## Local Coordinator Orientation Guide





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Access online via the **Spirituality Hub** ..... (Password: LC23)



## Purpose of the Marist Association

We Marists are a vital faith community, an expression of Church that embraces mission with Marian joy, hope, and audacity. Jesus Christ and the priorities of all of our ministries are inspired by the Gospel passion and compassion which fired Saint Marcellin. We remain attentive to the God of all life, and we are committed to nurturing our spirituality through ongoing formation. We draw on both Marist tradition and imagination to be gamechangers for young people, and particularly those most on the peripheries. We foster connectedness and communion among ourselves as an Association, with the Marist spiritual family around the world, and with the wider Church of which we are part.

### Why do we have a Marist Association?

This is a genuine response to a call for coresponsibility for the life & mission of the wider Australian Marist Community. It will provide a formal Church structure for leadership and governance of Marist ministries into the future. In many ways it formalises what already exists to better provide for Marist life and ministry. Marcellin Champagnat's particular gift was to found the Marist Brothers to teach and evangelise young people, particularly those on the margins of society. The Marist Association aims to provide the necessary structure to keep Marcellin's dream alive! It is a body of people, who share responsibility for the leadership, governance and animation of Marist ministries. The four main Marist ministries are schools (Marist Schools Australia), youth ministry (Marist Youth Ministry), youth care (Marist180) and solidarity (Australian Marist Solidarity).

### What is its main purpose?

The two main purposes are growing the Marist spiritual family and ensuring the future vitality & viability of Marist ministries. It nurtures the vocation of all Marists by building a sense of community and belonging between all those who choose to share in Marist life and mission. People who join the Association ensure that the Marist charism remains a living tradition by continually returning to the question: "What is God asking of Marists in Australia today?" The Association seeks to provide and bear witness to an experience of Church community that is Marian, Eucharistic, faith focused, mission driven and inclusive.

### To whom is the Association responsible?

The members are largely responsible to each other. The Association Council are appointed by the Trustees, following a discernment process where they may invite Members to vote for candidates. The Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat Limited (MASMC Ltd, a not-forprofit company limited by guarantee) was formed by the Trustees of the Marist Brothers to provide governance as well as spiritual leadership and formation for those engaged in the apostolic works, activities and operations of the Marists in Australia.

### Who can belong?

The Association is open to anyone with a Marist heart. It formally brings together the Marist Brothers in Australia with other people who are passionate about, and committed to Marist spirituality, life and mission. Members, most likely, are people who currently work in, or have worked in, a Marist school or other Marist ministry for a time. For some, their interest may be a result of personal friendship with a Marist Brother or Marist community, or through their experience of Marist life in other ways. Marist Brothers also choose to join the Association. For some people, the Association may be something they are looking to commit to and be a part of for the rest of their lives. For others, it may be a year by year prospect, or only makes sense to them whilst they are working in a Marist ministry.

#### The purpose of the Local Group is to:

- create a space to bring interested and likeminded people together to foster community and Marial spirit.
- respond to the local needs and discern with other group members about how to nurture, grow and strengthen their group as a faith filled and spiritual Marist community.
- foster a safe and inclusive environment where all people feel comfortable and affirmed.
- empower members, bringing their gifts and talents, to a shared responsibility for the life and vitality of the group.
- invite and accompany new people who are interested and curious in the Marist way of life to explore what it means and how they can become involved.
- offer diverse opportunities for contemplation, formation, prayer, friendship, and fun.
- connect with other local groups, Marist ministries and the wider Marist family creating relationships that support, care for and grow with one another.

## The 'As Marists' document provides the following guiding principles for Local Groups:

- engaging in faith formation for mission
- nourishing our spiritual life and personal relationship with Jesus
- evangelising through education
- favouring children and young people most in need
- responding to the most urgent needs of children
- nurturing relationships with the global Marist family and Church
- embracing our shared responsibility for the Association's mission
- strengthening and growing our Marist family as a gift for the Church

# Form of the Local Group

### **Role of each Member**

Each Local Group is made up of members and guests of the Marist Association who meet together for prayer, community and mission.

