



WORKSHEET 2: READING AND REFLECTION MATERIAL

3RD MARIST INTERNATIONAL MISSION ASSEMBLY “MARIST MISSION TODAY”

MISSIONARY FRONTS OF THE MARIST INSTITUTE IN THE WORLD TODAY:

As we head towards our Third International Marist Mission Assembly, the invitation is to pause to reflect and contemplate the different faces of Marist Mission today, as a Global Family. This Mission is built by the courageous hands of men and women committed to the Kingdom of God. The Fourvière Promise remains timely and powerful, and it is up to all Marists today to remain alive and fruitful.

The driving and motivating idea of all Champagnat’s efforts and endeavors was “To make Jesus Christ known and loved”. To this end, and according to emerging needs, various missionary fronts have emerged during these more than 200 years of the foundation of the Marist Institute. The objective of all of them is undoubtedly to continue to respond with audacity to the mission dreamed by Champagnat and to the project of the Kingdom.

We invite you, brothers, laity, collaborators and partners to look at, pray and reflect on the different ways of responding to the mission in the Institute today. The main fronts are: Marist Schools and Universities, Publishing, Children’s Rights, Marist Youth Ministry, Solidarity, Marist Volunteers and International Communities.

- **SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES**

Since the official recognition of the Institute of the Marist Brothers in 1851 by the French government, the Institute has experienced rapid growth, establishing itself as a respected institution of evangelization and teaching. For Father Champagnat, the school and the office of educating were privileged instruments of evangelization (LANFREY, 2017).

The final document of the International Assembly of the Marist Mission of Mendes strongly emphasizes that the right to education is: “an evangelizing education, committed to solidarity and social transformation, attentive to cultures and respect for the environment, an education without discrimination, creating spaces for those in need”.

Our educational spaces, be they schools or other educational structures, allow us to be among and with children, adolescents and young people. It also allows us to look to the future with hope and to respond to the calls of our time and our mission.

Father Champagnat conceived culture, science and knowledge as fundamental tools for the dialogue between faith and life, a powerful means to form “good Christians and virtuous citizens”. Champagnat said:



Escuelas

If it were only a question of teaching human sciences to young people, there would be no need for brothers: other teachers would suffice. If we wanted to provide only religious instruction, we would limit ourselves to being simple catechists. Our aim, however, is broader. We want to educate the children, that is, to instruct them in their duties, to teach them how to practice them, to instill in them the spirit and sentiments of Christianity, religious habits, the virtues of a Christian and a good citizen. To do this, it is necessary that we be educators, that we live among the children and that they remain with us for a long time (Life, 2000, p. 535, 536).

Champagnat wanted people capable of carrying out a quality evangelizing education that would conceive the student in his totality, that would allow him to dream and to be a protagonist in the construction of knowledge.

In view of this, the Institute has an international network of schools covering the 5 continents, spread over more than 80 countries, with a total of 600 units. In addition to these, another instrument of formation and evangelization is the **Marist International Network of Institutions of Higher Education - founded in 2004 - which today has 27 institutions present in more than 10 countries.**¹

• CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

From the first schools, Champagnat already warned the first Brothers of the need and commitment to protect children for their full development.

"The first and most important of their duties, therefore, consists in exercising a continual vigilance over children, so that they may remove from them every danger to virtue, every snare against their innocence. In short, a vigilance that makes evil impossible for them. Only at this price can the Brothers' School be useful for the children. If, for lack of vigilance, it were to become their tomb of innocence, instead of being their guardian and refuge, it would be preferable that these sweet children had never set foot in it." (FURET, pp. 535-536, 1999).



Protecting our children and adolescents is a call of the Marist Institute. In 2007, during the First International Marist Mission Assembly in Mendes, Rio de Janeiro, the desire and need for "decisive and prophetic" action on the part of the Institute in the defense and promotion of the rights of children and adolescents was strongly emphasized.



Editoriales

Action in the integral protection of children and adolescents has also become the call of the XXI and XXII General Chapters of the Marist Institute. As a concrete response to this urgency, the provinces were directed to develop institutional policies for the protection of children and adolescents, thus transforming our learning spaces into safe and healthy places for our beneficiaries.

• EDITORS

Another area of mission and activity of the Institute is publishers. The first spark of this front of work can be found in the letter in No. 175,

¹ <https://champagnat.org/pt/rede-internacional-marista-de-educacao-superior-rimes/>
<https://champagnat.org/pt/missao-marista/escolas-maristas/>

dated March 7, 1838, sent by Champagnat to Brother Jubin, informing him of the purchase, for 500 francs, of the equipment necessary to assemble a lithograph to be installed at the Hermitage, under the care of Brother Jubin.

