

**In the
Footsteps
of Marcellin Champagnat**

A Vision for Marist Education Today

Disciples of Marcellin Champagnat,

**Brothers and Laypeople,
together in mission, in the Church and in the world,**

among the young, especially the most neglected,

we are sowers of the Good News,

with a distinctive Marist style,

in schools

and

in other pastoral and social ministries.

We face the future with audacity and hope.

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FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to present to the Brothers and to all Marist layteachers this document entitled « The Marist Educational Mission: a Project for Today ». This is « an official document of the General Council to orient the educational mission of the Institute in response to a request of the XIX General Chapter in 1993 ». It will be for the next General Chapter to place it on its agenda to see whether improvements or adaptations may be needed, and to decide whether it is opportune to consider it an official document of the Institute.

Acknowledgements

My first thought as I write this introduction is one of gratitude to all those Marist educators whose love for children and young people and whose dedication to their mission as educators has enabled them not only to prolong the spirit we have inherited from Marcellin Champagnat but also to enrich it during the 181 years of our Marist history. It is evident that I am thinking in a special way of those Brothers who have had to deal with sociocultural and educational changes and who were creative enough to give specific responses to the needs which have arisen. In a special way, I want to thank all those who down through our history have sought to keep alive Champagnat's founding aim: to offer an education to those who lacked the opportunity to acquire one or who were marginalized by society.

Sincere and special gratitude to those Brothers filled with apostolic spirit, who even when their age or health prevented them from carrying on with full vigor the work they had made their own for life, were able to discover new ways of involvement and new tasks they could perform in the pastoral ministry of education, inside or outside the school system.

In expressing my gratitude, I cannot overlook those laymen and laywomen who during these recent decades have committed themselves to education within the context of a Marist undertaking. I thank them especially for their enthusiasm and love for the educational work of Marcellin Champagnat. Mutual confidence among the Brothers and Marist layfolk has made it easier to discover each one's gifts and to work together in an educational undertaking on the basis of the complementarity of our vocations. The experiences of « shared mission » which we are currently living together, Brothers and laypeople, have inspired the thrust of this document and have been a source of inspiration as it was being written.

The International Commission

The General Council entrusted the drawing up of this document to an international commission composed of Brothers and laypeople. I am aware that they dedicated much time to it, carried out Institute-wide consultations, went through moments of searching and a certain degree of frustration occasioned by the complexity of the subject matter in itself and by the multiplicity of lived realities throughout the Institute in the context of its educational mission, realities which cannot always be equated to one another.

I would like to mention the members of the commission by name, as a way of thanking and congratulating them for the service they have rendered us and for the love they have put into the accomplishment of the work entrusted to them. They are: Brothers Jeffrey Crowe (General Councillor), Henri Vignau (General Councillor), Carlos Martínez Lavin (Mexico), Dominick Pujia (USA), José Manoel Alves (Brazil), Honoré Rakatonorivo (Madagascar), Manuel de Leon (Philippines), Mark Farrelly (Australia), Maurice Bergeret (France), Miguel Cubeles (Spain), D. Alberto Libera (Bolivia), and Mrs. Emma Casis (Philippines).

The Stages of the Journey

Beginning with the years just after the Council, the Marist Institute has had to confront new situations which have affected it on various levels.

The first stage required the Brothers, as they listened to the world and the Church, to re-study the origins of the Institute and Marcellin Champagnat's founding intuition, in order to evaluate our path through history and to once again formulate our identity and hence our contemporary mission of evangelization in

a manner consistent with the inspiration which gave rise to the Institute. All of this was marvelously expressed in the Constitutions of the Institute, which are the fundamental text for the Brothers and which were approved by the Vatican in 1986.

I will quote from this text four articles which may help us the better to situate the mission of the Marist Institute and the document I am here introducing. Please keep in mind that I am quoting only certain parts of each article:

- 0 « It was this attitude that led (Marcellin) to found our Institute for the Christian education of the young, especially those most in need » (art. 2)

- 0 « The Church sends forth our Institute, which draws its life from the Holy Spirit. Faithful to Father Champagnat, it works to evangelize people, especially by educating the young, particularly those most neglected » (art. 80)
- 1 « Engaged in schools or in other forms of education, we put our heart and soul into serving the human person of the sake of the Kingdom » (art. 85)
- 2 « We share our spirituality and our educational approach with parents, lay teachers, and other members of the educational community » (art. 88)

Subsequent General Chapters pushed forward this renewal of the Institute, taking into account the major changes taking place in our society and the various settings in which our educational mission is carried out. Let me mention a few, by way of example:

- 0 The change of mentality and of structures which brought us from « the Brothers' school » to « the Marist school » (including both Brothers and laypeople) and then to a school based on « the shared mission » in which Brothers and layteachers are indiscriminately called to assume responsibility for its animation and/or administration.
- 1 The impact upon education of the cultural changes taking place in our world which affect human beings in their every dimension, the stress on a specifically youth-oriented culture, and the socio-political changes taking place in those countries where the Marist Institute is present.
- 2 In days past, children and young people were, to a certain extent, « passive subjects » of education. They came to school to receive guidance, values, religious formation, and knowledge which would prepare them for life. And all of this emphasized certain aspects of the organization of the school and of the manner of acting of those persons dedicated to education. Today, new concepts of education and interpersonal relations require of educators a special talent for entering the world of young people, to walk beside them as their friend, to motivate and accompany them as they search for what they are personally called to do.
- 3 I will add a fourth aspect: the educational plurality that exists in the Institute. The fact that we are present in 75 countries implies diversity in educational planning, in local idiosyncracies, in living together ecumenically with other religions, or in facing religious intolerance or exclusion, in the freedom to develop curricula, or in government financing of education. In addition, the Brothers sometimes animate or administer diocesan schools which have their own educational program.

All of this has consequences for the Marist educational mission and we have perhaps lacked the creativity to promote initiatives which would permit us to be with young people in the « new cultural contexts » in which they live. We have sometimes been rather passive in the face of the discrimination or lack of financial assistance with which certain governments have treated the Christian school, and in some places we have promoted schools which are attended primarily by students from the upper middle class and from economically stable families.

Moreover, in those countries we have perhaps lacked the initiative to develop, with help from society, other possibilities favoring the creation of new forms of presence in the pastoral of education for students who lack resources or who are on the fringes of society.

An Historic Moment

The diversity of countries, cultures and educational systems in which the Marist Institute is present has led to a major decentralization at the level of the Institute; however, even within that variety it is possible to identify the fundamental elements which characterize our style of education. The commission which

put together « The Marist Educational Mission: A Project for Today » attempted to set them in relief and the document provides tools which will help Brothers and laypeople to discern our mission in fidelity to the charism inherited from Marcellin Champagnat, and from that same point of view, to evaluate the human and evangelical fruitfulness of our educational works, and, if need be, to transform or transfer them.

The document invites us to look toward the future with daring and hope, but it suggests a number of orientations to guide us along that journey, among them the following:

It reaffirms the important role carried out by the school but it also invites us to undertake new educational projects within and without the school system, always taking into account our preference for the least favored students, the challenges which young people must confront, and the presence and nearness we owe them, because nowadays, we educators « must listen, ask, investigate, pray and look at our world through the eyes of young people ».

I underline the invitation to open ourselves to universal solidarity, seeking ways of collaborating with other groups, whether ecclesial, humanitarian or governmental, or with organizations more directly involved with the dignity and rights of children.

Let Us Journey Together, Brothers and Laypeople

In the visits I make to the provinces, I hold meetings with various groups of laypeople in our schools. On one occasion, I was pleasantly surprised with the way one group expressed itself, and other Brothers of the General Council have had similar experiences. « In our province, we are doing such and so..., we have set up a program. » « When our Brother Provincial visits us.... » When people talk like that, I do not need to ask them if they feel like part of the Marist family and if Marcellin Champagnat plays an important role in their commitment to Christian education. That way of talking allows me to consider them as my lay Marist brothers and sisters with whom I can openly share the joys, the limitations and the hopes with which we live in the Marist Institute.

I hope that this document will help us to walk together, Brothers and laypeople. We surely need a bit of patience and the ability to overcome the mistakes we may make, because we all have to learn how to carry « our shared mission » to its fulfillment. Above all, we can help one another to grow in this educational spirit that we have inherited from Marcellin. His canonization offers us an opportunity to read and deeply absorb together the pages which follow.

Again, let me express my appreciation and my gratitude in the name of the Brothers of the General Council, and my heartfelt greetings to all of you.

Br. Benito Arbués
Superior General
15 August 1998

INTRODUCTION

We each have our own experience of being a Marist educator in the Champagnat tradition. Each country where we are present has its own Marist history. As an international family we have a history and a tradition. When the General Chapter of the Brothers in 1993 called for the production of this text, they sensed that it was timely to set down a fresh expression of our common educational heritage and point to new ways of living out the charism of Marcellin Champagnat at the dawn of the Twenty-first century.

We know that we have received a great gift in the person of Marcellin and in his educational intuitions and those of Marist educators since him. We want to be faithful to this heritage in a dynamic way. In our day, the cries of young people are no less urgent than they were in Marcellin's time. They call for fresh responses. It is this desire to tap into our roots, to re-discover there the passion and vision for our mission for today's younger generation, that motivates this text.

In developing a contemporary vision statement for Marist education, we have followed the example of previous generations. In 1853 the Brothers published *The Teachers' Guide*, the fruit of their experience and reflections on Marcellin Champagnat's own educational insights and guidelines. They perceived the need for a text of reference, a source of inspiration and of unity. Later General Chapters called for its revision in the light of the increasing diversity of situations and of laws covering education, as well as of evolving approaches to education. Especially after the second Vatican Council, successive General Chapters have reflected deeply on our Marist apostolate and published texts and guidelines which retain their value still.

This present document consciously adopts a different approach, in the light of our international diversity and the insights of contemporary educational and Church thinking. Many Provinces have developed their own syntheses of what constitutes a Marist approach in education, but there is a felt need for a statement that is more universal and unifying at the level of foundational vision and principles. What we have produced has the richness of such universality, but also its limitations in terms of not being able to focus sharply on the urgent and priority questions arising in our different contexts. Further, in being a vision statement, it does not pretend to be a pedagogical treatise or manual of Marist spirituality.

There is a very significant change here from previous Marist documents: the "we" in the text addresses both Brothers and Laypeople who are the Marist educators of today. In doing this, we want to recognise the ever-increasing number of Laypeople who are carrying forward the project Marcellin began, and the importance of their inclusion in any contemporary reflection on Marist mission. Indeed, this document itself is the fruit of a two year consultation process involving people in seventy-five countries, under the co-ordination of an international commission composed of Brothers and Laypeople.

Also, the field of Marist education has broadened from formal education to other pastoral and social structures and activities. The terms "education" and "educator" are used in the text in this inclusive

sense. The motivation for this diversification has been our deepening appreciation of Marcellin's original vision and the desire to respond to the changing situation of children and youth.

In a particular way, the text mirrors both the reality and the ongoing challenge of how we keep in focus both our ultimate mission of evangelising children and youth and our priority of working with the least favoured. Local and international Chapters and Assemblies of Marist educators have re-asserted the conviction that being innovative in respect of such core issues is inherent to our fidelity as disciples of Marcellin Champagnat.

The document can be divided into three sections: the first (Chapters 1 and 2) presents the person of Marcellin and addresses an invitation to all of us to grow in our sense of sharing a common mission as his followers; the second (Chapters 3, 4, and 5) presents the key elements of our vision: the young people we want to serve, especially the least favoured, our mission of evangelising through education and our distinctive approach as Marists; the third looks at how we apply our vision to our work in formal education (Chapter 6), and to other pastoral and social ministries (Chapter 7).

To facilitate the reading of the text, topical words and phrases have been highlighted in each paragraph. Through the end-notes to each section, we have documented our primary sources, limiting ourselves to Marist and Church documents, and to Scripture.* A good number of these texts are included for easy reference.

We have tried to limit the repetition of ideas. At the same time, we have sought to make each section of the final two chapters sufficiently complete on its own, when read and understood as applications of the central vision.

The *present* tense is used throughout the text to propose our ideals. We are not pretending to describe the reality of our attitudes or work on every continent. In this sense the document is consciously visionary, charting a way forward. We invite you to use it for personal reflection, to be open to the challenges it contains; also to use it locally and regionally as a stimulus to the planning and evaluation of your various ministries.

We sincerely thank everyone throughout the Marist world who contributed to the preparation of this vision statement during the consultation stages.

May it strengthen our ties within the world-wide Marist family and help us to be Champagnats for the young people of each of our countries and continents.

The International Commission for Marist Education
2nd January, 1998

* The one exception is the reference to the 1996 Report to UNESCO on *Education for the Twenty-first Century*, which offers a contemporary and universal framework for educational planners.

Disciples of Marcellin Champagnat

1. Marcellin Champagnat is the **life-giving root** of Marist education. Times and circumstances change but his dynamic spirit and vision live on in our hearts. God chose him to bring hope and the message of Jesus' love to young lives in the France of his day. God inspires us to do the same in our time and place.

A man faithful to God in an age of crisis

2. Europe during Marcellin's life-time, 1789 to 1840, was the scene of great cultural, political and economic upheavals, a **time of crisis in society and in the Church**. This was the context in which he grew up and was educated, the setting which elicited his response of founding the Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary, known as the Marist Brothers.

- in his youth

Marlhes (1789-1805)

3. Marlhes,* the village where Marcellin was born, was a setting of backwardness and ignorance. Most of the adults and young people were functionally illiterate. During his childhood, however, there was a mood for change. Ideas about social progress and solidarity, flowing from the **revolution** taking place in France, were having their impact even in such isolated villages. Indeed, for a time Marcellin's father himself played an important role locally in this social movement.
4. Marcellin's character was shaped in particular by three people from within his immediate family circle. His father, an intelligent, hard-working, enterprising man, contributed to his formation **as a future citizen**. His mother and his aunt served as models and guides to strengthen his first steps **as a believer**, to deepen his faith and prayer life, and to awaken his devotion to Mary.
5. Young **Marcellin's intellectual formation** proved to be extremely difficult for lack of competent teachers. In fact, he refused to return to the local school after just one day when he witnessed the cruelty of the teacher towards another student,¹ and devoted himself instead to his work on the family farm. It was as an almost illiterate adolescent, then, that he generously answered God's call when invited to become a priest. What he lacked in formal education, he made up with abundant common sense, strong piety, strength of character, practical skills, and unshakable determination.²

Lyons (1813-1816)

6. From 1805 to 1813 Marcellin attended the minor seminary in **Verrières** where his vocation overcame many temptations to take the easy way out or to give in to discouragement. He then entered the major seminary in **Lyons** for his spiritual and theological formation by priests who had

* A town in the Forez mountains, 35 km south of the Hermitage, near Saint-Etienne in France.

suffered during the French Revolution and its aftermath. During these troubled times, this town, a Marial center of ancient origin, was to be the starting point for a number of new missionary and apostolic ventures.

7. It was in this Christian and Marial soil that the idea of the **Society of Mary** was conceived and promoted by a group of seminarians including Marcellin.³ From the start, he expressed his conviction that the Society should include **Teaching Brothers** to work with children deprived of a Christian education in remote rural areas because others were not going to them.⁴

- during the foundation period

La Valla (1816-1825)

8. After his ordination as a priest on 22 July 1816, Marcellin was appointed curate at La Valla. The **isolation and cultural poverty** of the people in this mountainous rural area immediately weighed on him.⁵ In the country as a whole, a middle-class, liberal, self-centered society was emerging and the politicians were primarily interested in creating an elite who could furnish military, political and economic leaders. Even in the Church, there was little happening for the pastoral care of young people in the countryside. Moreover, the teaching profession was held in such low esteem and so poorly paid that it attracted only candidates whose ability and character left a lot to be desired.
9. At the end of October 1816, Marcellin was called to the bedside of **Jean Baptiste Montagne**, who at the age of 17 was about to die without ever having heard much about God. In the eyes of this adolescent, he saw the calls for help of thousands of other youngsters, who, like him, were victims of tragic human and spiritual poverty. This event spurred him into action.⁶
10. On 2 January 1817, Marcellin brought together his first two followers. Others soon followed. **La Valla thus became the birthplace of the Marist Brothers.** A wonderful spiritual and educational adventure was to begin amid human poverty and trust in God and Mary.
11. **The first Brothers were young country boys**, most of whom were between 15 and 18 years old, more accustomed to hard work in the fields than to contemplation, intellectual reflection and working with children and other young people: Jean Marie Granjon (Br. Jean Marie), Jean Baptiste Audras (Br. Louis), Jean Claude Audras (Br. Laurent), Antoine Couturier (Br. Antoine), Barthélemy Badard (Br. Barthélemy), and Gabriel Rivat (Br. François), Jean Baptiste Furet (Br. Jean Baptiste).
12. Marcellin **enthused** these adolescents with his apostolic and educational **zeal**. He lived among them, like one of them. He taught them reading, writing and arithmetic, how to pray and to live the Gospel in ordinary life, and how to be teachers and religious educators themselves.
13. Very soon he **sent them** into the most remote hamlets of the parish, **to teach the children**, and sometimes the adults as well, the basics of religious knowledge, and of reading and writing. Between 1817 and 1824, he started a traditional primary school at La Valla and used it as a sort of teacher training center for his young Brothers, including opportunities for teaching practice.⁷

The Hermitage (1825-1840)

14. By 1824-1825, the little community had grown, and Marcellin built a large **formation house** in a valley near the city of Saint Chamond. This was called Notre Dame de l'Hermitage -- Our Lady's Hermitage – which was part monastery and part teacher training center for the Brothers.
15. Stretching possibilities to the limit, and in accordance with the legal requirements of the day, Marcellin offered his followers an initial and ongoing **human and spiritual formation** with a special focus on increasing their intellectual knowledge and teaching skills. The Hermitage, then, can be described as the crucible of Marist educational principles and practice.
16. It also gradually became the centre of a **network of elementary schools**, which increased in number and became better organized. The option taken by Marcellin and the Brothers was to **reduce the payment** they asked to a minimum, and to **live austere** themselves as a consequence.⁸ The first printed edition of the *Rule of Life of the Little Brothers of Mary* (1837) gave structure to both their life as a religious community and their life-work as educators.
17. The Hermitage was also the source of the **missionary activity** of the Institute, beginning in 1836 when three Brothers sailed to Oceania with a group of Marist Fathers⁹. Marcellin himself wrote to a Bishop who asked for Brothers, “Every diocese in the world figures in our plans”.¹⁰

An educator for our times

A man of practical vision, an innovator

18. From a young age, Marcellin showed his **enterprise and foresight**. He was looking forward to life as a farmer and was keenly interested in raising and selling sheep.¹¹ Yet, as soon as he heard God's call, he redirected his enthusiasm and energy to preparing for his mission as a priest.
19. With his closeness to the people of his area and a keen sense of their disadvantage in a changing world, Marcellin **dared to imagine** other possibilities beyond the vision of his contemporaries in Church and government. His **determination and drive** led him to gather followers to found a new religious community within six months of his ordination. The source of his apostolic energy was his unfailing **trust in God and in Mary**.
20. He was also **realistic and pragmatic**. In order to establish the Brothers, he was very enterprising, in buying land and houses, and in erecting, renovating, and enlarging buildings to make them suitable for religious community life and formation.¹² Similarly, he had a practical approach to solving problems as can be seen, for example, in his efforts to seek official recognition for his group and a solution to the conscription of his young Brothers.
21. The key to his success as a leader was his **ability to relate to other people and to communicate with them**. His personality and his project won over young people and he had the gift of bringing the best qualities out of them so that they became the best ambassadors of his work. Further, through his letter-writing and personal appeals to Church and government

authorities, and through his careful preparation of a set of statutes and a prospectus, he presented, defended and promoted the project he had received from God.¹³

Educator of children and youth

22. Marcellin was a **born teacher**. In Marlies, during his vacations from the seminary, he attracted children and even adults who came from quite a distance to attend his catechism lessons.¹⁴ They listened to him attentively, sometimes for more than two hours. In La Valla, the young curate transformed the parish by his welcoming and simple manner and by the constant quality of what he had to say during catechism lessons or his Sunday sermons, linking faith and life.¹⁵

23. He also showed himself to be a **first-class educator of young people**. His success in transforming the mostly poorly educated youth who wanted to be Brothers into capable teachers and religious educators was extraordinary. He was present among them, gave them good example, and helped them to develop humanly and spiritually. The secret of his success lay in the **great simplicity** with which he related to his young followers and in his **great confidence** in them.

24. Together with them he drew up and refined a **system of educational values** taking Mary as model, the servant of God and educator of Jesus in Nazareth.¹⁶ Likewise he was enterprising in implementing and adapting the **most effective pedagogical approaches** of his day.¹⁷

Formator of young apostles

25. Marcellin showed **personal interest** in each one of his young Brothers, guided them spiritually, encouraged them to become qualified, and entrusted them with apostolic responsibilities. He visited their schools, and accompanied each Brother in his mission as teacher and catechist.¹⁸

26. He nurtured in them an **apostolic spirituality** based on a sense of the Presence of a loving and faithful God,¹⁹ on leading a committed life **taking Mary as Model and Mother**,²⁰ and on a spirit of fraternal care in community. He introduced them to the love of Jesus as expressed in the Crib, the Cross and the Altar²¹ - not just as a focus for personal contemplation but as reminders of their own call to express love in down-to-earth ways. His love of the poor was a model for those who would claim the name "Marist".²²

27. Marcellin developed a system of **ongoing professional development** which involved both theory and practical experience and was community-based. Especially during the early years, the summer vacations were put to good use for improving his Brothers' store of knowledge and their educational methods through such means as individual and group work, examining committees, and conferences.²³

28. He established a similar system for the **formation of leaders**, especially school principals, in areas of administration, accounting, handling responsibility, relating with the other Brothers, and working as a council or as a team.²⁴

We continue his educational work

29. During the fifty-one years of his life, Marcellin labored to the point of exhaustion to found a family of religious educators. He experienced **the Cross in his life**, with countless disappointments, difficulties and setbacks but his **hope and vision** remained strong. When he died on 6 June 1840, this family numbered 290 Brothers in 48 elementary schools.

30. Brother François and the first Brothers took up Marcellin's project with enthusiasm. In a similar spirit of faith and apostolic zeal, their successors have taken it to the five continents. As contemporary Marist educators, **we share and continue Marcellin's dream** of transforming the lives and situation of young people, particularly the least favoured, through offering them an integral education, both human and spiritual, based on a personal love for each one.

Brothers and Laypeople, together in mission, in the Church and in the world

In the name of Marcellin Champagnat

31. Wherever he found people dedicated to the Christian formation of youth, Marcellin affirmed and encouraged them.¹ Since the early days at La Valla and the Hermitage, many different people, men and women, Brothers and Laypeople, have been attracted by his personality and charism. In living out their own vocation, they have come to identify themselves with his charismatic style of continuing the mission of Jesus.
32. In welcoming Laypeople to the 1993 General Chapter, the Superior General, speaking for all the Brothers, thanked them personally for their closeness to the Brothers and for their contribution to Marist mission. But, he went further in challenging us all to a renewed appreciation of “how we follow the **same path** of love, hope and service **together** in the Spirit”.² In their response, the Laypeople stated: “We come from so many different experiences, cultures and backgrounds, yet each one of us has been touched in a unique way by the spirit of Marcellin Champagnat.”³
33. These words speak to **all of us**, whether we be Brothers, Lay educators, youth leaders, or among all those who contribute in other ways in Marist works; whether we be parents of youth being served by Marists, or clergy associated with Marist works; whether we be members of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family or similar groups. We can all claim for ourselves Marcellin’s dream. **We have a shared mission.**⁴

One people, one Spirit, many gifts⁵

34. The roots of our renewed understanding of sharing in mission, and therefore of its concrete expressions in our ministry, are to be found in how the **Church** sees itself today as a missionary communion.⁶ In Jesus’ words at the Last Supper, “I call you friends”, we hear at once a call to unity and a commissioning.⁷ Inspired by such images,⁸ we are invited as **Christians** to live out together our common baptism, our common call to mission.⁹
35. Inspired by the **one Spirit of God**, Christians and those of other Faiths,¹⁰ we are united around a **common set of life-giving values** that are fundamental to our vision and practice of education: respect for the dignity of each human person, honesty, justice, solidarity, peace and a sense of the Transcendent.[†] Together, we give the best of ourselves to provide the young people in our care

[†] A real religious pluralism exists among us educators, especially in some parts of the world, just as it does among the young people we serve. It is up to each of us, then, to see in what way we can identify with the “we” of the text. In Chapter 4 we present the core of the mission of each Marist educating community in terms of “evangelising through education”. We recognise that our personal contribution to the full realisation of this mission will differ. Each of us, however, inasmuch as we share certain fundamental values, helps young people to grow as human persons and, by that very fact, participates in building up the Reign of God in our human communities.

with the means of achieving their full potential in life, including their growing faith and their responsible participation in society.

Our charism

36. Marcellin's story is one example of the **renewing power of God's activity** in human history. We believe he received a **charism**, a unique spiritual gift given through him to the whole Church in its service of humankind.¹¹ He was inspired by the Holy Spirit to discover a fresh way of living the Gospel as a concrete response to the spiritual and social needs of young people in a time of crisis. We see confirmation of the enduring relevance of this charism in its ability to inspire generations of disciples, including our own.
37. The experience of the love of Jesus and Mary for each of us personally and for others, openness and sensitivity to the needs of our times, and a practical love for young people, especially those most in need, are at the core of the **Marist charism** we have inherited from Marcellin.¹²
38. As sharers in Marist mission, we are invited to commit ourselves freely and generously to the same charism as consecrated religious or as single or married people, whatever our situation or culture.¹³ We identify with the charism in ways that are **different but complementary**. Together we witness to a unity of story, spirituality, mutual trust and common endeavour.¹⁴
39. Those of us who are **Laypeople** bring our own individual qualities as well as the fruits of our personal commitment, our professionalism, and our experience of family and social life. As **Christians**, we witness through our personal lives to the possibility of finding in Jesus Christ the ultimate meaning of life, and of living by His Gospel.¹⁵
40. Those of us who are **Brothers**, in addition to our own individual qualities, bring the gifts that emerge from the prophetic character of our lives as consecrated people: our religious witness, our rich formation in the charism of Champagnat, the open-hearted hospitality of our communities, our human and material patrimony. We bring our freedom to be totally dedicated and bold in apostolic enterprise, and a flexibility to move on.¹⁶
41. We **inspire one another** to deeper fidelity to the charism, discovering new insights into its spiritual richness and into its dynamic expression in ministry.¹⁷ The women among us, especially, bring a fresh perspective to Marcellin's charism and reveal new facets of its charism for all of us today.

