

# National Assembly: Forum 1

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## What draws you to be part of the association with other Marists?

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**A natural place to be so much of my past is Marist.**

**Experience as student and formation feels like home**

It is always invitational in approach

Strong sense of family.... it doesn't matter where you go, you feel you belong in a Marist community

**Feel at home in a Marist school and a former student. A natural fit commonality, sense of family and spirit. Well grounded.**

**Enriching faith and helping young people in need**

**A way of maintaining connection with a positive group of faithful people. To help keep Marist growing for others.**

**Being with people... having a similar worldview**

### Melbourne Marists

Provides an opportunity to be part of the Church through a Marist lens

**Being part of something that is bigger than me and is having a positive impact on our world. A shared vision!**

Part of Lavalla200. Joined Association to make connection with the people and the Province here. Good to gather and meet people.

**to contribute to the community**

**More than being part of- a re-commitment; hoping for a greater sense of understanding our group identity**

**a deeper search**

An enrichment to be offered in both the spiritual and social setting

It feels natural, it's like connecting with family. Love to **be** with, **gather** with, **pray** with, **work** alongside, in ways that you can with *no one else*.

## **Looking for a faith community that lives its faith (Exodus community)**

Building relationships, the family spirit. The Marist community has renewed my faith in church

## **Like a living water - a viable group of people with a common story and mission.**

## **Helps us to articulate and grow our faith**

## **Loved the experience and wider community of being Marist and have felt connected to the associated.**

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Uplifting to see the bigger picture in the stories tonight, but also that it is rooted locally. Groups gathering... making Jesus known and loved!

## **Helping me to be more expansive in my life. A place to belong. It is a powerful gift that has to be shared. It is a fraternity now beyond the Brothers which is amazing and expansive. Very powerful that can't be contained.**

## **The people**

## **I am a brother - how do we engage with original vision of Marcellin and Marists not limited to religious life. Support each other in our own spiritual journey. Growing together on a spiritual journey. Listening to faith journey we have all experienced.**

It is an extension of my own faith journey. Love of Marist charisma. Opportunity to connect on another faith level with Marists across Australia. Therefore have a share witness to our faith.

Marist is so simple and every day. It is reflecting on lived experience. Gift for wider community.

Teacher in school Marist charisma has so much to offer myself and young people. Like simplicity and faith in action. Marist theme this year as it is so accessible. 56 schools across Australia! Looking forward to sitting on and talking to people face to face.

A way to connect with others and share values and stories. We have a shared identity which gives us a sense of belonging.

## **the diversity of so many people in our family seeing so many different things to make Jesus known and loved in the way of Champagnat.**

An opportunity to give back to Marists

Carrying on from the original Brothers as the next version of lay companions

## **synodal church; a participatory spirituality**

The formative Marists that have invited people to be part of the Marist family, association. Whether it be Brothers or Marist lay mentors.

**To live and put Marcellin's vision into action...**

saying 'what can we do'

**invitation...guidance and support for personal faith development. Community...**

**pivot in the life of Church**

**Faith in action**

**opportunity to share spaces of encounter. meaningful conversations. meaningful work.**

A more personal connection to others, too.

**Many ways of being part of the Association**

**I don't know any other way. It is a natural way of being who I am. An opportunity for me as a lay person for me to connect with my spirituality through a Marist lens.**

Community - there's a purpose and a spirit. One faith, one Baptism, one Lord, one community.

**meeting like-minded others; gives life.**

**Being a Marist Brother, it has been part of my calling, being a part of the Association takes it to another level. This makes us part of a larger group across Australia and the world**

**A wonderful connection with the Marists that has changed my life. Finding the brothers has blessed me and now I want to pass it on. So many blessings. Very proud to be Marist**

**Felt like a no brainer - wanted to belong to a bigger picture. To take my Marist sense of belonging to another step. Being associated to/with people wanted to keep Marcellin's mission alive**

It is vibrant

I know these people

Its about the people

Family friends and faith - this draws me in.

Family is real and lived

people are authentic

It is real and a lived experience

It has a daily-ness about it

Common purpose

There is an energy about the association that is infectious and it hasn't waned despite all of the challenges and changes since 2014

It is a place of peace

It has a sense of belonging

It was the relationships that develop the charism - it is our relationships this are giving new expression to the Marian Church - this draws me in.

I get chance to minister and maintain my faith

**a great chance to connect with like-minded people from places within Australia and across the globe**

Common spirit, Marist charism. People in ministries that truly witness to the Gospel.  
Invitation, extending the tent.

