



Making Jesus Christ known and loved, in Mary's way

Our Marist Mission

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Our initial Marist foundation was for the education of the young in village schools. Following the devastation of the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic wars, education in France was in a parlous state. As Marcellin Champagnat and his companions in the seminary contemplated their futures as young priests, they spoke often of the call to establish a new 'family' in the Church. In this family Marcellin Champagnat took carriage of the foundation of the Marist teaching Brothers.

CONTENT

The mission of Marist schools is to lead young people to know and love Jesus, in the way of Mary, in the belief that they can all become 'good Christians and good citizens'. Inspired by St Marcellin Champagnat, Marist educators, before all else, love their students. Our approach is marked by the characteristic qualities of simplicity, family spirit, love of work, presence and all this in Mary's way.

Beginning with small village schools, Marist education saw some 40 village schools and almost 300 Brothers already operating at the time of Marcellin Champagnat's death in 1840 at just 51 years of age and after only about 20 years in existence.

There was, underlying this call for education, a need to care for the young people of France more broadly. Thus 'boarding' was an early option. Indeed, wherever the young were at risk, Marcellin saw a need to respond. (*cf. letter #306 of Marcellin Champagnat to Fr Matthieu Menaide PP St-Nizier, Lyon*)

So the Marist mission now extends to care for the most marginalised youth (e.g. Champagnat Institute, Suva); students at risk of dropping out of mainstream schooling (e.g. Marist Alternative Education, Auckland) and the most disadvantaged and marginalised of our world (e.g. Kiribati, Timor Leste, Syria).

QUOTATIONS

EVANGELISERS IN THE MIDST OF YOUTH (Marist Document on Service to Youth)

https://www.champagnat.org/e_maristas/Documentos/PJM_en.pdf

4. Today it is not uncommon to hear people claim that we are not only living in changing times but are witnessing an earthshaking time of change. We are talking about a profound transformation in our way of seeing, feeling, knowing, relating to and loving, all of which can be observed to an even greater degree in the young.
6. For the poorest teenagers and young people in these times of change and globalization, the spectacle of exclusion has become more pronounced. This situation profoundly affects the makeup of their identity in as much as many have grown up feeling scorned or ignored by a society that often judges them without knowing them.

35. For Marcellin, the historical circumstances and social context of his time must have weighed heavily on his mind and heart the morning he was called to the bedside of a dying and forsaken youth, Jean-Baptiste Montagne (17 years old).

REFLECTION

SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS OR REACTIONS TO THESE READINGS

- What you know of Marist works beyond mainstream schools and your hopes for our ongoing ministries?
- Your reflections on the above quotes from our seminal document on evangelizing the young.
- Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8.

PRAYER

Creator God, through your Son Jesus, our Good Mother Mary and St Marcellin, you have gifted the world with the Marist family and its mission.

Continue to keep us faithful to our mission, to be conscious of and hopeful for the young people of our world, our country and our ministries.

May we continue to be always aware of those most in need, and most marginalised. May we be for them and their families, beacons of hope, as we strive, with audacity to be other 'Champagnats' for our modern world. Help us to show them, through our interactions, the face of Jesus.

Amen.

Mary Our Good Mother, *pray for us*
St Marcellin Champagnat, *pray for us*