Working Together

42. In our ministries, we seek to create a work environment where every one feels **respected and co-responsible**. Further, among ourselves we develop a strong sense of **companionship**, affirming one another and offering mutual support and encouragement.
43. These attitudes are important in facing up to and resolving the **tensions** that can arise in our schools and other works and that concern all of us, for example issues of salaries and conditions of work. We seek to seize such opportunities for growing in our sensitivity to one another

through open dialogue. All of us, as employers, staff or staff organisations, are called on to let ourselves be guided both by the principles of fairness, justice and transparency, and by commitment to our mission.¹⁸

44. We know that, at both the interpersonal and group level, mistakes will be made, misunderstandings will occur, sensitivities will be offended, and professional differences will arise. Expressing our **mutual forgiveness** from time to time helps us keep our mission life-giving for ourselves and for those we serve.

45. Our sense of shared mission extends in a particular way to **parents**, respecting their “primary duty”¹⁹ for the education of their children. Following the Marcellin’s lead, we welcome them, listen to them, and “work together with them”.²⁰ It is a mutual process: we assist one another to better understand and address the particular situation and educational needs of their children.

46. For Marcellin, it was fundamental that our Marist works be integrated into the pastoral mission of the **local Church**. This principle guides us today in our relations with parishes and dioceses, as does our desire to share the gift of our charism.²¹

A shared responsibility

47. We all share a **common concern** for the success of our work and feel ourselves **co-responsible** with those in leadership positions for planning, animating and evaluating our ministry. Our school leaders foster this sharing of responsibilities through distributing the work to be done, and through setting up structures to both co-ordinate our efforts and ensure wide participation in the taking of decisions.²²

48. Our sense of shared concern and responsibility is promoted and expressed at the **Provincial level** as well, through special gatherings, assemblies and appropriate commissions. Together we celebrate our communion as Marists, and, in faith and hope, identify aspects of our Province mission where we are being called to grow.

49. Our Provincial authorities initiate practical plans and structures for **including Laypeople** in the financial management and direction of Marist works, those we own or those entrusted to us by parishes or dioceses.²³ In these matters, both the Institute and Church authorities are guided by Church and civil law.

50. We include, where possible, within our **network of Marist ministries** those institutions where the Brothers are no longer present. We foster collaboration, and offer activities which give the young people we serve the experience of being part of the Marist family.

51. Together with our Marist leaders at Provincial, inter-Provincial, and regional levels, we seek:

- to foster our **growth in Marist identity** through such means as programs of Marist formation which bring together Brothers and Laypeople, retreats, and publications. We focus especially on Marcellin Champagnat, his educational heritage, his spirituality and charism.

- to prepare **Marist leaders** through their ongoing formation in pedagogy, educational leadership and management, as well as in spirituality, the evangelisation of youth, justice and solidarity.
- to promote structures such as the **Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family** and other Champagnat groups, which provide an effective setting to support people in their efforts to live out Marist spirituality and mission.²⁴

A sign of the Reign of God

1. Our way of sharing mission in a spirit of genuine communion is itself a sign of the **Good News** for our Church, for our world, and certainly for the young people we serve. Together we seek to be creatively faithful to the charism of Marcellin Champagnat, and responsive to the signs of our times viewed in the light of the Gospel.

Among the young, especially the most neglected

53. Marcellin Champagnat **lived among** children and young people, **loved** them with passion, and **devoted** all his energies for them. As his disciples, we also experience a special joy in sharing our time and our persons with them, we resonate with their aspirations, we are filled with compassion for them and we reach out to them all in their difficulties.
54. In the same way that Marcellin was thinking especially of the **least favoured of young people** in founding the Marist Brothers, our preference is to be with those who are excluded from the mainstream of society, and those whose material poverty leads them to be deprived also in relation to health, family life, schooling, and education in values.¹
55. We recognise in this love for all young people, and especially for the poor, the essential **identifying** marks of our Marist mission.²
56. Further, fidelity to our charism requires us to be constantly alert to the **evolving social and cultural forces** that have a profound influence on the self-perception of young people, and on their spiritual, emotional, social and physical well-being.
57. Our world today is confronted by new **challenges**: global interdependence, living in pluralist societies, secularisation, and the advent of new technologies. Such developments set new horizons and, despite their ambiguities, create new possibilities.
58. Some trends pose **threats** for the healthy growth of the young, such as the rapid pace of change, a culture of individualism and consumerism, insecurity in family and work prospects. In some situations there is **not enough change** taking place: the gap between the rich and poor continues to grow in a world dominated by the vested interests of the powerful; our world is still scarred by wars. Gross inadequacy of living conditions and educational opportunities, as well as the experience of personal violence, abandonment, exploitation and discrimination of all kinds, continue to be the daily reality for many.
59. We also see some **clear signs of hope**:³ a growing acknowledgement of human rights, including the rights of children, and efforts to provide universal education for children; wonderful examples of progress in the service of human life, and a growing awareness of our responsibility for the environment; the efforts of peace-makers, and of people working to overcome injustices; the desire of the poor and marginalised to become actively involved in their liberation and development in the face of repressive structures; so many people, especially the young, committed to building bridges of solidarity among different peoples and offering their services as volunteers.
60. Through our ordinary contacts with **individual young people**, we come to appreciate their **idealism** and their need to be part of groups that energise them and give them a sense of identity. We know how, at their best, they are joyful, enthusiastic, and frank, how they are willing to trust, how they want to take part, and express their sense of freedom.

61. We feel their keen sense of justice, their desire for a more caring world, and their hunger for the spiritual. We hear their personal cries for acceptance and intimacy, for a quality education, for hope and authenticity, for meaning and purpose. We sense their eyes on us, examining our credibility as adult role models.
62. Often, however, we find young people who are **discouraged, disoriented**, or for whom **life is a daily struggle**. We see them dealing with learning difficulties, personal disabilities, lack of acceptance from peers. We meet many who are unchurched, ignorant of Jesus Christ, or indifferent to him and his message. We witness the inner turmoil of those who are victims of poverty, family disintegration, abuse, and social upheavals. In their confusion, they can be disruptive and angry, and even indulge in self-destructive behaviour.
63. To all in our care we are present with Marcellin's spirit of **practical compassion**.⁴ We listen with our hearts to his words, "Take particular care of the poor children, the most ignorant and the dullest; show such children a lot of kindness; ask them often how they are, and make it clear on all occasions that you esteem them and love them all the more for the fact that fortune has not smiled on them nor has nature favoured them."⁵
64. But the **harsh reality** of the lives of so many of these children and youth moves us personally, and as a group, to grow spiritually and to respond in more daring and more decisive ways in fidelity to the Gospel and to our charism.⁶
65. In opening our eyes and hearts to the depths of suffering of young people, we begin to **share God's compassion for the world**. Our faith enables us to see the face of Jesus in those who are suffering - we take some personal action to help; further, we experience indignation and outrage at the structures that create or condition poverty - we begin to address causes rather than symptoms.
66. We are humbled before the determination and capacity of the poor to help themselves - we hear the voice of God and see the hands of God and God's power in their struggles; we can become disillusioned with our own poverty and the human weakness of the poor until we learn real solidarity - together, no longer "us" and "them", we **recognise the cause of the poor as God's cause**, and that there are parts of all of us and our situations that only God can heal.
67. We embark on the transformation, where necessary, of **our existing institutional structures and other ministries** to reach out more effectively to young people who are truly vulnerable or marginalised because of family or social circumstances.⁷
68. We hear the call, especially the Brothers,⁸ to even **take the risk** of giving up some of our security and going where no-one else is going, to the "periphery" and the "frontier".⁹

We are sowers of the Good News

69. The core of Marcellin Champagnat's vision of mission was **"to make Jesus Christ known and loved"**.¹ He saw education as the way to lead young people to the experience of personal faith and of their vocation as "good Christians and virtuous citizens".²
70. As his followers, we assume this same mission,³ firstly, by helping young people, whatever their faith tradition and wherever they are in their spiritual search, to grow to become people of hope and personal integrity, with a deep sense of social responsibility to transform the world around them.⁴ This work of promoting **human growth** is integral to the process of evangelisation.⁵ In promoting Gospel values, all Marist educators[‡] contribute to the mission of every Marist project to build **God's Reign** on earth.⁶
71. But **we go further**. Inspired by the words of Marcellin, "I cannot see a child without wanting to teach him catechism, to make him realise how much Jesus Christ has loved him",⁷ **we present Jesus** to the young as a real person they can come to know, love, and follow.⁸
72. In **Jesus** we see God. He comes among us so that we may "have life and have it to the full".⁹ He unveils for us what it is to be fully human.¹⁰ His words and actions address our deepest human longings. He provides healing and hope for all. He pardons sinners, reconciling all facets of their human brokenness. He welcomes the poor and those on the edges of society with a special love. He teaches us how to pray.
73. Jesus comes "to bring fire to the earth",¹¹ denouncing instances and structures of domination, deliberately siding with the victimised. He does not accept the logic of the world. Rather he proclaims a new vision of human society which begins with loving one another, even our enemies, together sharing the bread of life, and transcending the divisions we have created of race, status, wealth, gender, or any other criteria of exclusion.¹²
74. Jesus' death on the Cross and his resurrection as the **Christ of our faith**, reveals the depths of his Father's love, of God's power to draw good out of evil. It inspires our human hope as does no other event in human history. His Spirit continues to work in the human heart and in the social order, redeeming, liberating and reconciling. In faith we respond to God's initiative of love in our history and we are transformed. This is the Good News of Jesus, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life".¹³

Our vision of evangelising through education

75. Following Marcellin Champagnat we seek to be **apostles to youth**, evangelising through our life and our presence among them as well as through our teaching: neither simply catechists, nor just teachers of secular subjects.¹⁴

[‡] For a discussion of how we understand this as including everyone, including those of other Faiths or those who do not hold a fully Christian worldview, see the footnote attached to article 35.

76. Education in its broadest sense is our field of evangelising: in school settings, in other pastoral and social programmes, and in less formal contacts. In all of these, we offer an **holistic education**,¹⁵ drawing on the Christian vision of the human person and of human development.¹⁶

77. With the active co-operation of the young people themselves,¹⁷ **we seek creative ways:**

- to develop their self-esteem and inner capacity to give direction to their lives.
- to provide an education of body, mind and heart, appropriate to the age, personal talents and needs of each one and to the social context.
- to encourage them to care for others and for God's creation.
- to educate them to be agents of social change, for greater justice towards all citizens in their own society, and for more awareness of the interdependence of nations.
- to nurture their faith and commitment as disciples of Jesus and apostles to other youth.
- to awaken their critical consciousness and assist them to make choices based on Gospel values.

1. We choose to be present among young people **in the same way that Jesus was with the disciples on the road to Emmaus**.¹⁸

- respectful of their consciences and stages of understanding,
- passionately immersed in their concerns,
- walking alongside them as their brothers and sisters,
- gradually unfolding for them the richness and relevance of Jesus' transforming vision of the human person and of the world.

1. We **welcome** young people. We **listen** to them, we **challenge**. We see in each one the image and likeness of God, worthy of our respect and love, no matter what his or her circumstances, religious belief, or personal need of conversion.¹⁹

We give **personal and community witness** of our joy, our hope and our Christian living.

2. We help the young to grow in **personal freedom** and a sense of the demands of life.²⁰ We lead them to freely give of themselves and what they have, and to commit themselves joyfully. We lead them to discover their **spiritual dimension**: their personal experience of the Spirit, inspiring, encouraging, supporting, consoling; their sense of wonder at the marvels of creation and of new life; their intuitions of the transcendent, of our ultimate destiny to be with God.

We engage young people in a **dialogue of life** which brings them into touch with the Word of God and the Spirit at work in their hearts.²¹

3. We build bridges among all the **cultures** that intersect in our various ministries. With the **light of the Gospel** as our guide, we affirm what is life-giving and look critically at the underlying values in the behaviour of today's generation of youth and their choice of priorities. In a true spirit of dialogue, we encourage the young to express their **searching faith**, with its aspirations and questioning, in their own idiom.²²

We share in the mission of the Church to **evangelise cultures**.²³

4. We present the Good News not only in personal terms but also in the form of Jesus' vision of the human community: **reaching out** to the "least" of our society, **seeking the common good** of all, and taking responsibility for the future of humanity and of God's creation.

We educate in and for **solidarity**.²⁴

5. We lead those who are Christian to **deepen their encounter with Jesus Christ**. We share how he is the ultimate source of new life, new hope, and new energy for us personally and for all of humankind. We encourage their growth as disciples of Jesus in their experience of the gifts of joy, peace of spirit and overcoming of fear.

We **share our faith**.²⁵

6. We provide young Christians with **an experience of Church**, and foster their sense of belonging to their local Church. We encourage their active participation in communities that celebrate and nourish their faith in Word and Sacrament. We encourage them to be bearers of the Good News themselves in their everyday contacts, in their various cultural and social milieux.

We assist in providing **sacramental initiation** for those who ask.

We work to build up **local Christian communities**, specifically to make them welcoming to young people.²⁶

7. In settings characterised by **religious pluralism**, we respect the religious freedom of all, valuing positively the richness of God's presence in the religious traditions of humankind.²⁷ We help young people of all faiths to live together peacefully in the context of their everyday lives: to be open to one another, to work and pray together.²⁸ We encourage those of non-Christian faiths in "the sincere practice of what is good in their own religious tradition".²⁹ We assist those who are Catholic to be clear about our identity and heritage and to avoid the pitfalls of false spiritualities and sectarian attitudes.

We foster **ecumenical**³⁰ and **inter-faith dialogue**.³¹

Respecting ages and circumstances

8. Each young person is different. Each group of young people has its own unique character. Each cultural context and set of social circumstances creates its own possibilities and challenges to our mission of evangelising.³² Conscious of such **plurality**, we develop approaches that respect the degree of readiness of the young people to whom we minister and their particular needs.
9. When working with **children**, we stress relating to nature, openness to one's companions and discovering Jesus as a friend. We introduce them to prayer, to knowledge of the Bible, to the life of the sacraments, and to attitudes of service and solidarity.³³
10. We accompany **adolescents** in their coming to personal identity and balance: their acceptance of their own gifts and limitations; relating in new ways to others, friends and family members; finding

their place in the world; growing beyond childish images of God. We help them in their search for values and ideals which can help them direct their life. We give special attention to the positive integration of their sexuality and affectivity. We show patience and understanding during moments of superficiality, rebellion and instability which are typical of their age.

11. In our work with **older youth and young adults**, we address their questions of meaning, of responsibility, of life-giving values. We foster their social and political awareness, and encourage their participation in organizations and groups working for social change. We support and accompany them in their experiences of social outreach. We prepare them to be a source of renewal and dynamism in the local Church. We provide them with a more solid religious formation so that they can be better prepared to explain their Christian faith and hope to their peers,³⁴ and to be Christian leaders themselves.
12. We help young people to clarify their **vocation in life**, presenting the options of single, married, priestly, and religious life. We invite those who show signs of readiness to consider Marist religious life. We accompany them in their desire to respond to their vocational calling.

With the power of the Spirit, in the way of Mary

13. **The work of evangelisation is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit.**³⁵ It was the Spirit who was the source of Jesus' prophetic authority to announce the coming of the Kingdom through signs and wonders. It was the Spirit, the promised one, who brought light, strength, and increase to the early Church. It is that same Spirit who guides all of humanity, and the Church in a special way, in our journey of faith and in making God's new order a reality among us.³⁶
14. Marcellin was no stranger to the power of the Spirit. Along with his fellow Marists of the Society of Mary, he was convinced that the Spirit was inspiring them to find **new ways of being present as Church** in an age of religious disbelief.³⁷ Today, we seek to be equally receptive and responsive to the promptings of the Spirit.
15. At the personal level, always mindful of **the presence of God**, especially in moments of difficulty and trial, Marcellin remained open to what was God's will as it unfolded in the events and circumstances of life. Psalm 127, "Unless the Lord build the house, those who build it labour in vain ...", became his constant prayer.³⁸ He confided his person and the success of his ministry to Mary, "who has done everything for us".³⁹ We make this attitude of prayer a daily orientation in our work of evangelisation.

With a strong sense of vocation

16. **Our work as educators is not just a career, it is a vocation.** Pope Paul VI reminded us that “modern men and women listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if they do listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses”.⁴⁰
17. It is not a one-sided process. The young people also inspire and **evangelise us** as we evangelise them. The experience of their trust in us, their energy and resilience, their honesty and searching, their goodness and faith, touches us and encourages us in our faith.
18. Marcellin Champagnat expressed our calling to an early follower in words that remind us of the responsibility we bear towards the young people we educate, but also of the trust that God has in us: “Their whole life will be an echo of what you will have taught them. Exert yourself, spare nothing to dispose their young hearts to virtue; make them realise that ... only God can make them happy, that it is for God alone that they were created. **How much good you can do, dear friend!**”⁴¹

With a distinctive Marist style

97. Our style of educating is based on a vision that is truly holistic, and that consciously seeks to communicate values. While we share such a vision with many, especially in Church circles, we use a **distinctive pedagogical approach** which Marcellin and the first Marists initiated and which was innovative in many of its aspects.
98. We share their intuition that “**to bring up children properly, we must love them, and love them all equally**”¹. From this principle flow the particular characteristics of our style of educating: presence, simplicity, family spirit, love of work, and following the way of Mary. We seek to adopt these attitudes and values as our way of inculturating the Gospel. It is their sum and their interaction which gives our Marist style its Spirit-inspired originality.

Presence²

99. We educate above all through being present to young people in ways that show that we care for them personally. We make time for them beyond merely professional contacts, getting to know each one individually. Personally and together as a group of adults, we seek to establish **relationships** with them, founded on love, which create a climate for learning in an educational setting, for passing on values, and for personal growth.³
100. We seek to **immerse ourselves in the lives of the young**.⁴ Our instinct is to engage the world of the young by going out to meet them in their own space and through their own culture. We create opportunities to become involved in their lives, and welcome them into ours. In school ministry, we seek to extend our presence through free-time, leisure, sports and cultural activities, or whatever means offer themselves.
101. Our way of being present in institutional settings seeks to be **neither obsessively vigilant nor negligently laissez-faire**. It is a way of helping young people through pre-emptive presence and advice, using prudent care. In a respectful way, we try to be firm and demanding with them, while remaining optimistic and focused on their personal growth.⁵
102. Through our way of being **attentive** and **welcoming**, of listening and engaging them in dialogue, we earn the **trust** of young people and foster their **openness**. This is even more true when we accompany them over an extended period of time. While our relationships are non-possessive, they may mature into friendships that last for many years.

Simplicity⁶

103. Our simplicity expresses itself primarily through contacts with young people that are **genuine** and **straightforward**, undertaken without pretence or duplicity. We say what we believe, and show that we believe what we say. Such simplicity is the fruit of a unity of mind and heart, of character and action, that derives ultimately from our being **honest** before ourselves and before our God.⁷

104. To simplicity we link **humility** and **modesty**, making the “three violets” of our Marist tradition: patiently allowing the action of God to work through us and seeking “to do good quietly”. In being aware of our own limitations and potential, we are more likely to be understanding of young people, respecting their dignity and freedom.⁸
105. In our teaching and organisational structures, we show a preference for simplicity of **method**. Our way of educating, like Marcellin’s, is personal, rooted in real life, and practical. Likewise simplicity of **expression**, avoiding any ostentation, guides our way of responding to the possibilities and the demands of our contemporary educational settings.
106. We lead the young to adopt **simplicity as a value for their own lives**, encouraging them to be themselves in every situation, to be open and truthful and to have the strength of their convictions. In a world distracted by the superficial, we help them to value themselves and others for who they are, and not be seduced from this by possessions or fame. Rather, we help them to prize an integrated, balanced and loving life, built on the rock of God’s love.

Family spirit ⁹

107. Father Champagnat’s great desire and legacy is that we relate to each other and to the young people in our care **as the members of a loving family** would intuitively do.¹⁰ We seek to make this a reality even in our more complex educational works.
108. Wherever we are, then, we undertake to **build community** among all associated with each of our institutions and activities, including those who work alongside us, the young in our care and their families.¹¹ Each person should feel at home among us. A warmth of welcome, acceptance and belonging should prevail where everyone has a sense of being valued and believed in, regardless of their role or their social standing.
109. Our way of relating to young people is to be a **brother or sister** to them.¹² As in a good family, with them we share life with its successes and failures, we set clear standards of honesty, mutual respect and tolerance, and we show them that we believe in their goodness, not confusing the person with their actions when mistakes are made. We are ready to trust each other, forgive each other, reconcile with each other.
110. **In a school setting**, our family spirit stands in contrast to an assembly-line or results-oriented education which does not respect the dignity and need of each young person. On the contrary, we give preferential attention to those whose needs are greatest, who are most deprived, or who are going through hard times.
111. Our leaders adopt an **organisational approach** which reflects our values. They encourage a spirit of partnership and shared responsibility, and at the same time, the responsible autonomy of each person involved in the educative process.

Love of work ¹³

112. Marcellin Champagnat was a man of work, a sworn enemy of laziness. **Dogged effort and total confidence in God** were characteristic of the ways he educated himself, ministered to parishioners, founded his religious family and undertook all his projects.¹⁴ Marcellin, the builder, shows us the importance of being ready to “roll up our sleeves”, prepared to do whatever is needed for the sake of our mission. We follow his example in being generous of heart, and constant and persevering in our daily work as well as in the efforts we undertake for our own ongoing education.
113. **In a school setting**, love of work implies a careful preparation of our classes and educational activities, thorough correction of students’ assignments and projects, planning and evaluation of our programs, and additional accompaniment of those who are experiencing any sort of difficulties.¹⁵ It demands that we be visionary and decisive in developing creative responses to the needs of young people.
114. In a society affected by consumerism and excess, we choose to train the younger generation to discover the **dignity of work**. Through our example, young people learn that work is a powerful means of **self-fulfilment**, of giving purpose and meaning to life, and of contributing to the general **economic, social and cultural well-being**. In this way, everyone becomes a “co-creator”, continuing the work of creation in our turn, with joy and hope.
115. We acknowledge the tragic reality of **unemployment**. In such situations we provide them with practical help to maintain their dignity and self-esteem, and to be creative and persevering in their efforts to obtain work.
116. Through a **pedagogy of serious effort**, we seek to help young people develop a strong character and resilient will, a balanced moral conscience, and solid values on which to base their lives. We develop a sense of personal planning and motivation that shows itself in their good use of time, talents and initiative. We foster teamwork, helping them to acquire a co-operative and socially-sensitive approach to serving others in need.

In the way of Mary ¹⁶

117. Mary is for us the **perfect model of the Marist educator**, as she was for Marcellin. As woman and layperson, Jesus' first follower, she inspires our personal faith. As educator of Jesus at Nazareth, she inspires our pedagogical approach.
118. Mary’s was a **journey of faith**, just like ours. Though schooled in the tradition of her people, she was nevertheless astounded by the extraordinary intervention of God in her life. Though “chosen from all women”,¹⁷ she knew the hardship of giving birth in an inhospitable place, far from home, and the life of a refugee. There was dust on her feet.¹⁸
119. She knew the joys and trials of life. She **marvelled** at the greatness of God even as she was **disturbed**. In faith, she was open to the action of the Holy Spirit. In faith, she **pondered** on the events of her life and of her Son’s. In faith, she **responded** wholeheartedly, not waiting to have answers to all her questions, from her “Yes” at the Annunciation to her grief at the foot of

the Cross.¹⁹ In faith, she humbly became one of Jesus' new family of followers who wanted only to do the will of the Father.²⁰

120. Together with Joseph at Nazareth, she provided Jesus with the **family unity and love** he needed to grow as a person.²¹ As Jesus developed through adolescence, they gave him the space to establish his own identity. Even when this provoked misunderstanding, they conveyed their trust and continued to foster his maturing "in wisdom, age and grace".²² From its beginnings, then, Mary has continued to carry out her **mission of mother and educator** within the Christian community.

121. The **marial aspect of our spirituality** is expressed, above all, in our identifying with her attitudes towards others and to God. She invites us, in her song of praise, the *Magnificat*,²³ to give witness to God's solidarity with people in their needs and sufferings. She urges us to do whatever Jesus tells us.²⁴ She is in our midst, a symbol of unity and mission, as she was for the apostles on the day of Pentecost.²⁵ Like Marcellin, we look to Mary as our Good Mother and Ordinary Resource,²⁶ and express our devotion to her in ways that are personal, family-based, simple, and that follow the practices of the Church and of local traditions.

122. We consciously bring a **marial dimension** to our catechesis and prayer with young people. We lead them to love and honour her. We inspire them to imitate her tenderness, strength, and constancy in faith, and to turn to her often in prayer.

123. In all that we do, we associate ourselves with Mary so as to bring Jesus to birth in the hearts of young people: "**All to Jesus through Mary. All to Mary for Jesus**".²⁷

Bearers of the vision

124. Even if we have not always been as creative or faithful as we could have been in response to the needs of youth, our contact with cultures and religious contexts across the world has **enriched our heritage** through the zeal of generations of Brothers and of increasing numbers of Laypeople in more recent decades. It has been enriched over the years, as well, through evolving pedagogical insights and theological developments.

125. This same **creative fidelity and zeal** drives us, in each of our ministries, to follow Marcellin in being among youth, especially the most neglected, as sowers of the Good News, with a distinctive approach as Marists.

