

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Marist Association?

The Marist Association is a spiritual faith community and expression of contemporary Church in Australia, with a membership of over 900 Marist Brothers, lay Marists and clergy. It provides a formal structure for leadership and governance of Marist ministries and mission, and creates a space for connection and belonging for all Marists. We follow the charism of St Marcellin Champagnat, in the way of Mary, as we minister to children and young people, particularly those most on the peripheries. We foster connectedness and communion among ourselves as an Association, with the Marist spiritual family around the world, and with the wider Church of which we are part.

Who are its Members?

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

Why do we need a Marist Association?

The Association grew out of a need. People who had been working with the Brothers for a long time wanted to belong formally to the Marist family, to identify with the Marist way – and the Association is this way.

The Association is also a genuine response to a call for co-responsibility for the life & mission of the Marist Brothers in Australia. It provides the necessary structure, within the Church, for all Marists to keep Marcellin's dream to evangelise young people - particularly those on the margins of society – alive today, and into the future. The four main Marist ministries are schools (Marist Schools Australia), youth ministry (Marist Youth Ministry), youth care (Marist180) and solidarity (Australian Marist Solidarity).

What is its main purpose?

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

Who leads the Marist Association?

The Association is led by the Association Council, which at this stage consists of a combination of lay Members and Brothers, including the Provincial. The Council, selected after a period of discernment by Members, is responsible for the administration and organisation of the Association.

Who can join the Marist Association?

The Association is open to anyone with a Marist heart! It formally brings together the Marist Brothers in Australia with other people who are passionate about, and committed to, Marist spirituality, life and mission. Many Members are people who currently work in, or have worked in, a Marist school or other Marist ministry for a time, or have had connections with the Brothers.

For some people, the Association may be something they are looking to commit to and be a part of for the rest of their lives. For others, it may be a year by year prospect, or only makes sense to them whilst they are working in a Marist ministry. There is no employment advantage for Members of the Association.

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

The Marist Association and the Australian Province of the Marist Brothers are separate entities. All matters pertaining to Marist Brothers are the responsibility of the Province. The Marist Association has responsibility for the animation of local Marist life and mission within Australia. Brothers may choose whether or not they wish to be Members of the Marist Association.

The Association is maturing in its identity as a respected body in the wider Australian Church.

What commitment am I making?

Those joining the Association commit to continuing their personal prayer life and faith journey, prioritising the nourishment of their Marist spirituality. They also help to discern the vision and direction of Marist mission into the future.

Whenever possible, and to the extent that is reasonable, those who join the Association are proactive in fostering Marist spirit and keeping Marcellin's dream alive by building Marist community and life in the places where they live and work. They draw in others, who are a part of the wider Australian Marist Community, to experience belonging and shared purpose. Members commit to attending local and regional Association gatherings, sharing their gifts to help lead and animate the life of the Association.

Do I have to be Catholic to join?

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

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

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

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

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

Are all Applications accepted?

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

How do I join the Marist Association?

The easiest way to join the Association is to complete the Application Form on our website: www.maristassociation.org.au/application-form

Association communities across the country have a Local Coordinator. You are encouraged to talk to your Local Coordinator to find out more about the Association and your Local Group. If you are not near a Local Group, please contact the Coordinator of Membership, Mr Michael Evison, at michael.evison@marists.org.au. Any enquiries can be made to marist.association@marists.org.au.

You may also want to discuss the Association with your Marist Ministry Leader, or the relevant contact person from the Marist Mission & Life Formation Team.

Support for your Application

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

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

After you submit an application, Michael will contact you to discuss it with you. Following that, your name will be put forward to the next Association Council meeting for formal endorsement.