


# CONSTITUTIONS AND STATUTES OF THE MARIST BROTHERS







**CONSTITUTIONS  
AND STATUTES  
OF THE  
MARIST BROTHERS**

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OF THE MARIST BROTHERS  
INSTITUTE OF THE MARIST BROTHERS

EDITOR

CASA GENERALIZIA DEI FRATELLI MARISTI DELLE SCUOLE  
FRATELLI MARISTI  
ROME, ITALY

REALIZATION

COMMUNICATION OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION  
PIAZZALE MARCELLINO CHAMPAGNAT, 2  
00144 ROME, ITALY  
[WWW.CHAMPAGNAT.ORG](http://WWW.CHAMPAGNAT.ORG)

ROME, OCTOBER 7, 2020

ISBN 979-12-80249-01-2

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# FOREWORD

Rome, October 7, 2020

Dear Brothers,

I am very pleased to present to you the text of our *Constitutions*, approved by the Holy See on June 6, 2020, the feast of our Founder, St. Marcellin Champagnat.

Together, we have made an important and decisive journey to arrive at the present text. In 2009, the XXI General Chapter invited us to carry out a profound revision of our *Constitutions and Statutes*, with the intention of achieving the *conversion of heart* needed to be of service in a new world and of facilitating *the revitalizing of our vocation* as brothers.

From 2013 onwards, we held conversations using the study guide, "*Stories of the Journey, Told Around the Fire*", and made proposals for modifications to the text. In 2017, the XXII General Chapter dedicated several days to the study and approval of the proposal presented by the previously appointed commission. Along the way, the idea emerged of having the document *Wherever you go: Rule of Life of the Marist Brothers*. This was accepted and approved by the same General Chapter as a text that blends with and complements the *Constitutions and Statutes*.

Article 12 defines the sense of this vital document for us in a clear and motivating way:

*Our Constitutions, approved by the Holy See, guide us in our way of living as brothers in the Church, and in carrying out the mind*

*and heart of our Founder. We look upon them as the Gospel interpreted for us, and a sure guide in accomplishing God's will. By our religious profession, we have committed ourselves to live by them. Attentive to the richness and the calls that lie within, we frequently read them in a spirit of prayer and discernment. Approved by the Holy See, their authentic interpreter, the Constitutions can only be modified with its authorization.*

It is clear that it is important to read and meditate on them frequently, to allow ourselves to be confronted by them with an open and well-disposed heart and to strive daily to make them alive in each of us, each community and Marist work. We are heirs and bearers of a valuable charism which we wish to live in a meaningful way in today's world, making our way together with lay Marists and with so many other people committed to our life and mission.

Today, we present the approved text in a digital format, in the four official languages of the Institute. I indicated in my letter of July 3 that we would speak of the next steps in the text's application once we were able to get it published for all. **The new Constitutions and Statutes will officially come into force on November 1, 2020.** The printed version will be sent in early 2021 and will include references and notes.

I again express my gratitude to all of you for your involvement in the process and to all the teams that have worked on the revision and renewal of *our Constitutions, Statutes and Rule of Life* over the past few years.

May Mary, our Good Mother, be our constant source of inspiration. May we live as her children, bearers of her name. By her side, let's continue on our way towards Jesus.

Faternally,

Br. Ernesto Sánchez Barba,

*Superior General*



# CHAPTER I

## OUR RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE OF BROTHERS

### IDENTITY OF THE MARIST BROTHER IN THE CHURCH

#### ORIGIN OF THE INSTITUTE

**1** The humble beginning of our Institute can be traced to January 2nd, 1817, when Father Marcellin Champagnat founded in La Valla (Loire Department, France) the first community of brothers, giving them the name 'Little Brothers of Mary'.

Marcellin intended his brothers to be a branch of the Society of Mary. This Society had its foundation with the promise made in the sanctuary of Notre Dame de Fourvière on July 23rd, 1816 by Marcellin, Jean-Claude Colin and their Marist companions.

On January 9th, 1863, the Holy See approved us as an autonomous lay Institute of Religious Brothers, of Pontifical Right, giving us the title, 'Marist Brothers of the Schools' (F.M.S.- Fratres Maristae a Scholis). We are commonly known as 'Marist Brothers'.

#### OUR IDENTITY: BEING BROTHERS

**2** As Religious Brothers in the Church, our vocation is to be prophetic reminders of the common dignity and fundamental equality of all the People of God.

We are brothers of Jesus Christ, brothers to one another and brothers to everyone, especially the poorest and those most in need; brothers for a greater brotherhood in the Church and world.

By the public profession of the evangelical counsels, we follow Jesus Christ, our Lord, conforming our lives with the Gospel in fraternal service.

DISCIPLES OF MARCELIN  
CHAMPAGNAT

**3** The love which the Holy Spirit pours into our hearts gives us a share in the charism of Marcellin Champagnat and directs all our energies to this one aim: TO FOLLOW CHRIST AS MARY DID, in His life of love for the Father and for people. We live out this ideal in community.

By contemplating Mary's life in the Scriptures, we make her spirit our own. Her attitudes as mother and disciple of Jesus shape our spirituality, our fraternal life, and how we share in her work of bringing Christ-life to birth in the Church.

In accordance with our motto: *"All to Jesus through Mary, all to Mary for Jesus"*, we make Mary known and loved as one who leads us to Him. We form a community around Mary, our Good Mother, as members of her family.

From Saint Marcellin Champagnat, we inherit the value of living the three virtues of humility, simplicity and modesty. Like him we live in the presence of God, whom we encounter in the mysteries of the Crib, the Cross and the Altar. Inspired by the home of Nazareth and the table of La Valla, our fraternal life is marked by a "family spirit", where love, forgiveness, mutual support, forgetfulness of self, openness to others and joy are found.

OUR MISSION: MAKING  
JESUS CHRIST KNOWN

**4** Born of the Spirit, the mission Marcellin entrusted to his brothers was, *"to make Jesus known and loved"*. With other Marists, we give ourselves to the evangelization and education of children and young people, especially those who are poor, most in need, and living on the geographical and existential peripheries.

Through our lives, and by our presence, these young people, their families and the communities to which they belong, come to know they are personally loved by God.

The wellbeing, safety and protection of children and young people is a high priority and the primary responsibility of every brother, every Marist community, every Marist ministry and the entire Institute.

MEMBERS OF THE  
INSTITUTE

**5** The Institute is made up of brothers with temporary and perpetual vows. We become members by our public religious

profession. As brothers, we are united by fraternal love and by obedience to living by our Constitutions.

The novices, who are beginning their life in the Institute, benefit from our spiritual patrimony, prayer and fraternal support.

BROTHERS AND  
LAYPEOPLE,  
MARISTS OF  
CHAMPAGNAT

**6** We acknowledge and welcome the many people who are attracted to the Marist charism and who identify themselves as being 'Marist'. This movement of the Spirit unites all Marists of Champagnat into a global charismatic family.

Within this charismatic family, we brothers willingly contribute the richness of our consecrated lives by building communion, providing accompaniment, sharing our spirituality and community life, participating in joint formation and solidarity works, and promoting co-responsibility for Marist life and mission.

Our path of union in mind and heart with Marist laypeople is based on their also following Jesus, with the same faith, the same Gospel and the same Baptism. Our specific identities are enriched and strengthened through this communion.

**6.1** *As an Institute, and in our Administrative Units, we continue to discern how best to support the development of movements, such as the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family, and other duly approved entities, each with its own statutes and structures. Each is responsible for the leadership and coordination of its activities and processes.*

*Administrative Units are free to decide how they recognize and ritualize the commitments that individuals want to make. Within their Administrative Units, Superiors with their Councils can decide how to accept the personal commitments regarding Marist spirituality and mission that some people may wish to make of their own free will and for a set time. In response to a formal petition, they can also recognise some association of lay people as an expression of the charism of St Marcellin Champagnat and, where necessary, withdraw such recognition.*

**6.2** *Certain people who demonstrate a commendable*

*witness of living Marist values and virtues can be affiliated to the Institute, or to an Administrative Unit. We pray for these people and offer our fraternal care.*

*The Superior of an Administrative Unit with his Council can grant such an affiliation to their Unit or make a proposal to the Superior General and his Council for affiliation to the Institute.*

## STRUCTURES AT THE SERVICE OF LIFE AND MISSION

**7** The Institute is made up of Administrative Units known as Provinces, Vice-Provinces or Districts. Each Administrative Unit is made up of religious houses and associated works, and is governed and led by a Superior with his Council.

Strong regional collaboration is also a favoured form of nurturing the life and mission of the Institute.

## WE ARE A GLOBAL FAMILY

**8** We are an international Institute, which has taken root in diverse cultures. Our unity is based on the spiritual heritage received from Marcellin Champagnat and handed on by the brothers who continued his life's work.

This unity calls for a communion of prayer, discernment, witness to international brotherhood and solidarity, coordinated global apostolic action, and the service that authority renders at all levels.

## BROTHERS IN UNION WITH THE CHURCH

**9** Religious consecration unites us in a special way to the Church and its mystery. As members of the People of God and of our charismatic family, we give prophetic and joyous witness to a life wholly dedicated to God and to humanity. Faithful to the charism of the Institute, we collaborate in the pastoral mission of the local Church.

Like Marcellin Champagnat, we have a deep respect and love for the Pope, whom, by obedience, we recognise as our highest authority. We express our faith and contribute to the unity of Christ's Body by striving to live in accordance with the Magisterium of the Church.

ALONGSIDE OTHER  
RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES

**10** As Saint Marcellin expressly wished, our fraternal love extends to all other Religious Institutes.

We share a special bond of unity with the other branches of the Marist family. Together, we contribute to being a Marian face of the Church to the world.

We support, collaborate and act in solidarity with other Religious Institutes, especially other Religious Brothers with whom we have much in common.

A GRACE FOREVER  
RELEVANT

**11** Our Institute, a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church, is a grace forever relevant to the world.

Our simple and fraternal communities are a call to live according to the spirit of the Beatitudes. The witness of our brotherhood and our fraternal service reveals to everyone the meaning of human existence, and encourages those around us, particularly young people, to build a more just society.

THE CONSTITUTIONS:  
THE GOSPEL  
INTERPRETED FOR US

**12** Our Constitutions, approved by the Holy See, guide us in our way of living as brothers in the Church, and in carrying out the mind and heart of our Founder. We look upon them as the Gospel interpreted for us, and a sure guide in accomplishing God's will. By our religious profession, we have committed ourselves to live by them. Attentive to the richness and the calls that lie within, we frequently read them in a spirit of prayer and discernment. Approved by the Holy See, their authentic interpreter, the Constitutions can only be modified with its authorization.

**12.1** *The Constitutions can only be modified by the General Chapter after a two-thirds majority vote in favour. A modification of the Statutes is achieved by an absolute majority vote of the General Chapter, with the exception of those which express the obligations of Canon Law.*

**12.2** *Throughout the year, we read the Constitutions and the Rule of Life prayerfully and in their entirety. If possible, this is done in community, in the manner which the community decides.*



## CHAPTER II

# OUR IDENTITY AS RELIGIOUS BROTHERS

### CONSECRATION AS BROTHERS

A COVENANT OF LOVE

**13** God holds out the promise of life for all humanity: for this purpose, we are called to be participants and partners in the mission of God.

He calls each of us by name, leading us into the desert, and there speaks to our hearts. His Spirit does not cease to work within us, ever deepening our conversion and growth in love so as to entrust us with His mission. In this is the source of our consecration, a covenant of love in which God gives Himself to us, and we to God.

CONSECrated AS  
BROTHERS

**14** In response to the loving action of God that consecrates us as Religious Brothers, we offer ourselves to Him through the profession of the public vows of chastity, obedience and poverty. Following in the footsteps of Jesus we want to continue His mission and be a sign of brotherhood for our world.

Our consecration has its roots in our Baptism and expresses our desire to live wholly for God and for others.

**14.1** *We renew our religious profession once a year.*

PROFESSION  
IN THE INSTITUTE

**15** Through our profession of public vows, made in total freedom before the Church community and accepted by the Major Superior, we commit ourselves to live by the Constitutions of the Institute. The Institute, in turn, accepts us as members and provides us with the means of growing in our life and mission as brothers.

In times of dryness and difficulty we are consoled and encouraged by the fraternal support of our brothers, the love of family and friends and the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist which bring us closer to Jesus, whom we have committed ourselves to follow.

**15.1** *The Province provides brothers with what they need. This includes their human, spiritual and professional formation, both initial and on-going. It also covers health requirements and social security.*

**15.2** *Our style of clothing expresses the simplicity appropriate to our being consecrated religious. Where the custom exists, we wear the symbol of the Marist cross or the Marist habit. Our habit is the soutane (with roman collar or rabat), the cord, and the Cross for perpetually professed brothers. Province Norms provide greater detail.*

VOCATION  
IN THE CHURCH

**16** Consecrated as Religious Brothers, we are sent to “make Jesus Christ known and loved”, especially to children and young people most in need. Our ministry, conducted in union with the Church, forms part of the identity of our Marist religious family.

WITH A PASSION  
FOR MISSION

**17** Faithful to Marcellin Champagnat and the example of the first brothers, we dedicate ourselves with passion to the mission entrusted to us.

We ensure that our ministry always flows from our intimate union with God, and that it strengthens and promotes this union.

Our call to be mystics and prophets gives a particular shape to our lives. This is one of the gifts with which consecrated life enriches the Church.



## A) EVANGELICAL COUNSEL OF CHASTITY

IN THE FOOTSTEPS  
OF THE CHASTE CHRIST

**18** Through our consecration we choose to devote the whole of our human existence to the following of Christ. Our consecrated celibacy for the sake of the Reign of God is a reminder of the resurrection to come and of the covenant of love between Christ and His Church.

WITH AN  
UNDIVIDED HEART

**19** In following the chaste Jesus, we promise to live with an undivided heart, observing perfect continence as a celibate. We live this gift as an experience of God's tender love for us personally, and, at the same time, we feel impelled by a universal love, to be weavers of the fabric of community through the witness of our brotherhood, a sign of the Reign of God.