In schools

126. A **Marist school** is a centre of learning, of life, and of evangelising. As a school, it leads students “**to learn to know, to be competent, to live together, and most especially, to grow as persons**”.¹ As a Catholic school, it is a community setting in which faith, hope and love are lived and communicated, and in which students are progressively initiated into their life-long challenge of **harmonising faith, culture and life**.² As a Catholic school in the Marist tradition, it adopts Marcellin’s approach to educating children and youth, in the way of Mary.
127. The **circumstances and profiles** of Marist schools around the world vary greatly, depending on their social, cultural, political and legal settings. They are to be found in the rural world as well as in urban areas. They include all three levels of education: primary, secondary, higher education and teacher training. There are day schools as well as those that offer boarding. They may belong wholly to the Institute, or be conducted by Provinces on behalf of a diocese, parish, or government.
128. In all our settings, we express our sense of shared mission in the way we come together as a single **community of educators**: the teachers, non-teaching staff, and parents,³ supporting one another in our complementary roles. Together, we seek to develop a pattern of relationships which reflect our Gospel and Marist ideals, and which witness to the values we want to pass on to our students.
129. Together, we develop a **statement of mission and guiding values**, based on our broad vision of Marist education, as presented earlier in this document.⁴ Such a statement makes explicit our identity, our ideal of education, the particular character of our school in its local context, and our priorities. It serves as a source of inspiration and a reference point for planning, programme development, and for the evaluation of school structures and activities.⁵

An educational process enlightened by faith

130. Our students are at the centre of our concerns in all that touches on school life and organisation. We assist them to **acquire learning, competence and values** through discovering the world, others, themselves, and God.⁶
131. We know that **students differ** in regard to natural giftedness and cultural, family, religious and financial circumstances. We are sensitive to this diversity in our school policies generally, in our pedagogical practices, and in the ways we judge students’ academic progress or behaviour.
132. Following Marcellin, we encourage them always to **strive to improve**, to give the best of themselves.⁷ We communicate our belief in their potential for growth and achievement.⁸ While providing for all, we give special attention to the personal capacity of **weak and vulnerable students**. We create learning situations where each one can succeed and is affirmed.

133. We determine **educational programs, curriculum content, and teaching methods** in the light of our mission statement, and of the best educational and pedagogical thinking available to us. We seek to meet the aspirations of **students** and their **parents** in regard to subject choices, career possibilities, and qualifications. Through external consultation, we seek to ensure that the education we offer is **socially and culturally relevant** in the long term.
134. We employ teaching methods which favour **active** over mechanical learning. We encourage students' self-expression through cultural, literary, artistic, scientific, technical, and business projects. Where possible, we provide opportunities for work experience in the wider community.
135. Through fostering such **participation** and **creativity** in the learning process, we assist students to gain in self-confidence. We try not only to develop their knowledge and competence, but to lead them to learn how to work and research together, how to communicate effectively with others, and to accept responsibility in projects.
136. In our general teaching, we help our students to develop their **critical judgement** of values implicit in material they are studying. We lead them to appreciate the spiritual aspirations of humanity, and the manner in which these have been expressed in the course of history in all cultural contexts.⁹
137. Consistent with our ideal of providing a truly **holistic education**, we include **environmental awareness** as well as physical and health education in our students' learning experiences. We encourage **sports** activities to develop their skills and physical co-ordination, as well as to enhance character formation, teamwork, recognition of personal limits, coping with failure, and the desire to succeed.
138. We give special emphasis to educating our students in **modern means of communication** such as the print media, television, films, and information technology. We develop their ability not only to participate fully in modern society, but also to see the ways in which they are being influenced for good and ill by such media.¹⁰
139. We are enterprising in the provision of **facilities** and **resources** as demanded by the pace of economic, technological, scientific and social change. In making such improvements, we are prudent in our financial outlay and in the contribution we ask from the families of students so as not to exclude those of poorer circumstances.
140. Our schools are open to students irrespective of their religious belief, as long as their families accept our approach to education. Respectful of their personal freedom, we provide a **moral and spiritual formation for all**. We challenge them to give meaning to their lives and to commit themselves to respect the integrity of creation and to live justly.¹¹
141. In all of our schools we establish structures of **pastoral care** and **guidance programmes**. Through these, we come to know our students better, provide individual attention to each of them, and promote their personal development and social skills. For those students who have

particular problems, we provide access to counsellors and to the services of other professionals.

142. Whenever correction is required, we respect the young person's dignity. We reject corporal punishment and the use of humiliation or any excessive severity.¹² Instead, we appeal to the student's sense of **personal and collective responsibility**.¹³

143. Our Marist tradition in relation to **discipline** emphasises creating an encouraging and friendly environment of **calm and order** in which students can study well, and **preventing** problems before they occur. Our school regulations should clearly reflect our commitment to the "Gospel spirit of freedom and charity".¹⁴

We go further in our efforts to make our schools centres of evangelisation

144. To be true to our mission of evangelising through education,¹⁵ and what this means in terms of helping students to integrate life, culture and faith,¹⁶ we develop **explicit ways of nurturing their personal faith and social commitment**.

145. At the heart of our school curriculum is a program of **religious education** which is comprehensive, systematic and conforming to the Church's guidelines.¹⁷ We aim for our students to become familiar with the story of Jesus and with what it means today to be a Christian. Where appropriate, we arrange sacramental preparation in conjunction with local parishes.

146. In **classes** of religious education, we focus on the students and not just the content. "We talk to them, and let them talk",¹⁸ seeking to help them discover values on which to base their lives. **Beyond the classroom**, we provide additional opportunities for them to express and develop their faith. We arrange prayer groups, retreats, and other spiritual experiences that are open to all.¹⁹ We **celebrate our faith** at special moments in the school year with well-prepared liturgies, gathering together the Christian community of parents, teachers, and students.

147. We pay attention to the **religious environment** of the school in terms of, for example, images, daily prayers, and sacred spaces. We encourage expression of our Christian vision of humanity, the world and God in contemporary language and symbols, especially through the creative arts.

148. For **young people who desire an ongoing and deeper spiritual formation**, we initiate apostolic movements within the school. We accompany them closely as they mature by means of a developmental approach, and by helping them to grow in the distinctive character of the movement.²⁰

149. For those who wish to identify more closely with our Marist spirituality, we set up **Marist apostolic movements**. In keeping with our tradition, we give priority to formation in prayer, a

strong commitment to society and Church, and a meaningful experience of community. We present Mary and Marcellin Champagnat as models on our journey towards Jesus.

150. We link our school into the overall pastoral programme of the **local Church**. In those countries where the Catholic school has become the major experience of church for many students and staff, we assume the pastoral and missionary responsibilities this implies, while still encouraging Catholics to connect with their local Church community.²¹
151. While we all share a responsibility for the faith life of the school, we develop a structure of **campus ministry** to promote and co-ordinate our efforts. Besides taking an active role in the religious education and activities of the school, those of us involved in this ministry seek to be close personally to the students and our fellow staff members, and to provide whatever accompaniment is appropriate and requested.
152. We educate students **in solidarity** above all in welcoming into the same school young people of different religious and social backgrounds, as well as those students who are disadvantaged or marginalised.²² To help our students live positively with such diversity which increasingly characterises our different settings, we educate them to **dialogue** and to **be tolerant**.²³ We create a climate of acceptance, mutual respect and support, encouraging the stronger to help the weaker.
153. We educate **for solidarity**, presenting it as “the Christian virtue of our time”²⁴, a moral imperative for all of humankind, given our contemporary global interdependence and the pervasiveness of “structures of sin”.²⁵ We incorporate the challenge of solidarity in our general curriculum, as well as teach the social doctrine of the Church in classes of moral or religious education.
154. We encourage **openness** to the material, cultural and spiritual needs of humanity, locally and globally. We involve our students in charitable works that bring them into contact with local situations of poverty, and we mobilize the whole school community to concrete expressions of solidarity.²⁶
155. Through our work in **teacher training**, in addition to providing professional formation, we seek to communicate our holistic vision of education, and to develop the students’ skills in catechetics and religious education. We work with them personally on their integration of life, culture and faith as befits future religious educators. We inspire them to be willing to serve as teachers, at least for a time, in neglected areas.
156. Our presence in the field of **higher education** gives us a privileged context to promote the dialogue between faith and contemporary thought. We foster high standards of academic discipline and research, contribute to cultural and social progress, and provide professional training and personal formation for future leaders. Through our campus ministry we assist students to integrate their development in faith with their personal ethics and their sense of social justice.²⁷

157. We challenge our **former students**, especially the young ones, to join us in our pastoral and social ministries, and to live up to the formation they have received in their personal lives and in their workplace

Transforming our schools²⁸

158. We **avoid being elitist** in any way. We ensure that “concern with scholastic results, reputation, and income never be obstacles to opening our schools to those less gifted or belonging to economically disadvantaged families”.²⁹ In situations where no government assistance is available for running Catholic schools, we appeal to the solidarity of all to ensure our openness to the materially poor.³⁰

159. We **adapt the curriculum** we offer, where this is possible, so as to provide better for the capabilities of students and respond to changing social realities: we include vocationally-oriented courses geared to their entry into the world of the professions and of work generally.

160. Working closely with others, we **establish new schools**, or change the sites of old ones, to serve families in impoverished and densely-populated areas, or those on the margins of society. We show similar enterprise in establishing vocational-training centres to address the aspirations of those seeking such further education or those excluded from formal schooling.

161. We identify as early as possible any **students who are "at risk"**, and, in consultation with their families, we devise appropriate strategies of intervention. For such young people and for **those with disabilities**, we develop other specialised services or even establish alternative schools.

162. In situations where **students and their families are suffering serious exploitation**, we adopt an educational approach which is community-based, adapted to the social context, and specifically focused on assisting such youth to become active agents of their own improvement and of the transformation of society.

All called to be leaders

163. We are all called on to exercise **professional and pastoral leadership** in our role as educators. We participate in programs of in-service to improve our personal competence in these domains, to seek together the most appropriate methods and strategies for educating contemporary youth, and to deepen our understanding of the specific character of Marist Catholic education and spirituality.

164. In a special way, **our school administrators** are challenged to be people of vision: to articulate and live by our core Marist values and lead others in living by them. More than anyone else, they are the Champagnat figures for the school community, leading with confidence and optimism, and modelling Marist apostolic spirituality.

165. We play an active role in the life of organisations of **Catholic education** within our country. We share our experience of education and evangelisation, and we learn from the experience of others. Together, we assist Church authorities to keep in touch with the reality of our ministry. Through such groups, as well, we seek to contribute to educational policy-making and practice at the local and national level.

166. In all the daily grind and busyness of contemporary school life, we remain **people of hope**, encouragers of the young. To all of us, ourselves as well as our students, we hold out the invitation of faith, of becoming “**a new creation**”, people of imagination, commitment, and love.³¹

In other pastoral and social ministries

We reach out to youth

167. Marcellin's constant searching for the most effective way to reach out to young people is at the heart of his charism. His example inspires our creative intuitions and energies as **Marist apostles**. We seek to be the human face of Jesus in the midst of the young, wherever we find them.
168. Marcellin **gathered** the children for catechism classes. He **went out** to the hamlets himself and **sent** his Brothers out. He **cared** in a special way for those who were poor or orphaned, welcoming them into La Valla and the Hermitage, and doing everything he could for their well-being and education.¹
169. Moved by **the compelling needs and aspirations of today's young people**, especially those who are most deprived or disturbed, we seek to **multiply our ways of entering** into their lives and their world.² With a missionary spirit, we are open to all young people irrespective of their faith background. We know we cannot walk the same path with each of them in our mission of evangelisation
170. We adopt a **holistic** vision of our mission within the context of each of our ministries. As brothers and sisters to the young, we are concerned for their total well-being. We accompany them in the way they relate to themselves, to others, to the world, and to God.³
171. Our **distinctive Marist approach** characterises each of our activities and projects.⁴ We are convinced of the educating value of quality relationships between ourselves and the young, and of the importance of being ourselves in their presence and their feeling at their ease with us. We are convinced, too, of the value of work and of working together, especially in situations where people are inclined to be passive or to give up. Such values are of particular importance in the sometimes **unstructured** settings of our ministry outside formal education. We begin from where they are.

Wherever they are to be found

172. We seek opportunities to **be with** young people in the places and activities where they gather in their free time, for example, sports, places where they relax, artistic and cultural pastimes within the local area or parish, camping, and movements such as the Scouts. Where necessary, we assist them to organise such activities after class, on weekends, or during vacations. We make particular efforts to be present as pastoral workers among deprived young people, for example, on the street, in slums, and in detention centres.
173. With the Church, the local community, non-government organisations or government youth departments, or by ourselves, we establish **centres** for recreation and sport, **facilities** where young people have the chance to meet and express their creative talents. In areas of particular

need, we develop study centres, libraries, and student hostels as well.

174. Within their groups, we encourage young people's **natural sociability**, their creativity, and their sensitivity to one another. In unobtrusive ways, we seek to initiate conversation which touches on their personal and family concerns. We help them to connect with other services and programmes available in the wider community, or with those we ourselves organise.
175. We develop their **critical consciousness** of the values of their world, of popular culture which is so influenced by the media, especially music and entertainment, and by peer relationships. Through our interactions with them, including setting up special **media services** for them, we promote positive social values, linking faith, culture and life in language they understand.⁵
176. We create opportunities for **get-togethers and common solidarity projects** among young people from different social backgrounds, cultures and lifestyles. In this way, we develop their open-mindedness and initiate them into the habit of sharing time, talents and skills in the service of others.
177. Even in settings in which it is not possible or appropriate to speak directly of Jesus and the Gospel, or where the young people themselves show little inclination to religious affairs, we still nurture their **spirituality**. We help them to give meaning to their lives, to internalise life-giving values, and to go further in their journey of faith.
178. Ministering to young people in such settings demands **personal balance and maturity**, judgement, creativity, a sense of fun, patience, flexibility, the gift of listening, and a transparent spirit of faith. We have to be willing to spend the time necessary to gain their confidence, not imposing ourselves on them but ensuring their own leadership in their activities.

Through faith development activities

179. For those who express a desire to deepen their faith and sense of belonging to the Church, we make available opportunities for more intensive **experiences of prayer and of Christian community**, and for joining in **apostolic activities**.⁶ We initiate these ourselves or link with those that exist in the local Church. We take steps in the local Church to ensure that all young people find a welcome, are listened to, and are able to exercise initiative there.⁷ We establish centres devoted to this ministry for our own programmes or as a service to the wider Church.
180. We tailor our style of ministry to the **age, character, and circumstances**⁸ of the particular group with whom we are working: for example, those still at school, parish groups, youth in urban or rural settings, young workers, university students; those with a strong connection with the Church and those with little or none; those with financial means and those who lack them.
181. We adopt a pastoral approach which is **simple** and **experiential**. We show young people models of the Christian life which permit them to discover in their own lives what it means to be a Christian today. We arrange special activities such as seminars, festivals, prayer evenings, religious celebrations, retreats, and pilgrimages. Individually or in small groups, we help them to articulate their ideals and translate them into goals suitable to their age and social context.

182. We invite **school-age youth**, who have come some way in living out their Christian convictions to join us in youth ministry, for example, in catechetical programmes for children and as animators in youth movements and other activities through which they can evangelise other young people.
183. Our pastoral ministry to **older youth** and **young adults** emphasises their maturing in personal faith and commitment. Besides the activities already mentioned, we provide personal accompaniment in which we help them reflect on their experience of life.⁹ We initiate them into Marist apostolic spirituality and how to live it out within the local Church. We offer them the support of networks with others of their age. Together with them, we draw up comprehensive programmes for the ongoing formation they need, and we dedicate sufficient time to providing these.
184. Furthermore, we encourage their involvement in **volunteer** and **missionary** programmes, either abroad or at home, in remote or deprived areas. We offer them the possibility of living for a time as a member of a Marist apostolic community.¹⁰ We foster their sense of **vocation**, including the options of religious life and the priesthood.¹¹
185. We form young believers as **Christian leaders** in society.¹² We journey with them in their desire to be sensitive to and in solidarity with the problems of other peoples and other cultures. We offer them the possibility of studying the social teachings of the Church.
186. As youth ministers, we are convinced that we render the best service of all through the witness of our **joyful lives**, which model what it is to be a **committed Christian** in today's world. We nourish **our own spirituality** through our personal relationship with Jesus Christ, so that we will be better able to share our faith with young people.
187. We keep ourselves up-to-date regarding advances in religious studies, in the social and educational sciences and in the theory and praxis of youth ministry. We develop competence in **leading groups**, as well as skills in **spiritual direction** and **personal accompaniment**.
188. With our friends or companions in ministry we **share our experiences**, the joys and sorrows involved, as well as how we have become aware of the presence of God in our work. In this way, as well, we are careful to be objective about the quality of our work and its impact on us personally.
189. We create links with and play an active role in the **co-ordination bodies** for youth ministry at the parish, diocesan and national levels.

Through non-formal education programmes

190. We work with groups of young people in **deprived areas** and **marginalised situations** whose needs are not being addressed by formal education structures. With them and their local

communities, and with government and non-government bodies, we study the situation to identify their **felt needs** and develop possible **responses**. Through our contacts with these groups, we ensure that our intervention is part of an integrated project of community development.

191. The programs in which we engage can be either **long-term or short-term**, for example, basic literacy, remedial classes, language skills for immigrants, personal development, health education, substance abuse, human relationships, pre-school care, workshops with social or cultural themes, community development skills, vocational skills training; artistic expression, and leadership training.
192. In such programmes, we **educate for life**. We seek to improve the well-being of individuals and to enhance the quality of life of the whole community. In and through such activities, we also make contact with the young people on the level of **faith**, and foster a strong practical sense of **solidarity** among them that reaches out to others.
193. Ministering in such settings demands that we be **initiative-takers**, hopeful, persevering in the face of setbacks, not expecting immediate results, and capable of interesting others in the value of our project. Often it means having to make do with few resources. We need to be good communicators, competent in what we undertake, and **able to work with a group**, even to lead it.
194. Knowing the challenges of working in small numbers, as can happen in such ministries, we endeavour to build a strong **family spirit** for our own support as well as for its formative influence on the young people we wish to serve. We make our own “the joys and the hopes, the griefs and anxieties”¹³ of the young people and of their families. We may even choose to live among them, sharing their life in a more direct way, as a witness to our commitment to them.¹⁴

Through social programmes

195. For some young people, especially those “**at risk**” or **on the fringes of society**, our point of entry into their service has a more clearly **social** character than the approaches mentioned above. With them and their families and, where possible, in collaboration with other groups and government programmes, we establish suitable programs and projects.
196. The **services** we offer include: homes for “street children”; institutions for the protection of minors and orphans; centres for young people in critical family situations; centres for helping broken families; projects for the disabled; services for ethnic minority groups, immigrants, and refugees; rehabilitation centres and programs for young people who are drug addicts or suffering from AIDS; and programs for helping youth who are imprisoned, who are former prisoners, or who are in trouble with the law.
197. We take measures to address the most immediate **physical and material needs** of such youth through preventive action and direct assistance. We try, however, to complement this type of

action with suitable **education strategies** to increase their long-term capacity to manage for themselves.

198. Given the history of negative experiences such young people have often had, we make a special effort to create a **stable environment** in which they feel respected, trusted and loved. Through counselling and personal development programmes, and through small projects in which they can achieve, we seek to foster self-confidence and restore their sense of self-esteem.
199. We help young people with the skills and attitudes they need to **integrate better into society**. We create situations where they experience living and working together and where they are faced with the consequences of their actions. In this way we educate them concerning issues of personal freedom, their dependence on peer pressure, and their need to take responsibility for their own lives.
200. A special aspect of the integration into society of young people “at risk” is their relationship with their **family**. We give attention to the needs of the whole family unit, taking steps towards re-integration where possible and reconciliation where necessary.
201. We **evaluate** regularly the outcomes of our ministry, always seeking the best means of moving the young people to greater personal independence. Recognising our own limits in dealing with young people who are disturbed or in crisis, we seek to provide the help they need through **external professional assistance**.
202. We address their **spiritual** needs through being people of faith, hope and love for them and through speaking to them of God’s special love for the poorest and most neglected. We encourage **inner change**, coming from their experience of this unconditional love and from their growing acceptance and love of themselves.
203. We form their **social conscience** by raising their awareness of the often dehumanising situations they are in and by assisting them to become active in the transformation of their own circumstances and in community development.¹⁵ We educate them in non-violent conflict resolution. We help them to understand their social, political and cultural context, and teach them elements of the Church's social doctrine.¹⁶
204. Along with other persons and institutions, we accept an **advocacy role** on behalf of young people who are victims, or where their rights and well-being are concerned in any way, and on behalf of greater social justice generally. We communicate with our Province community regarding our experiences and the concerns that arise, seeking collective support where this is appropriate.
205. Before engaging in such ministry with children and young people “at risk” or on the fringe of society, we prepare ourselves **personally, professionally, and pastorally**. Likewise, we resource ourselves in these domains at regular intervals, linking with and contributing to suitable programmes of ongoing formation open to youth workers.

206. Such work makes demands on us for **authenticity**, balance and maturity. It moves us to greater **simplicity** in our lifestyle. We are aware that many times we see **no immediate results** of our efforts, or receive no social recognition. We sometimes experience frustration and a feeling of failure. Such realities force us to develop our **personal spirituality**, our faith that it is the Lord's work we are doing and our hope in His promises to those who work "in his name".¹⁷ It is a spirituality of the Cross and the Resurrection that is capable of embracing the stories of suffering that these young people are living and sharing with us.¹⁸
207. Working with young people whose lives are marked by extreme poverty, abuse, or traumatic experiences like violence, war, or family break-up, has an **impact on our well-being** as well. It can draw out of us talents and depths of humanity we would never otherwise know. But we can also experience unhealthy bodily, psychological and spiritual side effects. We need to address these for our own sakes, and for the sake of remaining professionally and apostolically effective.
208. We acknowledge the **limitations** of our own person and what we can do. We monitor our own reactions and share our experiences with our peers. Wherever appropriate, we seek professional supervision and personal counselling. We take time to step away from our work, to meet our spiritual needs, and to be in a totally different setting with others who are close to us.

Workers for the Reign of God

209. We embrace the most confronting questions of our culture and age, written as they are so poignantly in the lives of the outcasts and the hopeless young people we meet in our ministry. Through **our hopeful and caring presence**, even at personal cost, and through **our voice in the Church and in society**, we bring the world closer to the Reign of God, where all its people have the chance of living decent human lives.
210. Our vocation as educators in these pastoral and social settings, then, is a calling to be **prophetic people**, especially on behalf of the "little ones",¹⁹ those on the sideroads of society. We seek to be light for them and to point to the Light, Jesus Christ.²⁰

We face the future with audacity and hope

In every corner of the world, there are thousands of young people whose lives are being touched by us. As educators we know the joys and pains of working with them. We know the good we can do. We believe in their future.

As disciples of Marcellin Champagnat

We believe in the continuing relevance of his charism.

We believe in our shared mission as Marist educators.

We believe in our vocation to minister to all young people, with a special love for the poor and excluded.

We believe in our mission to lead young people to life-giving values, to build a better world, to make Jesus Christ known and loved.

We believe that, as Mary did for Jesus, to educate young people we must first love them, and love them equally.

We believe in the value of the integral education we offer in our schools.

We believe in the significance of our hopeful and creative presence among young people in all our places of ministry, especially among those most neglected.

With a cutting edge to our mission

Marcellin began a prophetic movement,¹ galvanising the life-energies of hundreds of followers in his day around his charism. This same charism goes on stretching us in our attitudes and works. We are being called to be ever open to the Spirit and to shape our future ever more decisively in accordance with his dynamic vision.²

The challenges facing us are, firstly, those that confront the young: we have to listen, to question, to research, to pray and to look at our world through their young eyes. We choose not to remain frozen or passive before the “facts” of the social and cultural inequality that characterises all of our societies and is even more stark when viewed globally.

- We transform our existing structures.
- We initiate new ventures.
- We link internationally.

The challenges facing us are, secondly, those that confront us as educators who share Marcellin’s charism. We want our experience to match our rhetoric when we speak about:

- Our shared mission.

- Our preference for the least favoured.
- Our commitment to evangelising through education.

With Mary as our model

- Like Mary of the **Annunciation** (Luke 1: 26-38), we are open to the movement of God in our lives, of God for whom nothing is impossible. Despite our doubts, fears and feelings of inadequacy, we accept in faith God's invitation to participate in the work of spreading the Good News. In an age of independence, we make room for God.
- Like Mary of the **Visitation** (Luke 1: 39-45), we go out from our communion with the Lord full of faith and hope. We go to meet young people in their places of need, offering them our love. In an age of individualism, we put others first.
- Like Mary of the **Magnificat** (Luke 1: 46-55), we praise the Lord for the gift of life. In an age of concern over public morality, we side with the lowly.
- Like Mary of **Bethlehem** (Luke 2: 1-20), we bring Jesus to birth in the hearts of others. We are ready to do so in the most unlikely and inhospitable of places. In an age of consumerism, we make do with simple comforts.
- Like Mary of **Nazareth** (Luke 2: 39-52), we nurture, guide and care for the young, developing in them a knowledge and love of the God who is active in their lives, and a respect for all God has created. Like her, we accept them as they are even when we don't fully understand their decisions. In an age of self-gratification, we give our love generously.
- Like Mary of **Cana** (John 2: 1-11), we are sensitive to the needs of others. We invite the young to do whatever Jesus bids. In an age of self-centredness, we feel for others.
- Like Mary of **Calvary** (John 19: 25-27), we recognise Jesus in the face of the broken and suffering, aching for them with a mother's heart and believing in them with a mother's passion. In an age in which hope struggles with despair, we stand by those who are dying or grieving.
- Like Mary of the **Cenacle** (Acts 1: 12 - 2: 4), we build community around us. In an age that is adrift spiritually, we bring the belief and vision of a new and Spirit-filled Church.

Sustained by Hope

The glorified Jesus, God of Life and Lord of History, is our Hope. He goes forth to meet us, walks beside us, listens to us, stirs up hope within us, and helps us discover God's plan even in the midst of confusion and human darkness. In our daily contact with young people as much as in our moments of prayer, we recognize His Presence. The words of some of the first disciples come back to us, "Was not our heart burning within us?"³

Champagnat's mission continues through us

"The future of the world and the Church belongs to the younger generation . . . Christ expects great things from (them)."⁴ What a privileged vocation we have as Marist educators, Brothers and Laypeople, women and men, young and old, called to be Champagnats for this younger generation. With all the passion and dedication for mission which fired his everyday life, we in our times also choose to face our future with audacity and hope.

Suggested questions for reflection and discussion

1. Disciples of Marcellin Champagnat

1. What moment from Marcellin's life has a special significance for you?
2. What aspects of his character do you find attractive?
3. What aspects of his spirituality appeal to you?
4. What elements of Marcellin's story have you found that speak to the hearts of young people?
5. It is sometimes said that we also live in a time of 'crisis'. What challenges do you find that you have in common with those that Marcellin faced?

