



The Marist Project

01

As Board members we are invited to contribute to the life and traditions of the Marist story. In doing so, we take as our starting point what came to be known as the Marist 'project' at Fourvière. The 'project' is a term used to describe the Marists' self-understanding of their particular mission and distinctive style.

Our growing familiarity with the names and places in the story will assist us in owning our ministry's identity as part of the larger Marist story and mission of making Jesus Christ known and loved in the way of Mary.

We also clarify our thinking around how our Marist ministry is a part of the wider Mission of the Catholic Church. This Mission consists of "...witness ... dialogue, human promotion, commitment to justice and peace, education and the care of the sick, and aid to the poor and to children." (*Redemptoris Missio*, #20)

CONTENT

A group of twelve young priests and seminarians, one of whom was a newly ordained Marcellin Champagnat, climbed Fourvière Hill in Lyon on the morning of 23 July 1816 with great dreams and hope for the future of the Church in post-revolutionary France.

They were so determined in their thinking they laid out a plan committing themselves to the work of the Church, fired with the same zeal as the first disciples at Pentecost. This group was pledging themselves to live the Gospel in a certain way, the way Mary lived it, with tenderness and compassion for others.

This initial group of Marists dispersed to various regions of France and in a short period of a few months Marcellin Champagnat had begun his Little Brothers of Mary at La Valla on 2 January 1817.

QUOTATIONS

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT (Marist Education Document)

https://www.champagnat.org/e_maristas/Documentos/missaoEducativaMarista_EN.pdf

31. Wherever he found people dedicated to the Christian formation of youth, Marcellin affirmed and encouraged them. Since the early days at La Valla and the Hermitage, many different people, men and women, Brothers and Lay people, have been attracted by his personality and charism. In living out their own vocation, they have come to identify themselves with his charismatic style of continuing the mission of Jesus.

206. Such work makes demands on us for authenticity, balance and maturity. It moves us to greater simplicity in our lifestyle. Such realities force us to develop our personal spirituality, our faith that it is the Lord's work we are doing and our hope in His promises to those who work "in his name". It is a spirituality of the Cross and the Resurrection that can embrace the stories of suffering that these young people are living and sharing with us.

WATER FROM THE ROCK (Marist Spirituality Document)

https://www.champagnat.org/shared/documenti_maristi/AcquaRoccia_EN.pdf

15. We are inspired by the vision and lives of Marcellin and his first disciples as we journey to God. While we share such a pilgrimage with many, we are conscious of our own distinctive style. We are gifted to share in that transforming experience of being, with Mary, loved unconditionally by Jesus. From this flow the particular characteristics of our manner of being followers of Champagnat.

30. Marcellin and the first Brothers were united in heart and mind. Their relationships were marked by warmth and tenderness. In their discussions about living together as Brothers they found it useful to compare the spirit of their community life to that of a family. Like our early communities, we are inspired by the home of Nazareth to develop those attitudes that make family spirit a reality: love and forgiveness, support and help, forgetfulness of self, openness to others and joy. This style of relating has become a characteristic of our way of being Marist.

REFLECTION

SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS OR REACTIONS TO THESE READINGS

- What struck you about the Marist story?
- How do you become connected with the Marist story in your place of ministry?

PRAYER

Loving God, we give thanks for revealing yourself to us through the power of story and symbol to help us understand that we are a Marist community centred on making Jesus Christ known and loved.

Help us gain through our Marist story and tradition a greater understanding of this 'sacred place', this 'holy ground' on which our young people gather to deepen their personal relationship with Jesus and Mary in their lives.

Mary, we speak of you in symbol as we consider your faithfulness and care for us.
Morning Star, Good Mother and Ordinary Resource.

Be with us now as we work to appreciate the Marist story, charism and spirituality gifted to us by the Holy Spirit, through Marcellin, our father and founder.
Amen.

Mary Our Good Mother, *pray for us*
St Marcellin Champagnat, *pray for us*



Champagnat Marist Formation