WITHIN  
A COMMUNITY

**20** Our community is the most immediate place where this universal love to which we aspire becomes real and grows. The love we have for our brothers is simple, friendly, and attentive to affirming their strengths and recognizing their difficulties. We humbly share their joys and generously give ourselves to all. This same love is expressed in the welcome we offer to those who visit us.

BROTHERHOOD,  
CHASTITY AND  
FRIENDSHIP

**21** A fraternal life that is rich, warm and open-hearted, helps us in our personal growth and in the maturing of our chastity. At times when loneliness weighs heavily on us, we rely on the sensitive support and encouragement of our brothers. Their friendship brings joy to our hearts and fosters our emotional balance. A spirit of faith and mutual trust smooth the path to openness, dialogue, and even to challenging one another.

CHASTITY,  
A GIFT FROM GOD

**22** Chastity is a gift from God, sustained through our intimacy with the Lord and our self-giving to others. It is a grace we humbly ask for in our prayer.

We look to Mary for inspiration and support. In welcoming her into our home, we learn to love everyone and so become living

signs of the Father's tenderness.

Through personal accompaniment we seek appropriate help to grow in love and overcome our difficulties.

## BEING LIFE-GIVING

**23** Like Jesus, we learn to love and to let ourselves be loved, so as to grow in a chastity that is life-giving and adult. We adopt a positive approach to the renunciations common to human existence and to those that are particular to our way of life. We gradually purify the impulses of our ego that hinder us from loving in a selfless manner. We learn to accept and integrate the limitations and wounds of our personal history, and to face up to the challenges of the different stages of life.

**23.1** *To live celibate chastity in a mature and balanced way, and to practice healthy self-discipline, we ensure that we:*

**1** *undertake psychological education and formation in the areas of sexuality, affectivity, and human relationships;*

**2** *receive training for working with children and young people which ensures their safety;*

**3** *live our relationships with others with integrity, openness, honesty, and respect. We are attentive to use expressions of affection and friendship that respect the dignity and freedom of others, and also our commitment as consecrated religious;*

**4** *have recourse to counselling and spiritual direction;*

**5** *act with good judgement and prudence in the choice of leisure activities, entertainment, and the use of information and communication technologies.*

## B) EVANGELICAL COUNSEL OF OBEDIENCE

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE OBEDIENT CHRIST

**24** Jesus knew Himself to be the beloved Son of the Father. His very existence was one of total union with the will of His Father. This will nourished and sustained Him throughout His

life and in accomplishing His mission. *“He became obedient unto death, even death on a cross”* As religious brothers, we try to imitate the obedient Jesus in seeking and carrying out the will of the Father in all things.

GOSPEL-BASED  
DISCERNMENT

**25** A spirituality of discernment lies at the heart of the evangelical counsel of obedience.

Indeed, contemplation of Jesus in the gospels is the essential discipline that makes genuine decision-making possible. It schools our hearts and guides us to decisions that bring us closer to God.

A habit of personal prayer helps us to come to know Jesus and to make our own his way of discerning and making decisions.

CULTIVATING  
INNER FREEDOM

**26** Spiritual indifference is an essential ingredient in the exercise of this evangelical counsel.

True discernment requires us to develop a disposition of total detachment from anything or anyone that might hinder our ability to hear the Word of God.

With the help of grace and ascetical practices, what God wants from us and what we want eventually become one and the same: God’s will becomes our will.

COMMITTED TO  
OBEDIENCE

**27** The evangelical counsel of obedience, lived in a spirit of faith and love in the following of Christ, obliges us to obey the Superiors of the Institute, when they give an order in conformity with the Constitutions.

**27.1** *A formal order invoking the vow can be given only by a Major Superior, and only in exceptional cases.*

**27.2** *In exercising his pastoral responsibilities when dealing with a serious offence by a brother, the Major Superior is obliged to warn him in writing.*

**28** On our journey of discerning and following God's will, we freely accept mediation from several sources. By reason of this vow, we owe obedience to the Pope, the hierarchy of the Church, our Superiors, and to our Constitutions and Chapters.

We are all heirs of the Founder's charism, and so the practice of personal and community discernment and of fraternal dialogue assist us in listening to the voice of God for the good of our community life and mission.

**28.1** *In the organization of our apostolic works, we act by agreement with the Bishop, in conformity with Canon Law, and in accord with our charism and the Proper Law of the Institute.*

**28.2** *We do not accept any work or position outside the Institute, unless authorized by the Provincial.*

**28.3** *If we are working in a ministry outside the Institute, we are still under the authority of our Superiors and remain subject to the discipline of the Institute.*

## **C) EVANGELICAL COUNSEL OF POVERTY**

**29** In His love for humanity, Christ, although rich, emptied Himself to become poor. He invites us to become one with Him in His poverty. Out of love for Jesus, we follow in His footsteps and learn from Him how to live our vow of poverty fully by sharing everything in common, in a spirit of joyful and generous detachment.

**30** We live personal and community poverty by adopting a simple lifestyle. We avoid consumerist attitudes and we use natural resources responsibly. We value the small things of life and feel in solidarity with all of creation. We are serious about our commitment to care for the earth, which is our common home.

**30.1** *The community periodically evaluates its use of resources and examines how well their lifestyle and accommodation give witness to religious poverty.*

**30.2** *Faithful to our Marist tradition, and in a spirit of poverty and of solidarity with those who are poor, we do the small manual jobs in and around our houses.*

SIMPLICITY  
OF LIFE AND MINISTRY

**31** In the conduct of our ministry, we give evidence of simplicity, a distinctive value of our charism.

In this spirit, we share who we are and what we have, especially our time.

**31.1** *In what we buy, as in what we build, we make a special effort to maintain simplicity.*

EVANGELISED  
BY THE POOR

**32** In faithfulness to Christ, and to our Founder, we love those who are poor. They are God's blessed ones and evangelise us.

In our solidarity with them, we commit ourselves to be generous, to strive, above all, to eliminate the causes of their suffering, and to free ourselves from any prejudice, indifference or fear.

The Gospel guides the way we use our goods and resources. We generously share with those who are most destitute. We avoid offending or causing scandal by our attitudes or lifestyles.

As educators and evangelizers, we work with young people for the promotion of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

**32.1** *Wherever we are appointed, and whatever our ministry may be, we give preference to those who are poor. We look for opportunities to be in personal contact with them. In so doing, we come to share and understand the reality of their daily lives.*

**32.2** *At the start of his mandate, the Provincial with his Council sets out a plan for continuing or increasing, if possible, what the Province has been doing in favour of those in need.*

*He communicates this plan to the Superior General. Similarly, he reviews the implementation of Province norms regarding the practice of poverty.*

**32.3** *In drawing up the annual budget, the community determines what amount of money is allocated to those who are poor, as indicated by the Provincial.*

*In addition, the community looks for ways to increase this amount by sacrificing useful or even necessary things.*

## BEING DETACHED

**33** Through the evangelical counsel of poverty, we commit ourselves to live poorly, in fact as well as in spirit, striving to be moderate, and detached from earthly riches. We renounce the use and disposal of money, or of any other material goods of value, without the proper authorization. We can retain ownership of goods, the capacity to acquire others, and add any resulting profits to our patrimony. We relinquish the administration to others. With the permission of the Superiors, we can renounce our patrimony.

**33.1** *Concerning the use of money, we act according to the Norms of the Province. We give regular account of the money put at our disposal.*

**33.2** *We require the permission of the Community Leader to make use of any gift, be it of money or any other type.*

**33.3** *Before his profession, the novice cedes the administration of his goods to whomsoever he wishes and disposes freely of their use and usufruct.*

**33.4** *Before perpetual profession, we make a will that is valid in civil law.*

**33.5** *To modify our will, permission is required from the Provincial or, if the matter is urgent, the Community Leader.*

**33.6** *Everything that we acquire by our work or by reason of being a member of the Institute, and what we receive from pensions, grants, insurance, salary or social benefits, belongs to the Institute.*

**33.7** *Whatever we receive from royalties belongs to the Institute. The Norms of the Province, in conformity with the laws of the country, will regulate how royalties are to be managed.*

**33.8** *After ten years of perpetual profession, we may renounce our patrimony. To do this, we apply to the Provincial, who forwards a recommendation along with his opinion and that of his Council to the Superior General, with whom the final decision rests.*

**33.9** *Unless authorized by the Provincial, we cannot accept the administration of goods belonging to other persons, be they individuals or legal entities. We are not to act as surety, even concerning our own goods.*

**33.10** *We refuse to take advantage of personal offers made to us, such as valuable items, travel or stays outside the community. Even if there is no cost to the community, they may harm fraternal life and the witness of poverty.*

**33.11** *The Provincial Chapter draws up Norms related to the use of money given to brothers for various needs (e.g. studies, travel, holidays). It also draws up Norms related to items for personal use.*

*The Chapter can also draw up other Norms concerning the practice of poverty in their local context. In this case, the Provincial, with his Council consults the Superior General.*





## CHAPTER III

# OUR LIFE AS BROTHERS

## LIFE IN THE INSTITUTE

AN INTEGRATED LIFE

**34** The love that God pours into our hearts bears fruit in three key aspects of our lives as brothers: our fraternal relationships in community, Marist apostolic spirituality, and our ministry in the service of the Church.

These are essential aspects of the dream of Marcellin, and the brothers who followed him, that we seek to live in an integrated way as a coherent and fruitful response.

They complement one another and together lead to greater maturity and integrity in our lives.

Through such a balanced life we are a presence of Mary in the world today.

## A) FRATERNAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY

WITH MARY WE FORM  
THE COMMUNITY OF  
JESUS

**35** Trinitarian love is the wellspring of all community life. We respond to the call of Christ by living together as brothers in community.

Like the first community at Pentecost, we are conscious of Mary among us. Her presence invites us to live as brothers and reminds us that we form the community of Jesus. Gathered around her, we undertake to build up a Church with a Marian face.

**36** We live our brotherhood inspired by the family spirit of the Founder and the first brothers, thereby fulfilling his wish: *“Love one another as Jesus Christ has loved you. May there be among you but one heart and one mind.”*

As in La Valla, our communities are homes where each one is helped to centre his life on Jesus and to grow in fraternal love for one another. In this way, our community is continually transformed into a place of companionship, simplicity, hospitality and a Gospel-based life, in the service of our mission.

**36.1** *To keep this family spirit alive:*

**1** *we live our brotherly relationships with joy, mutual respect, and warmth;*

**2** *we offer a ready welcome to the brothers of our Province and of the Institute, as well as to our families and Marist laypeople;*

**3** *we express our sense of brotherhood especially at moments of family celebration – birthdays, jubilees, and Province gatherings;*

**4** *we willingly give time to the care and maintenance of the house and property;*

**5** *we make time for one another through community social gatherings and activities.*

**36.2** *Communities where brothers and lay people live together are places of mutual enrichment and a common commitment to live by the Gospel and the charism.*

**37** The Community Leader, by his attentive and available presence, finds ways of uniting the community and ensuring that each one feels the support of the others. He fosters a climate of mutual help and understanding and encourages a spirituality that places Christ and a passion for the Reign of God at the heart of community life.

Likewise, the Community Leader ensures the community's connection with the Province and the Institute.

**37.1** *Fraternal dialogue with the Community Leader makes for understanding and harmony in the community. It is a source of encouragement and human and spiritual growth. The Leader arranges to see each brother regularly.*

## CARE OF SICK BROTHERS

**38** Following the Founder's example, the members of the community see brothers who are ill or infirm as a "source of blessings". We show loving care for a brother who has come to life's end, and we pray frequently for our dead.

**38.1** *All brothers, especially the Community Leaders, show every kindness and patience towards confrères who are ill or infirm. They visit them, encourage them, and pray for them. The community sees to it that those who are ill, elderly or infirm have the help of the Sacrament of Anointing. These brothers welcome this grace in faith, abandoning themselves to God's will.*

**38.2** *On the death of the Superior General, or of a former Superior General, each community of the Institute has a Mass celebrated and prays the Office of the Dead or other appropriate prayers.*

**38.3** *On the death of a novice or a brother, each community of the Province has a Mass celebrated and prays the Office of the Dead.*

**38.4** *On the death of a parent of a brother, his community has a Mass celebrated and prays the Office of the Dead.*

**38.5** *During the annual retreat, we celebrate a Mass of Remembrance and pray the Office of the Dead for the deceased: brothers, parents of the brothers, affiliated members, former students, colleagues and benefactors.*

**38.6** *These suffrages for the dead may be added to by the Provincial, according to local custom.*

**39** Being brother and building up brotherhood is our primary mission. The prophetic witness we give of brotherly love as consecrated people makes us living reminders of Jesus and his Gospel for the Church and society.

The Marist community, engaged in various ministries, accepts as its own the apostolic work of each brother. In turn, irrespective of the contribution we make, we are integrated fully into the life and mission of the community.

**39.1** *An important way of building up Marist community is the community life plan, which gives us the opportunity to exercise co-responsibility in the search for God's will. The Provincial Chapter decides whether communities are obliged to draw up such a plan and, if this is not the case, indicates what will take its place.*

*This community life plan deals with some points of the Constitutions in relation to the concrete situation of the community and the priorities of the Province and the Institute. The plan also considers the relationship between our community and the local Church, its involvement with the people around us, and our responsibility to care for the earth, our common home.*

*In the same way, in fidelity to our mission, we examine the apostolic activities of the community to determine whether we are sufficiently true to the Founder's preference for those most in need.*

*The plan is to be approved by the Provincial.*

**40** Community meetings are a privileged means of community building and of stimulating the human and spiritual growth of each of us. We share the best of ourselves with our brothers: our experience of God, life, our mission and our journey as a community; our vulnerabilities, joys and disappointments.

**40.1** *The community recognises the importance of community meetings and decides how often they will be held.*

**40.2** *We strive to be present at the events that bring the community together and strengthen it, especially community meals.*

## HARMONY IN LIFE

**41** We live in harmony with ourselves, our brothers, and with creation, conscious of our God who dwells in all that exists and is the source of our being.