2. Brothers and Laypeople, together in mission, in the Church and in the world

1. What points made in this Chapter strike you?
2. What has contributed in a significant way to your convictions about ours being 'a shared mission'?
3. In what way do you personally identify with Marcellin's charism?
4. What personal challenges do you find in the ideal and practice of 'a shared mission'?
5. In what ways is your community, be it in a school or other setting, being called to grow towards a greater experience of 'shared mission'?

3. Among the young, especially the most neglected

1. What is new for you in this chapter/
2. What are the most pressing issues facing young people in your society? (Cf. articles 57-59 but add others to be specific to your society)
3. What historical developments in your society and Church give you hope?
4. Describe a situation confronting young people (a young person) which evokes your compassion or outrage.
5. In your society, who are the young people who are the most excluded, those whose material poverty leads them to be poor in other ways (cf. art. 55)?
6. How could we be more "daring and decisive" in reaching out to such young people?

4. We are sowers of the Good News

1. “A good Christian and a virtuous citizen”. How would you express this central phrase of Champagnat in contemporary words?
2. How would you explain your **mission** (your vision of your fundamental aim as an educator) in your own terms?
3. Art. 86 speaks of the diversity of our religious settings. How would you describe your own setting and what are the implications of this for your mission of evangelisation?
4. In your place of work, what have you found to be the greatest challenges to evangelising young people?
5. What points made in the Chapter challenge you the most personally?
6. “The young people also inspire and evangelise us.” Describe some way in which you have experienced this.

5. With a distinctive Marist style

1. “To bring up children properly, we must love them, and love them all equally”. This is sometimes called the ‘Golden Rule’ of Marist education. What does it mean to you?
2. What do you find distinctive about working in a Marist work?
3. Take each of the characteristics in turn:
 - (a) what points do you want to underline for yourself?
 - (b) what are some concrete examples (structures, attitudes, practices) of where you see this characteristic in evidence where you work?
 - (c) what are some concrete ways in which you are being challenged to grow, either personally or as a group, in living this characteristic more fully?

6. In schools

1. What ideas in the Chapter are new or fresh for you?
2. How would you describe the social profile of your school?
3. What challenges have you found in developing programmes, content, and methods for all the students, specifically those with greater difficulties (articles 132, 133, 159)?
4. “As a Catholic school, it is a community setting in which faith, hope and love are lived and communicated, and in which students are progressively initiated into their life-long challenge of harmonising faith, culture and life.” (Art. 126) What is going well for you in the regard? What difficulties are you having?
5. How do you go about educating in and for solidarity (articles 152 - 154)? (Do the “least favoured” feel at ease in your school?)
6. “Transforming our schools”: what challenges or possibilities do you see for your school in relation to the areas spoken of in articles 158 - 162?

7. In other pastoral and social ministries

1. “The compelling needs and aspirations of today’s young people, especially those who are most deprived or disturbed”: how would you describe the needs and aspirations of the group of young people to whom you are ministering?
2. For each of the 4 broad areas described as ways of entering into the world of youth other than in school settings:
 - (a) what ideas mentioned strike you most forcefully?
 - (b) how successful are you in being able to address the whole person of the youth with whom you are working (Cf. Article 170)?
3. What encourages you most / discourages you most in your ministry?
4. What are your hopes for the future of your ministry?

ENDNOTES

1: Disciples of Marcellin Champagnat

1.1 First Day at School:

Since his mother and his aunt had not been able to advance his reading to a satisfactory standard, Marcellin was sent to a school Master whose task was to perfect his reading and teach him to write. On his first day of attendance, as he was very timid and didn't leave the place he was given, the teacher called him to his side to read; but just as he arrived, another pupil took up a position in front of him. Then the teacher, somewhat angered and perhaps thinking that he would please young Marcellin, vigorously boxed the ears of the child who wanted to read first and sent him off sobbing to the back of the room. This was hardly calculated to reassure the new pupil and banish his timidity; so he said later, he had shaken all over and was more inclined to cry than to read. Marcellin's discerning mind was indignant at this cruel act and he vowed never to return to a school run by such a teacher; the ill-treatment inflicted, without reason, on that child showed him what was in store for himself; at the first opportunity, the same could happen to him; he therefore refused to have anything to do with that man's lessons, still less with his punishments. Indeed he was unwilling to return to that teacher in spite of the reiterated entreaties of his parents.

Life, I, pp. 5-6

1.2 Marcellin's call

Marcellin's decision to study Latin was not a passing whim. His parents doubted his ability to do so and tried to dissuade him, pointing out the trouble he had experienced in learning to read and the lack of taste he had shown for study. Their words fell on deaf ears. He was no longer interested in the farm-work or the little business deals that used to mean so much to him. . .

After a year with that uncle (a teacher), who spared no pains but had little success, he was against Marcellin's entering the seminary. "Your child", he advised the parents, "persists in his determination to study for the priesthood, but you would be mistaken to let him do so; he hasn't the ability to succeed." ...Marcellin had prayed and reflected for the whole year and was not the least put off by his uncle's speech or his parents' remarks. "Get my things ready", he insisted. "I am determined to go to the seminary. I shall succeed because it is God who calls me." As there was still reluctance to buy his outfit, he added: "Don't let the expense be a problem! I have money to pay for it." His clothing was, in fact, paid for from his savings.

Life, II, pp. 9-11

1.3 The Society of Mary

About this time (1812 - 1815) the foundation of the Society of Mary was laid. A few seminarians, led by (Courveille), John Claude Colin and Marcellin Champagnat, used to have frequent meetings to reinforce their piety and their practice of priestly virtues. Zeal for the salvation of souls and the best means to that end, were what they normally discussed. Their exchange of feelings about this goal and plans for it, gave rise to the idea of founding a Society of Priests. . . This elite group had a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin, a fact which prompted them to place the new society under the patronage of the Mother of God and gave it Mary's name. . . In one such meeting, it was agreed to go together on pilgrimage to Fourvière and to lay their plans at the feet of Mary. . .

However, the plans of the new Association made no provision for Teaching Brothers. It was Marcellin Champagnat alone who conceived their institution and who alone put his idea into execution. He would often say to his companions: "We must have Brothers! We must have Brothers to teach catechism, to help the missionaries and to conduct schools."

Life, III, pp. 27 - 28

1.4 Why Brothers?

Having been born in the township of Saint-Genest-Malifaux (Loire), I became aware, because of the extreme difficulty I encountered in learning to read and write, of the urgent necessity of creating a society which could, with less expense, provide for the rural areas the good education which the Brothers of the Christian Schools provide for the cities.

Champagnat to the Minister of Public Instruction, 1837, Letters, 159

1.6 The "Montagne": experience:

(Father Champagnat) was summoned to a hamlet one day, in order to hear a sick boy's confession. (His name was Jean-Baptiste Montagne, living in the hamlet of Les Palais, beyond Le Bessat. He was born on May 10th 1800 and died on October 28th 1816). As usual, he set out at once. Before proceeding with the confession, he put a few questions to make sure that he was sufficiently instructed to receive the sacraments. To his great surprise, the child knew nothing about the principal mysteries and, in fact, didn't even know whether God existed. Greatly upset at finding a seventeen year-old in such ignorance, and fearing that he would die in such a state, he sat down beside him to teach him the mysteries and truths necessary for salvation. It took him two hours for the instruction and confession. It was extremely difficult to impart even the most fundamental truths, to a child who was so sick that he scarcely grasped what was being said.

Having heard his confession, and helped him make several acts of love of God and of contrition as a preparation for death, the priest left him, to minister to a sick person in an adjoining house. As he went out, he asked after the sick youth, to be told by his tearful parents that he had died a moment after the priest's departure. He felt an upsurge of joy at having been there so opportunely . . .

He went home overwhelmed by those feelings and saying over and over to himself: "How many children are in the same predicament every day, exposed to the same dangers because they have no-one to teach them the truths of faith"

Then he became obsessed with overwhelming intensity, by the thought of founding a Society of Brothers to obviate such disasters through the Christian education of children.

Life, VI, pp. 58-59

1.7 Training the young Brothers at La Valla

(Marcellin) longed for the day when his Brothers would teach. Meanwhile, since they were not yet up to standard, he employed a lay teacher, and he did so to achieve two aims he believed necessary: to provide primary instruction for the children of the parish; to polish up the knowledge that the Brothers had already acquired and induct them into the method of teaching. . .

The teacher lived with the Brothers, set up his school in their house and the children soon filled it. The Brothers backed him up in his teaching, watched him in action, copied his style and adopted his method. In addition, out of school hours, he gave them their own lessons on the various aspects of teaching.

Life, VII, p. 71

1.8 Choosing to live on the little they received

The Superior of the association of the Little Brothers of Mary. . . has the honour to inform Your Excellency that since the aim of the association is to make it easier for rural towns to obtain the benefits of education for their children with little expense, he has reduced the salary of each teaching Brother to the minimum. . .

Champagnat
Letters, 113

. . . The sacrifices which we felt we should make in order to provide more conveniently the benefits of education for the large and deserving rural population allow us to get by, but only by dint of economy. . .

Letters, 173

The sum . . . is already little enough to meet the expenses of the upkeep of three Brothers in a town. To reduce it still more would be, it seems to me, to snatch away from them, not only the miserable salary attached to the most thankless and difficult job of any citizen, but even their poor and unappetizing food...

Champagnat to the Mayor of Bourg-Argental, Letters, 8

1.9 Missionary spirit

(Marcellin) asked Father Colin to let him be part of that favoured group of missionaries setting out for Oceania. He wanted to devote his last days and his little remaining strength to the instruction and sanctification of non-Christians. Though greatly impressed by Marcellin's zeal and devotedness, Father Colin reasoned with him that he could do more good in France than was possible in Oceania; that his particular mission was not to go in person to evangelise those peoples but to prepare for the task apostles full of zeal and the spirit of sacrifice. Obedience did not permit Father Champagnat to insist and his humility led him to believe that he was unworthy of the favour. Though he was resigned, he did not manage to conceal the strength of his longing.

(Note: With Bishop Pompallier there went, on December 24th, 1836: Fathers Servant, Bataillon, Bret and Chanel; Brothers Marie-Nizier, Michel and Joseph-Xavier.)

Life, XIX, pp. 202-203

1.11 Youthful enterprise

His parents, quite pleased with his orderliness and thrift, gave him two or three lambs which he was free to fatten and sell for himself. He certainly raised them very carefully, then sold them and bought others. . . his trade and saving soon allowed him to amass a tidy sum of six hundred francs. For a sixteen year old that was a lot of money; therefore, if he didn't already consider himself rich, he saw prospects of his becoming so. Plans were laid to expand his small business. One of his brothers was to join forces with him and they would pool their resources in a life-long partnership.

Life, I, p. 7

1.12 Marcellin, builder and repairman

There was only the barn for the postulants to sleep in. To remedy that state of affairs, Marcellin worked for more than a week to repair the garret of the house and convert it into a dormitory. He used scrap timber to construct beds with his own hands. . . It was obvious that the house could not accommodate so many people and a new building was a matter of urgency. Marcellin did not hesitate to undertake its construction. . . . He was the architect of the new building; he ordered everything and directed everyone.

Life, X, p. 101

"If God blesses us," he reflected, "we could very well set up house there (in the valley of the Gier river)." Yet, before finally opting for that position, he combed the surrounding district with two of the principal Brothers to make sure that it was the best available. . . "That mad Champagnat," alleged several of his fellow-priests and many other people, "must have gone off his head. What does he think he's doing? How is he going to pay for that house?" . . . Father Champagnat was well aware of what people were thinking and saying about him in public; but the talk of men had little influence on him, and he did not invoke the principles of human prudence to guide his life. So it was, that despite the large community on his hands, despite a debt of four thousand francs, despite a lack of money, and with confidence, (an unbounded one), in God alone, he fearlessly took on the construction of a house and chapel to accommodate one hundred and fifty people.

Life, XII, pp. 120 - 123

We are always repairing or building, and still we are cramped for space. We have made neither peace nor truce with the rocks of the Hermitage; we turn the soil, plant grapevines, and try to make the whole property productive.

Letters, 109

1.13 Marcellin explains his purpose in founding the Institute:

Ordained a priest in 1816, I was assigned to a town in the district of St.-Chamond (Loire). What I saw with my own eyes in that new post, with reference to the education, reminded me of the difficulties I had experienced myself at their age, for lack of teachers.

Champagnat to Queen Marie-Amélie, Letters, 59

. . . A good education is the surest way to form good subjects for society. Unfortunately, most of the rural towns are deprived of that advantage: the insufficiency of local resources and the poverty of their inhabitants does not permit them to confide the education of their children to the Brothers of the Christian Schools, whose merits and ability are well known; hence the sad necessity of either letting their children grow up in disastrous ignorance, or (which is even more distressing), handing them over to teachers who are hardly capable of training them in the knowledge and virtues necessary for good citizens.

To eliminate these drawbacks, the undersigned, Marcellin Champagnat, a priest of the diocese of Lyons, seeing the zeal which the king and his government put into providing the great benefit of education for all levels of society, decided to create, near the city of St.-Chamond, an association of elementary teachers, under the name of LITTLE BROTHERS OF MARY, and drew up the following statutes in order to obtain an authorisation which would give the members of this society the means to carry out their important and demanding function in a legal and therefore more effective manner. . .

Champagnat to His Majesty, Louis -Philippe, King of France, Letters, 34

1.14 Marcellin teaching the children

(During his holidays from the seminary), frequently he would gather village children in his room to teach them prayers and catechism. On Sundays, even the adults were assembled and he spoke to them briefly but feelingly on the mysteries of religion, the duties of a Christian and on the way to assist at Mass and at other church services.

1.15 Marcellin's success in teaching and preaching

The news spread through the parish (La Valla) like wildfire that Father Champagnat's catechism classes were absorbingly interesting. Grown-ups were eager to hear them and flocked to them in large numbers on Sundays. He was forced to adapt his method slightly to suit the new listeners. So, having explained the text of the day's lesson using short, clear and simple questions within the scope of the weakest minds, he then deduced the implications for moral conduct and offered reflections calculated to move their hearts and lead them to the practice of virtue. It didn't matter which subject Father Champagnat was presenting, he had the gift of meeting the needs of each one whatever their status, age or circumstances.

Life, IV, pp. 43-44

1.17 Pedagogical innovations of Marcellin Champagnat

It is scarcely necessary to assure you that in the composing, or rather in the compiling of this work we faithfully followed the rules and instructions of our saintly Founder on the subject of the *Education of Youth*. We sought above all, to imbue our minds with his spirit, to revive and reproduce it, as far as we were able, in order that it might be conveyed to you and be perpetuated amongst us. We are fully convinced that this was our duty and our whole task.

In particular, our beloved Father devoted the usual two months' vacation to training us to become efficient teachers and catechists, and in instructing us in the fundamental principles that constitute sound education.

Those who had the privilege of hearing him will remember that he entered into the minutest details of the subject and acquainted us with every point connected with the education of the child. They will not forget how feelingly he spoke of the children in the lowest class, or how warmly he exhorted the Brothers to lavish every care upon those young souls whom, by reason of their innocence, he designated as *little angels*. Nor will they fail to recall how definitely he pointed out the means that should be employed to instruct them in the first essential truths of religion, to train them in piety and virtue and also to make the steps in reading easier for them.

The love of God which filled his heart, and the tender affection he had for the children, revealed to him all their wants and the means of relieving them, as also the secret of winning their confidence, inclining them to virtue, inspiring them with piety and developing all the powers of their soul. This talent which, unknown to himself, he possessed in a high degree and the ardent zeal which animated him for the sanctification of children, and which he sought to impart to his Brothers in his daily instructions on the subject, are the features we have here endeavoured to trace for you.

(Brother François then mentions five points which, in the teaching methods of the Institute are the personal contribution of Father Champagnat):-

1. The *method of teaching reading*. . .
2. The *qualities of sound discipline*, which he based on moral authority and kindness, at a time when corporal punishment was in general use.
3. The *method of teaching Catechism*, and the pains he took to train good catechists.
4. The teaching of *Singing*, a subject then neglected in Primary Schools.
5. The rules concerning the *training of the Junior Brothers*.

Br. François, Preface to The Teacher's Guide, (1931) pp. 5-7.

1.18 Personal Concern for his followers:

Dear Brother Barthélemy,

You should have no doubt that, because of the beautiful name of father which you give me, I consider you all as my dear children in Jesus and Mary and carry you all with affection in my heart. I am very touched by your wishes for me, and I will not forget them. In my prayers I will remember the one who made such beautiful wishes for me. I am very well aware of all the problems which all the illnesses of your co-workers can create for you. Take good care of yourself, so that you can carry out your difficult duties well. All the Fathers and Brothers are well. I will share your New Year's wishes with them.

Be brave, dear friend, think how precious your occupation is in the eyes of God. Great saints and great men were happy to have a task which Jesus and Mary value so highly. *Let these children come to me, for heaven belongs to them.*

You have in your hands the price of the blood of Jesus Christ. After God, your many children will owe their salvation to you. Their whole life will be the echo of what you have taught them. Exert yourself, spare nothing to form their young hearts to virtue; make them realise that without virtue, without piety, without fear of God, they will never be happy; that there is not peace for the wicked. That only God can make them happy, that it was for him alone they were created. How much good you can do, dear friend !

Your parents are well. Your brother who was in the army died in Paris of severe head pains. Pray for him; regrets cannot do anything for him; all he needs is prayers.

I have many other things to tell you; I hope I will be able to tell them to you in person very shortly. I leave both of you in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. They are such good places !

I have the honour to be your very devoted father in Jesus and . . .

Champagnat, Superior of the Brothers, Notre Dame de l'Hermitage, 1831
Letters, 19

My very dear Brother Barthélemy,

. . . I promise you that the very next trip I make to Lyons, I will come to see you. Be brave, good friend; it is enough that you and your co-worker are willing to teach many children. Even if you had no students at all, your reward would still be the same. Don't get upset over the small number you have now. God holds the hearts of everyone in his hands; he will send you students when he sees fit; all you have to do is to be sure that no infidelity of yours stands in the way. You are where God wanted you to be, since you are where your superiors wanted you to be. I have no doubt that the Lord is rewarding you with many graces. . .

Champagnat, Superior, Notre Dame de l'Hermitage, 1831
Letters, 24

1.19 Marcellin's faith

Father Champagnat's way of practising the exercise of the presence of God, consisted in believing with a firm and real faith that God is everywhere present, filling the universe with his immensity, with the works of his goodness, with his mercy and his glory. . . Everything was for him a motive to raise himself to God and bless him; so, on every occasion, his soul poured out acts of love, praise and thanksgiving.

This feeling of the presence of God kept his soul in unvarying peace and tranquillity. He emphatically reiterated that we have nothing to fear if we are with God and that nothing can harm us if we trust in Divine Providence.

Life, V, pp. 314-315, 319

1.20 Mary our Model and our Good Mother

There were two complements to all these practices in honour of Mary and to his devotion towards her. The Founder wanted these for his Institute and prescribed them, since he considered them indispensable. The first one was the imitation of her virtues. He insisted, therefore, that the Brothers' love for Mary should lead them especially to acquire her spirit and to copy her humility, her modesty, her purity and her love of Jesus Christ. The poor and hidden life of the divine Mother and the sublime example she has given us ought to be the rule of conduct for the Brothers; each one should make such an effort to be like her that all his actions and his entire person are a reminder of Mary, and reflect her spirit and virtues.

The second stipulation was that the Brothers should consider themselves under a particular obligation to make Mary known and loved, to make her widely honoured and to inspire the children with devotion to her.

Life, VII, p. 338

1.21 The Crib, the Cross and the Altar

I want the Little Brothers of Mary to be faithful followers of the *newborn* Jesus, of the *dying* Jesus, and of Jesus *immolated* on the altar. May they be faithful followers of Jesus in all the mysteries: his life, his activities, his sufferings; these should be the main subject of their meditations. . .

Do you know, Brothers, why I want you to be faithful followers of Jesus in his crib, on Calvary and on the altar? Because those three places are the three great fountains of grace; it is there above all that Jesus distributes it abundantly to his chosen ones. . .

Yes, God is everywhere, but particularly at the crib, the Cross and the altar; in other words, it is in those three places above all that his infinite love appears and reveals itself. . . It is in those three places that our poor hearts can better understand and feel how much he loves us. . .

Jesus came to bring sacred fire to earth; he spreads it everywhere in a thousand ways, but he has built three great hearths where all the saints and all fervent souls should come to be set on fire. These hearths are: the stable of Bethlehem, Calvary, and the altar. . . Go to the Saviour's fountains and draw from them abundantly. . .

Opinions, Conferences, Sayings and Instructions, VI, p. 63

1.22 Marcellin's compassion for the poor

One day, he was summoned on a sick call and hurried to the address, where he found a poor unfortunate covered with ulcers, lying on a little straw and with only a few rags to cover his nakedness and his sores. Moved to deep compassion at the sight of so much suffering and such great poverty, he first of all spoke a few sympathetic

words to the sick man; then he ran home, sent for the Brother bursar and told him to go at once to the sick man's place, taking along a straw mattress, sheets and blankets. The Brother pointed out that there was no spare mattress. "What!" he was asked, "not a single one in the house?" "Not one," came the reply, "and you may remember, Father, that I gave away the last one only a few days ago." "Well," he went on, "take the one from my bed and see that he gets it at once." It was not unusual for him to deprive himself in order to help the poor or to cater for the needs of his Brothers.

Life, XXI, p. 510

1.23 See note 1.17

1.24 Formation of leaders

During the two months' holidays, he often talked to the directors on the way the houses were to be governed, on the material administration and on the direction of the classes. In these talks, he gave great play to the qualities necessary for a good superior and the way to obtain them; to the obligations of a teacher and of a Brother Director, and to the way these duties should be carried out.

In his talks to them, the holy Founder left his Brothers completely free to put forward their difficulties and their doubts, and whatever was causing them trouble in the details of their work. The Brothers took full advantage of this freedom, and each one made his observations, put forward what he thought on a whole pile of questions of administration, or of the running of their houses, or asked him to point out what was in line with the Rule or with the spirit of the congregation in such and such circumstances, or how to act in all the situations in which a Br Director has to give a ruling.

He often took the senior Brothers as a kind of council, and did practically nothing without getting their opinion. He wanted to initiate the Brothers into the business of the Institute and to consult them on the rules he was drawing up and on the methods of teaching he wanted to adopt. This was a sure way of training their thinking, of putting their ideas right, of developing their judgement, so that they could deal with things later intelligently and successfully. Sometimes, after discussing the pros and cons of some measure in council, he confided the business to a Brother and left it to him to carrying it out successfully. But once the work was completed, the Brother had to give an account of how he had done it. The Founder then praised and approved what had been done well; pointed out how it could have been done to avoid some difficulty, overcome some obstacle, win over someone who disagreed, or simply said that if it had been done differently, it would have been done better.

Life, XVII, p. 452

2: Brother and Laity, together in mission, in the Church and in the world

2.1 Marcellin's encouragement of others in the Christian education of youth:

May our Good Mother bless all your undertakings, bless you yourself, and preserve you for a long time in her good work which you direct.

Champagnat to Fr Mazelier, Superior of the Brothers of Christian Instruction, Letters 122

Since we all have the same aim and work for the same master, we want to be always united to you and work together with you.

To Fr Mazelier, Letters, 141

I should like the same charity which binds you together as members of a single body to extend as well to all other Institutes. By the boundless love of Jesus Christ, I call on you most solemnly to beware of ever envying anybody, especially those whom God has called to the Religious Life to labour, like you, for the education of youth. Be the first to rejoice at their successes and to grieve at their misfortune. Recommend them often to God and to Mary. Yield to them without difficulty. Never give ear to any rumours that may discredit them. Let only the glory of God and the honour of Mary be your one aim and ambition.

Spiritual Testament, Constitutions and Statutes

2.4 Sharing in the education of children:

Three classes of persons have a share in the education of the child, namely the parents, the priest and the teacher.

1. The **parents** are the natural educators placed by Almighty God in charge of the child from his very cradle. It is they, in reality, who possess in the highest degree that affection and authority which are the two chief factors in education.

2. The **priest** is the representative of the Church who holds from her divine Founder Himself her mission of universal educator (Matt. 28:19-20). And besides this direct mission, the Church has a controlling authority over the moral and religious education provided both by the family and by the school.

3. The **teacher** who is the substitute and the coadjutor of the parents and of the priest, holds the next highest place in education, because his influence is exercised systematically over a period of years and at a time when the child is most susceptible to the influences around him.

The Teacher's Guide, 1931, pp. 183-184

2.5 Image of Church as Communion

Communion with Jesus, which gives rise to the communion of Christians among themselves, is an indispensable condition for bearing fruit: "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). . . Communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission. . . On her part, the Church knows that the communion received by her as a gift is destined for all people.

Christifideles Laici, 32

Who then has this mission of evangelising? The Second Vatican Council gave a clear reply to this question: it is upon the Church that "there rests by divine mandate, the duty of going out into the whole world and preaching the gospel to every creature." And in another text: ". . . the whole Church is missionary, and the work of evangelisation is a basic duty of the People of God." . . . While the Church is proclaiming the Kingdom of God and building it up, she is establishing herself in the midst of the world as a sign and sacrament of this Kingdom which is and which is to come.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 59

The whole Church therefore is called upon to evangelise, and yet within her we have different evangelising tasks to accomplish. The diversity of services in the unity of the same mission makes up the richness and beauty of evangelisation.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 66

2.9 All the baptised are called to mission

The lay faithful, precisely because they are members of the Church, have the vocation and mission of proclaiming the Gospel: they are prepared for this work by the sacraments of Christian initiation and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Christifideles Laici, 33

Opening wide the doors to Christ, accepting him into humanity itself poses absolutely no threat to persons, indeed it is the only road to take to arrive at the total truth and the exalted value of the human individual.

This vital synthesis will be achieved when the lay faithful know how to put the Gospel and their daily duties of life into a most shining and convincing testimony, where not fear but the loving pursuit of Christ and adherence to him will be the factors determining how a person is to live and grow, and these will lead to new ways of living more in conformity with human dignity.

Humanity is loved by God! This very simple yet profound proclamation is owed to humanity by the Church. Each Christian's words and life must make this proclamation resound: God loves you, Christ came for you, Christ is for you "the Way, the Truth and the Life!" (Jn 14:6)

Christifideles Laici, 34

The Second Vatican Council confirmed this tradition in its description of the missionary character of the entire People of God and of the apostolate of the laity in particular, emphasising the specific contribution to missionary activity which they are called to make. The need for all the faithful to share in this responsibility is not merely a matter of making the apostolate more effective, it is a right and duty based on their baptismal dignity, whereby "the faithful participate, for their part, in the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King."

