



INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCAATION

STAGE II
July 2021 - June 2022

WELCOMING, NURTURING, LIVING AND SHARING OUR VOCATION.

Sheet 3 - Annex 1
Bonding and belonging

BONDING AND BELONGING TO THE MARIST CHARISM - SHEET 3 / 1

LINKING TO THE MARIST CHARISM GIVING LIFE TO OUR VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT

Annex 1

Lay Linking to the Marist Charism in the Iberian Province

On Sunday April 3, 2016, the second celebration of the lay linking to the Marist Charism in the Iberian Province took place in the Chapel of the house of meetings of Lardero. Fourteen lay men and women who have followed the Marist path for a long time confirmed publicly their vocation and commitment.

Sunday was a special day in which the affirmation found in the document of the XXI General Chapter became a reality:

“we recognize and support the Marist lay vocation. We believe that it is an invitation from the Spirit to live together a new communion of Marist Brothers and Laity, contributing a greater vitality to the Marist Charism and to the Mission in our world”.

And this was clear because of the large number of Brothers who accompanied us in the celebration and, above all, in the emotion and joy that their faces and tears expressed. Brothers who have not only witnessed our growth and development of our Marist option but also, in many cases, they have been the mediators for us to encounter a loving and tender God, close to us, with the solicitous presence of Mary and with the model of a full human being who is Marcellin Champagnat.



It was a day of thanksgiving for this gift that we have received in an unexpected way and which makes us part of a family of brothers and sisters where we desire to continue living our Christian vocation and our personal mission; where we find force and courage to faithfully continue our commitments day after day and which challenges always to be better.

This was a day that it did not mean a final point but a point and continue what we are already living. And the fourteen of us became very conscious of this on the week-end before, during which we had a peaceful time to gratefully remember our Marist history, and during which we could share profoundly all having a common emotion, the gratitude, the nostalgia for



those who accompanied us and are no longer among us, the joy for feeling the presence of the Spirit among us, the sentiment that this is a privilege for having well taken care of It in spite of the difficulties...

This was a desired day after some months or almost a year since we had made our petition, because important things require time and the Provincial Council takes very seriously this process. But this time has helped us to enter into contact with one another and having been able to have this previous live-in encounter, besides the careful preparation for the celebration. And this has been essential because even though the sign of linking is a personal gesture, the fact of having shared previously so much, has made us feel in communion with one another in spite of having different languages and being of different ages.

The celebration was very carefully prepared in all the details, and for those of us linking, with very significant moments. Already, in the welcome all those accompanying us were invited, families, Friends, fraternities and a large number of brothers, to join us in the thanksgiving for so many gifts received: life, faith, our vocation and belonging to this family of the Church.

But one of the moments of greatest emotion was that of the expression of the public commitment by the formula that has been coined in our Province and which reads as follows:

In the presence of God, our Father, our Good Mother and Marcelin Champagnat

After a process of discernment of my Christian vocation lived in the Marist Charism of Champagnat, I... desire and is my will to be recognized as a Lay Marist in our Iberian Province.

I ask Brother Provincial Superior to be accepted in this family and I commit myself to take care and to live my faith, to share it in my community and with other brothers and Lay Marists and to make Jesus Christ known and loved, constructing, with the help of the Spirit, a prophetic and Marian Church.

The Provincial accepted each one of us and gave us a beautiful silver cross with violet enamel that without any explanations it is a great sign.

United with this promise, each one of us placed a paper with our name on it in a little box that had the shape of a heart that was placed at the feet of our Good Mother. This gesture reminded us the tradition of Marcelin in the Hermitage when he deposited the names of the Brothers in the heart of the Virgin before they left for their new destinies. By this gesture we offered our life to Mary.

But what is more important is what that signifies for each one of us. And here is a brief piece of it:

“The celebration of linking to the Marist Charism I have lived it as one of the key moments of my life. This Sunday I have said in a personal way YES to the charism of Champagnat and the Institute has accepted me in this decision, with love, fraternally and close to me. I am sure that this step that I have taken is going to mark the rest of my life profoundly and positively in such a way that I cannot even imagine it now”. (Alfonso)



The living out of the linking that we have shared the fourteen of us who committed themselves, accompanied and wrapped up or protected by the MARIST FAMILY, has represented in my interior greater firmness of my faith in being able to share, the same as Marcelin Champagnat, his love for Mary and for the brothers. (Adolfo)

For me it was a family feast full of emotions and love, to manifest publically what I have been seeing for over 30 years. The fourteen of us had been together, since Friday evening, sharing our journeys and processes, creating fraternity. For me this was something very positive. It helped to gratefully remember my personal, Christian and Marist history, and to be able to share it with others and to live that moment with another joy and in fullness.

