



Sharing

THE LAY
MARIST
VOCATION

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YOUTH PASTORAL MINISTRY, A PRIVILEGED AREA OF VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

Life is a vocation, and every person is a vocation (Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 15). When we speak of vocation we refer to “a reality of a theandric nature, that is, the original convergence of God’s work and man’s work... which are concretely unified in the person through his life plan”. (LLANOS, O.M. *Servire le vocazioni nella Chiesa. Pastorale vocazionale e pedagogia della vocazione*. Roma, LAS, 2005,155).

Consequently, we can affirm that, since vocation is a dialogical reality between the divine call and the human response, it develops through the adequate involvement of both ecclesial mediation and human action. An ecclesial mediation that aims to find in the concrete experience of the person its starting point, to pedagogically propose the dynamism

of the divine call (choice, call, mission, accompaniment), so that it can develop a true process of growth through a life project accepted with a vocational sense. (O.M. LLANOS, *Servire le vocazioni nella Chiesa. Pastorale vocazionale e pedagogia della vocazione*. Roma, LAS, 2005, 155-197).

*Br. Omar Peña
América Central*



In this regard, the 2018 Synod of Bishops “Young People, the faith and vocational discernment”,



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wanted to welcome and reflect with precision on the experience of young people today, in the world and in the Church. In the final document, he pointed out one of the crucial junctures in the world of youth expressed in the novelty of the digital environment, which he defined as “...a widely digitalized culture that has profound impacts on the notion of time and space, on the self-perception, of others, and the world, on how to communicate, how to learn, how to obtain information, how to enter into relationships with others” (Synod of Bishops 2018. Young people, faith and vocational discernment. Final Document, 21). And precisely for this reason it becomes “an indispensable place for reaching out to and involving young people, also in pastoral initiatives and activities” (Bishops’ Synod 2018, *Young people, faith, and vocational discernment. Final Document, 21*).

If every life is a vocation, and we truly believe this, it means that God continues to call each person, each young person, to live fully in today’s existence, with its joys and its problems. A fullness that, welcomed and loved by the Christian community, is transmitted as a proposal of life, and hope through

a comprehensible pedagogical itinerary. A pedagogical proposal that aims to accompany the awakening of a vocational sensitivity that, among other things, is not always perceptible in the context in which we find ourselves as a human community. It is a service and a responsibility in fidelity to the Gospel that today more than ever urges us to propose life as a vocational call, from which a real, opportune, and involving evangelizing praxis must evolve.

Youth ministry, then, is considered a vocational pedagogical proposal whose dynamism constitutes a privileged area of vocational ministry. There is no youth ministry project that is not in itself a pedagogical mediation for the cultivation and development of vocational sensitivity in young people. Nor is there a vocation ministry that does not find in the concrete life experience of young people its fundamental hermeneutical category.

The practical confluence, meaning pedagogical, between vocational ministry and youth ministry, gives significance to the pastoral praxis of the Christian community that proposes to accompany the development of life as a vocational calling and plan.

The Connection to the Marist Charism

In my work with Marist Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the USA it's easy to see the connection to our charism each day. The young people throughout our province in the USA are thirsty for connections to God and when they encounter our Marist charism, often enough, it sets their hearts on fire. I remember having that experience myself as a student in a Marist School and encountering the charism through members of the Marist family. Each of those encounters moved me closer to the Marist that God created me to be. Being part of the Marist family isn't enough, Marist is part of me too.

The most rewarding part of being a lay Marist isn't just the work I do, it is in the ordinary daily ex-

Matt Fallon - United States

periences of my life. Our charism brings with it a wonderful joy to what can often be mundane. In daily interactions, difficult situations, moments of sadness or especially during long zoom meetings, being able to share a smile or laugh together carries us through. Our Marist sense of humor brings light to the hardest times. The joy and humor is an expression of the love we have for one another. That is the mark that makes the daily living as a Marist different from others. There is great strength and confidence in knowing that in living out our mission of Making Jesus known and loved, I am not alone and I am also known and loved.



