

June 6, 2023

Celebrating the Feast of  
**ST. MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT**  
and  
The **CLOSURE-CONTINUITY** of the  
**YEAR OF MARIST VOCATIONS**



The Brothers Today Secretariat gladly shares with you, Marists of Champagnat, this simple guide to celebrate the Feast of St. Marcellin Champagnat and the Closing of the Year of Marist Vocations on June 6, 2023 (or on any date that you have chosen to do so).

The idea is to have a uniform celebration all over the Institute; thus, reinforcing the sense of being a global family. This could be used by communities, fraternities, groups, associations, ministries, and the like. However, we also respect the unique context of each administrative unit; therefore, do feel free to adapt this guide accordingly.

More than being a closure, we would like to give emphasis on CONTINUITY; we give a new impetus to the inspiration and the movement that was awakened around vocation ministry in the Institute, from what we have discovered in and lived in “caring for and generating Marist Life”.



## COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

### I. INTRODUCTION

Happy feast day, everyone. Welcome to this celebration.

Today, we celebrate the Feast of our Founder, St. Marcellin Champagnat, who reunited with his Creator on this day 183 years ago. Also today, we bring to conclusion our celebration of the Year of Marist Vocations, which commenced on May 20, 2022, the birth of the Founder.

We honor our Founder, St. Marcellin, to whom God, through the Holy Spirit, first gave the gift of Marist life, the gift which he shared with the first brothers under the auspices of the Good Mother, the gift that was cared for and generated for over 200 years by countless brothers and lay men and women, the gift which we inherited and are blessed to live today.

We want this day to be, first of all, an occasion to give thanks to God for our own vocation; but most especially to give thanks for



all that we have experienced during this year: for having rediscovered the original passion that inspired us to become Marists; for having been able to deepen and appreciate the diversity of Marist life and the different vocational paths; for becoming more aware of our task to foster vocation in young people and to promote a vocational culture; and, finally, because we can boldly proclaim, "there is great value in being Marist today".

When we speak of the conclusion of the Year of Marist Vocations, it does not mean that we are finishing a project, but as at Pentecost, a new chapter is beginning, under the responsibility of each one, of each community, of each group and of each apostolic and educational center in the respective administrative units, in which, guided by the Spirit, all of us give continuity to the initiatives that light a new fire in our Institute to live and promote the Marist vocation.

The invitation to care for and generate Marist life remains, for vocation animation continues to be an important and vital task for Marist life and mission today and in the future, in which all Marists of Champagnat are called to participate, in the service of the Church and especially of children and young people.

May these little sparks (igniculus) that have emerged during the global celebration of the YMV, the inspiration that has moved our minds and hearts and all that we have perceived continue to impel and animate our personal, community and institutional journey.





## II. LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

### III. SONG about St. Marcellin Champagnat

### IV. TEXT TO READ OR LISTEN TO

Message of Br. Ernesto Sanchez, Superior General, for the June 6 Celebration this year. You may read the whole text, or some excerpts (<https://bit.ly/3OhzPop>)

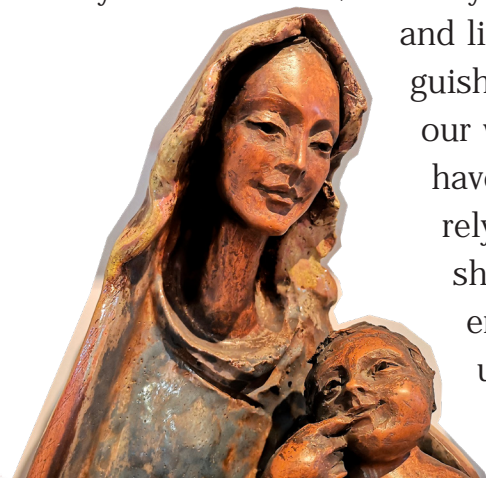


*A moment of silence*

### V. PRAYER (to be recited together)

Mary, this is your work. It is you who have brought us together, in spite of the opposition of the world, to procure the glory of your divine Son; unless you come to our aid, we shall perish

and like a lamp without oil become extinguished. But, if this work perishes, it is not our work that fails; it is yours, since you have done everything for us. We therefore rely on your powerful protection, and we shall count on it always. O Good Mother, preserve us, multiply us, sanctify us. Amen. (St. Marcellin Champagnat)





## VI. THANKSGIVING FOR THE GIFT OF MARIST VOCATION

### A. Reading I

Goal No. 1. Rediscovering the original passion that inspired us to be Marists.