Inspired by Jesus, we help one another live in the present moment and “overcome that unhealthy anxiety which makes us superficial, aggressive, and compulsive consumers”.

We cultivate silence which opens the way for developing our own inner life and for heartfelt relations with our brothers. Silence also adds depth to our awareness and creates an environment necessary for prayer, work, and rest.

**41.1** *Times of silence are decided on by the community to encourage our interior life and respect for others. After due discernment, we also decide how best to use mass media.*

**41.2** *Holidays are times to regain our strength and to draw closer together as brothers. Following the Norms of the Province, the community plans ahead for its holiday times, part of which is spent together.*

**41.3** *Family visits are determined by the Norms of the Province, taking into account differences in culture, types of community, and the demands of Marist religious life.*

## OUR HOME

**42** Because of our chosen way of life, we live in the community residence. We ensure that our shared home meets the needs of community living and allows for adequate privacy and space, in line with the character and mission of our Institute. A section of our residences should be reserved for the community to protect the privacy necessary for fraternal living.

**42.1** *For a just reason, the Provincial, with the consent of*

his Council, can give permission for a prolonged absence from community of up to one year. He will not give permission beyond a year, except for health reasons, for studies, or for an apostolate carried out in the name of the Institute. Requests for extension are to be made to the Holy See who has the responsibility of deciding such cases.

## HOSPITALITY AND WELCOME

**43** We offer a warm and hospitable welcome to those who visit us, especially the families of brothers, young people, and Marist laypeople.

**43.1** *In community, we agree on the manner of welcoming people. We invite our guests to join us for prayer and socialising.*

**43.2** *We reserve times for what is indispensable in a balanced community life.*

## B) CULTIVATING SPIRITUALITY

### UNITED IN THE PRAYER OF CHRIST

**44** In his way of relating with His Father, Jesus teaches us how to listen to God and respond. He expresses his yearning and love, his praise and thanks, his suffering and joy in the Spirit. He shows us how deeply God is moved by the needs and pain of people. This stance towards life, having a passion for God and compassion for humanity, inspires how we live our spirituality each day.

### LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

**45** As brothers we are seekers of the living God. Our prayer is not limited to exercises of piety, nor identified with our apostolic work. Rather, our spirituality is grounded in presence and being one with God, who draws nearest when we are attending to the needs of others.

Mary was said to be blessed for having heard the Word and putting it into practice. She is our model in spirituality.

Like Marcellin, we are alert to recognise the presence of God and

to experience God's love in all the events of our lives.

**45.1** *Prayer is a vital necessity for our life as religious brothers. Each of us is primarily responsible for our personal prayer and co-responsible for that of the community.*

AROUND THE  
TABLE OF THE LORD

**46** We experience the Eucharist as a celebration of the unfolding dream of God for humanity: to gather us all around the banquet table of the Kingdom. Each time we come together for this encounter with Jesus, we celebrate our faith as a community. Nourished by the Word, by the 'Bread of Life', Jesus Himself, and by our daily practice of charity, we are then sent into life as "the body of Christ" to be a sign and sacrament of brotherhood.

**46.1** *The Eucharist is at the heart of our consecrated life. We celebrate it every day where this is possible. On those days when we cannot celebrate Eucharist, where circumstances permit, we celebrate a liturgy of the Word.*

**46.2** *As far as possible, each Sunday we celebrate Eucharist within the local church so as to show our union with the People of God gathered around the Risen Christ.*

PRAYING WITH THE  
PEOPLE OF GOD

**47** When we gather for prayer in community, we acknowledge the presence of Jesus in our midst.

We make our own the contemplative attitude of Jesus, and in praying with Him, we express our praise and intercessions to the Father on behalf of humanity. We pray the Sacred Scriptures, especially the Psalms which nourished Jesus' own prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, or some other prayer form, drawing on the Word of God and life itself.

**47.1** *The community organises its prayer life in a creative and responsible way, especially daily morning and evening prayer.*

**47.2** *We invite and welcome those who share with us life and mission to join us for prayer. They can enrich our spirituality by the different ways they encounter God.*

**47.3** *As far as possible, each residence has an oratory, which is the normal place for community prayer. Christ's eucharistic presence makes it the focal point of the community.*

## SILENCE AND CONTEMPLATION

**48** In meditation we foster interior silence that allows us to listen to God in our innermost being.

We learn to contemplate the Word of God, creation, and our life story, with its people and events. In contemplation, we learn what we need to live lovingly and with integrity.

**48.1** *Each day we set aside at least half an hour for silent meditation and contemplation.*

## CONVERSION OF HEART

**49** We engage in an ongoing conversion of heart from all that holds us back from being entirely given to God.

We become reconciled as individuals and as a community so as to make manifest our experience of being sons and brothers. We cultivate the habit of spiritual reading, personal accompaniment, and days of recollection, in order to bring new energy and depth to our growth in the Spirit.

**49.1** *We make special use of Lectio Divina, personal prayer, the Review of the Day, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and other spiritual practices to deepen our spiritual life.*

**49.2** *We celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation from time to time in community as a privileged way of acknowledging the mercy of God on our weaknesses.*

**49.3** *Each brother in his personal life plan and the community in its plan ensure quality time each week for reading and study for spiritual and pastoral formation.*



**49.4** *In keeping with the tradition of the Institute, at the end of the year and at other significant moments, we make time for a review and for giving thanks.*

**49.5** *Each year we make a week's spiritual retreat, as arranged by the Provincial. Either the community or the Province sets the days of recollection during the year.*

**49.6** *We share our experience of God with our own community, with other members of the Marist family, and with faith-based groups.*

WITH MARCELLIN,  
LEARNING FROM MARY

**50** Following the example of Marcellin Champagnat, we turn to Mary as sons to their mothers. We draw inspiration from her, as our sister in faith, to live as disciples of Jesus.

We nourish in ourselves her spirit through personal prayer, and the study of Mariology.

We thank God for the gift of the life and charism of Marcellin Champagnat. Our love for the Founder extends to the brothers who have gone before us and to all the members and ministries of the Institute and the wider Marist Family.

**50.1** *We begin the day with the Salve Regina or another Marial greeting. As a focus for our prayer, we recall important dates in the history of the Institute, the anniversaries of our brothers, living and dead, and read some words from a Marist text.*

**50.2** *Every day, we praise the Mother of God by reciting the Rosary, or by some other Marial prayer.*

**50.3** *We celebrate Marial feast days in the spirit of the liturgy, in particular the Assumption, the patronal feast of the Institute. We also celebrate St Joseph, the principal patron of the Institute and ask him to help us share his love for Jesus and Mary.*

**50.4** *We celebrate the month of Mary in community, and, if*

*possible, with our students, young people we work with, fellow Marists and other members of the faithful.*

**50.5** *Marcellin Champagnat's feast day, June 6th, is an excellent occasion for making people more aware of the man and his work. If possible, we celebrate it with our students, young people, all those who share our life and mission, with members of the other Marist Institutes, and with the local Church.*

**50.6** *On January 2nd we remember the anniversary of the founding of the Institute, giving thanks for the gift that our religious family is for the Church and for the grace of our own vocation.*

**50.7** *We commemorate the brothers who are models of holiness for us, through the witness of their life of faith and passion for the Gospel.*

## **C) SENT ON MISSION**

JESUS, SENT  
BY THE FATHER

**51** Jesus, sent by the Father, is the source and model of all mission. By His incarnation, He stands in solidarity with every human person. Consecrated and led by the Holy Spirit, He proclaimed the Good News of God's reign. He made Himself servant of His brothers and sisters, even to laying down His life. The Spirit, sent by the Father and the Son, is the source of our energy and creativity as collaborators in God's mission of giving life and love to humanity. By Baptism and Confirmation, we and all Christians are called to be missionary disciples, following Christ and sharing in His mission.

MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT,  
WITH A PASSION FOR  
MISSION

**52** Trusting in Mary, Father Champagnat was alive with a passion for the Gospel and knew how to respond effectively to the problems of children and young people.

In communion with Marist lay people, our hearts burning with an apostolic passion like Marcellin's, we participate in the mission of God by responding to the needs of our world today.

Presence, good example and love are key elements in our style of educating.

**52.1** *The Provincial Chapter discerns what needs of the local Church can be addressed by the Province. It is up to the Provincial with his Council to make the appropriate decisions.*

SENT TO EVANGELISE  
THROUGH EDUCATION

**53** Raised up by the Spirit, our Institute is sent forth by the Church to evangelise young people, especially the most neglected, through education and other social and pastoral services. Marist communities, sent by the Institute, accomplish their mission in union with the pastors of the local Church and in collaboration with other persons and bodies, also dedicated to serving young people.

**53.1** *To establish a house, the Superiors require the prior written consent of the Bishop of the diocese.*

**53.2** *To close a house, the Bishop of the diocese must be consulted beforehand.*

**53.3** *When making his visits to the local communities, the Provincial will contact the leaders of the local Church.*

OUR BROTHERHOOD, THE  
GIFT WE BRING

**54** Ours is a community apostolate. Our brotherhood is already a sign of the message we want to make known to others. The joy and hope we share as brothers motivate young people to hear the voice of Jesus and commit themselves to follow Him.

**54.1** *In our work as evangelisers, the questions, hopes, language and symbols of the culture of those we serve, provide openings for the message of the Gospel.*

**54.2** *Faithful to our Marist tradition, we provide young people with catechesis about Mary. We present her as a source of inspiration and encouragement for their lives.*

EVANGELISERS IN THE  
MIDST OF YOUTH

**55** Open to any apostolate that is in harmony with our founding charism, the Institute sees evangelization and the proclamation of the Word of God as the focus and priority of our apostolic activity.

**55.1** *We provide the children and youth in our care with a holistic education and a solid religious formation, open to dialogue and interiority. For those who are embarking on their journey of faith, we offer a Catholic education, leading them to discover and to live the Gospel, introducing them to the practice of the Sacraments and helping them find their place in a Church community.*

**55.2** *To respond to the needs of the local Church, the Institute collaborates, as far as it can, in the formation of youth ministers, catechists and Christian teachers.*

**55.3** *Brothers working in the social media seize opportunities that will enable them to make known the Good News of Jesus Christ. In all that pertains to their work, they act in conformity with Canon Law.*

ESPECIALLY THOSE  
MOST EXCLUDED OR  
VULNERABLE

**56** As brothers, we all give our lives generously for the sake of the Reign of God, engaged in educational settings and works or projects serving children and youth, especially those who are most excluded or vulnerable.

**56.1** *A brother who is engaged in a work that is not conducted by the Institute witnesses to Jesus Christ by the quality of his life and his service. In all such cases, his professional involvement seeks to be in accord with his being a Marist religious.*

ALL OF US, WITNESSES  
WITH A MISSION

**57** Whatever our role, age, or health, we are all engaged in the mission entrusted to the Institute through our prayer, work, and the joyful witness of our lives. This commitment includes the support we give to those who share in Marist mission.

**57.1** *Brothers who have retired professionally are encouraged to continue to contribute to Marist ministries or other forms of service according to their abilities. Their choice of activities will be discerned with the Provincial and integrated into the community life plan.*

OUR MARIST APPROACH  
TO EDUCATION

**58** Marist educational ministries offer society an innovative and inclusive approach to education that helps young people grow as “good Christians and good citizens.” This approach draws faith, culture and life into harmony, proposing knowledge as a duty of service, and culture as a way of bringing people together.

Our educational ministries, open to any family that accepts our educational approach, encourage dialogue between people of different cultures and faiths.

**58.1** *Our documents, In the “Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat” and “Evangelisers in the Midst of Youth” describe in a contemporary way the spirit, aims, and pathways of our way of educating and evangelizing.*

**58.2** *We develop in youth a capacity for reflection and discernment, for them to grow as committed people, aware of the new challenges facing our world.*

*To respond to these challenges, the main elements of our educational and evangelisation programmes are the cultivation of contemplative practices, the development of their spirituality, their search for meaning in life, and their commitment to solidarity, justice and peace, and the care of creation.*

**59** The sensitivity of Marcellin Champagnat to the needs and suffering of the children of his day inspires us to respond to the emerging challenges facing humanity today.

For this reason, we promote and defend the rights of children and young people in all the settings of our Institute. Along with other organisations, we defend these rights in international bodies, States and other public and private institutions that impact on the dignity and well-being of children and young people.

In addition, we ensure that all our houses, educational centres and social works are places where children, young people and vulnerable adults always feel safe and respected.

**59.1** *Our educational centres and social works are the primary locus for our promoting and defending the rights of children and young people.*

**59.2** *Each Administrative Unit must have a safeguarding policy for children that conforms to national and international legislation and Church regulations.*

*This policy is to cover the life of the brothers, as well as all ministries and programmes that are in some way under the responsibility of the Marist Institute.*

*The policy must detail procedures for the prevention of abuse of any kind, as well as procedures for listening to claims of abuse and their investigation in appropriate ways.*

*Victims of abuse in Marist institutions need to be responded to decisively with compassion, justice and dignity.*

**59.3** *We empower children and young people, through education, to exercise their rights and to put their responsibilities into practice.*

**59.4** *We regularly review our educational practices and policies on child safeguarding to ensure that children are treated as persons with rights and responsibilities.*

**60** We contemplate the world through the eyes of poor children and young people. We keep ourselves alert and are ready to go to new fields of mission close to the most vulnerable among them.

**60.1** *As Marists, we collaborate with other bodies to address the needs of children and young people in crisis situations that are the result of wars, social problems or natural disasters, such as refugees, migrants and those who have lost everything.*

**60.2** *In solidarity with the people we are serving in mission, we remain at their side in situations of crisis or social upheaval.*

**61** Inspired by the missionary heart of Marcellin who exclaimed, "All the dioceses of the world enter into our designs", we constantly renew the missionary dynamism of our vocation.