Redemptoris Missio, 71

Let's make real partners of everyone who wants to share in our spirituality and our Mission. Let's take the risk of losing a little power and be daring enough to collaborate freely with laypeople, not because there are far fewer of us now, but because we recognise their vocation and mission as baptised Christians.

XIX General Chapter, Message, 19

2.10 The Church and people of other faiths

At the beginning of the declaration on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions, the attention of the Church is drawn to "our times when every day people are being drawn closer together and the ties between various peoples are being multiplied. . . All peoples comprise a single community, and have a single origin. . . The Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions. . . Through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other faiths, and in witness of Christian faith and life, acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral good found in these faiths, as well as in the values in their society and culture. . . The Church rejects as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination . . . because of race colour, condition of life, or religion.

Nostra Aetate, 1, 2, 5

Another level (of the relationship between people of different faiths) is the dialogue of works . . . of a humanitarian, social, economic or political character which promote the liberation and development of humanity. . . The great problems besetting humanity inspire Christians to collaborate with others in the name of their respective faiths.

Dialogue and Mission, Secretariat for Non-Christians, 1984, 31

The lay faithful can favour the relations which ought to be established with followers of *various religions* through their example in the situations in which they live and in their activities.

Christifideles Laici, 35

2.11 Charisms

The Holy Spirit, while bestowing diverse ministries in Church communion, enriches it still further with particular gifts or promptings of grace, called *charisms*. . . Whether they be exceptional and great or simple and ordinary, the charisms are *graces of the Holy Spirit that have, directly or indirectly, a usefulness for the ecclesial community*, ordered as they are to the building up of the Church, to the well-being of humanity and to the needs of the world. . . These charisms are given to individual persons, and can even be shared by others in such ways as to continue in time a precious and effective heritage, serving as a source of spiritual affinity among persons.

Christifideles Laici, 24

2.12 Marcellin's charism

Led by the Spirit, Marcellin was seized by the love that Jesus and Mary had for him and for others. His experience of this, as well as his openness to events and to people, is the wellspring of his spirituality and of his apostolic zeal. It made him sensitive to the needs of his times, especially to the ignorance concerning religion among young people and the poor circumstances in which they were placed.

His faith and eagerness to do God's will led him to realise that his mission was to "make Jesus Christ known and loved." He often said: "Every time I see a child, I long to teach him his catechism, to make him realise how much Jesus Christ has loved him." It was this attitude that led him to found our Institute for the Christian education of the young, especially those most in need .

Constitutions, 2

2.13 Expressing the charism in different situations and cultures

The present-day relevance of Marcellin Champagnat's charism is a challenge to our personal and community commitment to incarnate it in different situations and in different cultures. We all have a responsibility for this task.

Constitutions, 165

2.14 Time for a new relationship between Religious and Laypeople

In recent years, one of the fruits of the teaching on the Church as communion has been the growing awareness that her members can and must unite their efforts, with a view to co-operation and exchange of gifts, in order to participate more effectively in the Church's mission. . . Today, often as a result of new situations, many Institutes have come to the conclusion that *their charism can be shared with the laity*. The laity are therefore invited to share more intensely in the spirituality and mission of these Institutes. We may say that . . . a new chapter, rich in hope, has begun in the history of relations between consecrated persons and the laity.

Vita Consecrata, 54

2.15 The specific vocation of Laypeople

Lay people, whose particular vocation places them in the midst of the world and in charge of the most varied temporal tasks, must for this very reason exercise a very special form of evangelisation.

Their primary and immediate task is . . . to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelising activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media. It also includes all the realities which are open to evangelisation, such as human love, the family, the education of children and adolescents, professional work, suffering.

Evangelii Nuntiandi 70

The lay faithful are called by God so that they, led by the Spirit of the Gospel, might contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven . . .

Everyone in the Church, precisely because they are members, receive and thereby share in the common vocation to holiness. In the fullness of this title and on equal par with all other members of the Church, the lay faithful are called to holiness . . .

Christifideles Laici, 15,16

The Lay Catholic educator is a person who exercises a specific mission within the Church by living, in faith, a secular vocation in the communitarian structure of the school; with the best possible professional qualifications, with an apostolic intention inspired by faith, for the integral formation of the human person, in a communication of culture, in an exercise of that pedagogy which will give emphasis to direct and personal contact with students, giving spiritual instruction to the educational community of which he or she is a member, as well as to all the different persons related to the educational community. To this lay person, as a member of this community, the family and the Church entrust the school's educational endeavour.

Lay Catholics in Schools, 24

Lay Catholic educators in schools, whether teachers, principals, administrators, or auxiliary staff, must never have any doubts about the fact that they constitute an element of great hope for the Church. The Church has confidence in them, entrusting them with the task of gradually bringing about an integration of temporal reality with the Gospel, so that the Gospel can reach into the lives of all men and women. More particularly, it has entrusted to them the integral human formation and the faith education of young people. These young people are the ones who will determine whether the world of tomorrow is more closely or loosely bound to Christ.

Lay Catholics in Schools, 81

2.16 The specific vocation of Brothers

According to the terminology currently in use, Institutes which, by reason of their founders' design ... have a character and purpose which do not entail the exercise of Holy Orders are called "Lay Institutes". Nonetheless the Synod pointed out that this terminology does not adequately express the particular nature of the vocation of the members of these Religious Institutes. In fact, although they perform many works in common with lay faithful, these men do so insofar as they are consecrated, and thereby express the spirit of total self-giving to Christ and to the Church, in accordance with their specific charism.

For this reason the Synod fathers, in order to avoid ambiguity and confusion with the secular state of the lay faithful, proposed the terms *Religious Institutes of Brothers*. This proposal is significant, especially when we consider that the term "brother" suggests a rich spirituality. "These Religious are called to be brothers of Christ, deeply united with him, 'the firstborn among many brothers' (Rom 8:29); brothers to one another, in mutual love and working together in the Church in the same service of what is good; brothers to everyone, in their witness to Christ's love for all, specially the lowliest, the neediest; brothers for a greater brotherhood in the Church."

Vita Consecrata, 60

2.18 Just remuneration

As a matter of justice, Brothers who are responsible for the administration of the temporal goods of the Institute should see that our helpers receive a salary that meets the requirements of the laws of the country, and that they benefit from social security systems.

Constitutions, 156.1

Professional organisations whose aim is to protect the interests of those who work in the educational field cannot themselves be divorced from the specific mission of the Catholic school. The rights of the people who are involved in the school must be safeguarded in strict justice. But no matter what material interests may be at stake, or what social and moral conditions affect their professional development, the principle of the Second Vatican Council has a special application in this context: 'The faithful should learn how to distinguish carefully between

those rights and duties which are theirs as members of the Church, and those which they have as members of society. Let them strive to harmonise the two, remembering that in every temporal affair they must be guided by a Christian conscience'. . . Therefore, the special organisations set up to protect the rights of the teachers, parents and pupils must not forget the special mission of the Catholic school to be of service in the Christian education of youth.

Catholic Schools, 79

2.19 Parents and the education of their children

As the Second Vatican Council recalled, “since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. For it devolves on parents to create a family atmosphere so animated with love and reverence for God and others that a well-rounded personal and social development will be fostered among the children. Hence the family is the first school of the social virtues which every society needs”.

The right and duty of parents to give education is *essential*, since it is connected with the transmission of human life; it is *original and primary* with regard to the educational role of others, on account of the uniqueness of the loving relationship between parents and children; and it is *irreplaceable and inalienable*, and therefore incapable of being entirely delegated to others or usurped by others. (36)

In the case of baptised people, the family, called together by word and sacrament as the Church of the home, is both teacher and mother, the same as the worldwide Church. (38)

The right of parents to choose an education in conformity with their religious faith must be absolutely guaranteed. . . Those in society who are in charge of schools must never forget that the parents have been appointed by God himself as the first and principal educators of their children and that their right is completely inalienable. But corresponding to their right, parents have a serious duty to commit themselves totally to a cordial and active relationship with the teachers and the school authorities. (40)

Familiaris Consortio, 36, 38, 40

2.20 Working with parents

There are times when it is advisable to meet with the parents of certain children. You must always tell parents that their children show good potential, and that with a bit of hard work, plenty of care, and co-operation, you will succeed together in bringing them up well.

Rule of 1837, 16

2.22 Co-responsibility and Subsidiarity

. . . Co-responsibility finds expression in the different tasks entrusted to us, and develops within the structures set up by our proper law.

By the principle of subsidiarity, the limits of the powers proper to each level are defined and respected. The governing body makes the decisions that lie within its competence, as defined by the Constitutions. Only when a situation demands it, will a higher level of authority intervene.

Constitutions, 119

2.24 The Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family

It is easy to describe the main lines of the Movement. Apart altogether from vocabulary differences, which may have their origin in different cultures, these main lines are easily recognisable in the lives of several groups and many individuals very close to the work of the Brothers. There is, for example, the clear desire:

- to be apostles of Jesus in their milieu and their state of life,
- to love and to imitate the Blessed Virgin,
- to gather in small groups to share their faith in Jesus Christ and their experience of apostolic activity,
- to witness by their lifestyle to the spirituality of Marcellin Champagnat.

Introduction, Document on the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family, 1990

3: Among the Youth, especially the most neglected

3.1 The young people Champagnat wished to serve above all

You want to engage in the Christian education of youth. That is the end of your vocation and something I thoroughly endorse. However, I want the first fruits of your zeal to be dedicated to the most ignorant and most deprived children. My proposal, therefore, is that you go and teach in the hamlets of the parish.

Life, VII, p. 71

The teaching of children in general and, in particular, poor orphans, is the object of our Foundation. As soon as we have finished the Hermitage House and our means allow us to improve our water-supply, we shall take in children from houses of charity and give them a Christian education. Those who are well behaved and good students will be employed in the house.

Prospectus 1824

The aim of the Congregation is still to run Houses of Providence or a Refuge for down-and-outs who have solved their problems or are still in danger of falling back into the same situations.

Statutes 1828

The Brothers of Mary, whose main aim is the education of the poor, will teach reading, writing, mathematics, the principles of grammar and above all the practice of Religion. Their schools will be non-fee paying and they will negotiate with the communes the means of procuring a decent, not too onerous, living for themselves.

Statutes 1830; First Article.

3.2 Following the Founder's example in showing preference for the poor

. . . Loving the poor as he did, our Founder wanted to send us more especially to them, without excluding others. His first followers, by their austere lifestyle, lived very much on the level of the people they were serving.

Constitutions, 33

In being true to Christ and to our Founder, we love the poor. They are God's blessed ones; they draw down His gifts upon us and evangelise us.

Attuned to the voice of the Church, and in touch with our own vocation, we stand in solidarity with the poor and their just causes. We give them first preference wherever we are and whatever be our task. We love the places and the houses which enable us to share their lot, and we take every opportunity to be in contact with the reality of their daily lives.

Concern for the poor impels us to search out the root causes of their wretchedness, and to free ourselves from prejudice or indifference towards them. It makes us become more responsible in the use of our resources, which we must share with those among them who are most destitute. We avoid giving them the scandal of living in a way that is too comfortable.

Our mission as educators of youth commits us to work to promote justice.

Constitutions, 34

Experience teaches us that the vitality of a religious family is closely linked to the way in which it practises gospel poverty. . . Our preference is directed towards the poor, with whom we share our lives and our work.

Constitutions, 167

3.3 The cries of young people

They have become "signs of the times" for us. We heard:

- The cry of pain from so many poor people all over the world, who are simply swept aside and left by the side of the road.
- The cry of distress from all those young people who are out of work and whose talents are considered to be of no account.
- The cry which rises from the silence of all those who are rejected, all those who have no voice, no freedom, all those who are desperately lonely.
- The cry of despair from so many young people who are trying to make sense out of their life and who are seeking happiness in illusory paradises.

The injustice of the structures which create so much suffering cries out to heaven.

- The cry of the street children, abandoned and condemned to a subhuman existence.
- The cry of the children who are the unjust victims of hunger and war.
- The cry of the children who are discouraged by their failure in school.

- The cry of the children of divorced parents and broken homes.
- The cry of children who are abused or who sell their bodies.

Behind their suffering faces hides the face of Jesus.
Behind all their cries echoes the cry of Jesus from the Cross.

But there are also cries of hope:

- from all those who dedicate themselves to promoting human rights,
- from all those who build peace,
- from all those who push back the tide of misery,
- from all those who share in the mission of education,
- from all those involved in the struggle for respect for life,
- from all those involved in the effort to safeguard all of creation.
- from all those who announce the Good News.

These cries of hope make the seed of the Kingdom germinate and give proof of the presence of the Spirit.

XIX Chapter Message, 5, 6, 7

Signs of hope

- Young people's search and thirst for life and for God, even though confused at times.
- The desire of the poor and marginalized to become active participants of their liberation and development, particularly in the face of repressive structures.
- Citizens who press for the establishment of democratic structures in their countries to obtain a greater respect for human rights and liberty.
- A greater sensitivity for the values of culture.
- Non-Government and Popular Organizations have been formed as a significant element to help victims of catastrophes and wars and those who suffer from hunger and from many other basic necessities.
- Young people who work to establish more just societies and commit themselves to become agents of social change.

Since Vatican II, the Church has deepened its self-understanding and has become more conscious of its mission. We point out three significant calls:

- * The sense of being the People of God.
- * The preferential option for the poor.
- * The vision of a world where the Spirit is at work.

In concrete terms, and in spite of many tensions, changes are taking place in the way the Church approaches its mission:

- dialogue with other religions.
- respect for other cultures.
- the role and participation of lay men and women.
- an emphasis on the community dimension of the Church.
- acknowledgement of the principles of subsidiarity and pluralism.

XIX Chapter, Our Mission, 8 - 10

3.4 Dealing with a difficult pupil

Jean-Baptiste was an orphan, and lived like a young savage. Fr. Champagnat, helped by a few good people, came to help the boy's mother when she was dying in extreme want after being abandoned by the father. After the death of his mother, Jean-Baptiste was not able to live with the children of the charitable neighbours who took him in. So Fr. Champagnat turned him over to the Brothers. Br. Jean Baptiste Furet, who wrote the biography of the Founder, tells us: "Used to a beggar's life and to being free to follow all his bad instincts, he could not put up with the ordered life of a school... He ran away a number of times, preferring to beg his bread and live in want rather than submit in to the discipline of the school... The Brothers lost heart, and finally asked the Founder to send the boy away and leave him to his unhappy lot... They said: "We are wasting our time with this child, and sooner or later, we will have to send him away." Fr Champagnat encouraged the Brothers to have patience, for a number of months. In the end, Jean-Baptiste Berne changed completely. He became well-behaved, docile, "as pious as an angel." After he made his First Communion, he asked if he could become a Brother. "He was a pious

Brother, regular, obedient, and he died a holy death, aged twenty one, in the arms of Fr. Champagnat, after thanking him for all he had done for him.

Br. Nilamon (Jean-Baptiste Berne), died in 1830.

Marist Notebooks, 4, 1993 p. 72; Cf. Life, XXI, pp. 511-513

3.6 Daring and decisive

We believe . . . that we participate in the mission of Jesus sent to announce the Good News to the poor.

And yet today more than ever before. . . the number of poor and marginalized people who do not have the Gospel proclaimed to them is growing.

And so we feel ourselves called. . . to rediscover the 'Montagne' experience by fidelity to Christ and the Founder and to educate in solidarity for solidarity as a powerful instrument of evangelisation. We see this as the best service we can render.(10)

This is the hour for us to accept, decisively and unequivocally, the evangelical call for solidarity.(20)

XIX General Chapter, Solidarity 10, 20

Attentive to the Spirit and open to Youth

We are close to young people in their actual life-situations, taking the risk of going into what may be unexplored areas where those in material and spiritual poverty await the revelation of Christ. In dealing with young people, we show a concern that is humble, simple and forgetful of self.

We make Christ known to them as the Truth who sets them free, as He who calls everyone by name. We help them to discover their vocation in the Church and in the world. We remain ready to respond to the Holy Spirit, who challenges us by the hard facts of the lives of young people, and who urges us on to courageous action.

Constitutions, 83

Discerning the Calls

Fidelity to our mission requires us to be constantly alert to the signs of the times, to the calls of the Church, and to the needs of youth. Such alertness makes it easier for us to adapt structures and to take courageous, even unprecedented decisions.

The choice of our apostolic options is made in community discernment and with the mediation of Superiors.

Constitutions, 168

3.7 Transforming our works

. . . We must not allow (our works) to dominate us or to deprive us of our evangelical freedom. We have to try to find a way of transforming them in such a way that they answer the wishes of the Church and the needs of the young; that they help us to be really what we are called to be, and what we have given our lives for: to be apostles of Jesus Christ and followers of Champagnat.

Br. Benito Arbués, "Walk Peacefully, yet with a Sense of Urgency", Circulars, 1997, 31

3.8 Taking some risks

Let's be daring enough to give up some of our security so as to get closer to the poor and to all the others who don't count for much. Let's not be afraid to become involved with all those people who live on the fringes of society.

XIX General Chapter, Message, 20

In the modern age, missionary activity has been carried out especially in isolated regions which are far from centres of civilisation and which are hard to penetrate because of difficulties of communication, language or climate. Today the image of mission *ad gentes* is perhaps changing: efforts should be concentrated on the big cities, where new customs and styles of living arise together with new forms of culture and communication, which then influence the wider population. It is true that the 'option for the neediest' means that we should not overlook the most abandoned and isolated human groups, but it is also true that individuals or small groups cannot be evangelised if we neglect the centres where a new humanity, so to speak, is emerging, and where new models of development are taking shape. The future of the younger nations is being shaped in the cities.

Speaking of the future, we cannot forget the young, who in many countries comprise more than half the population. How do we bring the message of Christ to non-Christian young people who represent the future of entire continents? Clearly, the ordinary means of pastoral work are not sufficient: what are needed are associations, institutions, special centres and groups, and cultural and social initiatives for young people.

Redemptoris Missio, 37 (b)

3.9 A sense of urgency

It is important to create new ways of being present which could serve as reference points for re-creating our life-in-mission according to the charism of Father Champagnat. The re-founding of the Institute needs these new foundations in order to make visible and relevant the intuition of Father Champagnat, who was ever sensitive to the needs of the time, especially to the plight of deprived children and youth. I know it is easy to become discouraged, given the limitations of our human resources, but this is where the strength or weakness of faith comes in.

“Walk Peacefully, yet with a Sense of Urgency”, Circular of Superior General, 1997, 31

... Our thoughts go to the young generations who are outside the school circuit, to the 130 million children and adolescents who are unable to attend school and to the 100 million or more who abandon school before completing their education (cf. UNESCO Report to the International Commission on Education for the XXI Century, 1996). This reality, joined to the poverty of families, should move you to invest courageously your educational charism, born of the fire of charity, in new foundations where the various forms of poverty are worst, and in pedagogical responses adapted to the new requirements of the integral formation of youth.

Letter to Superiors General from the Congregation for Catholic Education, 1996, p.11

The Chapter asks the Institute to give priority to its commitment to the most needy:

Each Province will undertake a process of discernment. Following this discernment, it will put into action, during the next four years, at least one major programme involving Marist presence among the most neglected children and young people. This programme should be planned and implemented in collaboration with laypeople.

XIX General Chapter, Message, 27

We believe that a preferential option for the poor is a Gospel imperative; it commits us, in our educational mission, to work for the promotion of justice, being courageous, even at the risk of entering unexplored territory.

And yet, today more than ever before ... in spite of advances in technology, illiteracy is increasing.

And so we feel called ... to place an emphasis on solidarity as a basic principle of our educational mission and to put our works at the service of the poor.

XIX General Chapter, Solidarity, 9

To commit those responsible at each level of government to give preference to new projects designed for the least favoured children and young people.

To urge all administrative units to a greater collaboration among themselves, facilitating greater mobility of Brothers when a solidarity project requires it.

XIX General Chapter, Solidarity, 14, 15

4: We are sowers of the Good News

4.1 The mission of the Institute

“To impart knowledge of Our Lord ought, therefore, to be the goal of all your catechism lessons. . . The more you make him known, the more you make him loved, the more you weaken the reign of sin, the more you establish that of virtue and the more you ensure the salvation of your pupils.” In a great number of letters, he reiterated this advice, urging the Brothers to remind the children constantly how much Jesus loved them and how much, therefore, they were obliged to love him.

Life, VI, p. 331

4.3 We educate, we evangelise

The teacher . . . is not simply a professional person whose contribution is limited to the systematic transmission of knowledge in a school; “teacher” is to be understood as “educator” - one who helps to form human persons. . .

Lay Catholics in Schools, 16

4.4 Integral formation of the human person and ongoing social development

In both accepting and proclaiming the Gospel in the power of the Spirit the Church becomes at one and the same time an ‘evangelising and evangelised’ community, and for this very reason she is made the *servant of all*. In her the lay faithful participate in the mission of service to the person and to society. . .

Having received the responsibility of manifesting to the world the mystery of God that shines forth in Jesus Christ, *the Church likewise awakens one person to another*, giving a sense of one’s existence, opening each to

the whole truth about the individual and of each person's final destiny. From this perspective the Church is called, in virtue of her very mission of evangelisation, to serve all humanity. Such service is rooted primarily in the extraordinary and profound fact that 'through the Incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion to every person'.

For this reason the person 'is the primary route that the Church must travel in fulfilling her mission: the individual is the *primary and fundamental way for the Church*, the way traced by Christ himself, the way that leads invariably through the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption'.

Christifideles Laici, 36

The integral formation of the human person, which is the purpose of education, includes the development of all the human faculties of the students, their preparation for professional life, the formation of ethical and social sense in them, imparting an awareness of the transcendental, and giving them a religious education. . . (17)

The vocation of every Catholic educator includes the work of ongoing social development: to form men and women who will be ready to take their place in society, preparing them for the social commitment to work for the improvement of social structures, bringing them more into conformity with the Gospel. Thus, they will form human beings who will make human society more peaceful, caring and community-minded. . . in short, "a civilisation of love".(19)

Lay Catholics in Schools, 17, 19

4.5 The evangelising mission of the Church

For the Church, evangelising means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new . . . for the Church it is a question not only of preaching the Gospel in ever wider geographic areas to ever greater numbers of people, but also of affecting and as it were upsetting, through the power of the Gospel, humankind's criteria of judgement, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life, which are in contrast with the Word of God and the plan of salvation.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 18, 19

The Church has learnt that works directed to justice and human promotion are an indispensable part of its evangelising mission.

John Paul II to the Bishops at Puebla, 1979

Inter-religious dialogue is a part of the Church's evangelising mission . . .

Redemptoris Missio, 55

Deeper conversion of all

In this dialogue of salvation, Christians and others are called to collaborate with the Spirit of the Risen Lord who is universally present and active. . . to deepen their religious commitment, to respond with increasing sincerity to God's personal call and gracious self-gift. . . (The aim of inter-religious dialogue) is a deeper conversion of all towards God. (This) implies, on the one hand, mutual acceptance of differences, or even of contradictions, and, on the other, respect for the free decisions of persons taken according to the dictates of their conscience.

Dialogue and Proclamation, Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, 1991, 40, 41

4.6 The Reign of God

. . . The Reign of God is meant for all of humanity, and all people are called to be members of it. . . To emphasise this fact, Jesus drew especially near to those on the margins of society, and showed them special favour . . . The liberation and salvation brought by the Reign of God come to human persons both in their physical and spiritual dimensions. Two gestures are characteristic of Jesus' mission: healing and forgiving. . . (14)

The Reign of God aims at transforming human relationships; it grows gradually as people slowly learn to love, forgive and serve one another . . . Its nature, therefore, is one of communion among all human beings - with one another and with God. The Reign of God is the concern of everyone: individuals, society, and the world. Working for the Reign of God means acknowledging and promoting God's activity, which is present in human history and transforms it. Building the Reign of God means working for liberation from evil in all its forms. In a word, the Reign of God is the manifestation and the realisation of God's plan of salvation in all its fullness. (15)

It is true that the Reign of God as it takes shape in time can also be found beyond the confines of the Church among peoples everywhere, to the extent that they live 'Gospel values' and are open to the working of the Spirit who breathes when and where it wills (cf. Jn 3:8). But it must immediately be added that this temporal dimension of the Reign remains incomplete unless it is related to the Reign of the God present in the Church and straining

towards eschatological fullness. . . The Church is the sacrament of salvation for all humankind, and her activity is not limited only to those who accept her message. She is a dynamic force in humanity's journey towards the eschatological Reign of God, and is the sign and promoter of Gospel values. . . (20)

Redemptoris Missio, 12 - 20

4.7 Marcellin's desire to lead children to Jesus

If he met children in his travels, he immediately struck up a conversation with them, and after talking for a short while, he would kindly ask them whether they had made their First Communion and whether they had attended the catechism classes in the church; he skilfully discovered whether they knew the mysteries of religion and the other truths necessary for salvation; he got them to repeat these, or taught them what they were, without their even suspecting that he was doing so. He was often heard to say; "I cannot see a child without wanting to let him know how much Jesus Christ has loved him and how much he should, in turn, love the divine Saviour."

Life, XX, p. 492

4.8 Presenting Jesus Christ

Evangelisation will always contain - as the foundation, centre and at the same time summit of its dynamism - a clear proclamation that, in Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, who died and rose from the dead, salvation is offered to all men, as a gift of God's grace and mercy.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 27

The aim of our service of evangelisation is the formation of the disciples of Jesus Christ. We do this especially by the witness of our lives and by our ability to listen to, and engage in dialogue with the people we meet.

We give pride of place to catechesis. We devote ourselves whole-heartedly to this ministry, according to our capabilities, and we trust in the Lord's help and in the care that Mary has for us. We show a special interest in apostolic youth movements, which are complementary to catechesis.

Because of the strong bonds that link evangelisation and human development, we help those who are in need and co-operate with those who work for justice and peace.

Constitutions, 86

4.10 Jesus, who unveils what it means to be fully human

The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of the human person take on light. . . (Jesus) reveals what it means to be human and makes our supreme calling clear. . . He who is the "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15), is himself the perfect human being. . . By his incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every person. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind, acted by human choice, and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made like us in all things except sin.