Some members are based in Marist schools (68%) and others have affiliation with a Marist ministry.

### Responsibilities

All members of the Local Group take responsibility for Marist life and vitality. It is the role of the Local Coordinator to bring shape to this energy and to assist members to gather for formation and social connection.

### **Different Approaches**

Every group around Australia has its own expression and priorities based on the context and the people who form the group. Some groups are based within schools and other groups meet completely independent to educational structures.



#### We are a Vibrant Marist Community

The Marist Association is a spiritual family striving to make a difference in the lives of young people, especially those on the margins. Members enjoy sharing life, sharing prayer and sharing mission.

Come join over 800 Australian Marists, following in the way of Mary and St Marcellin Champagnat, as we gather together to share each other's good company - perhaps over a cuppa or a meal.

Take a look at our website **www.maristassociation.org.au** to find out more, and if you'd like to join us then fill in the Application Form.

#wemarists



Listen to Jess's story about being a Member https://youtu.be/uAfLSi6UxBs

# Role of the Local Coordinator

The role of the Local Coordinator in the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat is to support, nurture and accompany others in their Christian faith journey. They are a leader of a local Association group that is inspired by Marist traditions and spirituality.

### Local Coordinator Role Description

### Personal Qualities

The Local Coordinator is a person who:

- Has a passion for God and a compassion for people.
- Is inspired by St Marcellin Champagnat's vision of making Jesus Christ known and loved.
- Desires to nurture their own spirituality, and that of others, in the way of Mary.
- Understands the importance of community in building the Marist spiritual family.

### Key Responsibilities

- Build strong relationships so as to provide appropriate formation and accompaniment in response to identified individual and local needs
- Support, develop and continue to grow the Marist Association and its members
- Provide support and accompaniment to their Local Group in nurturing and growing their Marist life and spirituality
- Dialogue and discern the nature and identity of the Marist vocation

### The Local Coordinator:

- Looks for ways to bring interested and likeminded people together to foster community and Marial spirit.
- Responds to the local needs, discern with other group members how to nurture, grow and strengthen their group as a faith filled and spiritual Marist community.
- Liaises with the Mission, Life and Formation (MLF) contact person for support and resources.
- Is aware of creating a safe and inclusive environment where all people feel comfortable and affirmed.
- Empowers members, bringing their gifts and talents to a shared responsibility for the life and vitality of the group.
- Invites and accompanies new people who are interested and curious about the Marist way of life to explore what it means and how they can become involved.
- Provides diverse opportunities for contemplation, formation, prayer, friendship and fun.
- Connects with other local groups, Marist ministries and the wider Marist family creating relationships that support, care for and grow with one another.
- Assists new members with the application process and present them with a certificate and pin.

## Appointment Process of a new Local Coordinator

- Once the MLF Contact (or Coordinator of Membership) becomes aware of a vacancy coming up, the Director MLF is informed.
- The Director MLF ensures that there is consultation with the Principal or Ministry Leader or any other relevant stakeholder as to a suitable replacement.
- The name of the preferred person for the Local Coordinator role is discussed a joint meeting with the MASMC Executive Officer, Director MLF and Coordinator of Membership.
- The Leader of MASMC sends a letter of 'thank you' to the outgoing LC, and a letter of 'congratulations' to the incoming LC. There is also a letter that may be sent to the Local Group announcing the incoming LC. Included in the communication email of these letters: Principal or Ministry leader, Director MLF, Regional Director, MLF Contact.

# Planning Local Gatherings

Some Key Considerations:

### What is the purpose?

- It's important to ask yourself, why are we meeting and what do we hope are the outcomes? Local Gatherings often have a mixture of both spiritual, communal and mission elements. It's helpful to have a range of events and gatherings throughout the year.
- Some Local Groups gather every few months for a particular formation focus, such as the Marian Lecture, reflection on the national theme, or to renew their commitment on a key Marist date (Champagnat Day, Fourvière Pledge or Feast of the Assumption).
- Local Groups may take on a specific outreach project such as preparing meals for distribution in the broader community. It's important to consider the needs of those you are serving and the availability of your group. Marist Volunteering and Lavalla200> provides international opportunities.
- Many Local Gatherings take on a social aspect which helps to build community and strengthen relationships. The environment can play a key role in generating the right atmosphere.

