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NLARGED COMMUNITY

Enlarged communities are a way to answer the call that lay people feel to live the Gospel through the charism of Champagnat, together with those brothers who wish to widen the community horizon they have known so far by living an experience of communion with the laity. Enlarged communities have the same characteristics as mixed communities, albeit not under the same roof[[1]](#footnote-1). It is a privileged way of living the “new relationship” requested by the 21st General Chapter[[2]](#footnote-2).

These communities are born from the action of the Spirit, who is inviting us to multiply the ways in which we live communion and mutual enrichment between religious and lay people in the Church. Ultimately, these communities establish a new way of being Church and living as such.

The way they are organized is different in each Province. In general, the Provincial appoints the brothers and lay people – who have expressed their interest and taken part in a previous discernment and preparation process – as members of these communities. The lay people that the Provincial sends to a community are included in the brothers’ annual list of appointments. The Provincial renews the appointment to these communities each year.

The community project is the primary means to bring about internal unity. It determines the frequency of meetings – usually once or twice a week – which rotate at members’ homes, including the brothers’ house. Both the brothers and the lay people live in their own houses, and not necessarily work in the same place. This project also indicates the community’s path regarding life sharing, mission and spirituality.

Like all community experiences, the members try to welcome each other, and are open to search for new horizons and make decisions together. They share moments of prayer, reflection, and formation; the mission, with its gratifications and difficulties; outings, celebrations, and retreat sessions. They take care of each other, accepting their distinct and complementary identities, and trying to develop them.

1. The Secretariat of Laity has published these experiences of enlarged community: *Living the Marist Charism with Others. Enlarged Communities in Santa María de los Andes,* Rome, 2013; and *Adding Lives, Multiplying Horizons. Community experiences,* Rome, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. *Fundamental Call,* 21st General Chapter, Rome, 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)