## **family, connection, charism, spirit**

### **strong sense of connection to several marist schools**

#### **Family Spirit**

The sense of community with shared values, understanding and purpose.

#### **I never joined the Marist Brothers but the Marist Project joined me!**

The welcoming spirit, constant hospitality

**On joining my school, I became aware of the Association. I wanted to build relationships in the school and be part of the community. The relationships have kept me in this community. The Association keeps me connected.**

**A great opportunity for people in our schools who don't connect with church through parishes, but can do so through the spirituality of our schools.**

Familiar faces - Like catching up with family.

Opportunity to be involved in wider aspects of the Association, particularly if you are based in a school. Broadens the scope and opportunity to connect.

## **It aligns with my values**

Especially the COMMUNITY and FAMILY SPIRIT

## **foster opportunities to connect**

The Marist spirit is vital and alive, so be carried on for years to come

#### **Group 2**

- To have more Marist presence in our community.
- In teaching in Marist schools, you are part of the way of life and the solidarity. Being a presence in the community is enjoyable.
- Its great to be part of several Catholic communities including the Marist. Marists seem to fill a special gap where you don't have to follow the complex rules of the Church. Marists meet you where you are at and are okay with that, without judgement.
- The Holy Spirit is at work in the association. We have so many young people involved with tremendous enthusiasm and spirit. I feel carried along by this.
- Listened to. Can share my faith.

**A great deal to be gained from participating and learning how to inspire others. This is the wonder and beautiful part of the Marist Association.**

It's the strength of the charism.

There's something special and deliberate in every interaction between Marists

Variety of work with our young people is so heartening. Bigger than the school or particular ministry.

**Part of my role at the school was to support the Brothers in their community at the school and the experience of family spirit with the Brothers really drew me to want to connect more**

## **Enriches Life**

Sense of the holy Spirit; opportunity for something new  
Reinforces how the Holy Spirit works- gift of the whole church

*Grace of the Holy Spirit e.g Marist Solidarity, Marist 180 – ANONYMOUS*

**It's a natural thing to be - to join with others who relate to Marist identity. There is a diversity in the group.**

**As a non member, we need to connect more to those people who call themselves Marist but are not member**

## **Spiritual Formation**

Depth of spiritual formation that nurtures faith and getting to share deeper with others.

An opportunity to share and support, connect with others - a fellowship that lifts us all up

**It's a logical extension of ministry for Brothers. More diverse.**

**I'm fairly new but for me it was through school and the MYM events, especially the social justice events at Mittagong. MYM drew me out, I gained confidence and coming out of high school I wanted to stay associated and help other young people have that experience**

**The creative side appeals to me. Over the years as a Brother, the way we do things in school, prayers and rules, we have realised that the world has turned upside down, and we need to do that! The Association gives us the opportunity to be creative. Marcellin at LaValla saw the need for children to read and write, we know have different things to learn (technology)**

## **Q1 Group 10**

\* Natural progression in time of our church, where it's falling to laity to step up with decreasing numbers of clergy and religious. It was Marcellin's belief that laity would play a big part in mission

\* If not in ministry any more, it gives opportunity to be connected with people like-minded and like-hearted. Beneficial for spiritual life, beyond church. Sense of call; can't imagine life being full without it. Part of something much bigger than myself.

\* it's about fellowshiping with like-minded people. feeding the soul. we have a connection in no other part of life except through Association. each person has something special to bring.

\* when Br Jeff asked Brothers to be part of Association, it was of their own choice that they joined. have been in schools whole life, so was a way of connecting with staff in a Marist school, instead of just relating as teachers or staff. opportunity to see staff in a different light, and to share some of the charism that Champagnat gave so many years ago - giving them an aspect of our spiritual side, as a Brother.

**It started with Brothers that I knew, and from there it delved into the spirituality. It draws me in.**

## **Like a family reunion**

There's something about our schools and our charism that attracts people

Having studied at a Marist school, worked in Marist schools, even meeting my wife through MYM YA events, The Association represents a way to draw those experiences together as a spiritual journey

## **Each school is unique but there are some common threads. Real positivity in a Marist school.**

the newness, the blank canvas, the possibility for growth - which is open to all not just the chosen few - presents intriguing possibilities and opportunities

A sense of connection and belonging.

Spiritual nourishment as a Lay Marist.

A sense of being Marist and connecting with my local areas/workplace.

A sense of being Marist and connecting with other Association groups.

To engage in community service and ministry work and assist those in need.

Taught by Marists as a school student - impact on your life and wanting the same experience.