With the expansion of the mission, the Marists founded schools in countries with scarce educational resources and necessary teaching materials. At that time, there was only La Collection FTD-11 and, according to the needs, the material was carefully adapted to the local culture. This is how, in 1889, they created FTD in Spain - today Luis Vives (Edelvives); in Mexico, Editorial Progreso, in 1899; FTD-Brazil, in 1902; and GRAM Editora, in Argentina, in 1921.

These publishing houses are instruments for the realization of the Marist mission, “promoting education as a factor of human and social development, based on Christian and Marist values” (STATUTE, 2013).

• MARIST YOUTH MINISTRY

According to the International Marist Mission Assembly (Mendes, 2007), “evangelization is the center and priority of our apostolic actions, announcing Jesus Christ and his message”. This affirmation was accepted by the Institute at the XXI General Chapter. Moreover, in this same Chapter, the Superior General and his council expressed their concern for the separation of its members from the youth. He invites them to a deeper reconnection, capable of making the Institute a reference point for the Church. Marist Youth Ministry (MYM) is, without a doubt, the way to reach out to and be with young people.



Pastoral Juvenil Marista

In this sense, recognizing the strength of each Province and District, and with the objective of sharing experiences, in 2007 the General Council created an International Commission to prepare a reference document for the Institute, focused on Marist Youth Ministry, so that it could serve as a basis for its continued development in the different continents or provinces. As a product, the document “Evangelizers among Youth: A Reference Document for the Marist Institute” was created. This document is an instrument to place the evangelization of young people at the center of Marist pastoral practice (EVANGELIZERS, 2011).

The most recent project of the Institute for Marist Youth Ministry (MYM) was the official launch of the MYM Network, held in Lisbon on July 31st of this year. The launching took place at a propitious moment, during the Marist Festival, on the eve of World Youth Day, with a significant presence of young people and Marist Brothers from all over the world and representatives of the Institute. In the speech of the Superior General, Brother Ernesto Sanchez, he highlighted the importance and the potential of the International Network of MYM for Marist Youth. “As soon as I invite you to this network that is being launched today in the Marist Institute, may it help you to connect better with so many young people of the world, in this inspiration of Marcellin Champagnat, which he had through Mary. And may you connect better with yourself, with God, with others and with solidarity.”



Solidaridad

“Let us go to the young where they are. Let us go with courage to the environments, perhaps unexplored, where the expectation of Christ is revealed in material and spiritual poverty”. Let us also approach the young people who are among us, in our mission areas, in our communities and parishes. ²

• SOLIDARITY

Jesus, who saw the misery of his people and, in the face of the many signs of death, declared: “I have come that all may have life, and life in abundance” (Jn 10:10). Marcellin saw the miseries and pains of the young Montagne and decided to act. This event was decisive for

² Constitutions 83

Champagnat's dream of a more just and dignified world.

As followers of Jesus Christ and disciples of Champagnat, we Marists were called by the XXII General Chapter to live solidarity in a concrete way, in the reality in which we are inserted daily, as a Global Family, being builders of bridges, faces and hands of God's tenderness and mercy.

In 2007, with the goal of making the world a better place for children, adolescents and young people, the Marist Foundation for International Solidarity (FMSI) was created. For 16 years, FMSI has been working hard to develop the potential of children, making them **active agents** of social transformation in their communities.

• MARIST VOLUNTEERS

To set out on a journey, to go out to meet others, to be available, to experience new realities and cultures, whether at the local or global level, to break down the barriers of territories, to go beyond the frontiers of each Province is the proposal of the Marist Volunteer Movement. It is a means to build the culture of encounter between nations and peoples, to share values, knowledge and, above all, to give a little of oneself to "Make Jesus Christ known and loved". All the parties involved (the one who sends, the one who receives and the volunteer himself) are connected and oriented, with very well defined roles and agreements.



• INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

There is a Brazilian Catholic song that says: "The Spirit is an unceasing wind that will stop at nothing". Laval-la200 is undoubtedly an **initiative of the Spirit**.



It was on the occasion of the meeting of Marist leaders in 2013 that the then Superior General, Brother Emili Turú, through the letter "Montagne: the dance of the mission", invited the brothers and lay people "to discern, before God, if they felt the call to leave their country of origin to be part of an international community in another region of the world". In the invitation made, no one is left out, as Brother Sanchez affirms. Emili: "We are all invited to participate in the divine dance of mission. There is room for everyone. From this dance of life have emerged the Marist communities, composed of brothers, lay men and women, and today six communities are active in the service of the mission.

International Communities for a New Beginning is an initiative open to brothers and lay people who feel called to dedicate some time of their lives beyond their geographical and cultural boundaries. It is an initiative that promotes intercultural exchange, respect for diversity, nationality and interculturality, responding to the needs of mixed Marist communities, global availability, inter-

God constantly calls workers to his harvest, listening to him requires intimacy and listening. May God be God in us and among us.