### Who will be there?

- The best Local Gatherings begin with the people in mind. What is it that they need? What will draw them to be involved? Knowing your people and what motivates them is a critical part of planning for a Local Gathering.
- Consider the timing of the gathering, both in the calendar and time of day.
- Use reminders, personal invitation and recruit others to help you to engage a broad range of people.

### What content will be used?

- If you are preparing a Local Gathering that requires materials, consider making use of the many resources available online and based on the national theme.
- Guest speakers and other stimulus material can help animate rich conversations.

### What processes will be used?

- It's a good idea to draw on a variety of processes throughout the year.
- Depending on the format of your Local Gathering you may like to start or end with a prayer and
- reflection.
- Provide time for personal reflection
- Invite participants to discuss their thoughts with others.
- Is there a commitment or takeaway message from the gathering.

### Who is able to assist you?

- A Local Gathering can have a few moving parts and it's helpful to draw on the talents and energy of others to assist you, before, during and after the event.
- Some local groups assign roles such as hospitality, set up/clean up, prayer and input.
- The MLF Contact Person can also assist with the preparation and delivery if required.

### How will the gathering be promoted?

- Promotion prior and after the event is important for spreading the word about what the Local Group does and who is involved.
- Preparing an attractive invitation or poster that briefly outlines the purpose of the gathering and sharing this through regular community notices is essential.
- Taking photos during the Local Gathering and asking one or two participants to write about the experience will provide you with content to celebrate and share your event both within your community and the National Marist Association.

### What resources do you need?

- Hospitality
- Venue
- Materials

## **Calendar Ideas**

### **Marist Dates of Significance**

2 January Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

25 March Annunciation

18 April Canonization of Marcellin Champagnat

The Feast of the Immaculate Heart (Saturday following the Second Sunday after Pentecost)

May Month dedicated to Mary

29 May Beatification of Marcellin Champagnat

31 May Visitation

6 June St Marcellin Feast Day 16 July Our Lady of Mount Carmel

23 July Fourviere Pledge

15 August Feast of the Assumption

15 September Our Lady of Sorrows

7 October Our Lady of the Rosary

21 November The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

8 December Feast of the Immaculate Conception



# Publications and Membership

### Becoming a Member

The easiest way to join the Association is to complete the Application Form on our website: www.maristassociation.org.au/application-form Association communities across the country have a Local Coordinator. Potential members are encouraged to talk to their Local Coordinator to find out more about the Association and their Local Group. Any enquiries can be made to marist.association@marists.org.au Potential members may also want to discuss

the Association with their Marist Ministry Leader, or the relevant contact person from the Marist Mission & Life Formation Team.

### **Support for your Application**

If a potential member is connected with a Marist Ministry, they will need to provide the name and email address of one supporter who endorses their application and can be contacted for confirmation: (eg: Marist Brother, College Principal, Ministry Leader, Association Local Coordinator or an Association Member).

If a potential member does not work in, or is not connected with a Marist Ministry or College, they will need to provide the names, positions and contact numbers of two people who support their application to belong to this Spiritual Family: (eg: Priest, Marist Brother or other Religious, Lay Marist, or Lay person who is involved in the Catholic Church through their work/Parish/ volunteering).

Apply Online here: www.maristassociation.org.au/application-form

After the application is submitted, Michael will contact the potential member to discuss. Following that, the name will be put forward to the next Association Council meeting for formal endorsement.