To bear witness to the continuing relevance of the Marist charism, first we must rediscover the original passion that inspired us to be Marists. Thus, the Year of Marist Vocations is an opportunity for every Marist brother and laity to reflect on, further appreciate, celebrate, and talk about his/her unique vocational history.



## B. Thanksgiving

1. Each one lights his/her candle and offers his prayer of thanksgiving for the gift of his/her vocation and what it is that inspires him/her most in his/her Marist life and makes him say, "There is great value in being Marist today." He/she then lays the candle around the plant. Please allow a brief moment of silence after each one.

## C. At the end, the Magnificat

(in whatever version selected) is sung.

# VII. LOOKING AT THE PRESENT: CARING FOR MARIST LIFE

## A. Reading II:

Goal No. 2. Promoting and nourishing the diversity of Marist life and recognizing and supporting distinctive vocational paths.

The Year of Marist Vocations, significantly different from "Year of Vocations", is not only about the vocation of the Brothers. Through the years, many lay men and women have claimed as their own our Marist charism. As sharers of it, they are co-responsible for its ministry. Hence, Brothers and laity should help each other nourish their respective ways of living the response to the call.



## **B. Prayer: Rule of Life 95** (in a contemplative manner)

Ever faithful God, we are grateful in a special way for the charism received through Marcellin Champagnat.

It has enriched the life of the Church and continues to do the same in the lives of so many Marists today.

Thank you for the many generations of Marist Brothers, who, in serving all around the world, have given their lives for the evangelization of children and young people.

Thanks, too, for the growing number of others called to be Marist, men and women called by the Spirit to live their Christian vocations as Marists, in communion with their brothers, and sharing together the one same mission.

We are grateful also for the presence of the Spirit who calls us constantly to be converted anew, and who never ceases to surprise us by opening new horizons within the Institute.

Grant us courage and generosity so that we may be signs of your mercy and tenderness among the poor young people of today.

May we be faithful to our mission of making Jesus Christ known and loved.

Mary, woman of action, make our hands and feet move 'in haste' to others, bringing them, as you did, the charity and love of your Son Jesus and the light of the gospel to the world.

Amen.





### **C. Reading III**

Goal No. 3. Encouraging the vocation of young people.

We must make a fresh effort and invest more energy into making the gift of the charism more visible, believing that the Holy Spirit continues to inspire vocations today. The Year of Marist Vocations is a time for Brothers and laity to extensively get involved in fostering vocations to Marist life among young people. Our first mission among young people is to help them discover the meaning of life. They are waiting to be shown the way to use their God-given gifts to be visible signs of God's love, compassion, and mercy, especially towards those who are suffering, poor or in need.

### **D. Calling to mind those in Vocational Discernment or Process**

Each one writes the name(s) of those who are in the process of vocational discernment and formation, whether to be brothers or Marist lay men and women, whom he/she would like to particularly pray for. The name(s) is/are read before being placed around the plant (or the main candle).



**E. Prayer of Praise:** Psalm 127 (in two choirs, or in responsorial format)

**R./ Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.**

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain **(R./)**

It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep **(R./)**

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children[a] of one's youth **(R./)**

Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate **(R./)**

## **F. Song about vocation**

E.g., song of the YMV:

Lyrics: <https://bit.ly/3IoDRaO>

MP3: <https://bit.ly/3BCY1dm>





## **VIII. LOOKING BEYOND: GENERATING MARIST LIFE**

### **A. Reading IV**

Goal No. 4. “There is great value in being MARIST today.”

We firmly believe that God continues to inspire new vocations to the Marist life in our days. Thus, we must not get tired of promoting Marist vocations even if in some parts of the world it has been a while since there were any; while in others, they have been very few. During the Year of Marist Vocations, we do not just wait for young people to come. Rather, we go to them, and we create spaces for them to consider becoming Marists. We help them realize that it is in discerning and following God’s plan that they will experience the joy of living their life to the full.