**61.1** *Each Province encourages the missionary spirit in its members.*

*To this end, it provides appropriate training for those who feel called in this way, making them available for new missionary projects of the Region or the Institute.*

**61.2** *As Marists, we desire to grow in global availability, being prepared to go well beyond the customary bounds of our Administrative Units and regions and committing ourselves to international collaboration for mission.*

**61.3** *As Marists, we want to become more intercultural. Our communities, and in particular our missionary communities, are called to integrate into their local context, work to cultivate dialogue between cultures and religions, and to appreciate diversity.*





## CHAPTER IV

# OUR JOURNEY AS BROTHERS

## MARIST FORMATION AND MEMBERSHIP

### PURPOSE OF MARIST FORMATION

**62** Formation plays a fundamental role in nurturing the life and vitality of our Institute.

The goal of Marist formation at all stages of the brothers' lives is to form men who will:

- 1** come to full maturity in Christ, following Jesus in the way of Mary and,
- 2** freely vow their entire lives to God living in apostolic communities, globally available at the service of the mission entrusted to the Institute.

Led by the Holy Spirit, and accompanied by trained formation personnel, each is the principal artisan of his own formation.

The Major Superiors of the Institute have the primary responsibility for all Marist formation.

### PATHWAYS AND PROCESSES

**63** Our formation as brothers is a life-long journey of grace, conversion and transformation toward holiness in fulfilling the great commandment in loving God and the other..

Personal freedom, responsible collaboration, and communal discernment are necessary elements of any formation process.

Every candidate or brother in initial or ongoing formation is offered appropriate processes and pathways tailored to his personal needs.

Over the course of our vocational journey, we participate in experiences of joint formation with Marist lay people to strengthen our bonds of communion, share the charismatic vitality of Champagnat and deepen both our common Christian vocation and our specific identities..

**63.1** *The Provincial accompanies the preparation and evaluation of a systematic, well-coordinated and integrated plan for vocations ministry and initial and ongoing formation for the Administrative Unit.*

**63.2** *Formation personnel design programmes that are adapted to the culture, needs and life circumstances of individuals. Such programs are open and flexible and reflect the priorities of the Institute, and the Administrative Unit. As a global Institute, it is important to plan that, at some point in the formation journey, everyone is engaged in a Marist international and inter-cultural experience.*

**63.3** *Major Superiors encourage the promotion of joint formation programmes for candidates to be Marist Brothers or Marist laypeople.*

## **A) VOCATIONS MINISTRY**

### **AWAKENING VOCATIONS**

**64** By the action of the Holy Spirit, God calls every person to a life of love, communion and wholeness. All the baptized are disciples of Jesus Christ, called to use their God-given gifts to be visible signs of God's love, compassion and mercy, especially towards those who are suffering, poor or in need. Our Marist charism, a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church and the world, inspires some to want to live their Christian vocation in a Marist way, either as a brother, a sister, a married or single lay person, or as a priest.

The purpose of Marist Vocations Ministry, therefore, is to provide formation opportunities where individuals can discover God's personal call and respond by offering the gift of his or her life. It is also to offer pathways and experiences that promote, educate, and accompany the discernment of and commitment to all Christian vocations, particularly Marist vocations, in communion with the local Church.

## KEY ELEMENTS OF A VOCATIONS CULTURE

**65** With other Marists, we cultivate a "culture of vocations" in our communities and places of ministry. We do this by giving witness to the joy of living as a Marist, in consecrated life and in other life options.

We pray regularly for vocations. We assist young people to learn to listen to the movement of the Spirit within themselves and to respond with compassion to people in need. We support educational, pastoral and solidarity activities with our presence and encouragement.

We offer welcome and hospitality in our communities to those looking to experience our Marist life.

**65.1** *The Provincial makes Vocations Ministry a priority in the Administrative Unit.*

*He ensures that it is well coordinated, planned, resourced and evaluated in accordance with the Formation Guide, and encourages the active collaboration of brothers and lay people.*

**65.2** *Provincials ensure that those involved in Vocations Ministry receive the formation and training required to work effectively in the areas of vocation promotion and accompaniment.*

**65.3** *In its annual Community Life Plan, each community determines how it will help to build a positive "culture of vocations" and promote Marist vocations, in particular the brother's vocation.*

**65.4** *We promote Marist apostolic movements where*

*young people can be immersed in a vocational culture that facilitates their response to the calls of the Lord. We work in close liaison with families, parishes, dioceses, and other apostolic movements.*

**65.5** *Those responsible for Marist Vocations Ministry work in harmony with those in charge of Youth Ministry and Initial Formation.*

## **B) PRE-NOVITIATE**

### **DISCERNMENT OF THE CALL**

**66** The purpose of Marist pre-novitiate formation (which has two phases, aspirancy and postulancy) is to offer to those young men experiencing a call to be a Marist Brother a process:

- 1** to come to a better knowledge and understanding of themselves in their deepening experience of human, Christian and Marist life;
- 2** to learn to listen attentively to the Spirit at work in their lives, and to accept and transcend themselves in a journey of Gospel conversion;
- 3** with the formator, to discern their motivations, and ascertain whether they have the qualities and dispositions needed to become Marist Brothers.

**66.1** *Each Administrative Unit determines how the phases of the pre-novitiate are organised.*

**66.2** *The first steps of the pre-novitiate are to be made in one's own country. This allows the candidate to remain in contact with his own culture and engage in ministry in familiar settings.*

**66.3** *During the pre-novitiate, the candidate negotiates a gradual transition from his previous lifestyle and relationships to experiment living in a Marist community and learn what it means*

for him to have a Marist identity. The accompanying brother also helps the postulant's family to understand the Marist vocation.

**66.4** We create the necessary conditions so that the candidate can make a free and responsible decision.

**66.5** The Postulancy lasts at least six months. The Provincial admits the candidates.

**66.6** The Postulancy usually takes place in a house distinct from the novitiate and in accordance with the Province Formation plan.

**66.7** The Provincial appoints a perpetually-professed brother to be in charge of pre-novitiate formation. The other brothers of the community are also actively involved in the candidates' formation.

**66.8** During the pre-novitiate (or prior), the candidate is required to undergo a professional psychological assessment. The resulting report will be shared with the Provincial and the formator, with the consent of the candidate. This assessment gives the candidate helpful information for his ongoing personal growth; it may also give evidence of the presence of any factors that indicate that he is unsuited to religious life. It is also essential for the candidate to meet the standards for working with children as defined in the Province Policy on child protection.

**66.9** Towards the end of the postulancy, the candidate writes to the Provincial, requesting entry into the novitiate. The formation personnel supplement this with a report on the suitability of the postulant. Once a favourable reply has been received from the Provincial, the postulant can begin his novitiate.

## **C) NOVITIATE**

INITIATION INTO  
RELIGIOUS LIFE

**67** The Marist novitiate is where life in the Institute begins. Its purpose is to accompany the novice as he discerns his call to follow Christ in the way of Mary as a Marist Brother, at the service of our mission as a global Institute.

The discernment process is designed to help the novice to deepen his faith, to bring him to a loving encounter with God, and to clarify his motivations and suitability.

Assisted by the Novice Master and his team, the novice is initiated into living in accordance with the Constitutions.

As the novitiate nears conclusion, the novice prepares himself for his religious profession.

**67.1** *The novice engages only in work or studies that contribute directly to his formation.*

HUMAN AND CHRISTIAN  
FORMATION

**68** The novitiate programme enables the novice to learn how to develop and integrate human, Christian and Marist virtues in his life.

Accompanied by the Novice Master and the formation community, the novice gradually learns to open his heart to Jesus and Mary, and to interiorize Gospel values.

He grows more sensitive to the action of the Holy Spirit in his life through contemplation and deepens his intimacy with God. He learns to value community life with its diversity of personalities and cultures and a common faith.

By means of a thorough study of the Constitutions and the Rule of Life, the novice gradually learns what it means to give himself completely to God and to others, particularly through his living of the evangelical counsels.

MARIST FORMATION

**69** The novice makes the Marist charism his own and gives his heart to it through the study of Marial theology, learning about the person and work of Marcellin Champagnat, and the history, spirit and purpose of the Institute.

He discovers our first brothers as icons of how one can live a simple and fraternal life. Manual work, carried out in the spirit of

these first followers of Marcellin Champagnat, contributes to his balanced formation.

## HOUSE AND DURATION OF THE NOVITIATE

**70** The novitiate, under the direction of the Novice Master, is made in a house established by a written decree of the Superior General.

The novitiate lasts at least eighteen months or, at the most, two years. For it to be valid, twelve consecutive months are to be spent in the novitiate community.

An absence that goes beyond three months, whether continuous or not, makes the novitiate invalid. An absence that goes beyond fifteen days must be made good.

**70.1** *The novitiate house is to be set up in surroundings that are favourable to attaining its purpose. It is to be simple and hospitable, suited to quiet reflection, to prayer, and to community life.*

**70.2** *The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, can permit a candidate to do his novitiate in another house of the Institute. The Provincial can authorise a group of novices to do their novitiate, for a certain period, in another house of the Institute.*

**70.3** *In particular cases, the Provincial can prolong the time of novitiate, but not for more than six months.*

**70.4** *The way in which an inter-provincial novitiate is conducted is agreed on by the Superiors of the Administrative Units concerned.*

## PERIODS OF APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE

**71** With the consent of the Provincial, the Master of Novices can organize periods of community and apostolic experience outside the novitiate community.

**71.1** *Extended periods of apostolic experience should be programmed so as not to interrupt with the canonical year of*

*the novitiate. At least six months are to be spent in the novitiate before such experiences begin and they must end at least three months before first profession.*

**71.2** *To ensure the success of these community and apostolic experiences, the Master of Novices sees to it that:*

**1** *the kind of work the novice is engaged in is in harmony with the aim of the Institute and adapted to his age and maturity;*

**2** *the community receiving the novice understands the objectives of this experience and collaborates in their being met.*

## CONCLUSION OF THE NOVITIATE

**72** Towards the end of the novitiate, the novice writes to the Provincial asking to be admitted to profession.

In preparation for his profession, the novice makes a retreat. The novitiate ends with a ceremony of temporary profession.

**72.1** *Three months before the end of the novitiate, the novice is invited to submit to the Provincial his request for admission to profession. His letter will give an account of his novitiate experience and outline his motivation for wanting to give himself to God in the Institute.*

*The Novice Master and his team also submit a report on the novice to the Provincial.*

**72.2** *The Provincial can admit to profession a novice in danger of death. The juridical effects of this profession elapse if the novice recovers.*

## D) POST-NOVITIATE

### GROWING AS A PERSON CONSECRATED FOR MISSION

**73** Marist post-novitiate formation for a temporary professed brother takes place in a formative community. Its purpose is for him:

**1** to continue to deepen the meaning of his religious conse-



cration, taking into account the reality of his own personality, his life situation, and the call to be globally available for mission;

**2** to be engaged in a process of personal, spiritual and professional formation that prepares him well for active involvement in Marist mission;

**3** to undergo a discernment process that leads him to a decision about whether to make perpetual profession.

**73.1** *Post-novitiate formation occurs in two phases:*

**1** *Preparation for mission in a formative community specifically constituted for this purpose, under the direction of a brother appointed by the Provincial;*

**2** *Apostolic apprenticeship, lived in an apostolic community, for the period before perpetual profession.*

**73.2** *The Provincial with his Council, examines how best to achieve the aims of each phase of post-novitiate formation, appoints the formators, and approves the formation pathways appropriate for their Province.*

LEADING A  
BALANCED LIFE

**74** In his preparation for mission, the temporary professed brother further consolidates his life as a religious and engages himself in an integrated programme of human, Christian, cultural, social, and ecological formation.

He learns how to balance personal and community life, personal prayer, studies and apostolic activities.

**74.1** *The Provincial, together with the formators, dialogues with each temporary professed brother to discern his future ministry and formation pathway during this phase.*

**74.2** *The Provincial ensures sufficient time is given for the temporary professed brother to continue his human, theological, and Marist formation before fully engaging in apostolic ministry. This period may include courses of theological*

*and professional studies designed to give him competence and the necessary professional qualifications required for his ministry.*

**74.3** *Formators ensure that the temporary professed brother does not engage in any work, nor accept any function, that could interfere with his formation.*

**74.4** *A brother who is undertaking formation in a Province other than his own, follows the directives agreed between the Provincials concerned.*

## FIRST STEPS IN MINISTRY

**75** The temporary professed brother continues his formation as an apostle by:

- 1** applying what he has learned during his time of preparation for mission;
- 2** reflecting on and learning from his lived experiences;
- 3** developing new insights and skills.

The Provincial chooses a suitable community for the temporary professed brother where he is given the support and accompaniment he needs during his period of apostolic immersion.

This phase concludes with the brother making his perpetual profession after a period of preparation.

**75.1** *The Provincial may appoint a brother other than the Community Leader to accompany the temporary professed brother. All members of his community provide their support and are actively involved in his formation.*

**75.2** *Before perpetual profession, a suitable time (e.g. 3 to 6 months) is given to a more intensive personal and spiritual preparation.*

## E) FORMATION PERSONNEL

FORMATION, THE  
RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

**76** Every Brother offers his personal support and encouragement to those involved in initial formation.

We recognize that the best support we can give to those in formation is the witness of our fidelity, our joyful presence, our generous service and our prayer for them.

PROFILE OF FORMATION  
PERSONNEL

**77** Brothers appointed as formators, especially the Novice Master, are chosen for their competence, their human and spiritual maturity, and their skills in prayer and discernment. They are men who easily gain the trust of young people and can work as part of a team.

Formators look to Mary as a source of inspiration for their ministry. From her they learn sensitivity to the Spirit and how to be loving, patient, discreet, and persevering with those confided to their care.

**77.1** *Novice Masters, and brothers responsible for post-novice formation must be perpetually professed.  
Formators are to be free of any responsibility that would impede them in effectively carrying out their role.*

**77.2** *Provincials give careful attention to the selection, preparation and pastoral care of formators. They also ensure that formators are provided with the resources they need and are given time for renewal.*

## F) ONGOING FORMATION

RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR  
OWN FORMATION

**78** As finally professed brothers, we take personal responsibility for our ongoing formation by being attentive to:

- 1** God's ever-renewed calls that arise as we live out our vocation in the world and in the Church;
- 2** the critical questions or issues we confront in relation to our experience of different stages of life;

**3** the need to continue to improve our competencies, knowledge and skills related to our ministries.

Giving priority to our ongoing formation means we take initiatives to pursue formation in personal development, spiritual, doctrinal and professional fields.

