



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCAATION

STAGE II  
July 2021 - June 2022

WELCOMING, NURTURING, LIVING AND SHARING OUR VOCATION.

Theme 0 - Anex 1  
Opening and organization

## LOCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS GATHERINGS

### Presentation - Br. Ernesto Sánchez, Superior General

**D**ear Marists of Champagnat: For a little over a year now, around the world we have been living through a time of both intense crisis and opportunity. The pandemic caused by Covid-19, in addition to presenting us with significant challenges in terms of caring for life, has made us aware of the many faces of suffering and injustice that exist in our world. Situations that, in one way or another, were already present, but which the pandemic has brought to the fore more sharply, and others besides that have emerged during this period. In regard to all this, Pope Francis said, "We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat...are all of us." (Pope's prayer in St. Peter's Square, 27 March 2020).

To set out, conscious of our need for one another, was the main call of the 22nd General Chapter: let's journey together as a global family! At a time when protection measures seem to be separating and isolating us, new ways of feeling close and connected are emerging.

Among these, digital means are currently playing a key role. Our spirit of hope is prodding us to be creative and motivating us to be innovative.

This is the context in which the initiative of an INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON THE LAY MARIST VOCATION is being launched in the Institute. It is a process that is intended to take place over the next four years. Several of the stages will be carried out on-line, others in person. The process seeks to encourage us in WELCOMING, NURTURING, LIVING AND SHARING OUR VOCATION.

In my Circular Homes of Light I invited all of us to continue to grow in our experience of our Marist vocation as brothers and laypeople, following the invitation of the XXII General Chapter: "the future for the charism will be founded on a communion of fully committed Marists". A number of initiatives are currently underway throughout the Institute that are focussed on strengthening each of these vocations, with elements specific to each vocation and elements common to us all. On this occasion, the focus of the INTERNATIONAL FORUM is the lay Marist vocation.

I would like to thank the members



of the Secretariat of the Laity and the Extended Secretariat, as well as the facilitators, for their achievement in launching and assisting in the Forum process. Thanks also to all the formation teams serving lay Marists in the Provinces and Districts. My thanks to all the brothers and lay people who will be involved in this Forum movement. We believe it will be a life-giving experience for all.

We place the work of the Forum in the hands of Mary, our Good Mother, as well as our lives and mission, since this Institute is her work, as St. Marcellin so often reminded us. Mary inspires in us a heart that is free and full of the fire of God, capable of welcoming newness. With her by our side, let us journey together.

Br. Ernesto Sánchez, SG