

How well does the 'We Marists vision' reflect who we have become as an Association?

Any entity that calls itself 'Marist' and walks in the way of St Marcellin is family-focused – in the broadest sense – and all about relationships that reflect the ways in which Jesus related to those whom he encountered. Here, authenticity, a welcoming approach and attentiveness to the individual are central.

Similarly, it is 'of the Church', although not in a way that is limiting or narrowly defining. Rather, the Association has the scope to be both a mirror to the Church and, when appropriate, a provocative and challenging body.

Inclusion is increasingly valued and demanded in our society, yet the Church can be seen by some to be 'lagging behind'. Can we as Marists challenge structures which impose barriers to inclusivity?

The times – both in terms of the world generally and the burgeoning Star of the Sea Province – demand that greater consideration be given in the vision statement to the matters raised by Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* – creation, an ecology of the heart, sustainability and stewardship.

These matters have particular urgency for Pacific nations threatened by rising seas. A more global and prophetic dimension could deepen the impact of the vision being promoted. After all, there will be 11 countries in Star of the Sea Province! Each of these will have its own 'flavour' to be embraced.

We see ourselves as 'game changers for young people' – can we be 'game changers' for the Church to which we belong as well, in the spirit of the gospel and of St Marcellin?

Where do you find yourself in this vision?

Inclusion is not only critical for our outward-looking, global vision, but also for ourselves as an Association. For example, while Brothers and lay Marists have long seen themselves as belonging together to the Marist family, there is concern about staying connected with those who move out of Marist ministries/schools, those who belong to communities which are very different from the communities many of us know.

As one respondent said, "often you have to find the 'left out' and bring them in".

For many, the Association offers a tangible point of entry to our Catholic culture and tradition. Young Marists can find connection, opportunities for

formation – formal and informal – guidance and a sense of being genuinely engaged in a common endeavour that's meaningful and worthwhile.

The Association is a practical means of both honouring and preserving the Marist way and ensuring it adapts to changing times and newly identified needs.

The sense of 'home' that is integral to the Marist way is a dimension that provides a firm foundation for whatever changes and challenges ensue.

What else needs to find voice in the August Assembly Gathering?

Further to earlier suggestions regarding greater attention to inclusion, broadly speaking, and also to creation, an ecology of the heart, sustainability and stewardship, there was a suggestion that the language of First Nations be explicitly included.

There is a desire to draw young people – Marcellin's first concern – into Marist life ever more deeply and to hear their voices more effectively. There was a particular desire to care for young people on the margins which includes LGBTQI+ communities.

Questions were asked around practical matters of canonical and civil arrangements and also funding arrangements for ministry.

What do the recent Plenary Council statements and motions have to offer the Association, and, vice versa, how might the Association respond to the Plenary outcomes?

One respondent described young Marist professionals as "an uneasy space" – how might this be addressed?

There was an implication that the overlap of parish/broader Church/Association can also be "an uneasy space". How might this be addressed? Is there scope for complementarity, given that each dimension is about discipleship?

There were questions around responding to the particular needs – social, emotional, academic (particularly special needs) – of students in our schools.

The spiritual journey of parents, which can be interrupted by the demands of parenting and 'life' generally, is an area which engages the thoughts of some respondents.

Shine among them like stars in the sky