The process of ongoing formation is personal and communal. Formation occurs in the context of communal discernment where the aim is to bring about change in the whole community and not just in individuals.

**78.1** *True to our life as religious brothers, and to the evolving mission of the Institute, our ongoing formation focuses on the following priorities:*

- 1** *Spirituality and contemplative living*
- 2** *Education, catechesis, evangelization, youth and vocation ministry*
- 3** *Social work, justice and ecological education, the use of information technology and social media*
- 4** *Advocacy on children's rights*
- 5** *Finances*
- 6** *Study of other languages*

**78.2** *Each Administrative Unit develops its own plan for ongoing formation. This plan is adapted to the local cultures, needs and priorities of different individuals and groups.*

**78.3** *The Provincial ensures that each brother has the opportunities and resources needed for his ongoing formation.*

**78.4** *The brother and the Provincial engage in a process of dialogue and discernment when planning for specialised study, training, renewal or other programmes.*

**78.5** *The Provincial ensures that provision is made for formation programmes for those serving in roles of community and ministry leadership.*

**78.6** *We dedicate time to studying the spiritual patrimony of the Institute to deepen our knowledge of the Founder, the first brothers, our spirituality and the history of the Institute.*

*The Provincial encourages and support brothers and Marist lay people to undertake courses, further studies or research in this regard.*

**78.7** *We take time to read, either personally or in community, the publications and documents of the Institute, the Superior General and our Province.*

**78.8** *The Superior General with his Council periodically organises international programmes for certain roles and services within the Institute. Where appropriate, these programmes offer an experience of shared formation between brothers and Marist lay people.*

**78.9** *The Superior General with his Council resources Centres of Marist spirituality that offer brothers and Marist lay people the opportunity to renew or deepen their respective Marist vocations and sense of mission, and relive the journey of the Founder and the early brothers.*

*These Centres regularly evaluate their services in order to better respond to the needs of the times and the priorities of the Institute.*

**78.10** *To foster a better knowledge of our origins, and of our spirituality, the Superior General with his Council promotes and co-ordinates research into the life of the Founder, and the history of the Institute.*

## **G) ADMISSION TO THE INSTITUTE AND RELIGIOUS PROFESSION**

ADMISSION  
TO THE INSTITUTE

**79** We follow the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law in admitting candidates to the Institute.

The brothers responsible for admitting candidates accept those who give evidence of an authentic call from God, a sincere desire to respond to that call, good physical and psychological health, the maturity to participate fully in the formation process, and the capacity and qualities required to live as a Religious Brother and minister to children and young people.

## ADMISSION TO THE NOVITIATE

**80** Permission to enter the novitiate is given by the Provincial. He needs to be satisfied that the postulant has proof of Baptism and Confirmation, is free of any impediment defined by Universal Law, and of any financial debts or other obligations.

In addition, the candidate needs to give evidence of the dispositions required for life as a Marist Brother, such as good judgement, satisfactory health, and the ability and maturity to live in community and work with young people.

**80.1** *To enter the novitiate, the postulant must be at least eighteen years of age, and a layman with no canonical hindrances.*

**80.2** *The Novice Master decides the practical details concerning the beginning of the novitiate. During a simple welcoming ritual, the new novice is given a copy of the Constitutions and other appropriate symbols.*

## ADMISSION TO PROFESSION

**81** The Provincial, with the consent of his Council, grants admission to those applying for temporary or perpetual profession. This must be confirmed by the Superior General.

Temporary profession is made for one or three years. The period of temporary profession must last at least four years. It terminates in perpetual profession.

When the period for which the temporary profession was made has been completed, the brother is free to ask to be admitted to vows. If he is considered suitable, he is admitted to temporary or to perpetual profession; otherwise, the brother is to leave.

**81.1** Before profession, the novice, or brother, makes a written application to the Provincial for admission, giving reasons for his request. If possible, the Provincial makes his reply known in a personal interview.

**81.2** For temporary profession to be valid:

- 1** the novice must be at least twenty years old;
- 2** he must have made a valid novitiate;
- 3** the admission must have been made freely by the Provincial with his Council;
- 4** the profession must be expressly stated and made without force, grave fear, or deceit;
- 5** it must be received by the Provincial, or his delegate, in the name of the Superior General.

**81.3** For perpetual profession to be valid, in addition to the requirements listed in statute 81.2, the following are required:

- 1** the brother must have completed at least his twenty-fourth year;
- 2** at least four years of temporary profession.

Perpetual profession may be anticipated by the Provincial, but not by more than three months.

**81.4** The brother must spend at least two years of apostolic life in a Marist community before he is admitted to perpetual profession.

**81.5** When a brother in temporary vows asks to renew his profession, or to make Perpetual profession, the brothers who know him, especially those of his own community, give their impressions of him in writing, sending their report to the Provincial. They should comment on the external aspects of the brother's personal life and his life in community and ministry.

**81.6** A year of temporary profession is normally calculated as the time from one annual retreat to the next. For any other situation, the authorisation of the Provincial is required.

**81.7** *In exceptional cases, the Superior General can prolong the period of temporary profession up to nine years.*

**81.8** *Records of admission to the novitiate, and to the different professions, are sent immediately to the Secretary General, who supplies the appropriate forms.*

**81.9** *At the request of a Provincial, the Superior General can, with the consent of his council, re-admit a person who lawfully left the Institute after completing the novitiate, or after temporary profession, without the obligation of repeating the novitiate. The Superior General is to determine an appropriate probation period before temporary profession, and the length of time in temporary vows before making perpetual profession.*

## PROFESSION FORMULA

**82** The profession formula is:

"I, Brother .... freely and voluntarily, make into your hands, Brother Superior General, (OR Brother ....., delegate of Brother Superior General) profession of the evangelical counsels by the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, for one year (OR for three years, OR for my whole life), according to the Constitutions of the Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary (OR the Marist Brothers of the Schools)."

If the brother wishes to add a personal introduction and/or conclusion to this formula, he may do so. Such additions are to be approved beforehand by the Provincial.

## VOW OF STABILITY

**83** When we arrive at an age when there is a clear harmony between our personal vocation and our belonging to Institute, we may be moved by the Holy Spirit to ask to make a vow of Stability. This vow acknowledges God's constant fidelity towards us, and our gratitude to Mary and to the Institute.

In making the vow of Stability in the presence of our brothers, we wish to re-affirm our deep desire to continue to live generously the gift of our vocation as a Marist Brother in accordance with the Constitutions. We recommit ourselves to responding wholeheart-



edly to the calls of the Church and our Institute, and to meeting the challenges of our times.

**83.1** *The vow of Stability can be made after ten years of perpetual profession. We submit a request to the Provincial, who, in turn, informs the Superior General for his confirmation.*

**83.2** *The vow of Stability is made during a Eucharist attended by brothers and other guests.*

*The brother making the vow of Stability pronounces the following formula, or one like it:*

*"God of life and faithfulness, I thank you for the sacred and precious gift of my life and vocation as a Marist Brother. Through my years of joys and struggles, you have constantly called me ever more deeply into your love in the service of my brothers, and in being an evangelising presence among children and young people. Today, I wish to re-affirm the total gift of myself, in a faithful living out of our Constitutions, ready to respond to the continuing calls of the Church and our Institute. In this spirit, and in the presence of my brothers (family and friends) I make the vow of stability in the Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary, (or the Marist Brothers of the Schools). Mary, my Good Mother, help me to persevere faithfully until death."*

## **H) SEPARATION FROM THE INSTITUTE**

### **LEAVING THE INSTITUTE**

**84** Once the time of his profession has expired, a brother in temporary vows is free to leave the Institute. He should do so only after due prayer, discernment and dialogue with his immediate Major Superior.

If, during the time of his temporary profession, a brother asks to leave the Institute for some serious reason, he can obtain an indult to leave. This indult is granted by the Superior General, with the consent of his Council.

The Provincial, after consulting his Council, can, for just reasons, exclude a brother in temporary profession from renewing his vows.

A brother in perpetual profession must not ask for a dispensation from his vows, except for very grave reasons that have been maturely thought over in a process of prayer, discernment and dialogue. If he decides to leave, he makes his request to the Superior General, who, after consulting his Council, passes it on to the Holy See with his own opinion and that of the Council.

**84.1** *A brother who has reached the point of wanting to leave the Institute will arrange matters through his Provincial.*

**84.2** *An indult to leave, legitimately granted and notified to the brother, carries with it, by virtue of the law itself, the dispensation from vows and from all obligations arising from profession, unless it be rejected by the brother at the time of notification.*

## OTHER CASES OF SEPARATION

### **85** Other cases of separation may be by:

- 1 transfer to another Institute;
- 2 exclaustation;
- 3 dismissal.

In matters concerning separation from the Institute, we follow the prescriptions of Canon Law.

**85.1** *An exclaustated brother provides for his own needs. If difficulties arise, he should make his situation known to the Provincial, who, with his Council, decides on how the Province can help.*

**85.2** *The Institute has a duty of charity towards those who have left us. Although such brothers cannot ask for any recompense for the services they have given, the Institute helps them, materially and spiritually, to establish themselves in some other way of life. We maintain bonds of friendship with former members of the Institute.*

## 86 With regard to dismissal from the Institute, we follow what is stipulated in Canon Law.

**86.1** *The Provincial shall recommend to the Superior General the dismissal of any brother who is tried and convicted of sexual abuse. This includes convictions for producing, accessing or disseminating images or materials of child abuse on the Internet.*

*Where there are serious reasons that make the expulsion of the brother in question inadvisable, the Provincial must inform the Superior General.*

**86.2** *Dismissal may also be appropriate for brothers who were tried and convicted of sexual abuse in the past. This will depend on the nature, the number and notoriety of the crimes, the level of contrition of the brother and his commitment to live with the restrictions imposed on him.*

**86.3** *For serious reasons, the Provincial with his Council may impose restrictions on a brother who has abused minors. These restrictions may include:*

- 1** *permanent supervision;*
- 2** *limitations on the work he can do, the positions he can hold in the Institute and in public life;*
- 3** *the places to which he has access;*
- 4** *loss of voting rights;*
- 5** *and restrictions on the use of religious dress and of the title of Brother.*

**86.4** *In accordance with the prescriptions of Canon Law, a brother can be dismissed from the Institute if he:*

- 1** *habitually neglects the obligations of Marist consecrated life;*
- 2** *repeatedly violates his sacred bonds;*
- 3** *obstinately disobeys the lawful orders of Superiors in grave matters;*

**4** causes grave scandal arising from his culpable behaviour;  
**5** is obstinately attached to or diffuses teachings or practices condemned by the magisterium of the Church.

# CHAPTER V

## OUR ORGANISATION

### AS BROTHERS

#### THE SERVICE OF AUTHORITY

CHRIS, MARY AND  
MARCELLIN, SOURCES OF  
INSPIRATION

**87** Christ, who received all authority from the Father, became a servant, washing the feet of his disciples, thus leaving them a new model of authority as service.

Like Mary in the early Church, Marcellin accompanied the first brothers with attentiveness, sensitivity, and equanimity.

Brothers among their brothers, those called to exercise the service of authority seek, like the Lord Himself, *“to serve rather than be served”*, in accord with the purposes of the Institute. It is in this spirit that they take the responsibility to command, when necessary. Above all, however, their role is to promote listening and fraternal dialogue, foster discernment, and build up genuine brotherhood, a seed of the Good News.

CO-RESPONSIBILITY  
AND SUBSIDIARITY

**88** As brothers in apostolic communities, we all feel co-responsible for the life of the Institute and its mission. We contribute our skills and talents, our competence and creativity at the various levels of the Institute, and in its participatory and leadership structures.

Our Proper Law defines the responsibilities of each level of authority. Governing bodies take decisions that lie within their competence, respecting the roles of others, and always remaining open to collaboration. Only when a situation requires it, will a higher level of authority intervene.

**88.1** *In the Institute, the legislative bodies are the Gene-*

ral Chapter and the Provincial Chapter. They establish the law, either directly or through a Major Superior. Our Proper Law is made up of the Constitutions approved by the Holy See, and their Statutes and the Rule of Life, as well as official Guides, Norms and Rules of Procedure approved by the Major Superiors of the Institute.

**88.2** All references to co responsibility and subsidiarity are to be understood solely in reference to the internal functioning of the Institute, in ways approved by General Chapters or the Holy See. They have no force or bearing in regard to civil or penal law in countries where the Institute is carrying out its mission.

## LEADERSHIP ROLES IN THE INSTITUTE

**89** The Major Superiors are the Superior General, the Vicar General, the Provincials, the Vicar Provincials and the Vice-Province Leaders.

**89.1** For the better conduct of their mission, Major Superiors may delegate some roles and responsibilities to other people, bodies, and entities. Our Proper Law describes such delegations with their respective roles and responsibilities. When this concerns roles and competencies determined by civil law, such delegation is made in compliance with what is required by that law.

**89.2** Community Leaders assume the responsibilities that Canon Law assigns to the Superior of a community.

**89.3** Directors of apostolic works are at the service of our mission and of those involved in a particular ministry, offering everyone their collaboration, advice and the support of their authority.

Directors adopt a team approach to leadership, relying on the support of other executive members. Together they form the leadership team responsible for the apostolic spirit and Marist

*values in their place of ministry.*

*How Directors and other executive officers are appointed, the term of their mandate, and responsibilities allocated, are determined by the laws, statutes and rules of those that govern the work.*

*These persons take care that the ministry functions well, avoiding ostentation, and seeing to it that Marist simplicity is in evidence in everything.*

*They act with all necessary prudence and within the strict limits of the responsibilities given.*

*Those who are brothers are accountable to their Community Leader in everything that concerns their state as religious.*

## COUNCILS: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

**90** The Superiors have a Council which they convene at regular intervals. With the help of their Council, they lead and govern according to Canon Law and the Proper Law of the Institute, which indicate the cases where they act collegially with their Council, and those where they cannot act without the consent or advice of this Council. Within their jurisdiction, Superiors may grant a dispensation from some disciplinary article of the Constitutions for a set time.