## B. Personal Commitment

1. Each one thinks of a personal commitment that he/she would like to make to continue the inspiration of the Year of Marist Vocations. He/she may write it on his/her journal.
2. Each one shares his/her personal commitment, which will afterwards be symbolized by pouring some water on the plant. (Just a drop so as not to drown it)

## IX. LITANY TO MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

(Based on his Biography by Br. Jean Baptist Furet)

St. Marcellin, you gave your time and energy to form the brothers to virtue and keep them faithful and joyful in their vocation.

**Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

St. Marcellin, you worked relentlessly to help the brothers in their human and spiritual development, perfecting their characters, inspiring them to love prayer, savor it and to always put Christ at the center. **Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

St. Marcellin, when you noticed that someone seemed dispirited or confused, you took time to listen to him with fatherly patience and a compassionate heart and encouraged him to be strong in the face of challenges and difficulties. **Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

St. Marcellin, like the Good Shepherd, you constantly led you







flock and with great care. You left the rectory to live with the brothers and take part in their daily life. You worked with them, whether in the garden or making nails, and joined them in

recreation. **Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

St. Marcellin, you instilled in the brothers the zeal and passion for the Christian education of youth. You taught them to be effective teachers and good catechists. **Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

St. Marcellin, you developed in the brothers the necessary pedagogical skills to form pupils' hearts and consciences and instructed them in supervision and class discipline. **Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

St. Marcellin, you visited and made yourself present in the classes to encourage the pupils and the teachers. **Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

St. Marcellin, in your tender affection you visited the sick brothers frequently to see at first hand whether they needed anything; you consoled and encouraged them, taught them how to sanctify their sufferings and, when necessary, how to prepare to die a happy death. **Teach us to care for and generate Marist life.**

A moment of silence (with contemplative music)



## X. COUNSEL OF POPE FRANCIS

(Pope Francis' conversation with Hungarian Jesuits. April 29, 2023)  
[His response to the question, how to deal with young people.]

For me the word is "WITNESS." Without witness, nothing is done. And witness means consistency of life.

Speak clearly -- you have to speak clearly, to show them consistency. Young people have a nose for when there is no consistency. And with young people in formation, you have to talk to them as adults, as you talk to men, not children. And introduce them into the spiritual experience, prepare them for the great spiritual experience...Young people do not tolerate double language, that is clear to me. But being clear does not mean being aggressive at all. Clarity must always be combined with amiability, fraternity, fatherhood.

The key word is "authenticity." Let young people say what they feel. And you as a formator must teach young people consistency.

## XI. PRAYER FOR THE YEAR OF MARIST VOCATIONS

Heavenly Father, You answered the prayer of Marcellin Champagnat two hundred years ago and delivered the Institute from seeming sterility by blessing it with a prodigious surge of growth.

Throughout our history, you have done wonderful things through the men who dedicated themselves as Little Brothers of Mary





and the lay men and women who have widened the tent to share the Marist charism and mission.

We praise and thank you for this close collaboration to make Jesus and Mary known and loved by children and young people in places where we are present.

Lord of the harvest, we find ourselves today in a turbulent world where the founder's dream continues to be relevant more than ever. Help us to care for and generate Marist life and keep us rooted in the original passion that inspired us so that we can boldly respond to the emerging needs of our times.

Like Marcellin, we pray today that you increase our number by guiding to our Institute those whom you call. Show us the young men you have chosen and enable us to accompany them in nurturing their Marist vocation.

Inspire us to take up this journey of love for and service to the least favored as Marists of Champagnat.

Mary, our Good Mother, we believe this is your work; we are confident that you will not allow the lamp to be extinguished for lack of oil.

Accompany our prayers to your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **XII. SONG TO MARY (of your choice)**



There is great value in  
being Marist today.

*caring for and generating*

MARIST LIFE

YEAR OF MARIST VOCATIONS

20 MAY 2022 - 06 JUNE 2023



Institute of the Marist Brothers  
Secretariat Brothers Today  
6 June 2023