him,

And all the stars looked down.

Mary, our Good Mother, pray for us.

St Marcellin Champagnat, pray for us.

**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**