**90.1** *It is always the Superior who performs the juridical act. He can do this in several ways:*

**1** *He can act alone, if the act lies within the limits of the responsibilities of his position.*

**2** *If the Law requires the advice of his Council, the Superior must seek this advice. Although he is not obliged to follow such advice, nevertheless, he must not act against advice unanimously agreed on by his Council, except for serious reasons. Except when important matters are treated, he does not need to convoke the Council, but he must consult every member. It is valid for them to give their opinion using electronic means.*

**3** *When the Law requires that the Superior needs the consent of his Council, he must convoke it. After the question*

*has been examined, the Council's decision is normally taken by an absolute majority of the votes of the Councillors present - at least four-*

*The Superior does not vote, since it is understood that he is asking for the Council's consent. If the vote is positive, it is not binding on the Superior. On the other hand, he cannot proceed against a majority negative vote.*

**4** *When the Law prescribes that the Superior act collegially with his Council, he must convoke it. The act is collegial when the Superior and the Councillors act together with equal rights. The decision is taken by an absolute majority of votes with at least four Councillors present. In matters other than elections, if, after two ballots, the votes remain tied, the Superior, as president of the college, can break the tie with a casting vote.*

**5** *When acting as a civilly incorporated body, Superiors and Councils take formal decisions in accord with the civil laws governing their operation. Even so, the internal process for taking decisions respects what is set down in Canon Law and our Proper Law.*

**90.2** *Besides the Council, the existence of other bodies to include more people and gain their advice, promotes the co-responsibility of all in the life and the progress of the Institute.*

## ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

### **A) UNITS OF LIFE AND MISSION**

**91** An Administrative Unit constitutes a broad community of life, of prayer, and of mission.

It embodies the Institute in local Churches, and through its unity with the Superior General, it is linked to the universal Church.

Even though these Units are administratively independent of one another, each is called to be part of a global body, to foster relationships with other units and with the General Government,



and to strengthen our fraternal bonds of unity and our sharing of resources.

## TYPES OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

**92** Our Institute is divided into Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Districts. These Administrative Units are established by the Superior General with his Council, as is their being grouped together into Regions.

**92.1** *If the number of brothers in an Administrative Unit becomes too small, the Superior General, after having consulted those in charge, may take the initiative of joining it to another unit, or of bringing it directly under the General Government.*

## PROVINCES

**93** A Province is an Administrative Unit composed of a number of houses whose personnel and material resources are sufficient to assure its autonomous existence. It is governed by a Provincial.

**93.1** *The Superior General, with the consent of his Council, may authorise the appointment and the process of appointment of Vicar Provincials to assist Provincials who make such a request, where this is required for the leadership and governance of the Province.*

## VICE-PROVINCES

**94** A Vice-Province is an Administrative Unit comprising a group of houses with sufficient human and financial resources to lead a semi-autonomous life in some respects. It is governed by a Superior of the Vice-Province, in accordance with the statute approved by the Superior General with his Council.

The Vice-Province Leader is appointed by the Superior General with his Council for three years renewable, after consultation with all the Brothers of the Vice-Province.

**94.1** *From among the powers and responsibilities attributed to a Provincial in the Constitutions and Statutes, the statutes of the Vice-Province indicate those which the Vice-Province*

*Leader assumes and those excluded. The faculties that are not granted in these statutes are assumed by the Superior General, who may delegate them.*

**DISTRICTS** **95** A District is an Administrative Unit comprising a group of houses bound by common interests, but not having the requirements necessary to become a Province or Vice-Province. It depends directly on the Superior General or on a Provincial, and is governed by a District Leader, in accordance with its statute approved by the Superior General and his Council. The District Leader is appointed by the Superior General or by the Provincial, as the case may be, for three years renewable, after consultation with all the brothers of the District.

**95.1** *The District statutes indicate the powers and responsibilities delegated to the District Leader by the Superior General or by the Provincial, as the case may be.*

**REGIONS** **96** The Administrative Units of a particular geographic area constitute a Region, officially approved by the Superior General with his Council, along with its statutes. Within a Region, the Administrative Units establish close ties of collaboration, solidarity and interdependence. They extend their bonds of brotherhood to other regions of the Institute in order to fashion, along with the General Government, an Institute that lives and operates as a global body, while being present and engaged in each local context.

**96.1** *At the administrative level, the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Districts are part of the Region where they are situated geographically.*

**96.2** *Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Districts with common interests are free to work together. This may require the drawing up of statutes, which are to be presented to the Superior General for approval.*

**97** The community is the basic cell of the Institute. It lives in a house lawfully established by the Provincial, with the written consent of the Bishop of the diocese. The community is governed by a Community Leader. The closing of a house requires the assent of the Superior General, after consultation with the local Bishop.

**97.1** *Procedures described in Canon Law for opening and closing houses apply equally to the seats of apostolic ministries linked to the Province.*

**97.2** *For founding a house jointly with another institution, a contract is signed between the General Government or Administrative Unit and the responsible authorities of the other institution.*

**97.3** *Certain houses depend directly on the General Government and do not belong to any Province. Their immediate Major Superior is the Superior General. They function with a special statute approved by the Superior General.*

**97.4** *The communities of these houses are made up of brothers chosen by the Superior General for a specified time, in agreement with the Provincials concerned. Such brothers remain members of their Provinces, retaining active and passive voice in elections for the General Chapter and for the consultation for the appointment of the Provincial. During the time that they are at the service of the General Government, they forego their passive voice for any other election carried out in their Province. The Provincial can request an exception to this norm, leaving the decision to the Superior General.*

## **B) ADMINISTRATION OF RESOURCES**

**98** In the management and use of resources under our responsibility, we always draw our inspiration from the principles

of justice, brotherhood, generosity, and the care of creation that form the basis of a Gospel approach to finances.

We use our resources well, and employ financial practices that are transparent, responsible, efficient, sustainable and reliable. Our resources are at the service of evangelization, solidarity, and Institute unity, in accord with our charism.

**98.1** *Even though we all feel responsible for the resources at the service of the Institute and its mission, we delegate some roles to brothers and lay people who help us administer and manage them, with a human touch and an apostolic and professional spirit.*

## ADMINISTRATION OF TEMPORAL GOODS

**99** Only the Institute, the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Districts, in their capacity as public juridic persons, have the right to acquire, possess, alienate and administer temporal goods. Houses can only administer them, according to their competencies.

**99.1** *Canonically, all the assets of a Province, Vice-Province or District, as well as the resources of communities and apostolic works, and income from the work of brothers and their pensions, are considered as temporal goods at the service of the Institute and its mission.*

*Each Province determines what should happen with resources and surpluses of communities and apostolic works. Provision for transfer of funds to the Province are to be written into any civil statutes.*

**99.2** *Only the Institute, the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and the Districts can accrue capital, in keeping with their social and financial responsibilities. Houses cannot own or alienate goods or property. When they possess a civil status that grants them these attributes, communities and apostolic works respect the internal process for taking decisions as laid out in Canon Law and our Proper Law.*

*Leaders, aware of our commitment to poverty and sensitive to the needs of the world, direct some of their funds to help Administrative Units with few resources, the expansion of our mission, and social works.*

*The Superior General with his Council sets criteria affecting all Administrative Units for them to discern an appropriate level of capitalization. At the same time, he encourages the sharing of resources across all levels of the Institute.*

**99.3** *In order to safeguard better their interests, it is recommended, where appropriate, that the Administrative Units, as well as houses or groups of houses, be set up as legal entities in Canon and/or civil law. Approval must be sought from the next level of competent authority.*

*These legal entities are independent of one another, unless their Statutes determine otherwise.*

*If constituting such legal entities demands some alienation or transaction, this requires the authorisation of the competent authority.*

**99.4** *Legal entities, civil societies and juridical persons established by the Institute or Administrative Units, are to consider their assets as goods at the service of the Institute, manage them in accordance with Canon Law and our Proper Law, and follow the guidelines of the Institute and Provinces.*

**99.5** *Assets at the service of the Institute and its mission include short term assets, investments and fixed assets.*

*Short-term assets and investments are administered by the Bursar with the advisors according to the policies adopted by the Superior General or the Provincial, as the case may be. This is what is known as ordinary administration.*

*It is the responsibility of the Superior of an Administrative Unit to administer the stable patrimony in his unit within the limits set by Canon Law and the ceiling authorised for the Administrative Unit. The General Government will request from the Holy See*

*whatever permissions may be needed. This is known as extraordinary administration.*

*The General Secretariat and the secretariats of the Administrative Units keep a record of what constitutes the stable patrimony of the Institute and the Administrative Unit.*

**99.6** *When several Administrative Units take joint responsibility for an apostolic work, they draw up, by common agreement, written Statutes concerning it. The same holds for works that are shared with other bodies.*

## GUIDELINES AND NORMS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF RESOURCES

**100** The General Chapter provides guidelines and directives for the administration of temporal goods at the service of the Institute, Administrative Units, and the General Government. It oversees the financial operations of the Office of the Bursar General.

At each level of government, it is the Superior who, following the general directives and considering any special circumstances, decides how resources are to be used and administered. He also supervises the financial operations. Each Administrative Unit assumes its own legal responsibilities, independently of the others.

**100.1** *In agreement with what is set down by the Holy See, the Superior General with his Council determines the maximum amount that a Province, Vice-Province or a District dependent on him, can dispose of without authorisation. At the request of the Superior of an Administrative Unit, this amount may be changed, after an examination of the financial situation of the unit concerned.*

**100.2** *The various Administrative Units co-finance the running expenses of the General Government of the Institute and other expenses it has to meet.*

**100.3** *Internal controls, in accord with good banking, investment and accounting practices, apply to all financial tran-*

sactions. These controls are established and reviewed regularly by the respective Finance Councils. Final approval lies with the competent authority, in accordance with the legislation in each country.

The methods and procedures of these transactions are also approved by the competent authority.

All bank accounts, whether cheque or savings, must be able to be accessed by more than one person.

## THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR RESOURCES

**101** Those responsible for resources at the service of the Institute take good care of them, inspired by the mission they take on within the Church. In their management, they show great concern for the common good, for justice, poverty, charity, and the mission of the Institute. Their management practices respect Canon Law and our Proper Law, as well as the local civil law.

**101.1** Bursars act in accord with their assigned competences in the day-to-day matters of their administration. They refer extraordinary matters to their respective Superiors.

**101.2** For Bursars to fulfil their function properly, it is essential that they collaborate closely with their respective Superiors and act under their direction on financial matters, be it at the General, Province or local level.

**101.3** As a matter of justice, those responsible for administering our resources across the Institute ensure that all our employees have good working conditions, receive a salary that meets the requirements of the laws of the country, and that they also receive and are covered by standard social benefits.

## C) GENERAL GOVERNMENT

### 1) THE GENERAL CHAPTER

**DEFINITION 102** The General Chapter is a representative assembly of the whole Institute. It is a way of giving all brothers a voice in the life and mission of the Institute, as well making them feel co-responsible in its government. The Chapter exercises the highest extraordinary authority. The Superior General convokes it and presides over it. He convokes the ordinary General Chapter one year before the end of his mandate or if the office is vacant. For grave reasons and with the consent of his Council, he can also convoke an extraordinary General Chapter.

**102.1** *Provinces, local communities, and individual brothers or groups of brothers, or lay people, are free to make their wishes and suggestions known to the General Chapter. These contributions are signed and sent to the Preparatory Commission, which passes them on to the capitulants.*

**FUNCTIONS 103** The ordinary General Chapter has the following functions:

- 1** to elect the Superior General, the Vicar General, and the members of the General Council, according to our Proper Law;
- 2** to deal with major issues concerning the nature, aim, and spirit of the Institute, and to advance its renewal and adaptation, preserving all the while its spiritual heritage;
- 3** to determine its own Rules of Procedure; draw up Statutes for the whole Institute, the Rule of Life and give directives by means of Guides, Norms and rules that bring together elements of our Proper Law not contained in the Constitutions, Statutes or Rule of Life;
- 4** to put before the Holy See possible modifications to some points of the Constitutions.

All who are entitled to take part in voting must be validly convoked.

**COMPOSITION 104** The General Chapter is made up of ex-officio members and of elected members. The number of those elected must



be greater than the number of those who are ex-officio members. The Institute's Proper Law sets out the election process.

MEMBERS BY RIGHT  
AND GUESTS

**105** *Ex-officio* members of the General Chapter are:

- 1** the Superior General;
- 2** the former Superior General;
- 3** the Vicar General and the General Councillors in office at the time the Chapter opens;
- 4** the Provincials, Vice-Province Leaders and District Leaders.

The Statutes set down procedures for invited guests and brothers who are elected to offices but are not capitulants.

**105.1** *The number of Brothers elected as delegates to the General Chapter will be two brothers by Province, one by Vice-Province, and one by District.*

**105.2** *Brothers who, in the course of the Chapter, are elected Superior General, Vicar General, or General Councillors, become members of the Chapter if they are not already present. If the elected Superior General is not present, the Chapter must await his arrival before continuing with the election of Councillors and proceeding with other Chapter business.*

**105.3** *The Superior General, with his Council can elect up to a maximum of two brothers when there would be some lack of representation at the Chapter. These brothers are considered capitulants, with the right to speak and vote on all decisions before the Chapter.*

**105.4** *The Superior General, with his Council may invite various people to the Chapter, but fewer than 20% of the number of capitulants. In dialogue with the Preparatory Commission, he determines the nature and duration of the participation of the people invited.*

**ELIGIBILITY 106** All perpetually professed brothers are eligible as delegates to the General Chapter, except those in a canonical process of joining another Institute, exclaustation, expulsion or some irregularity.

**ELECTORS 107** All brothers have the right to vote, whether in temporary or perpetual profession, except those in a canonical process of transferring to another Institute, exclaustation, expulsion or some irregularity.

