

Marist
ASSOCIATION OF
ST MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

Resource Preview

**Marist Spiritual Formation
for Members of Boards
and Councils**

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Module Overview..... | 4 |
| Our Starting Point - The Mission of God..... | 5 |
| Module 1A - The Marist Story..... | 12 |
| Module 1B - The Marist Story..... | 19 |
| Module 2A - Catholic Identity and Christian Spirituality..... | 25 |
| Module 2B - Catholic Identity and Christian Spirituality..... | 33 |
| Module 3A - The Marist Approach to Ministry..... | 40 |
| Module 3B - The Marist Approach to Ministry..... | 47 |
| Module 4A - Faith Leadership..... | 56 |
| Module 4B - Faith Leadership and Discernment..... | 67 |





Introduction

As Marists, we seek to experience through our lives and work: 'a living and dynamic experience of God, contemplative and action oriented at the same time' (WFTR, p10).

Good governance relies on board and council members having a clear understanding of the respective constitution, policies and procedures in order to appropriately exercise their role. Essential to this understanding is a deep and developing appreciation of our work as part of God's mission, exercised in the name of the Catholic Church, with a *Marist way* of seeking to live the Gospel and *make Jesus known and loved* especially among the young. An attempt to describe through reflection and prayer, *The Marist Way* is captured in the Spirituality Document for Marists worldwide, titled "*Water from the Rock.*" (WFTR). It is recommended reading for all who work and volunteer in Marist Schools and Ministries, and is a key source document that informs Marist spiritual formation.

From the Latin formare, meaning 'to shape,' formation is an intentional process that is ongoing and reflective. It focusses on the development of individuals and communities from their lived experiences, in spiritual awareness, theological understanding, vocational motivation and capabilities for mission and service in the Church and the world. - NCEC. (2017). A Framework for Mission in Catholic Schools

Spiritual and theological formation has to do with the *transformation* of the whole person: their minds and hearts and spirits. **Formation** is different from professional development and training. It is invitational, ongoing, developmental, and encourages each person to walk in the light of the Gospel to bring about the Common Good and fullness of all humanity.

The work of board and council members is greatly valued by the Marist Association and, while assisting in meeting responsibilities for matters such as strategic direction, compliance and governance, importantly boards and councils are responsible for the evolution of the Marist way and ethos of the organisation.

Program Objectives:

Each council and board member will be invited to participate in the formation modules based on the distinctive elements of **Catholic Identity and**

Marist Spirituality and Story.

Each council or board member will be offered an opportunity to:

- reflect upon God's mission and the Good News of Jesus;
- reflect upon aspects of leadership, and stewardship;
- engage with important church documents for example - Catholic Social Teaching and Laudato Si' - and identify how these may have a critical influence at the personal, communal and organisational levels of decision making.
- develop an understanding of the school or ministry in the context of the mission of the Catholic Church in Australia;
- recognize the importance of the inspiration and influence of Mary in the Marist Story, Spirituality and Tradition including an understanding of the legacy of the Brothers to present day lay leadership;
- develop a clear understanding that the Marist Association is committed to the care of young people, particularly those who are most in need and neglected;
- further enhance a personal spiritual and theological journey, including engaging in various forms of prayer and encounters with scripture

Thank you for your generosity in serving on a Marist Board or Council. May these formation experiences enrich your work and its meaning.

"Today the Spirit that was so active in our founder longs to live and breathe in you and me."

- **Br Sean Sammon (Former Superior General)**

Yours sincerely

Frank Malloy

Executive Officer for the Marist Association of Saint Marcellin Champagnat
National Director Marist Schools Australia



Module Overview

Module 1 – The Marist Story

In Part One of this Module, we will reflect upon the Mission of God as the Good News of Jesus coming into the world and how this good news governs the Catholic Church's social teaching. Part Two will focus on Saint Marcellin, his charism and the Marist Story as a wonderful gift of the spirit to the Catholic Church today.

Our objectives for this module are:

- to reflect upon the Mission of God as the Good News of Jesus
- to recognise the Marist story as a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church

Module 2 – Catholic Identity and Christian Spirituality

In this module, we will explore some of our Catholic traditions and how our Christian spirituality flows from our understanding of who we are and how we live our lives in relationship with God and others.