### Membership Team

#### **Coordinating Membership**

The successful experience of growing membership in the first five years of the Association indicated that specific attention be given to inviting, accepting and carefully following up expressions of interest is necessary. Currently, this function is undertaken nationally by the Coordinator of Membership, through the Association Executive Officer. The promotion of and encouragement to membership of the Association is a shared responsibility of all Ministry Leaders, Principals, Local Group Leaders and MLF team members.

#### Communication

Christlife is edited by and produced by Tracey Doublet, appearing regularly throughout the year. Tracey also maintain the Association online presence through the Association website and Facebook page.

## Share your stories and photos through Social Media and Christlife

Download Christlife here



Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat Administrative Office: 1 Dawson Street Brunswick Victoria 3056 Australia Phone: 03 9389 3100 Email: marist.association@marists.org.au

# Resources for Local Groups

## **Association Formation Events**

### MARIAN LECTURE

The Marian Lecture takes up the annual theme and features a keynote speaker of significance.

### HOLDING THE SPACE: A CONTEMPLATIVE CONVERSATION RETREAT

Come and journey with others and experience the power of contemplation as a tool for living with awareness. Experience the richness of dialogue founded on listening to others with an open mind and an open heart.

This online retreat is a four-week experience. Retreatants will receive spiritual input every Friday by email for four weeks. The spiritual input includes a variety of reflections, questions for journaling, prayer practices to explore, and meditations to help contextualise the content. Retreatants gather on Zoom to engage in a shared contemplative dialogue in response to what has emerged over the week.

#### ANNUAL MOMENT OF RENEWAL

Each year, the Moment of Renewal provides a simple way for members of the Marist Association to remember in each other's company our desire to be a vital faith community, remain attentive to the God of all life, nurture our spirituality, and draw on our mission imagination to serve and foster connectedness and communion. Marist Association Local Coordinators choose the most appropriate context for the ritual to be carried out.

6 June Feast Day of St Marcellin Champagnat 23 July Fourvière Pledge 15 August Feast of the Assumption

Resources are made available to Marist Association Local Coordinators.

#### MARIST ASSOCIATION REGIONAL GATHERINGS

The Regional Gatherings aim to strengthen the connections between members of the Marist Association in geographical regions across Australia. Participants will have the opportunity to share their experience of Marist life and explore ideas and resources for nurturing the Marist Association. The format and content of gatherings will be determined by the local groups in the region and may consist of a shared meal, spiritual input and time for reflection and prayer. The Marist Mission and Life Formation Team are available to provide resources and support Local Coordinators in the facilitation of Regional Gatherings.

#### MID-WINTER RETREAT

(For Association members, school and ministry staff)

Our annual retreat offers a time of insight and renewal through a process of quiet reflection, spiritual reading and quality input.

### FAITH FORMATORS' COLLOQUIUM

For Local Coordinators, Directors of Mission, RECs, APREs, Local Coordinators

The Colloquium explores the annual theme and its implications for forming staff and young people. Through modern art, storytelling and reflection, participants will consider how they are being drawn by God as faith leaders and discover new ways of creating together for mission.

Contact: Please refer to the Annual Program and Events Booklet found on the Marist Spirituality Hub <u>here</u>.

## **Programs and Modules**

### THEME REFLECTIONS

This set of resources is designed to be used with Local Groups to reflect on the annual theme and provide a 1 hour program and printable materials.

Download here: Theme Resources

### **GROWING THE SPIRITUAL FAMILY**

'Growing the Spiritual Family - Marists for the World' is an initial Formation Program for members of the Marist Association which explore the following core questions:

- What is God asking of Marists in Australia today?
- Who in the future will deliberately and consciously bring witness to and lead these particular works of the Church?
- How do we build and lead life-giving, meaningful and Christ-centred community between all committed Marists in the future?
- How do we best provide and resource the nurturing of our spirituality and develop a culture of spiritual formation?

The six modules are separate, yet connected. The intention is for them to be a source of reflection that will fuel rich dialogue between Marists.

Download here: 'Growing the Spiritual Family'

### THE BLESSED ORDINARY

One hour Spiritual Formation sessions for local groups in the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat. It includes two x one hour sessions each with a session outline, handouts, suggested readings and keynote/powerpoints. Each session follows a similar outline with the invitation for those in Local Groups to adapt the material appropriate to their local context.