Gaudium et Spes, 22

4.14 Apostles to youth

In founding his Institute, Father Champagnat had more in mind than providing primary instruction for the children or even, than teaching them the truths of religion; he wanted to educate them, in the sense that we have just explained. "If it were only a question", he said, "of teaching the children secular subjects, the Brothers would not be necessary, because secular masters could do that; if our only aim were to give religious instruction, we could confine ourselves to being simply catechists, bringing children together for an hour each day and getting them to recite their Christian doctrine. But, we aim at something better; we want to educate the children, that is to instruct them in their duty, to teach them to practise it, to give them a Christian spirit and attitudes and to form them to religious habits and the virtues possessed by a good Christian and a good citizen.

Life, XXIII, p. 535

For a Brother, zeal is the philosopher's stone, it works like alchemy, turning all zeal's actions into gold. . . The zeal you have leading children to God will have transformed into gold, that is, into acts of virtue, your most ordinary actions and all your classroom performance. Oh! What a mighty difference there is between a Brother who teaches as an apostle out of a spirit of zeal, and one who does so simply as a school master carrying out a profession.

Life, XXIII, p. 545

The Greatness of the Teacher's Mission

The educator shares essentially in what is most noble in the divine parenthood . . .

The Church has always seen education as an apostolate, like the priesthood. . .

Opinions, Conferences, XLI, p. 433

4.15 Holistic education

To bring up a child involves more than teaching him to read and write, more than initiating him into the subjects which normally make up primary instruction. That teaching would be adequate for man, if he were meant only for this world; but he has quite a different destiny - he is made for heaven and God; and it is for these that he must be brought up. To educate a child, therefore, is to show him this high and sublime destiny and to give him the means to reach it; in a word, it is to form him into a good Christian and a virtuous citizen.

Life, XXIII, p. 534

4.16 Vision of the human person and of the world

All education is influenced by a particular concept of what it means to be a human person. In today's pluralistic world, the Catholic educator is called consciously to inspire his or her activity with the Christian concept of the person, in communion with the Magisterium of the Church.

It is a concept which includes a defence of human rights, but as something befitting the dignity of a child of God; it speaks liberty in its most complete sense, freedom from sin itself through Christ; it points to the most exalted destiny of each human person, which is the definitive and total possession of God Himself, through love. It establishes the strictest possible relationship of solidarity among all persons, through mutual love and in ecclesial community. It calls for the fullest development of all that is human, because we have been made masters of the world by its creator.

Finally, it proposes Christ, Incarnate Son of God and perfect Man, as both model and means.

Lay Catholics in Schools, 18

Educating a child

1. Educating a child means *enlightening his mind* and helping him to know religion;
2. Educating a child means *reforming his evil inclinations* . . .
3. Educating a child means *training his heart* and developing his good dispositions.
4. Educating a child means *forming his conscience*.
5. Educating a child means *training him in piety*.
6. Giving religious instruction means *making virtue and religion loved*.
7. Educating a child means *training his will*.
8. Education also and especially means *training the child's judgement*.
9. Educating a child means *moulding and polishing his character*.
10. To work at educating a child means *to maintain constant vigilance over him*.
11. To give a child an education means *to inspire him with love of work*, . . .
12. To give a child an education means *giving him the knowledge he will need* in his position and station in life.
13. To work at imparting a good education also means *seeing to the child's physical* as well as his intellectual, moral and religious growth.
14. Finally, to educate a child *means to give him the means to acquire the total perfection of his being*, making this child a complete person..

Opinions, Conferences, XXXV, pp. 368-377

4.17 Pupils as active agents in their own education

God holds first place in education because the child absolutely needs his help in order to work personally at his education. Piety is the first thing a child needs to carry on the work of his education . . .

The child has to make a sustained effort against his own nature; we can help and encourage him, but in the final analysis, it is up to him to uproot evil, cultivate good, correct his defects and develop his qualities . . .

Opinions, Conferences, XLI, p. 442

4.18 Respecting consciences

One of the most important things in the children's education, is to give them a love for Religion and induce them to fulfil their duties out of love . . .

Avoid constraint in religious matters. Religion does not impose itself by force, it has to penetrate the heart like a gentle dewdrop. Jesus Christ Himself never wanted anything done through constraint: "If you wish to enter into life," He said, "keep the Commandments of God." It is of the utmost importance to understand that fully, because moral constraint doesn't make children virtuous, but hypocrites . . .

4.19 An inviting manner

With kindness and understanding, (educators) will accept the students as they are, helping them to see that doubt and indifference are common phenomena, and that the reasons for this are readily understandable. But they will invite students in a friendly manner to seek and discover together the message of the Gospel, the source of joy and peace. The teachers' attitudes and behaviour should be those of one preparing the soil.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 71

4.20 Freedom and responsibility

Deep within our conscience we discover a law which we have not laid on ourselves but which we must obey. Its voice, ever calling us to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in our heart at the right moment . . . For we have in our heart a law inscribed by God . . . Our conscience is our most secret core and our sanctuary. There we are alone with God whose voice echoes in our depths.

Gaudium et Spes, 16

We need to bring the *Gospel of life* to the heart of every man and woman and to make it penetrate every part of society. (80)

To be truly a people at the service of life we must proclaim these truths constantly and courageously from the very first proclamation of the Gospel, and therefore *in catechesis, in the various forms of preaching, in personal dialogue, and in all educational activities*. . . We shall find important points of contact and dialogue also with non-believers in our common commitment to the establishment of a new culture of life.(82)

Evangelium Vitae, 80-82

4.21 Dialogue of life

. . . the so-called 'dialogue of life' through which believers of different religions bear witness before each other in daily life to their own human and spiritual values, and help each other to live according to those values in order to build a more just and caring society.

Redemptoris Missio, 57

4.22 Inculturation

Inculturation is not a matter of purely external adaptation, but means "the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration into Christianity and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures". The process is thus a profound and all-embracing one, which involves the Christian message and also the Church's reflection and practice. . . (The Church) transmits to (different cultures) her own values, at the same time taking the good elements that already exist in them and renewing them from within. . .

Redemptoris Missio, 52,53

4.23 Evangelising culture and cultures

What matters is to evangelise man's culture and cultures . . . always taking the person as one's starting point and always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God. . . The split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 20

Service to the individual and to human society is expressed and finds its fulfilment through *the creation and the transmission of culture*. . . (Among other things) culture must be held as the common good of every people, the expression of its dignity, liberty and creativity, and the testimony of its course through history. In particular, only from within and through culture does the Christian faith become a part of history and the creator of history.

The Church is fully aware of a pastoral urgency that calls for an absolutely special concern for culture in those circumstances where the development of a culture becomes disassociated not only from Christian faith but even from human values, as well as in those situations where science and technology are powerless in giving an adequate response to the pressing questions of truth and well-being that burn people's hearts.

For this reason the Church calls upon the lay faithful to be present, as signs of courage and intellectual creativity, in the privileged places of culture, that is the world of education - school and university - in places of scientific and technological research, the areas of artistic creativity and work in the humanities. Such a presence is destined not only for the recognition and possible purification of the elements that critically burden existing culture, but also for the elevation of these cultures through the riches which have their source in the Gospel and the Christian faith.

The presence of Religious

Because of their special consecration, their particular experience of the gifts of the Spirit, their constant listening to the word of God, their practice of discernment, their rich heritage of pedagogical traditions built up since the establishment of their Institute, and their profound grasp of spiritual truth, consecrated persons are able to be especially effective in educational activities and to offer a specific contribution to the work of other educators.

Equipped with this charism, consecrated persons can give life to educational undertakings permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity, in which young people are helped to mature humanly under the action of the Spirit. In this way a community of learning becomes an experience of grace, where the teaching programme contributes to uniting into a harmonious whole the human and the divine, the Gospel and culture, faith and life.

Vita Consecrata, 96

4.26 Youth, the Hope of the Church

To the people of our century, to all of you, dear young people, who hunger and thirst for truth, the Church offers herself as a travelling companion. She offers the eternal Gospel message and entrusts you with an exalting apostolic task: to be protagonists of the New Evangelisation.

As the faithful guardian and representative of the wealth of faith transmitted to her by Christ, she is ready to enter into a dialogue with the new generations in order to answer their needs and expectations, and to find in frank and open dialogue the most appropriate way to reach the source of divine salvation. . .

To you young people the task of becoming communicators of hope and peacemakers is entrusted in a special way (cf. Mt 5:9) in a world that is ever more in need of credible witnesses and consistent messengers. Know how to speak to the hearts of your contemporaries, who thirst for truth and happiness, in a constant, even if often unconscious, search for God.

Message of Pope John Paul II to Youth, 1993, 4,5

The Synod wished to give particular attention to the young. And rightly so. In a great many countries of the world, they represent half of entire populations. . . Youth make up an exceptional potential and a great challenge for the future of the Church. . . Youth must not be simply be considered as an object of pastoral concern for the Church: in fact, young people are and ought to be encouraged to be active on behalf of the Church as *leading characters in evangelisation and participation in the renewal of society*. Youth is a time of an especially intensive *discovery* of a 'self' and a 'choice of life'. It is a time for *growth* which ought to progress "in wisdom, age and grace before God and people" (Lk 2:52). . . The Church has so much to talk about with youth, and youth have so much to share with the Church.

Christifideles Laici, 46

4.27 God's presence to individuals and religious traditions beyond the Church

We cannot limit ourselves to the two thousand years which have passed since the birth of Christ. We need to go further back, to embrace the whole of the action of the Holy Spirit even before Christ - from the beginning, throughout the world, and especially in the economy of the Old Covenant. For this action has been exercised, in every place and at every time, indeed in every individual, according to the eternal plan of salvation, whereby this action was to be closely linked with the mystery of the incarnation and redemption. . .

But . . . we need to look and go further afield, knowing that "the wind blows where it will". . . (cf. Jn 3:8). The Second Vatican Council. . . reminds us of the Holy Spirit's activity also "outside the visible Body of the Church." The Council speaks precisely of "all people of good will in whose hearts grace is active invisibly. . ."

Dominum et Vivificantem, 53

In Christ, God calls all peoples to himself and he wishes to share with them the fullness of his revelation and love. He does not fail to make himself present in many ways, not only to individuals but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches, of which their religions are the main and essential expression, even when they contain 'gaps, insufficiencies and errors'.

Redemptoris Missio, 55

4.28 People of all faiths praying together

Every authentic prayer is under the influence of the Holy Spirit "who intercedes insistently for us. . . , because we do not know how to pray as we ought," but he prays in us "with unutterable groanings" and "the One who searches the hearts knows what are the desires of the Spirit" (cf. Rom. 8: 26-27). We can indeed maintain that every authentic prayer is called forth by the Holy Spirit, who is mysteriously present in the heart of every person.

4.29 The salvation of all

The mystery of salvation reaches out to (those unaware that Jesus Christ is the source of their salvation) in a way known to God, through the invisible action of the Holy Spirit. Concretely, it will be in the sincere practice of what is good in their own religious tradition and by following the dictates of their conscience that the members of other religions respond positively to God's invitation and receive salvation in Jesus Christ, even while they do not recognise or acknowledge him as their Saviour.

Dialogue and Proclamation, Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, 29

4.30 Building Christian Unity

It is absolutely clear that ecumenism, the movement promoting Christian unity, *is not just some sort of "appendix"* which is added to the Church's traditional activity. Rather, ecumenism is an organic part of her life and work, and consequently must pervade all that she is and does.

Love is the great undercurrent which gives life and adds vigour to the movement towards unity. This love finds its most complete expression in *common prayer*. . . Fellowship in prayer leads people to look at the Church and Christianity in a new way.

Ut Unum Sint, 20, 21, 23 28

4.31 One God, One Christ, Convergent paths

(Dialogue) is demanded by deep respect for everything that has been brought about in human beings by the Spirit who blows where he wills. Through dialogue, the Church seeks to uncover the "seeds of the Word", a "ray of truth which enlightens all men"; these are found in individuals and in the religious traditions of mankind. . .

Redemptoris Missio, 56, 57

The Church's relationship with the Muslims

"The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day."

Lumen Gentium, 16

4.32 A diversity of religious settings

Looking at today's world from the viewpoint of evangelisation, we can distinguish three situations:

First, there is the situation which the Church's missionary activity addresses: peoples, groups and socio-cultural contexts in which Christ and his Gospel are not known, or which lack Christian communities sufficiently mature to be able to incarnate the faith in their own environment and proclaim it to other groups. This is mission *ad gentes* in the proper sense of the term.

Secondly, there are Christian communities with adequate and solid ecclesial structures. They are fervent in their faith and in Christian living. They bear witness to the Gospel in their surroundings and have a sense of commitment to the universal mission. In these communities the Church carries out her activity of **pastoral care**.

Thirdly, there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptised have lost a living sense of faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a "**new evangelisation**" or a "re-evangelisation".

Redemptoris Missio, 33

4.33 Children and the Kingdom of God

1. A child is the noblest and most perfect of visible creatures; he is "God's greatest miracle", as St. Augustine says;

2. A child is the image and likeness of God. Like God, he is a trinity: he has life, intelligence, reason and love; these qualities constitute the basis of his being. Like the Father, he has existence; like the Son, he has intelligence; like the Holy Spirit, he has love; like Father, Son and Holy Spirit, he has in his being, in his intelligence, in his love, one single happiness and one single life.

3. A child is a son of God, a son of the Most High (Ps 81,6). Yes, no matter how small, weak and vulnerable he may seem to you, he is not only called a son of God, but he really is one, and he is one even now, beneath the rags which cover him.

4. A child is the conquest and the price of the blood of God our Saviour; he is a member and brother of Jesus Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, one in whom God takes delight.
5. A child is the hope of heaven, the friend and brother of the angels and saints. He is the heir of the heavenly kingdom and the eternal palms.
6. A child is one of the most loveable and most beautiful things on earth, “the flower and adornment of the human race”, as St. Macarius says.
7. A child is your peer, bone of your bones, another self.
8. A child is a field God has given you to cultivate, a tender sprout, a weak plant who will one day become a great tree loaded down with the fruit of all the virtues, casting far and wide its glorious shade.
9. A child is a little rivulet, a spring just bubbling up, but he may become a majestic river if you are like the skilled engineer of whom scripture speaks, if you carefully channel his docile water and never let foreign, polluted or bitter water disturb his heart.
10. A child is the focus of your work, your fatigue, your practice of virtue. He will be your consolation at the moment of death, your defender before the judgement seat of God, your crown and your glory in heaven.
11. A child is God’s blessing, the hope of the earth whose wealth and treasure he already is, and whose strength and glory he will one day become.
12. In a word, a child is the whole human race, all of humanity; he is humankind, no more, no less. He is entitled to respect, and must show respect to others. Such is the child you must respect.

Opinions, Conferences, XXXVIII, pp. 398-402

4.35 The work of the Spirit

It must be said that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelisation: it is he who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel, and it is he who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood. But it can equally be said that he is the goal of evangelisation: he alone stirs up the new creation, the new humanity. . . Through the Holy Spirit the Gospel penetrates to the heart of the world, for it is he who causes people to discern the signs of the times - signs willed by God - which evangelisation reveals and puts to use within history.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 75

4.36 Renew the face of the earth

In our own day, too, the Spirit is the *principal agent of the new evangelisation*. Hence it will be important to gain a renewed appreciation of the Spirit as the One who builds the Kingdom of God within the course of history and prepares for its full manifestation in Jesus Christ, stirring people’s hearts and quickening in our world the seeds of the full salvation which will come at the end of time.

Tertio Millenio Adveniente, 45

4.37 “I was the mainstay of the new-born Church”

“The Society must begin a new Church over again. I do not mean that in a literal sense, that would be blasphemy. But still, in a certain sense, yes, we must begin a new Church. The Society of Mary, like the Church, began with simple, poorly educated men; but since then the Church has developed and encompassed everything.”

Father Colin, The Mayet Memoirs, Sept. 27, 1846

4.38 Unless the Lord builds the house . . .

There is no virtue which Father Champagnat so much recommended to the Brothers as trust. He commented innumerable times on the first two verses of the psalm, “Unless the Lord builds the house” and his reflections on them would fill volumes.

Life, III, p. 290

4.39 Trust in Mary

Mary, our Mother . . . you have gathered us under your banner to promote the glory of your Divine Son, notwithstanding the opposition of the world. If you do not come to our aid we shall fail, and, like a lamp without oil, become extinguished. But if this work should perish, it is not our work that fails, but yours, for you have done everything for us. We therefore trust in your powerful protection and we shall trust in it always. Amen

from Marcellin’s Prayer for Vocations, Life, p. 93

4.41 Our sense of calling

“My dear Brothers,” he pointed out to us one day, “what a high value God sets on the function that you perform! How fortunate you are to have chosen such a noble task! What you do is what Christ himself did when on earth:

you teach the same mysteries, the same truths. . ." To bring up a child, that is to instruct him in the truths of religion, to form him to virtue and to teach him to love God, is a more sublime and more noble function than governing the world.

Life, XX, pp. 496,497

The Teacher as co-worker with God

"Paul planted, Apollo watered"; teachers do what they can, but neither he who plants nor he who waters counts for anything. There is only one person who truly counts in a man's education: he who gives the increase, which is to say, he who develops strengthens, enlightens, brings up - and that means God. . .

So the teacher is only God's co-worker in the task of education; but to be fit to work together with God, one must obviously be closely united to him and share generously in his Spirit. . .

Opinions, Conferences, XLI, pp. 440, 441

The Children are confided to us by God

At the moment when someone entrusts a child to you, imagine Jesus Christ saying to you, as Pharaoh's daughter said of Moses whom she had just taken from the Nile, "Take this child and raise him for me; I will repay you for your work. This is the most valuable thing I have on earth: I entrust him to you . . ."

Opinions, Conferences, XLI, p. 442

5: With a distinctive Marist style

5.1 The "Golden Rule" for Marist educators:

To bring up children properly **we must love them; we must love them all equally**. To love the children is to devote oneself completely to teaching them and to take all the means that an industrious zeal can think of in order to form them to virtue and piety.

Life, XXIII, p. 538

To succeed in the noble ministry of teaching, one must have great esteem for that task, and **one must love children**. One must dedicate the entire strength of one's being one's mind, one's heart, one's activity, one's whole life, to the accomplishment of one's duty. One must not share oneself; that is to say, become weakened and divided. The teacher's total affection and concern must be directed toward his students. If he carries out his mission as though it were a trade, or like a mercenary; if he does not love what he does, nor his students; if he does not give himself totally to their education, he will not do a bit of good.

Education does not consist in either discipline or teaching; it is not imparted by courses in politeness or even in religion, but by constant daily contact between students and their teachers, by personal advice, attention to details, encouragement, corrections, and all the other sorts of lessons to which this uninterrupted contact gives rise.

But in order to cultivate these young souls this way, one by one, with the assiduousness their needs and their frailty require, one must love children. When one loves them, one does more for them, one does better, with less difficulty and greater success. Why ?

Because words and actions which are inspired by true affection carry with them a special, penetrating, irresistible force. A teacher who loves can warn and advise; the love which comes through in his words gives them more charm and force; his advice is received as a sign of friendship, and followed with docility. A teacher who loves can reprimand and punish, because there is neither prejudice nor rigor in his severity, and the student is more upset about having disappointed his teacher who, he knows, loves him than about the punishment he received.

So love your students; fight ceaselessly against the indifference, weariness and annoyance their faults so easily arouse in you. Without closing your eyes to their defects, because you must correct them, keep in mind at the same time all the pleasant qualities they have, which deserve your attention. Look at the innocence which shines in their peaceful faces and unwrinkled brows, the naiveté of their statements, the sincerity of their contrition even though it may not last long, the honesty of their resolutions even though they break them quickly, the generosity of their efforts even though it is rarely sustained for long. Give them credit for the good they do, no matter how imperfect, and for all the evil they do not do.

Finally, whatever they may do, keep loving them as long as they are with you, since this is the only way to work with any success at reforming them. **Love them all equally** - - no outcasts, no favourites; or rather, let each of them think he is favoured and privileged because he receives personal proof of your affection.

Who entrusted these children to you ? God and their families.

Now, God is all love for human beings, and whoever governs in his name should imitate his providence and share his love. Their fathers and mothers have entrusted these children to you, but are you unaware that the heart of a father or mother is an unquenchable furnace of love ? Then in the name of God and of their families, love these children; only then will you be worthy and capable of raising them.

Opinions, Conferences, XLI, pp. 311-312

5.3 Presence among the young:

Dear Brother Barthélemy and your dear fellow worker,

. . . I also know that you have many children in your school; you will consequently have many copies of your virtues because the children will model themselves on you, and will certainly follow your example.

What a wonderful and sublime occupation you have ! You are constantly among the very people with whom Jesus Christ was so delighted to be, since he expressly forbade his disciples to prevent children from coming to him. And, you, dear friend, far from preventing them, are making every effort to lead them to him. What a reception you will have in your turn, from this divine and generous master, who does not let even a glass of cold water go without its reward !

How happy I would be if I could be a teacher, and devote myself even more directly to educating these impressionable children !

Champagnat
Letters, 14

. . . Of all the lessons you can, and indeed must, give your pupils, the first and principal one, the most meritorious for you and the most efficacious for them, is your example. Education is assimilated more easily and makes a deeper impression by way of the eyes than by way of the ears.

Opinions, Conferences, XLI, p. 310

5.4 Being close to young people and their world

We are close to young people in their actual life situations, taking the risk of going into what may be unexplored areas where those in material and spiritual poverty await the revelation of Christ. . .

Constitutions, 83

5.5 Discipline in the Marist tradition

Preventing faults and forestalling mistakes

For penances to be worthwhile, they should only be used rarely and with a great deal of discretion.

The first duty of teachers in maintaining discipline is therefore to anticipate by means of watchfulness and irreproachable conduct on their own part, the breaches of rules, and lapses in behaviour. The pupils are seldom themselves fully to blame. More often than not it is more the fault of those in charge. The chief means of preventing faults which are at the disposal of teachers are:- . . .

To maintain their own equanimity, to be always composed and at the same time have a prepossessing appearance. What soils everything in a school is a fickle Master, who is sometimes joyful and other times sad, whose expectations and oversights vary from one moment to the next, who rejects at one moment what he demands at another, who acts at the instigation of others or on whim, who puts up with everything one day and punishes everything the next, and who gives everything to some pupils and nothing to others.

Never to lose sight of the pupils and keep them always busy, to be meticulous about doing things on time; for nothing restrains the pupils better, or brings them more quickly or surely back to their duties if they are tempted to swerve from them, than this vigilance and punctuality.

To give them advice when required, to teach them their lessons in a benevolent way to reproach them gently and firmly, never provoking them beyond endurance when they are obviously in bad humour or ready to flare up, and never putting together in one group, children who would be unable to keep themselves from chattering.

Guide (1853), pp. 55-56

Developing personal responsibility

Supervision itself, though preventing many breaches of discipline, cannot eliminate them all. The Master must therefore bring weight to bear upon the child's will, using in turn, or simultaneously, diverse motives that impel to action. These are: the appeal to reason and to the conscience, laudable emulation, the desire for praise and reward, (the fear of punishment etc.)

The Teacher's Guide, (1931) 129

Ingredients of good discipline

Though discipline is absolutely necessary in a school, the kind of discipline must be of a nature to promote the education of the pupil, to train his will and establish him in virtue. . . .

To ensure this end, discipline must be paternal, otherwise it will do the pupil more harm than good. If discipline is not of the paternal type, it degrades those who have to submit to it, and still more him who imposes it. Now to be paternal, discipline must have religion, affection and kindness as its basis.

1. Religion reinforces and maintains discipline, because the pupil acting from supernatural motives, learns that authority and law have their source in God.

2. Affection. - A teacher who loves his pupils is in a position to instruct them..

The affectionate teacher is able to warn and advise his pupils, and his advice is accepted as a favour and followed as an oracle. Moreover, he is able to reprove and punish whenever the general or the individual good demands it.

3. Kindness. . . . A teacher will zealously devote himself to the instruction of his pupils, though he foresees he will encounter poorly favoured minds which acquire knowledge only slowly and with difficulty, fickle characters that cannot apply themselves to work, that readily forget and take nothing seriously, study even less than anything else, inconstant natures that are easily distracted and forget today what was taught them yesterday. He realises all this and yet it does not discourage or annoy him; he proceeds with redoubled zeal and remains ever kind and condescending. . . .

The leniency here recommended is that which is dictated by reason, prudence and charity, and not the indulgence which arises from weakness of character.

The Teacher's Guide, (1931) pp. 107-112

Punishing as little as possible

You must also pardon and overlook a large number of faults. The whole class should never be punished when a grave misdemeanour has taken place. What must be done in such cases is to try to find out those responsible for the disturbance and deal with them accordingly. If you cannot identify them then you might give the impression that you can. Children are children. There are days, when you have no idea what is making them light-headed and indisposed to work. On such occasions, it is better not to force a show-down, which would only embitter and irritate them; but to be patient and give them serious work to do. By conducting yourself in this manner, you will never compromise your authority. You will be fair and sparing in imposing sanctions, and the pupils will be convinced that they are being punished only out of duty and because they are loved.

Guide (1853), pp. 56-57

Attitude while administering correction

In reprimands and punishments, a Brother ought to possess his soul in peace and never display signs of anger or bad temper. Prompted by feelings of anger the punishment of a pupil is no longer a correction but a vengeful act.

Contrariwise, when punishment is imposed with calmness and enforced in the same spirit, it manifests the justice and resoluteness of the Master and commands respect.

A Brother should never be afraid to say to a pupil: "I shall not correct you today, or just now, because I feel too angry."

Guide (1853), pp. 60-61

Characteristics of punishments

Besides being *rarely-imposed* as well as *moderately* and *calmly inflicted*, they should moreover be just in themselves, *proportionate* to the offence and, *kindly* and *prudent*.

Guide (1853), pp. 62-63

Corporal Punishment

"Is it by striking them with the cane," queried the Founder, "that children are to be brought up and inspired with a love of virtue? No. . . . It is strange that, in the education of children, methods are used which would be considered unsuitable even for animals. . . . Such methods of education flout the dignity of human beings; they degrade the child and draw down scorn and hatred on their perpetrators; they introduce disorder into the school, destroying

feelings of love, esteem, and the mutual confidence and respect between teachers and pupils; finally, they wipe out the benefits from all care bestowed on the child.”

