



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

## Champagnat Marist Spirituality 06

Inspiring and enlightening our Marist endeavours, is a spirituality inherited from our founder St Marcellin Champagnat. From his earliest days in his family, and especially from his parents Jean-Baptiste and Marie Therese, he learned the positive values of the French Revolution: 'liberty, equality, fraternity'.

From his mother in particular he learned to remain close to God in prayer and especially learning from her a great love for our Good Mother. In his priestly training too, from the Sulpician priests of the French School of Spirituality, he was formed in their very human insights into the love of Jesus, in the Eucharist and a particular love for the Mother of Jesus – our 'Ordinary Resource'.

### CONTENT

"Although Marie Champagnat tenderly loved all her children, she had a special affection for young Marcellin... not so much because he was the youngest as for a conviction she had that he would oneday do great things for God". (Gibson, R. (1971). *Father Champagnat, The Man and his Spirituality*, Chapter 2: Influences that helped to shape the character and ideals of Marcellin Champagnat, footnote #67)

"Spirituality is the inner core, made up of all the experiences and encounters one has had in life and out of which comes the motivations, inspirations and commitment that make one live and decide in a particular way." (Rolheiser)

Marcellin was driven by an utter confidence in God and a firm conviction that the work he was called to do was 'Mary's work'. So if it failed, as he often prayed to her, 'It is not my problem but yours!'

He called his brothers to be among the first at 'the crib, the cross and the altar', summarizing a deep spirituality of the Incarnation, the power and redemptive quality of the Cross and a commitment to the greatest Christian prayer: the Eucharist.

"He had a depth of spirituality that was sincere and warm, and the ability to communicate this ardour to others. His talks to his seminarians were given at frequent intervals: his eyes glistened with unshed tears as he spoke of Jesus, the saving Lord. He was an apostle of the Eucharist and urged his more fervent students to go to communion once every three weeks or oftener – which was quite a novelty in a time when communion once a month was regarded as normal for people of the holiest disposition..." (Gibson, R. op.cit. footnote #94).

### QUOTATIONS

#### **WATER FROM THE ROCK (Marist Spirituality Document)**

[https://www.champagnat.org/shared/documenti\\_maristi/AcquaRoccia\\_EN.pdf](https://www.champagnat.org/shared/documenti_maristi/AcquaRoccia_EN.pdf)

4. For us Jesus is the human face of God. In a privileged way we encounter him in the three special Marist places, where Jesus reveals God to us. At the Crib we find the innocence, simplicity, gentleness and even weakness of a God who is capable of touching the hardest of hearts. There is no room for fear of a God who became a child. We come to know a God who has pitched his tent in our midst, and whom we call "brother."

21. At the foot of the Cross, we are in awe of a God who loves us without reserve. We find a God who shares the physical and psychological suffering, betrayal, abandonment and violence experienced by humanity, and transforms these experiences. There we enter the mystery of redemptive suffering and learn humble fidelity in love. The crucified Christ is the sign and deepest expression of a God who is love.
22. At the Altar, the Eucharist, we find a privileged place to enter into communion with the Body of Christ: to stand as one with all who are members and to deepen our relationship with the living presence of Jesus in our lives. The celebration of the Eucharist, and prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, were intense experiences of God for Marcellin. Experiencing the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Christian life leads us to the heart of the Marist's spirituality.

## REFLECTION

### SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS OR REACTIONS TO THE READINGS

- Your understanding of how our Marist spirituality is seen at work in our ministries.
- Your insights and questions as to how we as Board members can nurture this spirituality in our work.

## PRAYER

Lord of life, you touch each of us with your presence in our world and in your people.  
To all those we encounter, make your reality felt through us and our Marist works.  
Like Saint Marcellin, we are inspired day by day, to make Jesus Christ known and loved in  
Mary's way.

Help us to be always faithful to our traditions of encountering you  
through word and sacrament;  
in the sadness and suffering in the shadow of the Cross;  
in the joy of the Resurrection,  
and in your great event of remembrance – the Eucharist, pinnacle of your love for us.  
Amen.

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