As Ana said in the celebration this is not a final point. It is a point and continue because my life within the Marist Family, sharing with brothers and Laity my believing being and my human and Christian growth continue.

Thank you to all who made possible this moment. Also to those who were present accompanying us and to those who have accompanied us from a greater distance. Together we continue to open the way. (Mayte)

The ceremony of the linking to the Marist Charism was one of great emotion and at the same time, it was very intimate, that the only thing I could do was to smile. I was extremely happy, grateful, I felt that God loves me and gives me things like this one.

At every moment I am remembering my husband, Santiago, whom I am sure is really enchanted to see me at the altar. (Maika)

When I was reading the formula of linking I was reaffirmed in what is the sense of my life and in what I want to continue to be, conscious of my fragility but also of the loving presence of God in my life. To do it before so many persons who love me and whom I love was the most beautiful. I feel fortunate to form part of this family and I would like that others can also discover it. (Ana)

After a process of various phases concerning the possibility of the linking, the moment arrived. It has not been a decision taken lightly. I desired to do this "not taking for granted the road covered"... It has been necessary to taste and consider the memory of my history of encounter with God (my Sacred History) and I always rediscover it almost in the Marist aspect. Many are the faces of Brothers and laity that have marked me profoundly through the events that we have lived, up to the point of "no return" (to discover my vocation)... I cannot any longer not feel that I am Marist; this is the style in which I discover and relate better with God.

After the intense lived experience of Easter, the live in meeting with my companions of linking before the celebration, has been a profound, peaceful and relaxed sharing, praying together thanking for the gift of life, preparing the celebration together that we desired... A gift. The celebration... not getting nervous, but much emotion and illusion... A very intimate and simple celebration, surrounded by so many significant and dear persons... under the loving look of our Jesus of Lardero, the Good Mother and Marcelin... If those persons and the stained glass window of the Chapel could "speak" about all the processes which they have witnessed... (Marimar)



The live-in meeting during the week-end seemed to me to be a gift from God and of life. It has helped me to keep interior peace, to think about the difficulties of life (which we all have) and to see the future with illusion, hope and very clearly. The art of living with balance is very difficult but with tenacity, interior force and LOVE, it is possible. The celebration of linking was emotional, familiar and welcoming. Thanks a million to the Council, to the Brothers and to all those persons who accompanied us. (M^a Pilar).

The Marist linking was for me a full day and spiritual joy, not only for what it presupposes of adherence to its life-style, but also because of the affection and joy with which I felt surrounded by all the Marist family. (M^a Carmen)

If there is anything which is clear to me, it was that God became present in me, through my Marist being and feeling. What was lived on Sunday, in the presence of so many Brothers and Laity, confirms me how lucky I am (we are) to belong to this great FAMILY. (Javier)

“Really it is very difficult for me to express in words my sentiments, what I really lived. There were sentiments of uncertainty, even at some moments of fear, of illusion, but above all, of THANKSGIVING OF GRATITUDE, for all the persons whom God has given me in life and who generously have given me their love, their knowledge and their way of living their faith, Brothers and laity. My adventure of life began among all of them, among them I found my companion of work and fatigue, among them my family grew, among them I live in community, and among them we continue the journey, seeking and constructing...”
(Inazio)

“Do not insist that I leave you and return. Wherever you will go, I will go, where you will live, I will live, your people will be my people, your God will be my God.” (Ruth 1,16). I understand my linking to the Marist Charism that culminated with the family celebration of Lardero. is a history of fidelity. I feel that my personal journey is a Marist history Beginning at this moment, when the Marist Charism has been recognized also in the Laity, I feel recognized and integrated in the Marist family in a personal way, and I feel committed with its values and responsible for its work. I believe that this is my vocation and it is according to this that I understand the step that we have taken (Andrés)



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ITINERARY OF THE IBERIAN PROVINCE FOR LAY INKING TO THE MARIST CHARISM

The commitment with the Charism implies a mutual commitment of fraternity and care:

The lay Marist commits him/herself to:

- Take care of his/her vocation and spirituality
- Participate in the mission
- Live the Marist community experience
- Maintain fraternal bonds of union with the other Marists
- Maintain a permanent formation

Cross given by the Brother Provincial to the lay people involved.

The Marist Province commits itself to:

- Accompany his/her Marist life
- Facilitate places or spaces of fraternal life, including the communication of the life of the Province and the Institute
- Propose spaces for participation in the mission
- Facilitate processes of permanent formation
- Convoke to places for spiritual growth and for sharing prayer and celebration.



#MaristInternationalForum



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