THE LAITY IN YOUR HEART

*Luis Alejandro Delgado Rangel -
Colombia*

I was born 21 years ago in Armenia. I studied with the Marist Brothers and during my school years, I participated in youth movements. At present, as a graduate and university student, I participate in the animation of the children and youth ministry of the Marist College San José de Armenia, and my vocation as a lay Marist is accompanied by the Marist Jesmar Fraternity. One of the characteristics that we young people have is that we try to save our best memories in a selfie, and then we try to capture them on our social networks, always looking forward to being “connected”.

With the Pandemic outbreak and therefore the quarantines, I wanted these social networks not only to connect us young people but also to connect the Champagnat Marists of my Province. Connecting the Marist Norandina family through streaming spaces on Facebook, publishing the life of our lay groups and Marist fraternities, sharing religious celebrations, also accompanying the moments of difficulty and pain, and making small technological pills so for those who were not as familiar with technology could continue being part of this wonderful family, it was not an easy challenge.

But today I can say that deep down with my smile and joy I wanted no Marist to feel alone and that everyone felt connected, not only with the networks but mostly with the Marist charism.

“A like closer to you”, united my whole Province in pandemic times. Today with the presence, I keep on animating the social



networks of the Marist laity, but now, the best “like” I can receive is to share my life experience as a lay Marist with the children and young people in the youth groups.

A small seed has also been born that is pushing a group of young people to generate a new proposal that for now, we have called JLM (lay Marist youth).

Today, as Father Champagnat wanted, I can say that I share my table at La Valla with the children of Semar, the young people of Remar and JLM, with my fraternity, with the Marist Norandina family; but also in my University and in the classrooms where I carry out my pedagogical internships.

To live as a young lay Marist is to spread joy, it is to make real the “you will be Champagnat today” that we sing with so much encouragement, it is to make trend today more than ever that Mary Our Good Mother continues to do everything among us”, it is to be able to be history because we contribute to a society with young people who love without limits

Marist once, Marist forever!

MARIST FAMILY

Regina Sandoval – Guatemala

My Marist experience can be described in many ways. It has taken many paths over the years, and I have lived different experiences: schools of leaders, Remar and Remar communities. They have formed me and brought me closer to Champagnat's charism.

If I had to summarize it in one word, it would be family. Being a Marist means not only a sense of family and welcome but also the experience of fraternity and service.

Being a Marist is also a lifestyle, that not only marks our way of acting but also the way in which we gradually relate to others. Being a young lay Marist,

I find myself challenged every day to bring the experience of love, joy, and fraternity, giving me the Marist charism, to all those around me. It is through service, my mission, and the encounter with others that, for me, being a Marist makes sense. Small gestures are the biggest differentiators that leave a mark on me, and on those with whom I meet.

Being a young lay Marist implies that, from my reality, I share the values of Father Champagnat and the family fraternal experiences that marked my journey.

We move forward together as a family, sharing the joy of being Marists!



SOCIAL NETWORK MARIST LAYTY

We invite you to share your experience as a Marist lay person on social media by posting texts, photos and videos using the hashtag #MaristLayVocation.

It will help us to develop an internet identity for Marist life worldwide.

At the same time, the Secretariat of Laity has created a public group in FaceBook: [“Laicos Maristas / Marist Laity - Global group”](#). It is a place to build an online community of Marist Laypeople and to share our emotions and experiences. You are invited to subscribe to the group and to start posting and gathering online with other members of our global family.

www.champagnat.org

- [III Assembly of the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat](#)
- [General Administration Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation](#)
- [20 June: World Refugee Day](#)
- [Laypeople Commitment Ceremony](#)
- [World Day Against Child Labour – 12 June](#)
- [Meeting in the Province of Brasil Centro-Sul of the Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation](#)
- [Lay people and Brothers of Africa reflect on Lay Marist Vocation](#)
- [Central America holds the assembly of the Forum on the Lay Marist Vocation](#)
- [Where are we at this moment in the International Forum process?](#)
- [Message of the Superior General on the Feast of St. Marcellin Champagnat](#)
- [“This is happening” in Champagnat Global](#)

#LayMaristVocation

The newsletter will be issued monthly. Each time, a different Region will oversee it. The next issue will be sent on July 25th.

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