Life, XXII, p. 529

Expulsions

Expulsion from the school, either temporary or final. This is the last and severest of all penalties. This is only inflicted in extreme cases where there is no longer any hope of amendment or where the conduct of the offender constitutes a danger to his fellow pupils. Open offences against morals, persistent insubordination, scandalous expressions against religion, and other serious faults of a like nature are usually cases entailing final expulsionWhen expulsion becomes a necessity, arrangements should be made with the parents, if at all possible, so that they may withdraw their child quietly and thus avoid unpleasant consequences.

Guide (1853), p.72

5.6 Being simple

... In dealing with young people, we show a concern that is humble, simple, and forgetful of self.

Constitutions, 83

5.7 Simplicity and coherence in our lives

The teacher should also draw from the depths of his soul true ideas, good, noble and virtuous sentiments - everything which makes up the moral life. If all of that is only in his words and not in his way of acting, it will be no more than useless noise, a dead letter, rather than life bringing forth life, and virtue producing virtue.

Opinions, Conferences, XLI, p. 432

5.8 Humility, Simplicity and Modesty

Humility is a basic element in our relationships since it has to do with clear self-understanding. It means knowing and accepting the truth about ourselves, being honest with ourselves, being free of pretension and self-delusion. Simplicity has to do with the way we live the truth of ourselves, giving us a personal transparency which allows others to know us and to relate to us as we are. Modesty can be seen as the result of humility and simplicity especially in the respect that we show to others, our sensitivity towards them in what we say and in what we do. These Marist virtues give “a quality of authenticity and kindness to our relationships with our Brothers and with other people that we meet”.

Br. Charles Howard, “Marist Apostolic Spirituality”, Circulars, 1992, p. 492

5.9 Our Family Spirit

Our pedagogy of presence and our family spirit make a powerful impact on a society which often breeds selfishness, individualism and loneliness.

XIX General Chapter, Message, 12

In calling ourselves BROTHERS, we proclaim that we belong to a family united in Christ’s love.

The home at Nazareth is the model for our family spirit, which consists of love and forgiveness, support and help, forgetfulness of self, openness to others and joy.

Constitutions, 6

5.10 As members of a loving family

I beg of you, my dear Brothers, with all the affection of my soul, and by all the love you have for me, do all you can to ensure that charity is always maintained among you. Love one another as Jesus Christ has loved you. Be of one heart and one mind. May it be said of the Little Brothers of Mary as of the first Christians: “See how they love one another.”

Spiritual Testament of Marcellin Champagnat, Life, XXII, p. 237

5.11 Building community

We share our spirituality and our educational approach with parents, lay teachers, and other members of the educating community. By the service they render, the non-teaching staff collaborate closely in our apostolic task. We show our pupils that we are not only their teachers, but also their brothers. By trying to establish in the school a spirit of friendliness and collaboration, we help young people to become responsible for their own formation.

Constitutions, 88

5.12 As brothers and sisters to young people

... The spirit of a Brothers' school ought to be a family spirit. Now, in a good family, a well-run family, sentiments of respect, love and mutual trust predominate, and not fear of punishments.

Life, XXII, p. 530

5.13 Enthusiasm for our work

... This (family) spirit finds expression and gains strength in a special way in love of work, which has always been one of our characteristic features.

Constitutions, 6

5.14 Marcellin's example

Marcellin teaches us by his example and is the first to put into practice what he asks of us. Work was never a problem to him, and from his childhood he gave himself to it with pleasure. We saw him in his parents' home put a hand to everything and succeed at it . . .

He was able to construct the house of La Valla himself. Similarly a large part of the Hermitage construction was done in this way; so, too, were the repairs, the furnishings of the house, the fences and the improvements to the property. . .

It is hardly necessary to point out that Father Champagnat turned to manual work less from taste than from necessity and that he had far more important occupations. To devote himself to study; to instruct and train his Brothers; to carry on his correspondence; to keep a check on all aspects of the administration of his Institute; to visit the schools; to draw up, to study and to meditate on the Rules he wished to give his community; to satisfy all sorts of people who had business to do with him; and to receive the Brothers and postulants in interview for a discussion of their needs and personal conduct: such were the tasks that filled his day or rather his entire life . . .

Life, XIV, pp. 415-417

In his conferences, Marcellin was always exhorting the Brothers to love work and avoid idleness. "Work", he used to remind them, "is necessary to ensure health of mind and purity of soul; it serves to promote man's physical and moral improvement and is even essential to his happiness. . ." (419)

A Brother should strive to become capable of filling any post, any employment in the Institute. . . (A Brother) should put his hand to everything and try to master all skills. The same applies to our studies and the subjects we have to teach; we should not rest satisfied with a superficial knowledge of them but study them in depth, ending up with a perfect knowledge; this will not happen without application from us in daily, unremitting study.

Life, XIV, pp. 419, 422

Certainly among all the men of his time (Marcellin) was open to new ideas and fresh attitudes. Consider, for instance, the matter of manual work. In 1817 the Vicars General of Lyons issued a circular to the clergy speaking of physical work, and viewing very unfavourably those priests who indulged in it . . . It can never be said of Father Champagnat that the work he did led to the neglect of his apostolate, but we do know that he devoted long hours to "this lowly employment" and collected any amount of dust on the soutane that marked his "lofty calling". Nor did he feel the least embarrassed in consequence. We all remember his cheerful invitation to an ecclesiastical colleague whose ideas were identical with those of the Vicars General: "Come along and I'll take you on as an apprentice."

Br. Basilio Rueda, "The Spirit of the Institute", Circulars, 1975, p. 192

5.15 Class preparation

Although the teaching of Religion is the main aim of the Brothers and this has to occupy the forefront in their Schools, the other subjects in Primary Education must not be neglected. The Brothers will apply themselves so as to give themselves to these with great care and zeal; because it is important that their classes lack nothing which is necessary for the requirements and right direction of their studies. In this way, the parents who give preference to religious principles, will have no regrets at finding the education of their children lacking in anything.

Guide (1853), p. 84

5.16 In the way of Mary

Our attitudes towards young people find their inspiration in Mary, bringing up Jesus at Nazareth. Our apostolic work is a sharing in her spiritual motherhood.

We attract young hearts to Mary, Christ's perfect disciple, making her known and loved as one who will lead us to Jesus. We entrust those in our care to her, and we invite them to pray often to this Good Mother and to make her their Model.

5.18 There was dust on her feet

The Mary revealed in the gospels shatters many of the images which people have built up around her: ... in Nazareth, an insignificant village. . . the life of the caravan . . .the hardship of giving birth in a stable. . .the terror of persecution. . .the life of a refugee. . .There was dust on her feet . . . It is important that we draw close to the maiden listening in silence at the Annunciation; but it is important, too, to be near her as she relates to the non-believer, the distraught refugee and the other people of the road who have so little hope and who so fear the future. . .

Br. Charles Howard, "Marist Apostolic Spirituality", Circulars, 1992, pp. 494-495

5.26 Mary, our Ordinary Resource

Once Father Champagnat had put any matter in Mary's hands, he remained at peace and full of confidence, whatever turn things might seem to take. . .It was from her protection that he expected everything and his favourite expression was: "Mary is our Ordinary Resource. . .You know to whom you should go for . . . favours, to our Ordinary Resource. Don't be afraid of calling on her help too frequently. . .Besides, she is responsible for us, being our Mother, our Patroness, our Superior and our source of hope. This community is her work.

Life, VII, p. 342

Lost in the snow

In the month of February 1823, one of the Brothers of Bourg-Argental was seriously ill and Father Champagnat did not want his child to die without seeing him once more and giving him his blessing. The weather was bad and the ground covered with snow, but he was not deterred from making his way on foot to visit the patient, once he heard of his dangerous state. After consoling the Brother and blessing him, he made ready to return to La Valla, despite the efforts to dissuade him because of the great quantity of snow which had fallen that same day, and the blizzard that was still raging. However, drawing on his courage, he chose to resist the pleading of the Brothers and advice of his friends. He soon had reason to regret that choice.

With Brother Stanislaus at his side, he started for La Valla across the mountains of Pilat; but they had walked for hardly two hours when they lost their way. As there was no trace of a path, they were forced to rely on luck or rather on the protection of God. A violent wind hurled the snow into their faces, making it so difficult to see that they didn't know whether they were going backwards or forwards. After wandering for a few hours, the Brother became so worn out that Father Champagnat had to take him by the arm to lead him and to help him keep his feet. It wasn't long, however, before he himself, benumbed with cold and smothered with snow, felt his strength failing and was obliged to stop.

"My friend," he admitted to the Brother, "we are finished, if the Blessed Virgin doesn't come to our aid; let us have recourse to her and beg her to rescue us from the danger we are in of losing our lives in these woods and this snow." The words were scarcely out of his mouth when he felt the Brother slip from his grasp. Full of confidence, he knelt down beside him, (now apparently unconscious), and said the *Memorare* with great fervour. After the prayer, he tried to raise the Brother when they noticed a light shining in the distance; for it was night. They made in the direction of the light and arrived at a house, where they spent the night. They were both quite benumbed with cold, and the Brother especially was a long time recovering.

Father Champagnat declared on several occasions that if help had not arrived right then, they would have both perished and that the Blessed Virgin had snatched them from certain death.

Life, VII, pp. 343-344

5.27 Marcellin's motto

His motto . . .became: "All to Jesus through Mary, and all to Mary for Jesus." This saying reveals the spirit which guided him and was his rule of conduct throughout his life.

Life, VII, p. 332

6: In Schools**6.1 The four pillars of learning**

Education throughout life is based on four pillars: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.

* Learning to know, by combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects. This also means learning to learn, so as to benefit from the opportunities education provides throughout life.

* Learning to do, in order to acquire not only an occupational skill but also, more broadly, the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams. . .

* Learning to live together, by developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence . . . in a spirit of respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace.

* Learning to be, so as better to develop one's personality and be able to act with ever greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility.

Formal education systems tend to emphasize the acquisition of knowledge to the detriment of other types of learning; but it is vital now to conceive education in a more encompassing fashion.

"Learning: The Treasure Within", Report to UNESCO by J. Delors, president, 1996.

Teachers who confine themselves to imparting information to their pupils would only be doing the minimum part of their task; to fulfil it completely they must EDUCATE their pupils.

To educate children is to develop, strengthen and bring to perfection every faculty of their souls; above all, it is to form their hearts, their wills, their characters, their consciences and their judgements. . .

Guide (1853), p. 105

6.2 The aims of Catholic education

Catholic schools. . . are no less zealous than other schools in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. It is, however, the special function of the Catholic school to develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity based on the Gospel. It enables young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in that new life which has been given to them in baptism. Finally it so orientates the whole of human culture to the message of salvation that the knowledge which the pupils acquire of the world, of life and of human beings is illumined by faith. Thus the Catholic school, taking into consideration as it should the conditions of an age of progress, prepares its pupils to contribute effectively to the welfare of the world of men and to work for the extension of the kingdom of God, so that by living an exemplary and apostolic life they may be, as it were, a saving leaven in the community.

Gravissimum Educationis, 8

In helping pupils to achieve through the medium of its teaching an integration of **faith and culture**, the Catholic school sets out with a deep awareness of the value of knowledge as such. Under no circumstances does it wish to divert the imparting of knowledge from its rightful objective. (38)

Each discipline is autonomous: Individual subjects must be taught according to their own particular methods. It would be wrong to consider subjects as mere adjuncts to faith or as a useful means of teaching apologetics. They enable the pupil to assimilate skills, knowledge, intellectual methods and moral and social attitudes, all of which help to develop his personality and lead him to take his place as an active member of the community of man. Their aim is not merely the attainment of knowledge but the acquisition of values and the discovery of truth. (39)

Teaching as the search for truth: Since the educative mission of the Catholic school is so wide, the teacher is in an excellent position to guide the pupil to a deepening of his faith and to enrich and enlighten his human knowledge with the data of the faith. While there are many occasions in teaching when pupils can be stimulated by insights of faith, a Christian education acknowledges the valid contribution which can be made by academic subjects towards the development of a mature Christian. The teacher can form the mind and heart of his or her pupils and guide them to develop a total commitment in Christ, with their whole personality enriched by human culture. (40)

It is a quest for the Eternal Truth: . . . A teacher who is full of Christian wisdom, well prepared in his own subject, does more than convey the sense of what he is teaching to his pupils. Over and above what he says, he guides his pupils beyond his mere words to the heart of total truth. (41)

. . . **and for absolute values:** The cultural heritage of mankind includes other values apart from the specific ambience of truth. When the Christian teacher helps a pupil to grasp, appreciate and assimilate these values, he is guiding him towards eternal realities. This movement towards the uncreated source of all knowledge highlights the importance of teaching for the growth of faith. (42)

The importance of Teaching: . . . The extent to which the Christian message is transmitted through education depends to a very great extent on the teachers. The integration of culture and faith is mediated by the other integration of faith and life in the person of the teacher. The nobility of the task to which teachers are called demands that, in imitation of Christ, the only teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every facet of their behaviour. This is what makes the difference between a school whose education is permeated by the Christian spirit and one in which religion is only regarded as an academic subject like any other. (43)

The Catholic School, 38-43

6.3 The Marist School, an educating community

We share our spirituality and our education approach with parents, lay teachers, and other members of the educating community. By the service they render, the non-teaching staff collaborate closely in our apostolic task.

Constitutions 88

6.5 School mission statements

All who are responsible for education: parents, teachers, young people and school authorities are urged to pool all their resources and the means at their disposal to enable Catholic schools to provide a service which is truly civic and apostolic.

The Catholic School, 4

What is a Christian school climate? . . . The elements to be considered in developing an organic vision of a school climate are persons, space, time, relationships, teaching, study and various other activities. (24)

A Catholic school needs to have a set of educational goals which are "distinctive" in the sense that the school has a specific objective in mind, and all of the goals are related to this objective. Concretely, the educational goals provide a frame of reference which:

- defines the school's identity: in particular, the Gospel values which are its inspiration must be explicitly mentioned;
- gives a precise description of the pedagogical, educational and cultural aims of the school;
- presents the course content, along with the values that are to be transmitted through these courses;
- describes the organisation and the management of the school;
- determines which policy decisions are to be reserved to professional staff [governors and teachers], which policies are to be developed with the help of parents and students, and which activities are to be left to the free initiative of teachers, parents, or students;
- indicates the ways in which student progress is to be tested and evaluated. (100)

In addition, careful attention must be given to the development of general criteria which will enable each aspect of school activity to assist in the attainment of the educational objective, so that the cultural, pedagogical, social, civil and political aspects of school life are all integrated:

- a) Fidelity to the Gospel
- b) Careful rigour in the study of culture and the development of a critical sense;
- c) Adapting the educational process in a way that respects the particular circumstances of the individual students and their families;
- d) Sharing responsibility with the Church. (101)

It is clear, then, that the set of educational goals is something quite distinct from internal school regulations or teaching methods, and it is not just a description of vague intentions.

The educational goals should be revised each year on the basis of experience and need. (102)

Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 24, 100-112

6.6 Acquiring learning

In teaching, the main aim of the lesson is not so much to fill the minds of the children with useful knowledge as to give them the means to acquire it. To do that, you have to develop, direct and cultivate their intellectual faculties, to put them into a position of deriving from them every possible use in the course of their lives. But of all the faculties, the one you have to latch on to in order to form and cultivate most, is judgement. That is essentially one of the greatest objectives in teaching and education. . .

Guide (1853), 113

6.7 Encouraging the student's efforts

For a school to prosper and its teaching to be effective, the co-operation of the students is needed. What the teacher himself does by his devotedness and his lessons, doesn't add up to much; what he gets the pupils to do by study, application and work, is vital. . . Father Champagnat saw emulation as a sure and efficacious means of achieving this, and he expected the Brothers to make every effort to establish and maintain it in their schools.

Life XXII, pp. 520-521

6.8 The Good Effects of Rewards

Rewards, whatever their details, produce beneficial results; they win over the hearts of the pupils, attach them to their school, make the work easy and pleasant and enable them to persevere in their tasks. Since they judge things by the immediate advantage they get from them, these rewards, however trifling they may be, leave a deep and lasting impression on their hearts and enable them to carry out their duties courageously and even joyfully. Study is not always to their taste, because they are unable to see the long-term effects to be achieved from their lessons. However, by offering them prizes, you will have changed what they viewed as drudgery into pleasant pastimes and even enjoyments.

Guide (1853), 237-238

6.9 The Religious Dimensions of the School Culture

Relationship between human culture and faith

Intellectual development and growth as a Christian go forward hand in hand. As students move up from one class into the next, it becomes increasingly imperative that a Catholic school help them become aware that a relationship exists between faith and human culture (GE, 8). Human culture remains human, and must be taught with scientific objectivity. But the lessons of the teacher and the reception of those students who are believers will not divorce faith from this culture; this would be a major spiritual loss. The world of human culture and the world of religion are not like two parallel lines that never meet; points of contact are established within the human person. For a believer is both human and a person of faith, the protagonist of culture and the subject of religion. Anyone who searches for the contact points will be able to find them. Helping in the search is not solely the task of religion teachers; their time is quite limited, while other teachers have many hours at their disposal every day. Everyone should work together, each one developing his or her own subject area with professional competence, but sensitive to those opportunities in which they can help students to see beyond the limited horizon of human reality. In a Catholic school, and analogously in every school, God cannot be the Great Absent One or the unwelcome intruder. The Creator does not put obstacles in the path of someone trying to learn more about the universe he created, a universe which is given new significance when seen with the eyes of faith. (51)

Challenges to the faith

A Catholic secondary school will give special attention to the "challenges" that human culture poses for faith. Students will be helped to attain that synthesis of faith and culture which is necessary for faith to be mature. But a mature faith is also able to recognize and reject cultural counter-values which threaten human dignity and are therefore counter to the Gospel. . . (52)

Faith illumines culture

. . . We must always remember that, while faith is not to be identified with any one culture and is independent of all cultures, it must inspire every culture: "Faith which does not become culture is faith which is not received fully, not assimilated entirely, not lived faithfully.(53)

The religious dimension of science

In a number of countries, renewal in school programming has given increased attention to science and technology. Those teaching these subject areas must not ignore the religious dimension. They should help their students to understand that positive science, and the technology allied to it, is a part of the universe created by God. Understanding this can help encourage an interest in research. . .(54)

Study of the person as a whole

A Catholic school must be committed to the development of a programme which will overcome the problems of a fragmented and insufficient curriculum. Teachers dealing with areas such as anthropology, biology, psychology, sociology and philosophy all have the opportunity to present a complete picture of the human person, including the religious dimension.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 51-55

6.10 Media education

The privileged way at present for the creation and transmission of culture is the means of social communications. The world of the mass media represents a new frontier for the mission of the Church, because it is undergoing a rapid and innovative development and has an extensive world-wide influence on the formation of mentality and customs.

The use of these instruments by professionals in communication and their reception by the public demand both a work of education in a critical sense, which is animated by a passion for the truth, and a work of defence of

liberty, respect for the dignity of individuals, and the elevation of the authentic culture of peoples which occurs through a firm and courageous rejection of every form of monopoly and manipulation.

Christifideles Laici, 44

6.11 Being open to other Christian denominations

Children of Protestant or other persuasions, will be admitted into school but on the express condition that they will be subject to the common regulations of the class and that there will be no distinction for the religious exercises which blend the inner life of the child. They will attend Catechism classes, without being made to learn the catechism by heart or recite it unless they themselves want to do so.

As for Mass, they will not be obliged to attend it, if their parents object, and in this case, they will not be allowed to turn up at school until the pupils return from Mass. Similarly, they will not be cared for whilst they are at home with their parents, and they will not be obliged to go to Confession, if the latter are against it.

Guide (1853), p.2

. . . In many parts of the world, the student body in a Catholic school includes increasing numbers of young people from different faiths and different ideological backgrounds. In these situations it is essential to clarify the relationship between development and cultural growth. It is a question which must not be ignored, and dealing with it is the responsibility of each Christian member of the educational community.

In these situations, however, evangelization is not easy - it may not even be possible. We should look to pre-evangelization: to the development of a religious sense of life. In order to do this, the process of formation must constantly raise questions about the "how" and the "why" and the "what" and then point out and deepen the positive results of this investigation.

The transmission of a culture ought to be especially attentive to the practical effects of that culture, and strengthen those aspects of it which will make a person more human. In particular, it ought to pay attention to the religious dimension of the culture and the emerging ethical requirements to be found in it. (108)

Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 108

6.12 See endnote 5.5

6.13 See endnote 5.5

6.14 Linking faith, culture and life

For the Church it is a question not only of preaching the Gospel in ever wider geographic areas or to ever greater numbers of people, but also of affecting and as it were upsetting, through the power of the Gospel, mankind's criteria of judgement, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life, which are in contrast with the Word of God and the plan of salvation.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 19

6.15 See endnotes 6.2 and 5.5

6.18 Dialogue with students on matters of faith

An excellent way to establish rapport with students is simply to talk to them - and to let them talk. Once a warm and trusting atmosphere has been established, various questions will come up naturally. These obviously depend on age and living situation, but many of the questions seem to be common among all of today's youth, and they tend to raise them at a younger age. These questions are serious ones for young people, and they make a calm study of the Christian faith very difficult. Teachers should respond with patience and humility, and should avoid the type of peremptory statements that can be so easily contradicted.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 72

6.21 Linking with the pastoral programme of the Local Church

"In the whole diocese or in given areas of it the co-ordination and close interconnection of all apostolic works should be fostered under the direction of the bishop. In this way all undertakings and organisation, whether catechetical, missionary, charitable, social, family, educational, or any other programme serving a pastoral goal will be co-ordinated. Moreover, the unity of the diocese will thereby be made more evident." This is something which is obviously indispensable for the Catholic school, inasmuch as it involves "apostolic co-operation on the part of both branches of the clergy, as well as the religious and the laity."

The Catholic School, 72

You are decisive instruments for the proclamation in the school setting of the Gospel of Christ. . . We can therefore rightly affirm that your schools are “missionary” communities. . . The specific educational activity of the Catholic school must be integrated in the overall pastoral ministry of the local Church, helping the pupils to take an active part in the life of the parochial and diocesan community, and enabling yourselves to be present, as far as possible, in the various Church organisms. On the other hand, the parish and diocese should consider Catholic schools as an integral part of their Church community and they should assist them in developing their own contribution to education and formation.

Instruction from the Congregation for Catholic Education, Vatican, October 1996, 7

6.22 Welcoming students of all social backgrounds

. . . since education is an important means of improving the social and economic condition of the individual and of peoples, if the Catholic school were to turn its attention exclusively or predominantly to those from the wealthier social classes, it could be contributing towards their privileged position, and could thereby continue to favour a society which is unjust.

The Catholic School, 58

Learning to live together

Violence all too often dominates life in the contemporary world, forming a depressing contrast with the hope which some people have been able to place in human progress. Human history has constantly been scarred by conflicts, but the risk is heightened by two new elements. Firstly, there is the extraordinary potential for self-destruction created by humans in the twentieth century. Then, we have the ability of the new media to provide the entire world with information and unverifiable reports on ongoing conflicts. Public opinion becomes a helpless observer or even a hostage of those who initiate or keep up the conflicts. Until now education has been unable to do much to mitigate this situation. Can we do better? Can we educate ourselves to avoid conflict or peacefully resolve it?

The conclusion would seem to be that education should adopt two complementary approaches. From early childhood, it should focus on the discovery of other people in the first stage of education. In the second stage of education and in lifelong education, it should encourage involvement in common projects. This seems to be an effective way of avoiding conflict or resolving latent conflicts.

Discovering other people

One of education's tasks is both to teach pupils and students about human diversity and to instil in them an awareness of the similarities and interdependence of all people. From early childhood, the school should seize every opportunity to pursue this two-pronged approach. Some subjects lend themselves to this - human geography in basic education, foreign languages and literature later on.

Lastly, recognition of the rights of other people should not be jeopardized by the way children and young people are taught. Teachers who are so dogmatic that they stifle curiosity or healthy criticism instead of teaching their pupils how to engage in lively debate can do more harm than good. Forgetting that they are putting themselves across as models, they may, because of their attitude, inflict lifelong harm on their pupils in terms of the latter's openness to other people and their ability to face up to the inevitable tensions between individuals, groups and nations. One of the essential tools for education in the twenty-first century will be a suitable forum for dialogue and discussion.

Towards common goals

When people work together on exciting projects which involve them in unaccustomed forms of action, differences and even conflicts between individuals tend to pale and sometimes disappear. A new form of identity is created by these projects which enable people to transcend the routines of their personal lives and attach value to what they have in common as against what divides them. In sport, for example, the tensions between social classes or nationalities can eventually be welded into a spirit of solidarity by the commitment to a common cause. In the world of work, too, so many achievements would not have been possible if people had not successfully moved beyond the conflicts that generally arise in hierarchical organizations through their involvement in a common project.

“Learning: The Treasure Within”, Report to UNESCO, Delors, 1996
www.unesco.org

6.24 Solidarity - a moral imperative

A theological reading of modern problems: All in the light of God.

. . . Solidarity is not a vague feeling of compassion or a shallow sadness, but a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good. It is an attitude where the more influential feel responsible for the weaker, and where the weaker do what they can for the good of all.

Solidarity is the path to peace. Interdependence demands the abandonment of blocs, the sacrifice of all forms of economic, military or political imperialism, and the conversion of distrust into collaboration. Solidarity is the Christian virtue of our times. (301)

It is easy to understand that some of us will feel confused, even frustrated and angry in the face of a challenge which may appear to have geo-political dimensions. What can I, as an individual, be called to undertake in reversing the tide of history? . . . Because of its growing gravity, the underdevelopment of persons and nations now requires the moral mobilisation of the whole human family. The central premise of Pope John Paul's encyclical is that human development cannot be attained without appealing to the conscience and moral solidarity of our contemporaries, both rich and poor, all of whom are involved in and share responsibility for the true progress of the human family. . . (309-310)

Br. Charles Howard, "An Urgent Appeal: *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*", Circulars, 1990, pp. 301, 309-310

6.25 Structures of sin

This general analysis, which is religious in nature, can be supplemented by a number of particular considerations to demonstrate that among the actions and attitudes opposed to the will of God, the good of neighbour and the "structures" created by them, two are very typical: on the one hand, the all-consuming desire for profit, and on the other, the thirst for power, with the intention of imposing one's will upon others. In order to characterise better each of these attitudes, one can add the expression: "at any price." In other words, we are faced with the absolutising of human attitudes with all its possible consequences. . .