## 2) THE SUPERIOR GENERAL AND HIS COUNCIL

**ROLE OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL 108** As successor to the Founder, the Superior General gathers all the brothers of the Institute around Christ, and guides and accompanies them in their fidelity to their commitment. He discerns with them the best way to adapt our apostolate to the needs of the times, according to the charism of the Institute. He oversees fidelity to our mission in all Institute contexts, communities and works, and uses his authority to ensure that this mission is carried out in the service of children and young people, especially the most vulnerable. He has direct authority over all brothers, houses, and Administrative Units.

**108.1** *The Superior General visits the Administrative Units at least once during his term of office, either in person or by his Vicar, his Councillors, or other delegated brothers.*

**ELECTION AND MANDATE 109** The Superior General is elected by the General Chapter in accordance with Canon Law, by a secret ballot, and by an absolute majority of the brothers present. At the time of his election he must be perpetually professed for at least ten years. His term of office lasts eight years. He can be re-elected consecutively only once. His resignation or his deposition is reserved to the Holy See.

**VICAR GENERAL** **110** The Vicar General is the closest collaborator of the Superior General, replacing him in his absence, and when the Superior General finds himself unable to carry out his task, in whole or in part.

**110.1** *The Vicar General cannot be Bursar General at the same time.*

**ELECTION OF THE VICAR GENERAL** **111** The Vicar General is elected or re-elected by the General Chapter under the same conditions and in the same way as the Superior General.

**VICAR GENERAL: VACANCY** **112** If it becomes impossible for the Vicar General to fulfil his role during his term of office, a new Vicar General will be elected by the Superior General with his Council.

**SUPERIOR GENERAL: VACANCY** **113** If it becomes impossible for the Superior General to fulfil his role during his term of office, the Vicar General takes up the duties of the Superior General and governs the Institute until the following General Chapter. If, however, he was elected by the Superior General with his Council, he must convoke the Chapter within a year.

**113.1** *The Superior General and the Vicar General have their official residence at the General House.*

**GENERAL COUNCIL** **114** The General Council is made up of the Vicar General and General Councillors. Together with the Superior General, they form the General Government.

The General Chapter decides on the number of General Councillors it is to elect, (at least four) and on the way they are to be elected. At the time of their election, they must be at least ten years perpetually professed. Their term of office is the same as that of the Superior General.

**114.1** *The Superior General will convoke his entire Council*

*at least once a year, to assess the situation of the Institute, to define the plans of his administration, and to examine priority matters. Other matters are dealt with in ordinary sessions.*

**114.2** *For decisions taken to be valid, the presence of at least 4 members of the Council is required. Council members can also participate by electronic means to give their opinion.*

**114.3** *The Superior General with his Council, after due consultation and discernment, defines the strategic direction for the life and mission of the Institute in response to the calls of the Spirit, the needs of the Institute and the orientations of the General Chapter.*

*To take this forward, he establishes whatever internal services or groups and legal entities he judges opportune for the leadership, coordination and accompaniment of all the Administrative Units, and, most especially, their leaders.*

## ROLE OF THE VICAR AND COUNCILLORS

**115** The Vicar General and the General Councillors are the direct collaborators of the Superior General in governing the Institute. They are available to the Superior General for any task that he may entrust to them and he consults them on important matters concerning Administrative Units and Regions.

## DECISIONS REQUIRING THE ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL

**116** The Superior General must ask the advice of his Council:

- 1** to forward the request of a perpetually professed brother who asks for an indult to leave the Institute, together with his personal opinion and that of his Council;
- 2** to suppress a house at the request of a Provincial;
- 3** to approve the Norms set by a Provincial Chapter.

## DECISIONS REQUIRING THE CONSENT OF THE COUNCIL

**117** The Superior General cannot act without the consent of his Council to:

- a) Personal matters

- 1** grant the transfer of a perpetually professed brother to another Institute, and the admission of a perpetually professed religious coming from another Institute;
- 2** grant an indult of exclaustation to a perpetually professed brother, the maximum length of time being three years;
- 3** grant a brother in temporary profession an indult to leave the Institute;
- 4** re-admit into the Institute;
- 5** authorise a candidate, as a particular case and by way of exception, to make his novitiate in a community of the Institute other than that of the novitiate, under the care of an experienced brother, who takes the place of the Novice Master;

b) Organisation

- 6** set up, modify or suppress Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Districts, and Regions as well;
- 7** approve the canonical statutes of Districts, Vice-Provinces and groupings of Administrative Units, as well as of houses that depend directly on the General Government;
- 8** approve the civil statutes of Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Districts, and also those of Regions;
- 9** set up, transfer or close a novitiate house, and authorise the establishment of various novitiates in the same Province or District.

c) Administration

- 10** authorise construction work, borrowings, loans, purchases, the disposing of property or of objects of special value, beyond the limit fixed for the Provinces, with the permission of the Holy See, if this is needed;
- 11** approve the annual budget of the General Government and the corresponding management and financial report, presented each year by the Bursar General;

d) General Chapter

- 12** fix the place and date of the General Chapter; as well as

appoint the Preparatory Commission, the Committee to verify the credentials of capitulants and the Provisional Committee of the General Chapter;

**13** convoke an extraordinary General Chapter;

d) Other matters

14 other matters which, because of the Universal Law of the Church or our Proper Law, require the consent of the Council.

COLLEGIAL DECISIONS

**118**

The Superior General acts collegially with his Council, with decisions taken by an absolute majority of those present, to:

**1** elect the Vicar General and General Councillors outside the time of a General Chapter, to complete the number fixed by the Chapter; also, to accept their resignation or removal from office for serious reasons;

**2** appoint Provincials, Vice-Province and District Leaders dependent on the Superior General, or extend their term in office for a period of less than six months; also, to accept their resignation or removal from office for serious reasons;

**3** appoint the Secretary General, the Bursar General, the Procurator General, the Postulator General, and the others chosen to work in the General Administration; also, the members of the Finance Council of the Institute and the Economics Committee of the General Council; and the members of other internal groups and legal entities dependent on the General Government, according to their respective norms if they exist; also, accept their resignation or removal from office for serious reasons;

**4** dismiss a brother from the Institute, in accordance with procedures of Canon Law.

**3) PARTICIPATORY AND ADVISORY BODIES**

**119**

Besides the General Council, the Superior General makes use of participatory and advisory groups that he con-

PROMOTING  
CO-RESPONSIBILITY

siders helpful in encouraging the co-responsibility of all for the running of the Institute and, when he deems it appropriate, he convokes them as set down in our Proper Law.

**119.1** *The General Conference is a consultative assembly, made up of the Superior General, the Vicar General, the General Councillors, the Provincials and also, Vice-Province and District Leaders, if provided for in their Statutes.*

*The Superior General convokes the General Conference in the period between two General Chapters. If he judges it opportune, he can invite other persons to attend.*

*The aim of the General Conference is:*

- 1** *to strengthen the unity of the Institute, and to enable the Superiors to have direct contact with one another, with the Superior General, and members of his Council;*
- 2** *to study questions of general concern, and to propose ways of responding.*

**119.2** *An Extended General Council is a meeting of the General Council with a group of Superiors of Administrative Units with their respective Councils, convoked by the Superior General. He can invite others to attend if he thinks this will prove helpful.*

*The letter of convocation defines the Administrative Units concerned, whether it is by the topic to be discussed or by geographic region.*

*As a consultative assembly, it is a means of accompanying the Superiors of Administrative Units and their Councils, of getting to know their context and situation better, and of exercising co-responsibility in the leadership and government of the Institute.*

**119.3** *The Superior General and his Council, in conjunction with the Administrative Units and other Marist bodies, make arrangements for an International Mission Assembly, a representative gathering of all Marists, brothers and lay people, who*

*share the responsibility for Marist mission. Essentially, it provides an opportunity to share experiences, understand current social realities, discern priorities, and propose future directions and strategies for Marist life and mission around the world.*

#### 4) GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

**SECRETARY GENERAL 120** The Secretary General is in charge of the Secretariat of the General Council. He is responsible for the minutes of the General Council, and official correspondence in the name of the Institute, certifications and other institutional documentation, as well as overseeing their proper conservation. He relates closely with Province Secretaries. He is appointed by the Superior General with his Council. His term of office is three years and may be renewed.

In addition to the Secretary General, other personnel within the General Administration assist the Superior General and his Council in their work of leading and governing the Institute.

**120.1** *The Procurator General is the representative of the Institute, accredited to the Holy See, for canonical matters. He provides the Superior General and his Council with information from the Church concerning Religious in Canon Law.*

**120.2** *The Postulator General is in charge of the causes of beatification and canonisation of the Institute. He prepares the documents dealing with these causes and organises the dissemination of whatever could bring them to a successful conclusion.*

**120.3** *Other persons provide services on behalf of the General Administration; in particular, commissions, Secretariats, formation programmes, archives, statistical information, research into the history of the Institute, and communications.*

**BURSAR GENERAL 121** The Bursar General deals with the economic and



financial sustainability of the Institute in the service of Marist life and mission, and, in particular, with the finances and administration of the resources of the General Government. He oversees the management of resources by the Administrative Units and promotes their coordination.

He is appointed by the Superior General with his Council and exercises his mandate under their direction and control. His term of office is three years and may be renewed.

**121.1** *If the Bursar General is not a General Councillor, he is called into the Council when the Superior General considers it opportune. He works with a team, counting on the contribution of professionals, to provide fraternal and competent service, the fruit of their combined effort.*

**121.2** *Before the beginning of the financial year, the Bursar General, with the help of the finance advisory groups, draws up the provisional budget of the General Government. He submits it for the approval of the Superior General with his Council.*

**121.3** *At the end of the financial year, the Bursar General prepares the management and financial report of the General Government and presents it for the approval of the Superior General with his Council.*

**121.4** *The Superior General is responsible for requesting an annual external audit of the accounts of the General Government.*

**121.5** *The Bursar General requests certified copies of title deeds of properties of the Institute if, in his opinion, circumstances in Administrative Units, or their joint entities, warrant such action.*

**121.6** *The Bursar General asks the Provincial Bursars to send him the documents he needs for overseeing the mana-*

gement of the Institute's assets, especially the Province budget and economic and financial reports, in the format set for this purpose.

**121.7** Each year the Bursar General provides the Superior General and his Council with information concerning the financial position of the Administrative Units.

**121.8** The Bursar General has the right to audit the accounts of the Administrative Units, communities and apostolic works, either himself or using specialised and professional services which he engages for this purpose.

## FINANCE COUNCIL OF THE INSTITUTE

**122** The Superior General with his Council names a Finance Council of the Institute, composed of at least four experts, to assist the Bursar General in the development and application of the economic and financial policies of the Institute. He also establishes such committees as he deems appropriate to address particular issues.

**122.1** The Superior General with his Council appoints three or more experts to constitute, with the Bursar General, the Economics Committee of the General Council. This Committee assists the Bursar General and studies requests involving finance that are submitted to the Superior General. Before making a decision, the Superior General takes heed of the recommendations of this Committee.

## D) PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

### 1) THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

**DEFINITION** **123** The Provincial Chapter is an assembly which represents the entire Province and expresses the involvement of all

the brothers in the work of governance. It meets at the time of the installation of the Provincial. It is convoked and presided over by the Provincial.

It constitutes an extraordinary authority at the provincial level.

## MEMBERS

### 124

The Provincial Chapter is made up of *ex-officio* members and of elected members. The outgoing Provincial and his successor are in the first category.

There may be other *ex-officio* members, but their number must be less than the number of elected members. If they are not so already, those newly elected to the Council become capitulants.

A Provincial Chapter could decide that all the brothers of the Province would be members of the Chapter.

## FUNCTIONS

### 125

The Provincial Chapter has a deliberative role when there is question of:

- 1 drawing up its own Rules of Procedure;
- 2 deciding on the number of Provincial Councillors – at least four – and their manner of election;
- 3 drawing up the Norms of the Province, which must be approved by the Superior General;
- 4 stipulating, in its Rules of Procedure, the composition of the following Provincial Chapter in conformity with the above article dealing with Chapter composition.

In all other matters they make suggestions only.

**125.1** *The Provincial Chapter has a consultative role when it examines general matters concerning the Province. Taking into account the overall situation of the Province, the needs apparent around us, the calls of the local Church, and the directives of the General Chapter, the Provincial Chapter suggests the main lines of action to be followed.*

## ORGANISATION

### 126

The out-going Provincial, with his Council, organises the election of the Chapter delegates. He convokes the Chapter and presides at its opening.

After the installation of the new Provincial, the topics listed in due form on the agenda are dealt with. This is followed by the election of the members of his Council.

**126.1** *The report of the Provincial Chapter is sent to the Superior General.*

**126.2** *A summary of matters discussed at the Provincial Chapter is sent to the brothers of the Province. Its decisions take effect on the date set by the Chapter itself.*

**126.3** *If, for a time, it is impossible for the Province to meet in Chapter, the Provincial will inform the Superior General, who will indicate how the Provincial Councillors are to be elected. During this time the powers proper to the Provincial Chapter are vested in the Provincial with his Council.*

## 2) THE PROVINCIAL AND HIS COUNCIL

### ROLE OF THE PROVINCIAL

## 127

The Provincial governs with the help of his Council. His main role is as leader of the religious life and mission of the brothers, promoting the renewal that is always needed. He fosters a strong sense of unity among the brothers and co-ordinates their work.

He ensures that plans and programmes are established for the pastoral care of those lay people involved in Marist life and mission.

Together with the Superior General, he oversees fidelity to our mission and, as an expression of this, has the primary responsibility for the administration of Province resources. He has direct authority over all the brothers and all the houses of the Province.

**127.1** *The Provincial assigns the mission of each brother of the Province. He arranges the communities, with an eye to their vitality, and, as far as possible, the aptitudes and personal situa-*

*tion of each brother.*

*He may authorize any person to live in a Marist community for a determined time.*

**127.2** *To make the governing of a Province easier, the Provincial can combine some houses and apostolic works to form a Sector, with its own Statute, if necessary.*

**127.3** *The temporary transfer of a brother from one Province to another is made by a written agreement between the Provincials concerned. The permanent transfer of a brother must be confirmed by the Superior General.*

**127.4** *The Provincial should ensure that the brothers are covered by insurance, according to their needs and the circumstances of the country.*

**127.5** *Exceptionally, and in cases of urgency, the Provincial can himself give permission for an outlay of less than 10% of the amount authorised for the Province.*

## APPOINTMENT AND MANDATE

**128** The Provincial is appointed for three years by the Superior General with his Council, after consultation with all the brothers of the Province. At the time of his appointment, he must have at least ten years of perpetual profession. He may be re-appointed. Only in exceptional circumstances may he be appointed for a third term. Other ways of deciding on a Provincial must be agreed to by the Superior General with his Council, by way of exception and for good reasons.