Our objectives for this module are:

- To understand the essential characteristics of our Catholic and Marist Identity
- To determine how they shape and influence what we do as a Board/Council
- To develop a shared language and understanding of what it means to be a Catholic/Marist Board/Council

Module 3 – The Marist Approach to Ministry

In this module we will explore our Marist approach to ministry. We will consider the Marian approach to our work and life, describe and express what it means to be a Marian leader, and to recognise that our wider mission is connected to the universal principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

Our objectives for this module are:

- To explore the Marian approach to our work and life
- To describe and express what it means to be 'Marian'
- To recognise our wider mission is connected to the universal Church through its Social Teaching

Module 4 – Faith Leadership and Discernment

Discernment is a vital aspect of faith leadership. We look to robust processes of dialogue and reflection, guided by the Holy Spirit, in support of the best possible outcomes being ensured.

Our objectives for this module are:

- to explore the importance of the process of discernment
- to investigate the steps of a discernment model

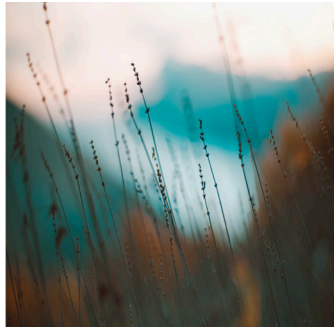


Our Starting Point – The Mission of God

Welcome to our online formation course for Members of **Marist Councils and Boards**. This course comprises eight modules that focus primarily on the Marist story, our Catholic identity and Marist spirituality and our Marist approach to ministry, faith leadership and governance. Each module will offer a specific focus that will assist you in your role as a Member of a Marist Council or Board.

It is intended that each module will take approximately **30 minutes** to complete. There are extended units within each module for you to explore.

Before we get started with the first module, we will briefly explore the foundations of our Marist Mission. Please ensure you have a copy of the booklet and a pen with you.



Opening Prayer

Let us pause and call to mind
God's presence within and among us,
today and always.

Brief pause

God of mercy and infinite love,
we place ourselves before You.
Help us to be open to Your Word,
responsive to Your Spirit,
and alert to Your call.
May Your peace be with us.

We make this prayer through
Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Introduction



In this Introduction we will reflect upon the Mission of God as the Good News of Jesus coming into the world and how this good news governs the Catholic Church's social teaching. Modules 1A and 1B will focus on Saint Marcellin, his **charism** and the Marist Story as a wonderful **gift of the spirit** to the Catholic Church today.

We will recognise the great responsibility each of you has as members of Boards and Councils to continue to bear witness to the good news as we express the mission today in our various places of ministry.



What is God's Mission?

As Christians, we belong to a rich spiritual tradition dating back 2000 years. The Church tells us, the mission of God, **Missio Dei**, flows directly through every believer and every community of faith that adheres to the teachings of Jesus Christ. In our work we share in **God's mission**.

Many have contributed to the telling and building of this rich tradition and story since the time of Jesus. Mary the mother of Jesus, the early disciples, St Paul, the Desert mystics, Saint Hildegard, Saint Francis and the Jesuits to name a few that impacted the Christian story.

A pre-eminent theologian and scripture scholar from Spain, Jose Pagola, has spent his life devoted to studying and writing on Jesus. He speaks of God's mission as the **Reign of God** that Jesus came to build on earth. Pagola says:

Jesus left the desert, crossed the Jordan River, and walked back into the land that God had given his people. It was around the year 28; Jesus was about 32 years old. He went straight to Galilee. There was fire in his heart. He needed to proclaim to those poor people the news that was burning inside him: God was coming now to liberate his people from so much suffering and oppression. He knew what he wanted to do: he would bring fire to the earth by proclaiming the irruption of the reign of God (Pagola, 95).

Pagola says all the sources point to one thing beyond any doubt: Jesus saw himself as the bearer of **Good News** because God was good:

*What God cared about was liberating the people from whatever dehumanised them and caused them suffering. Indeed, his message would inspire great joy among the poor and humiliated. The reign of God that Jesus proclaimed was the answer to their deepest hope: to **live in dignity** (Pagola, 106).*



What is the Good News?

The mission of God is modelled on the life, death and resurrection of **Jesus**. God sent His only son into the world to share the 'Good News' of God's love for His people, and His call to us, His Church to take part in the mission.

John's Gospel records succinctly the **Good News** that Jesus came to bring and share:

'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.' (Jn 10:10)

Pope Francis echoes the joy of the Gospel message of Jesus in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*. He says the mission of Jesus was to give life to others. And this mission comes alive in the hearts of people through: "bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising up, healing and freeing" (EG273).

How has this story been carried? Bishop Geoffrey Robinson describes the **Good News** using the metaphor as a song that Jesus sang:

Resource Preview

To access pages 8-76 please
contact mlf@marists.org.au