Session 1: The Music of Holiness In Our Everyday Lives uses a framing document: the 2018 apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis entitled Gaudete et Exsultate (Rejoice and Be Glad).

Session 2: Family. A Homemade Holiness engages us with the joys and challenges of being a family of faith in the Twenty First Century.

Download here: 'The Blessed Ordinary' Here

### THE VISION STILL HAS TIME

The Vision Still Has Time Reflection Series is a series of seven reflections written by Brother Mark O'Connor FMS that focuses on our humanity, faith, seeking God, compassion, prayer and the state of our hearts. Each Scriptural reflection is framed with questions to invite readers to a deeper point in their selves, where they can find the love and peace of Christ and Mary, his first disciple.

Download here: The Vision Still Has Time

### HAIL MARY: REFLECTIONS ON THE ROSARY

Hail Mary: Reflections on the Mysteries of the Rosary provides a series of articles written by Br Mark O'Connor FMS. Focused on a selection of the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous mysteries of the Rosary, this collection sensitively addresses the Marian mysteries in the contemporary context of our post-modern world. Each article is followed by a number of questions for personal enrichment in a variety of parish and school settings. They are suitable for use individually or collectively, with small or large groups, within one or over several sessions or as an opening prayer reflection.

Download here: Hail Mary: Reflections on the Rosary

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES COMPANION GUIDE

As Marists, we participate in God's mission, making Jesus known and loved. We continue to draw on, personalise and interpret the tradition of Marcellin Champagnat and the earliest Brothers, as a way of being attentive and responsive to the call of the Gospel and what the Spirit is asking of us today.

The Guiding Principles presented in the 'As Marists' booklet - arising from, and following, the conversations, consultation and discernment of the 2018 National Assembly - will come alive with our imagination and creativity. We are encouraged to break them open together. These three companion guides, consisting of three Principles each, offer a way for us to discover the possibilities and challenges for us as Marists collectively and individually, in the three key areas of Spirituality, Ministry and Spiritual Family.



### **BEING MARIST VIDEOS**

The Marist Brothers Province of Australia published three short films on contemporary expressions of Marist spirituality in Australia.

The films are available to watch **here**, and resources that have been developed to accompany each film can be downloaded and used for personal or group reflection.





## Support for the Role of Local Coordinator

Frequently Asked Questions Spiritual Accompaniment Connecting with other Local Coordinators Building a shared responsibility Connecting regularly with MLF Contact

### Frequently Asked Questions

### Who are Members of the Marist Association?

Many Members have at some stage been directly involved in Marist work, in schools or ministries. They are Brothers, clergy, lay, women and men, old and young, from city or country, students, retired or professional. All have a desire to be identified as Marist, with a commitment to live out Marist life and mission together, making Jesus Christ known and loved.

### What is the purpose of the Marist Association?

The two main purposes are growing the Marist spiritual family and ensuring the future vitality & viability of Marist ministries. The Association nurtures the vocation of all Marists by building a sense of family and belonging between all those who choose to share in Marist life and mission. The people who join the Association ensure that the Marist charism remains a living tradition by continually returning to the question: "What is God asking of Marists in Australia today?"

### Who leads the Marist Association?

The Association is led by the Association Council, which at this stage consists of a combination of lay Members and Brothers, including the Provincial. The Council, elected from the Membership, is responsible for the administration and organisation of the Association.

### Who can join the Marist Association?

The Association is open to anyone with a Marist heart! It formally brings together the Marist Brothers in Australia with other people who are passionate about, and committed to, Marist spirituality, life and mission. Many Members are people who currently work in, or have worked in, a Marist school or other Marist ministry for a time, or have had connections with the Brothers. For some people, the Association may be something they are looking to commit to and be a part of for the rest of their lives. For others, it may be a year by year prospect, or only makes sense to them whilst they are working in a Marist ministry. There is no employment advantage for Members of the Association.