Obviously, not only individuals fall victim to this double attitude of sin; nations and blocs can do so too. And this favours even more the introduction of the "structures of sin" of which I have spoken. If certain forms of modern "imperialism" were considered in the light of these moral criteria, we would see that hidden behind certain decisions, apparently inspired only by economics or politics, are real forms of idolatry: of money, ideology, class, technology.

I have wished to introduce this type of analysis above all in order to point out the true nature of the evil which faces us with respect to the development of peoples: it is a question of moral evil, the fruit of many sins which lead to "structures of sin." To diagnose the evil in this way is to identify precisely, on the level of human conduct, the path to be followed in order to overcome it.

Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 37

6.27 Higher education and universities

With respectful sensitivity and missionary boldness, consecrated men and women should show that faith in Jesus Christ enlightens the whole enterprise of education, never disparaging human values but rather confirming and elevating them. . . Because of the importance that Catholic and ecclesiastical universities and faculties have in the field of education and evangelization, Institutes which are responsible for their direction should be conscious of their responsibility. They should ensure the preservation of their unique Catholic identity in complete fidelity to the Church's Magisterium, all the while engaging in active dialogue with present-day cultural trends.

Vita Consecrata, 97

6.28 New school projects

Normally we appeal for the conversion of the individual so that, once transformed himself, he can move forward with liberty of spirit. Less common are the processes which affect the "conversion of works" and the beginnings of new projects which could be reference points and "myth" inspiring us to live the spirit of the XIX General Chapter. At times I feel that we encourage the Brothers to renew themselves while putting them in situations which choke and exhaust them. It is not goodwill that is lacking. But we must strengthen the spirit with projects and structures which encourage and sustain the quality of life of our Brothers in keeping with the new evangelical thrust inherent in our mission. (10)

I am surprised to hear it said that we cannot afford to take on more schools for the poor because the works we are presently engaged in take up all our energy and we do not have enough Brothers to keep them going.

This is a delicate matter and somewhat of a touchstone. It is difficult to find a solution to the problem. But it is a question of fidelity and life. To hang on to works, unable to subject them to evangelical evaluation and discernment, justifying everything from a position of inertia or fear, will in the end bring spiritual death to these works and, possibly, the death of enthusiasm for many apostolic vocations of Brothers or lay people. (32)

Br. Benito Arbués, "Walk Peacefully yet with a Sense of Urgency", Circulars, 1997, 10, 32

6.30 Everyone equal

It was particularly for the sake of these (poor children), that he founded his Institute, and he wished the Brothers to consider themselves especially responsible for their instruction. . . Equality ought to be the hallmark of the Brothers' schools; no-one there should benefit from preference or privilege because of social standing or exterior qualities; each pupil, rich or poor, should be treated according to his deserts, his ability, his virtue and his personal worth. . . The precautions taken to keep the (children who can afford to pay) at the school, have, as their aim, to furnish the means to instruct (those who cannot); for, for most of the time, if there were no rich children to provide the Brothers' salary, the school would not be viable.

Life, XXI, pp. 517-518

7: In other pastoral and social ministries

7.1 Marcellin's creative zeal

Father Champagnat was the animating force of the House. It was he who kept up the Brothers' spirits and guided them; it was he who induced the parents to send their children along; he now decided to extend the school's facilities. A single class was quite inadequate, he saw, for the large numbers offering. He formed a second one and was thus able to divide the pupils, classifying them according to their ability and consequently contributing greatly to their accelerated progress.

His attention was required for another, more serious matter. Some parents, unable to secure accommodation for their children to sleep at the Brothers' place, lodged them in the town, where they misbehaved, because they were left on their own resources after school. To get over this problem, Father Champagnat had repairs done to the house, and extensions put on. This enabled the Brothers to take in those children who had been placed in private houses. A few poor children also sought refuge. These were given a kind and enthusiastic welcome and, though the Community was itself penniless, it provided for all their needs.

Marcellin, who had unlimited confidence in God, even accepted responsibility for several abandoned children or orphans. He had them taught, fed and dressed. Later he placed them in respectable families and continued to monitor their conduct, to guide them and be a father to them. During the first year, he took in twelve of these children. . . (72-73)

To inspire the Brothers with a spirit of zeal and to impress on them that the goal of their vocation was to save souls, he didn't rest satisfied with their catechism lessons to the children of the school; in addition, on Sundays and certain other days, he sent the Brothers in pairs to the hamlets of the parish to teach catechism to the country folk.

When they reached the hamlet they had been assigned, the two Brothers assembled children and adults in a barn or any suitable place, said a prayer, sang a hymn and tested the young people on the words of the catechism. . . The session concluded with a short story having a moral to it, or with a few examples from history. . .

Brother Lawrence

For a long time, Brother Lawrence had asked to be allowed the privilege of teaching catechism at Le Bessac. . . , situated on the heights of Mt Pilat. . . about six miles from La Valla, shrouded in snow for at least six months of the year. There was no priest in the hamlet, so the children and even the adults were abysmally ignorant.

Brother Lawrence used to carry his meagre stock of provisions with him from La Valla, returning on Thursdays to refresh himself spiritually with his Brothers and to replenish his supplies. He stayed in a private house in Le Bessac and prepared his own food: soup. . . some potatoes and a little cheese. Twice a day he went around the hamlet ringing a little bell to gather the children. (78-79)

Life, VII, pp. 72-73, 78-79

Furthermore the Hermitage was designed, from the outset, to house a "Trade School" for orphans:

As soon as we have finished the building and our means enable us to install running-water, we shall take in children from institutions for the destitute. We shall improve their situation by giving them a Christian education and those of them who show honest qualities and a desire to learn will be employed in the house.

Marist Notebooks, 1, p. 33

7.2 Responding to the needs of young people "at risk"

We commit ourselves to be more present among children and young people on the margins of our societies. We respond to the urgent calls that come to us from young people who really are at risk, for example, street children, those who are illiterate, victims of drugs and of violence.

XIX General Chapter, Mission, 33

7.7 See note 4.26

7.9 Accompanying young people

Accompaniment (aims at helping young people) know themselves and to recognise the presence of God in their lives, to understand what God is asking of them; to discover, appreciate and assimilate human and gospel values and to act according to them. . . Personal accompaniment . . . is carried out particularly through personal interviews at regular intervals. . .

Marist Formation Guide, Glossary, 158

7.10 Working with young adults

We commit ourselves to building communities that are prophetic, simple and open, especially to young people.

XIX General Chapter, Mission, 29

7.11 Fostering vocations

Today we are more than ever convinced of the timeliness and the validity of our mission in the world. Yes, it is worthwhile to be a Marist Brother, and worth the sacrifice of consecrating one's entire life to this mission!

We are convinced that God wants us to be Brothers, Lay Religious, present in the world as much as possible, especially among children and young people in a simple and welcoming way.

XIX General Chapter, Mission, 23, 26

7.12 Christian leaders

You, young people, are especially called to become missionaries of this New Evangelisation, by daily witnessing to the Word that saves. You personally experience the anxieties of the present historical period, fraught with hope and doubt, in which it can at times be easy to lose the way that leads to the encounter with Christ. In fact, numerous are the temptations of our time, the seductions that seek to muffle the divine voice resounding within the heart of each individual.

To the people of our century, to all of you, dear young people, who hunger and thirst for truth, the Church offers herself as a travelling companion. She offers the eternal Gospel message and entrusts you with an exalting apostolic task: to be protagonists of the New Evangelisation. . .

The Church entrusts to young people the task of proclaiming to the world the joy which springs from having met Christ. Dear friends, allow yourselves to be drawn to Christ; accept his invitation and follow him. Go and preach the Good News that redeems (cf. Mt 28:19); do it with happiness in your hearts and become *communicators of hope* in a world which is often tempted to despair, *communicators of faith* in a society which at times seems resigned to disbelief, *communicators of love* in daily events that are often marked by a mentality of unbridled selfishness.

Message of Pope John Paul II to Youth, 1993

7.13 Being close to the reality of peoples' lives

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts.

Gaudium et Spes, 1

7.14 With the eyes of the poor

All the Brothers of the Institute are involved in this call to solidarity. However, it is not possible for all to express it in the same way. Following each province's expressed option for the poor, some Brothers are called to work directly with the poor. Some are also called to live like the poor in a way that allows us to speak about a real preferential option for the poor. All Brothers, wherever they may be, know the call to work for the poor and to organise their lives and their apostolates from the perspective of the poor.

XIX General Chapter, Solidarity, 19

7.15 Empowering young people

Evangelising through education involves . . .empowering the young person to be the subject not only of his or her own growth but of the development of the whole community: education for service.

Puebla, 1030

7.16 Forming the young to be “leaven” in their society

Catholic education must produce people who are prepared to act for lasting structural change to our societies, through providing them with a civic and political formation inspired by the social teaching of the Church. (Inaugural address of Pope John Paul II)

Puebla, 1033

7.18 The presence of God in our life and the presence of life in our prayers

Calls that we hear:

To adopt a renewed form of prayer, open to the reality of creation and of history, echoing a life of solidarity with our brothers and sisters, above all with the poor, and with those who are suffering. An apostolic prayer which takes into account the pains and joys, anguish and hopes of people that God puts in our way.

XIX General Chapter, Marist Apostolic Spirituality, 26

8: We face the future with audacity and hope

8.1 Being prophetic people

Prophets are seen as persons intimately related to both God and humanity at the same time. They pray privately and communally for the world, while being simultaneously and vitally involved on behalf of their contemporaries, with whom they pray and struggle. Prophets are religious people, who, inhabited by the Spirit of Yahweh, inspire and influence their surroundings, since they believe in a saving and life-giving God. They are people of their times, who try to understand the message of the signs of the times. . . ; they are also people of the future. . .

The way of life of those persons who spoke in the name of God, and especially the life of Jesus . . . find a concrete fulfilment in the Brother’s life. Here we touch on something which involves his very identity and which shows him the way to continual self-transcendence.

Brother in lay Religious Institutes, Union of Superiors General, 1991, Ch.4

8.2 A Call to Action

(We have recognised) the life which is still welling up in different forms. It is the new wine of a greater sensitivity to the needs of the Institute or of the world and which makes for greater availability. . .It is the new wine of inter-provincial projects and international communities, or some new experience of community life being tried out by some Brothers and laypeople, or the moving out of established works and communities towards the marginalised, where our priorities lie. And the life (new wine) is valued not in terms of quantity but for itself. We may perhaps have detected a certain sense of timidity in these processes of change, but let us joyfully acknowledge that they exist.

Br. Benito Arbués, “Walk peacefully, but with a sense of urgency”, Circulars, 1997, 25
(See also notes 3.7, 3.9)

8.4 A Challenge to young people

The future of the world and the Church belongs to the younger generation, to those who, born in this century, will reach maturity in the next, the first century of the new millennium. *Christ expects great things from young people*, as he did from the young man who asked him: “What good deed must I do to have eternal life?” (Mt 19:16). . . Young people, in every situation, do not cease to put questions to Christ: *they meet him and they keep searching for him in order to question him further*. If they succeed in following the road which he points out to them, they will have the joy of making their own contribution to his presence in the next century and in the centuries to come, until the end of time. “Jesus is the same yesterday, today and for ever.”

Tertio Millennio Adveniente, 58

**International Commission for Marist Education
(1995-98)**

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Henri Vignau (General Council)

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Miguel Cubeles (Spain)

Mr. Alberto Libera (Bolivia)

Ms. Emma Casis (Philippines)

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- ¹ *Life of Joseph Benedict Marcellin Champagnat*, Marist Brothers, Rome, (ed. 1989), Chapter I, pp. 5-6. (*This biography was written in 1856 by Br. Jean Baptiste Furet, one of the first disciples of M. Champagnat.*)
- ² *ibid.* II, pp. 9, 10
- ³ *ibid.* III, pp. 27-28
- ⁴ *Letters of Marcellin J.B. Champagnat*, Br. P. Sester editor, Marist Brothers, Rome, 1985, 159.
- ⁵ Cf. *Letters*, General Introduction, pp. 3-16
- ⁶ *Life*, VI, pp. 58-59
- ⁷ *ibid.* VII, pp. 71
- ⁸ *Letters*, 113, 171, 173, 319, Prospectus 1824 A; cf. *Letters* 8, 9, 35, 39
- ⁹ *Life*, XIX, pp. 202-205
- ¹⁰ *Letters*, 112
- ¹¹ *Life*, I, p. 7
- ¹² *ibid.* X, p. 101; XII, pp. 120-123; *Letters*, 109
- ¹³ *Letters*, 59, 34; Statutes 1825, 15;
- ¹⁴ *Life*, III, p. 23
- ¹⁵ *ibid.* IV, pp. 43-46
- ¹⁶ Cf. Ch. 5, "With a distinctive Marist style"
- ¹⁷ Preface to *Teacher's Guide*, written by Br. François, pp. 5-7; cf. *Life*, XVI, pp. 162-163; Br. A. Balko, "Marcellin Champagnat, the Educator", *Marist Notebooks*, No.1, 1990, pp. 35-46
- ¹⁸ *Letters*, 19, 24
- ¹⁹ *Life*, V, pp. 314-315, 319
- ²⁰ *ibid.* XII, pp. 124, 338; cf. Br. J. Roche, "Mary, Our Good Mother", *Marist Notebooks*, No. 2, 1991, pp.53-60
- ²¹ Marcellin Champagnat: *Opinions, Conferences, Sayings and Instructions*, Marist Brothers, Rome, ed. 1998, VI, p. 63. (*In this work, dated 1868, Br. Jean Baptiste Furet has laid out in an orderly way the ideas and teachings of M. Champagnat.*)
- ²² *Life*, XXI, p. 510
- ²³ *Annales du F. Avit*, Marist Brothers, Rome, (1993) p. 96, cf. Br. M. Bergeret, "The Marist Teaching Tradition", *Marist Notebooks*, No.4, 1993, p 79
- ²⁴ *Life*, XVII, pp. 450-453, also Bergeret in *Marist Notebooks*, No. 4, pp. 75-76

2. Brothers and Laypeople, together in mission, in the Church and in the world

- ¹ Cf. *Letters* 122, 141; Spiritual Testament in *Constitutions and Statutes*, Marist Brothers, Rome, 1986, p. 140; *Life*, p. 237
- ² XIX General Chapter, 'Laypeople and Brothers, Together on Mission', *Brothers in Solidarity*, Marist Brothers, Rome, (1993) p. 41
- ³ *Ibid.*, "A Message to Our Brothers (from the Laity)", p. 47
- ⁴ *Teacher's Guide*, (ed 1931), XVI, pp. 183-184
- ⁵ 1 Corinthians, 3: 1-9
- ⁶ *Christifideles Laici*, (1988) 32; *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, (1975) 59, 66; cf. XIX General Chapter, 'Laypeople and Brothers, Together on Mission', pp. 43
- ⁷ John 15:15; 17:17-18
- ⁸ 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31; Acts 2: 46-47; 4: 32, 34
- ⁹ *Christifideles Laici*, 33, 34; *Redemptoris Missio*, (1990) 71; XIX General Chapter, Message, 19
- ¹⁰ *Nostra Aetate*, (Vatican II), 1, 2, 5; Secretariat for Non Christians, *Reflections on Dialogue and Mission*, 1984, 31; *Christifideles Laici*, 35
- ¹¹ *Christifideles Laici*, 24
- ¹² *Constitutions and Statutes*, 1986, article 2 (hereafter C.2)
- ¹³ C. 165
- ¹⁴ *Vita Consecrata*, 1996, 54
- ¹⁵ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 70; *Christifideles Laici*, 15, 16; Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools, Witnesses to the Faith* (1982) 24, 81

¹⁶ *Vita Consecrata*, 60

¹⁷ *Vita Consecrata*, 55

¹⁸ C. 156.1; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School and the Mission of the Church*, (1977) 79

¹⁹ *Familiaris Consortio*, (1981) 36, 38, 40

²⁰ *The Rule of 1837*, Marist Brothers, 16

²¹ cf. XIX Chapter, Our Mission, 25, 28, 32; *Life*, XI, pp. 115-117; *Letters*, 26, 28, 112, 146

²² C. 119

²³ cf. XIX General Chapter, Our Mission, 34

²⁴ Brother Charles Howard, “Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family”, Circulars, 1991, p. 400; cf. XIX General Chapter, Our Mission, 36

3. Among the young, especially the most neglected

¹ *Life*, VII, p. 71; Prospectus 1824; Statutes 1828; Statutes 1830, 1; cf. *Letters*, 13, 159

² C. 33, 34, 167

³ XIX General Chapter, Message, 5, 6, 7; Our Mission, 8-10; cf. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, (1994) 46

⁴ *Life*, XXI, pp. 511- 513; cf. *Marist Notebooks* 4, 1993, p. 72

⁵ *Life*, XX, pp. 507

⁶ XIX General Chapter, Solidarity, 10, 20; C. 83, 168

⁷ Brother Benito Arbués, “Walk Peacefully, With a Sense of Urgency”, Circulars, 1997, 31

⁸ XIX General Chapter, Message, 20; *Redemptoris Missio*, 37 (b)

⁹ Brother Benito Arbués, op. cit., 31; Congregation for Catholic Education, Letter to Superiors General, ProtN. 483/96/13, 1996, p.11; XIX General Chapter, Message, 27; Solidarity, 9, 14, 15

4. We are sowers of the Good News

¹ *Life*, VI, p. 331; cf. C.2; XX, p. 490

² cf. *Life*, XXIII, p. 535; *Teachers’ Guide*, (1931) pp. 17-18

³ *Lay Catholics in Schools*, 16; cf. *Life*, XXIII, pp. 535 - 547

⁴ *Christifideles Laici*, 36; *Lay Catholics in Schools*, 17, 19

⁵ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 18, 19; *Redemptoris Missio*, 55; Pontifical Commission for Inter-religious Dialogue and Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples, *Dialogue and Proclamation*, (1991) 40, 41; cf. *Dialogue and Mission*, 13

⁶ *Redemptoris Missio*, 12 - 20

⁷ *Life*, XX, pp. 492, 503-504

⁸ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 27; C. 86

⁹ John 10:10

¹⁰ *Gaudium et Spes*, (Vatican II) 22; Cf. Hebrews 4: 14-15

¹¹ Luke 12: 49

¹² Galatians 3: 28-29

¹³ John 14:6

¹⁴ *Life*, XXIII, pp. 535ff, 545; *Opinions*, XLI, p. 433

¹⁵ *Life*, XXIII, p. 534

¹⁶ *Lay Catholics in Schools*, 18; *Opinions*, XXXV, pp. 361-370; cf. *Teachers’ Guide*, (1931) pp. 16-17; *Formation Guide*, Marist Brothers, Rome, 13-23

¹⁷ *Opinions*, XLI, pp. 442

¹⁸ *Guide* (1853), pp. 121-122; Luke 24, 13 -25

¹⁹ Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, 71

²⁰ *Gaudium et Spes*, 16; *Evangelium Vitae*, (1995) 80-82; cf. John 8, 32, 36; Galatians 5

²¹ *Redemptoris Missio*, 57; cf. C.85; *Dialogue and Mission*, 29

²² *Redemptoris Missio*, 52, 53

²³ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 20; *Christifideles Laici*, 44; *Vita Consecrata*, 96

²⁴ Cf. Luke 4: 27-38; XIX Chapter, Solidarity, 10

²⁵ Cf. John 1: 1-18

²⁶ Message of Pope John Paul II to Youth, 1993, 4,5; *Christifideles Laici*, 46

²⁷ *Dominum et Vivificantem*, (1986) 53; *Redemptoris Missio*, 55

- ²⁸ *Address of John Paul II to Roman Curia, Bulletin, Secretariat for Non-Christians, 1987, 11*
- ²⁹ *Dialogue and Proclamation, 29*
- ³⁰ *Ut Unum Sint, (1995) 20-28*
- ³¹ *Redemptoris Missio, 56, 57; Lumen Gentium, (Vatican II) 16; cf. Dialogue and Mission, 26*
- ³² *Redemptoris Missio, 33*
- ³³ *Opinions, XXXVIII, 398-402; Christifideles Laici, 47*
- ³⁴ 1 Peter 3: 15
- ³⁵ *Evangelii Nuntiandi, 75*
- ³⁶ *Tertio Millenio Adveniente, 45; cf. Dominum et Vivificantem, 67; Revelations 21, 1-7*
- ³⁷ *Mayet Memoirs, Jan 19, 1848, Origines Maristes Vol.2, 632; cf. Sept. 27, 1846, 674; Letters, 11*
- ³⁸ *Life, III, p. 290; cf. Letters, 169*
- ³⁹ *From the prayer for vocations composed by Fr Champagnat, Life, IX, p 93*
- ⁴⁰ *cf. Evangelii Nuntiandi, 41; Cf. XIX General Chapter, Message, 21*
- ⁴¹ *Life, XX, pp. 496-497; Opinions XLI, pp. 440-442; cf. Letters, 19*

5. With a distinctive Marist style

- ¹ *Life, XXIII, p. 538; Opinions, XLI, pp. 438-440; Cf. Bergeret, Marist Notebooks, No 4, 1993, pp. 68 -69*
- ² C. 81
- ³ *Letters, 14; cf. Opinions, XLI, p. 437; Life, XXIII, p. 544*
- ⁴ C. 83
- ⁵ *Teachers' Guide, (1931) pp. 107-112, 129, 130; Life, XXII, p. 529; Guide (1853) pp. 43-79*
- ⁶ C. 83
- ⁷ *Opinions, XLI, p. 425*
- ⁸ *Brother Charles Howard, "Marist Apostolic Spirituality", Circulars, 1992, p.492*
- ⁹ *XIX General Chapter, Message, 12; C. 6*
- ¹⁰ *Spiritual Testament, Life, XXII, p 237*
- ¹¹ C. 88
- ¹² *Life, XXII, p. 530*
- ¹³ C. 6
- ¹⁴ *Life, XIV, pp. 415-417, 419, 422; Br. Basilio Rueda, "The Spirit of the Institute", Circulars, 1975, p. 192*
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- ²⁴ *John 2:5*
- ²⁵ *Acts 1, 14*
- ²⁶ *Life, VII, pp. 342-344*
- ²⁷ *Life, VII, p. 332*

6. In schools

- ¹ *"Learning: The Treasure Within", Report to UNESCO of the International Commission for Education in the 21st Century, J. Delors, president, 1996; Guide (1853), p. 105*
- ² *Gravissimum Educationis Momentum, (Vatican II) 8; The Catholic School, all, but especially 38-43*
- ³ C. 88; cf. *The Catholic School, 61*
- ⁴ Cf. Chapters 3, 4, 5 of this text
- ⁵ *Religious Dimension of Education, 24, 100-112; cf. C. 87; The Catholic School, 4*
- ⁶ *Guide (1853), p. 113*
- ⁷ *Life, XXII (2), pp. 520-521*
- ⁸ *Guide (1853), p. 237-238; cf. Rule of 1837, art. 16; Balko, Marist Notebooks, No. 1, 1990, p. 42*
- ⁹ *Religious Dimension of Education, 51-55*

- ¹⁰ *Christifideles Laici*, 44; cf. *Vita Consecrata*, 99
- ¹¹ *Guide*, (1853), p. 2; *Religious Dimension of Education*, 108; Cf. chapter 4 of this text, articles 87-90
- ¹² *Life*, XXII, p. 529; *Teachers' Guide*, (1931) p. 152
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- ¹⁴ *Gravissimum Educationis*, 8
- ¹⁵ See chapter 4, "We are sowers of the Good News"
- ¹⁶ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 19; cf. *Religious Dimension of Education*, 51-54
- ¹⁷ cf. *Religious Dimension of Education*, 74- 95
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 72
- ¹⁹ XIX General Chapter , Our Mission, 31
- ²⁰ XIX General Chapter, Our Mission, 32; C. 87.1
- ²¹ *The Catholic School*, 72; Congregation for Catholic Education, Letter to Superiors General, Prot.N.483/96/13, Vatican, October, 1996, p.7.
- ²² *The Catholic School*, 58; Delors, "Learning: The Treasure Within"
- ²³ Cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, (1995) 102
- ²⁴ Brother Charles Howard, "An Urgent Appeal: Sollicitudo Rei Socialis", Circulars, 1990, pp. 309-310.
- ²⁵ *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, (1987) 36-37
- ²⁶ XIX General Chapter, Solidarity, 16
- ²⁷ *Vita Consecrata*, 97
- ²⁸ Br. Benito Arbués, op. cit., 10, 32
- ²⁹ XIX General Chapter, Solidarity, 16
- ³⁰ *Life*, XXI, pp. 517-518
- ³¹ Ephesians 4: 24

7. In pastoral and social ministries

- ¹ *Life*, VII, pp. 72-73; 78-79; cf. Ballo, sections 2 and 9, *Marist Notebooks*, No.1, 1990
- ² XIX General Chapter, Mission, 33
- ³ Our vision of "evangelisation" is presented in chapter 4, "We are Sowers of the Good News"
- ⁴ Cf. chapter 5, "With a distinctive Marist style"
- ⁵ *Christifideles Laici*, 44
- ⁶ XIX General Chapter, Mission, 32; cf. chapter 4, articles 69 - 85
- ⁷ *Message of Pope John Paul II to Youth*, 1993
- ⁸ Cf. Chapter. 4, articles 86 - 90
- ⁹ *Formation Guide*: "accompaniment", glossary
- ¹⁰ XIX General Chapter, Our Mission, 29; cf. *Opinions XXIII*, p. 229.
- ¹¹ XIX General Chapter, Our Mission, 23, 26; cf. *Teacher's Guide*, (1931) p. 194-212
- ¹² *Message of Pope John Paul II to Youth*, 1993
- ¹³ *Gaudium et Spes*, 1
- ¹⁴ Cf. XIX General Chapter, Solidarity, 19
- ¹⁵ *Inaugural Address of John Paul II to 3rd Conference of Latin American Bishops*, Puebla, 1979, 1030
- ¹⁶ Puebla, 1033
- ¹⁷ Acts 3: 1-8, 16; 4: 10, 12
- ¹⁸ XIX General Chapter, Marist Apostolic Spirituality, 26; C. 71
- ¹⁹ Matthew 25, 34-40
- ²⁰ John 1: 9

8. We face the future with audacity and hope

- ¹ *Brother in lay Religious Institutes*, Union of Superiors General, Rome, 1991, Ch.4
- ² Brother Benito Arbués, op. cit., 25, 31-33
- ³ Luke 24: 32
- ⁴ *Tertio Millenio Adveniente*, 58