



INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCAATION

STAGE II
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WELCOMING, NURTURING, LIVING AND SHARING OUR VOCATION.

Sheet 3
Bonding and belonging

BONDING AND BELONGING TO THE MARIST CHARISM - SHEET 3 / 2

LINKING TO THE MARIST CHARISM GIVING LIFE TO OUR VOCATIONAL COMMITMENT

Annex 2

BONDING AND BELONGING

In [LEXICON PROJECT](#)

Bonding and belonging is an expression indicating a form of commitment of the laity to a group or institution. The General Chapter of 2001 already mentioned the possibility of belonging to the Institute in different ways (1).

An accurate use of the terms in this regard can be useful. One of the documents (2) defines them as follows:
Bonding: supporting a cause, person or institution.
Commitment: contracting an obligation that is known to others. Attachment: submitting oneself to an obligation to an institution. Belonging: becoming part of an institution.

Belonging is an answer to some lay people's vocational process, which asks for an official acknowledgment from the Institute and the Church. A life project consisting in following Jesus through the Marist charism has deep meaning for them. The essence of their lay Marist vocation is their bonding to the charism, which in some cases involves a desire of belonging to the Institute or having a formal link with an association.

Belonging to an association means being part of a stable group that makes the charism visible. The vocational process is the backbone holding lay identity in place. The ongoing reflection in this regard within the Institute is trying to define if belonging to the Institute is more suitable than joining a strictly lay structure with an international character, which would be part of the same charismatic family centered on the charism and not on the Institute.

Bonding and belonging bring about a shared respon-





sibility regarding the vitality of the Marist charism, as well as mutual care among all the people who make up the Association. They imply assuming the Association's rights and duties. The person applies for membership and the Association's representatives answer the application. A public sign or ceremony can express the admission, with the members of the group acting as witnesses. Admission indicates that the local community officially acknowledges the person's lay Marist vocation. This form of belonging would give ca-

nonical expression to the person's identification with the charism, and endorse the maturity of his or her lay vocation.

Bonding also involves other experiences, such as being in relation to others, joining forces, walking together, representing a global project, developing mission projects, having a common voice in the Church, leading processes to revitalize the charism, and keeping Champagnat's insight alive.

1. Cf. the 20th General Chapter's recommendations to the Council, 47.2 and 47.3, Rome 2001. The Assembly of Mendes (Brazil) also mentioned not only the possibility of belonging to the Institute, but of new ways of bonding to the Marist charism (cf. 2 Vocation-3). The 21st General Chapter holds the same view about bonding to the charism: "A new relationship between Brothers and Lay Marists, based on communion, searching together for a greater vitality of the Marist charism for our world" (Message, B). "A new relationship between Brothers and Lay people, based on communion, for the sake of greater vitality of the Marist charism for our world today" (Fundamental Call).

2. Cf. Bonding, commitment, attachment and belonging of lay people to the Institute and/or the Marist charism. Juan Miguel Anaya & Pau Fornells, Rome 2009.



#MaristInternationalForum



Institute of the Marist Brothers - Secretariat of Laity
Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat, 2 - Rome, Italy

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Facebook
E-Mail

<http://www.champagnat.org>
<https://www.facebook.com>
comunica@fms.it