#### What is the relationship between the Marist Association, the Australian Province of the Marist Brothers and the wider Church?

The Marist Association and the Australian Province of the Marist Brothers are separate entities. All matters pertaining to Marist Brothers are the responsibility of the Province. The Marist Association has responsibility for the animation of local Marist life and mission within Australia. Brothers may choose whether or not they wish to be Members of the Marist Association. The Association is maturing in its identity as a respected body in the wider Australian Church.

### What commitment am I making?

Those joining the Association commit to continuing their personal prayer life and faith journey, prioritising the nourishment of their Marist spirituality. They also help to discern the vision and direction of Marist mission into the future. Whenever possible, and to the extent that is reasonable, those who join the Association are proactive in fostering Marial spirit and keeping Marcellin's dream alive by building Marist community and life in the places where they live and work. They draw in others, who are a part of the wider Australian Marist Community, to experience belonging and shared purpose. Members commit to attending local and regional Association gatherings, sharing their gifts to help lead and animate the life of the Association.

### Do I have to be Catholic to join?

No, other Christians can be Members of the Association. People of any Christian denomination can be Members with voting rights. People who are part of other religious traditions, or who have no religious affiliation, are welcome to be a part of the life of the Marist Association as companions.

## If I am the leader of a Marist ministry, is there an expectation that I join?

While it is hoped that many leaders of Marist ministries would want to be a part of the Association, in all cases it is an individual's choice to join based on his or her personal journey as a Marist. However, as a leader of a Marist ministry, there would be an expectation that the Marist Association is promoted and encouraged to staff who are interested.

## Do I need to have previous Marist formation in order to join?

Some applicants have already undertaken previous spiritual and Marist formation. Others join the Association and then participate in such formation. In either case, all Members are offered many ongoing opportunities to enrich their faith life.

### Are all Applications accepted?

The vast majority of applications are accepted, however, the Association Council reserves the right to decline an application if they believe joining is not in the best interests of the Association.

# Regional Gatherings

### Event planning guide

- 1. Local Coordinators gather to agree on dates and themes for the year
- 2. Book a speaker for 1 hour to 1.5 hrs input
- 3. Book a venue to gather, perhaps a nearby club that can cater for a meal/drink afterwards
- 4. Put together some simple slides.
- 5. Local Coordinators take it in turns to organise the event
- 6. Create a simple flyer for the event,
- 7. Send an online form for RSVPs in the flyer
- 8. Take a group photo with the speaker.
- 9. Write a short 3-4 paragraph article summary of the event with photos click here for guidelines and send article and images to Tracey Doublet for Christlife
- 10. Post to the Marist Association Facebook page

Here is a sample of a **Regional Gathering** and the **purpose** of Regional Gatherings.

### Guest speakers and themes

This is not an exhaustive list of speakers, but offers some suggestions of those who have delivered sessions over the past few years to groups. Your MLF team member can help Regional Groups book and plan a guest speaker.

- Br Doug Walsh Solidarity the Exodus Community
- Br Tony Leon Marist Dreaming, Spirituality and contemporary reflections on life
- Br Michael Green Growing Marist Life
- Br Darren Burge Accompaniment
- Br Graham Neist Spirituality
- Br Bill Sullivan Nourishing the Soul
- Br Neville Solomon Mary at the Foot of the Cross
- Br Mark O'Connor Pope Francis
- Br Robert O'Connor Miriam
- Br Michael Callinan National Staff Spirituality Program & Liturgucal Music Leaders Workshop
- Lavalla200 Community in action
- Br Chris Wills Global Marists
- Br Michael Flanagan The Australian Marist Project

Watch **Br Michael Green** at the Macarthur Regional Gathering 2022: **click here** 

Watch **Br Doug Walsh** at the Gippsland Regional Gathering 2022: **click here** 

Sample Regional Gatherings click here











To access online materials via the Spirituality Hub **maristformation.org**/local-coordinator-resources (Password: LC23)