**128.1** *The way in which the consultation for the appointment is to be carried out is determined by the Superior General, after discussion with the Provincial with his Council.*

CANONICAL VISITS **129** The Provincial, either in person or by delegate, visits the brothers and houses of the Province at least once a year.

**129.1** *When making his annual visit to the communities, the Provincial, or his delegate, evaluates with the brothers the quality of their religious and apostolic life. He arranges to see each brother personally.*

RECEPTION OF VOWS **130** In the name of the Superior General, the Provincial receives the vows of the brothers of the Province, either in person or by his delegate.

PREACHERS  
AND PUBLICATIONS **131** He authorises those who preach in our houses, and gives permission for any publications by brothers concerning religion or morals.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL **132** The Provincial Council is composed of Provincial Councillors who, with the Provincial, form the Provincial Government, the key group for reflection, advice, and decision-making for the Province. The Provincial Council It helps the Provincial in government, in the administration of resources, in paying special attention to the spiritual and apostolic leadership of the brothers, and to the pastoral care of all those committed to Marist life and mission.

**132.1** *The Provincial with his Council defines the strategic direction for the life and mission of the Province, in union with the whole Institute.*

ELECTION OF  
COUNCILLORS **133** Provincial Councillors are elected by the Provincial Chapter. They must be perpetually professed. The Provincial Chapter fixes the number of Provincial Councillors to be elected – at least four – and their manner of election. Their term of office ceases with that of the Provincial whose Council they form.

**133.1** *The Provincial Council is made up of at least four*

brothers. From them, the Provincial chooses the Vice Provincial, who acts in his stead as the need arises.

**133.2** *The Provincial convokes his Council, at least six times a year. As far as possible, the agenda is sent to the Council members some days before the meeting. The minutes are recorded and are approved and signed by all. For decisions to be valid, at least four members of the Council must be present. They may also participate by electronic means to give their opinion.*

**133.3** *Occasionally, other people may be invited to the Council, especially those with Province responsibilities. These do not have the right to vote.*

**133.4** *Provinces may set up internal services or groups and legal entities, composed of brothers and lay people, tasked with reflecting on, advising, and taking decisions on matters relating to apostolic works. The Provincial with his Council determines how to set up these organizations and the extent of their decision-making powers, and the decisions that need to be confirmed by the Provincial Government. When necessary, they will submit their Statutes for the approval of the Superior General with his Council.*

**133.5** *The Provincial and Provincial Councillors, where they are leaders of one or more civil entities that represent the canonical Province before the State, take on legal responsibilities. These responsibilities are both institutional and personal; they cover all the matters determined by the legislation of each country.*

## ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

# 134

The Provincial consults his Council on matters that are important to the Province, to the communities, and to Province ministries.

DECISIONS REQUIRING THE  
ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL

## 135

The Provincial must consult his Council when there is question of:

- 1** beginning the process for authorising a brother to renounce his possessions;
- 2** authorising a brother to make the vow of stability - an authorisation that must be confirmed by the Superior General;
- 3** prolonging the time of probation for a novice;
- 4** refusing to accept a candidate for profession;
- 5** beginning the process of dismissal of a brother, except in cases of automatic and obligatory dismissal, for serious reasons contemplated in Canon Law and which require the appraisal of the Council.

DECISIONS REQUIRING THE  
CONSENT OF THE COUNCIL

## 136

The Provincial cannot act without the consent of his Council when there is question of:

a) Personal Matters

- 1** admitting brothers to temporary or perpetual profession, which also requires the approval of the Superior General;
- 2** giving a brother permission to live outside community for a long period;

b) Organisation

- 3** establishing a house, with the written consent of the Bishop of the diocese;
- 4** proposing to the Superior General the closing of a house, after consultation with the Bishop of the diocese;
- 5** drawing up the canonical statute for a District or a civil statute for the Administrative Unit and submitting it for the approval of the Superior General with his Council;
- 6** drawing up a canonical statute, should the situation require it, for a Sector or when several communities are living together in the same house;
- 7** approving, if necessary, the civil statute of an apostolic work or collective of works;
- 8** drawing up or modifying a contract with those initiating an



apostolic work;

**9** approving the plans for community life or their equivalent;

c) Administration

**10** disposing of or acquiring property, authorising any building or improvements, borrowings, loans - where the total amount does not go beyond that authorised for the Province. If the total amount exceeds the sum authorised, the approval of the Superior General with his Council is required;

**11** approving the budgets and Financial Statements of the Province, the communities and apostolic works, as well as the controls, systems, and procedures to be utilized in financial transactions;

d) Provincial Chapter

**12** organising the election of delegates to the Provincial Chapter;

**13** fixing the place and date for the opening of the Provincial Chapter;

e) Other matters

**14** other matters that require the consent of the Council, according to Universal Law and our Proper Law.

**COLLEGIAL DECISIONS** **137** The Provincial acts collegially with his Council, taking decisions by an absolute majority of those present, when there is question of:

**1** electing Provincial Councillors outside the time of the Provincial Chapter in order to make up the number fixed by the Chapter; appointing a Vicar Provincial as a Provincial Councillor, in the event that he was not already member of the Council; and accepting their resignation or deposing them for grave reasons;

**2** appointing, after consultation with the brothers, a District or Sector Leader; and accepting their resignation or deposing them for grave reasons;

**3** appointing the Province Secretary, Province Bursar, Novice Master, Directors of formation centres, and Community Leaders; also, in accordance with relevant regulations, carrying out their given role in appointing the members of internal bodies and legal entities dependent on the Provincial Government, and the executive officers of apostolic works they govern; as well as accepting the resignation of any of them or deposing them for grave reasons;

**4** petition the Superior General for the dismissal of a brother, except in cases of automatic and obligatory dismissal, for serious reasons contemplated in Canon Law and which require the appraisal of the Council.

### 3) PARTICIPATORY AND ADVISORY GROUPS

PROMOTING  
CO-RESPONSIBILITY

**138** Besides the Provincial Council, the Provincial makes use of participatory and advisory groups that he considers helpful in encouraging the co-responsibility of all for the running of the Province and, when he deems it appropriate, he convokes them as set down in our Proper Law.

**138.1** *The Provincial can convoke a Province Assembly. This is a meeting open to all the brothers in order to foster good relations between brothers and communities, and to arouse the interest of all by examining important questions concerning the Province. This consultative assembly does not replace the Provincial Chapter.*

*The Provincial may also invite others, especially lay people who are engaged in Marist life and mission.*

**138.2** *An Extended Provincial Council is a meeting of the whole Provincial Council with the work teams, commissions, communities, groups or individuals whom the Provincial invites as appropriate for the matters under discussion.*

*As a consultative Council, it is a means of getting to know better*

*the reality of the Province in its various contexts, and of exercising co-responsibility in its leadership and government.*

#### 4) PROVINCE ADMINISTRATION

##### PROVINCE SECRETARY

### 139

The Province Secretary assists the Provincial in official correspondence and in the management, certification and conservation of the documents of the Province, in coordination with the Province Bursar. The Secretary collaborates closely with the Secretary General and sees to the sending, at the times required, of the various documents requested by the General Administration. The Provincial Secretary is appointed by the Provincial with his Council. The Secretary's term of office is three years and may be renewed.

In addition to the Province Secretary, other services assist the Provincial and his Council in their task of leading and governing the Province.

**139.1** *To carry out his mission, the Provincial calls on others to work with him. As the need arises, he sets up commissions to lead and co-ordinate the various activities of the Province.*

##### PROVINCE BURSAR

### 140

The Province Bursar administers the temporal goods of the Province and carries out his role under the authority of the Provincial with his Council. In the Province setting, he holds the powers and responsibilities equivalent to those of the Bursar General. He gives guidelines to the other bursars for consistency in management throughout the Province. He is appointed by the Provincial with his Council. His term of office is three years and may be renewed.

**140.1** *If the Province Bursar he is not a Provincial Councillor, the Province Bursar is called to the Council when the Provincial deems it appropriate. The Bursar works with a team, counting on the contribution of other professionals to provide brotherly and competent service, the fruit of their combined effort.*

**140.2** *At the start of the financial year, the Province Bursar prepares the provisional budget of the Province, communities, and apostolic works, and presents them for the approval of the Provincial with his Council.*

*The final budget of the Province is forwarded to the Bursar General in a format determined by him.*

**140.3** *At the close of accounts, the Province Bursar presents the financial report of the Province, communities, and apostolic works for the approval of the Provincial with his Council. This includes information about loans, borrowings, and insurance policies, as well as the management and financial report of the Province Finance Office and other reports that may be requested.*

*The full Financial Report of the Province is forwarded to the Bursar General in a format determined by him.*

**140.4** *It is the responsibility of the Provincial to appoint an external auditor for the annual accounts of the Province, as distinct from any internal audit.*

**140.5** *The Province Bursar, in agreement with the Province Secretary, will see that the following items are kept in a safe place:*

- 1** *all title deeds to property and any related documents, such as mortgages, proxies, powers of attorney, wills, leases, and insurance policies;*
- 2** *documents concerning the establishment of houses, which are not the property of the Institute.*

**140.6** *The Province Bursar oversees the financial management of the houses of the Province and the other works it manages or any ministry for which the Province may be held responsible. He may arrange for the auditing of any financial operation under his supervision.*

*The Provincial and the Province Bursar have the right of access*

*to the accounts and any other related documents of the houses, and of every work for which the Province is responsible.*

**140.7** *To borrow or to lend a sum of money that exceeds the authorised amount, the Provincial, with the consent of his Council, must present a request for authorisation to the Superior General. This request will detail the conditions under which the borrowing or the loan is to be made, and the conditions of repayment.*

**140.8** *A Province that has contracted debts or other financial obligations, even with the permission of the Superiors, is responsible for their repayment. A brother who contracts debts or other financial obligations without valid permission is solely responsible for them. Neither the Institute, the Province, nor Marist institution can be held liable for the repayment of such debts.*

**140.9** *With the agreement of the Provincial, the Province Bursar decides the system of accounting in the Province with a clear separation between the accounts of ministries and those of communities.*

*With the assistance of the Province Finance Commission, the Province Bursar draws up the procedures and systems for regulating community financial matters.*

*All matters related to the financial operation of ministries are covered by a Province manual prepared for this precise purpose and approved by the Provincial with his Council.*

**140.10** *Each community and apostolic work draws up an annual budget and review its financial report. Both are presented to the Provincial with his Council for approval.*

*The budget and financial report are produced using guidelines, models, and criteria set by the Province Finance Office.*

the Province Bursar, constitute the Province Finance Commission. The Provincial pays attention to the remarks or recommendations of this Commission. Likewise, he appoints the committees he deems appropriate to address particular issues.

**141.1** *External professionals may be appointed to assist the Province Bursar in carrying out his role.*

*It is essential for the proper functioning of the Province Finance Office that the role and duties of all involved are clearly defined, so as to ensure close collaboration between the Provincial and the Province Finance Office.*

## **E) COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT**

### **1) THE COMMUNITY LEADER**

**ROLE 142** The Community Leader is at the service of his brothers in helping them live out their personal, community, and apostolic vocations. He offers each brother his collaboration and advice, and the support of his authority.

**FUNCTIONS 143** The Community Leader takes an interest in each of his brothers, and serves them by carrying out the following roles:

- 1** he accompanies them in their search for what is for the common good and is available to spend time with them and to listen to them;
- 2** he takes the initiative, when necessary, to confirm a decision made in community, or to decide by himself about matters that cannot remain unresolved;
- 3** he authorises the personal expenditure of the brothers, within the limits of his competence;
- 4** he is responsible for having the community meet at regular intervals;
- 5** he provides for the safe keeping and the classifying of

archive documents;

6 he sees to the upkeep of buildings and furniture.

## COUNCIL OF THE COMMUNITY LEADER

**144** Normally, the whole community acts as the Council of the Community Leader.

By agreement with the Provincial, a smaller local Council can be constituted in communities where the number of brothers or other circumstances make this a need.

## DECISIONS REQUIRING THE CONSENT OF THE COMMUNITY

**145** The Community Leader cannot act without the consent of his community or his local Council when there is question of:

**1** taking decisions on matters agreed on by the community or that flow from the plan for community life;

**2** apportioning tasks and responsibilities not specified by the Provincial;

**3** preparing the annual budget and the Financial Statement at the end of the financial year, and submitting them to the Provincial for approval;

**4** deciding on significant expenditure and alterations, within the limits of the approved budget;

**5** drawing up plans that call for the approval of the Major Superiors;

**6** attending to matters arising from the Provincial Chapter.

## APPOINTMENT AND MANDATE

**146** The Community Leader is appointed by the Provincial for three years, after appropriate consultation. He must be perpetually professed for at least one year. He can be re-appointed. For serious reasons, and/or with service to the Province in mind, the Provincial can shorten the term of office.

**146.1** *After several consecutive terms as leader, a brother, where possible, will have an interval of time before once more being entrusted with community leadership. Province Norms will establish if there should be a limit to the number of consecutive three-year terms.*

**146.2** *Where helpful, an Assistant Community Leader can be appointed to help out and, when needed, replace the Community Leader.*

*The Assistant Community Leader is appointed in accord with the Province Norms and forms part of the community Council.*

## 2) COMMUNITY FINANCES

### CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY

**147** The Community makes use of its resources in the spirit of the Gospel and in conformity with the demands of religious poverty.

**147.1** *Whenever possible, the community has a Local Bursar, appointed according to the Province Norms.*

### FINANCES PROVINCE GUIDELINES

**148** The Community Leader and Local Bursar follow the directions given by the Province Bursar in matters of his competence.