Getting other people involved.

Positive experience with the Marist family and wanting to continue the connection.

Getting to know the story of Champagnat and incorporating that story authentically into our lives.

Spirituality - trying to find a purpose and a belief. Having a belief and a family.

Inspiration from others to attend to the Marist mission of giving hope to young people.

## **I'd been in the Marist schools network for some time but then joining a different school outside the network forced me to really make a conscious choice to stay connected to this important part of my identity, my 'Marist heart'**

## **Being able to pass this Marist charism on to subsequent generations**

connecting as a spiritual family - separate from work or parish, a place you can be at home and be yourself, to be known and loved in a way not just because of your job, or parish life. Something that transcends daily life or geographical borders, where you can share life and faith and love for what you do. The Association provides a structure for this exchange and to find richness in it.

## **Hospitality and community**

## **Spiritual community - a desire to grow my own faith outside of work and in turn to share that**

The charism provides a connection with others of like mind, spirit and faith. A great sense of community and family spirit.

The sense of being part of an international family.

Our motto of "making Jesus Christ known and loved" resonates within my own life.

A sense of coming home to people where there is a strong sense of understanding and belonging.

Our spirituality is authentic and practical. It is a home base.

The inclusiveness of our charism. The acceptance of all people - all are gathered around the same time.

That lay people have a voice.

To ensure we learn from each other as Marists and to keep the dream of Champagnat alive

## **Young members of the association**

I loved hearing from second year educators that they want the Association to embrace young Marists more. Can we have a space at the Assembly to let the young members of the association lead the discussion and promote Marist Young Professionals. We Marists, As Marists, Next Marists.

## **What are you hoping this assembly process will achieve and what are you bringing to it? Is there something in particular you would like to bring to the dialogue?**

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**The need to listen to people that we have not even recognised yet! Diversity means 'we listen' - this enlivens us**

**Opportunity to consolidate ideas flowing on from Adelaide.**

**Seeing what's next on a national level - and state/local level too, may be some need for some drive to help us move forward**

**Being part of something broader that we don't often see in our own 'part of the Marist slice' of which we are a part.**

Shaping the association and continuing the story

**Re-engage with ideas post Covid. How do we engage a wider concept and support each other both brothers and lay Marists**

**connect in with fellow Marists**

**Fantastic opportunity to catch up with others and swap ideas!**

**revisit why ?**

**We're still in our infancy - forming a connection with other regions and seeing what works**

Idea collecting and seeing what will work in our context

**the energy and enthusiam from Adelaide is driving me. I want that back after the last couple of years.**

**Hope it continues to achieve its intent and purpose and that we do not lose what it set out to do. That without Brs/less Brothers we can continue this mission throughout the world**

**My faith my spirituality and a willingness to share**

**Where aren't we but we could be? New edges of Marist mission in Australia**

**The youth voice**

The voice of the future

The voice of the present

**I want to hear about the new edges of Marist ministry in Australia eg LaValla 200**

**Understanding in more depth the breadth of Marist life and Mission in Australia**

**Seeing again what was written on the butcher's paper at the last Assembly in Adelaide and seeing if we can re- engage with those hopes and dreams**

**Freshness, passion, live on the edge, to be comfortable with the uncomfortable.**

**Delving deeper into what "We Marists" means "as Marists"**

**We hope that the process allows likes of time for the Holy Spirit to bring forward those crazy ideas and leftfield notions that push us to new places and new people.**

That people will bring a passion to the process... not just a set of objectives, some life...

**Re- energised and re- engaged with the process of being part of the Assiciation**

**God is ever expanding/changing - as we need to be**

**Reconnecting with Marist family**

**I'd like to see some more discussion about how to support those people who aren't in schools. There are lots of us!**

Renewal of commitment.

**We'd like to see more online groups generated for 'special interest Marists'**

**Celebration of our Marist World**

Grown and adapt to needs- how lay people have embraced the charism; collective faith; faith in action.

**Building relationships and people meeting with a similar heart!**

**Would like to have more activities to re- engage members**

That the assembly is a spiritual gathering but also that the whole association be part of the apostolic work of the different ministries. Be an active part of the apostolic work of the Association.

What is the future going to bring especially in the post Covid times.

**Deeper and Challenged**

Current time in Australian and universal church; encouragement of other

**That we will strengthen what we believe and encourage others to join the Association.**

**reaffirm and re-establish relationships**

**Keep the mission up for the poor especially for those who can't afford schooling. Where are we going with the mission? Our mission is for the poor**

Fair and active representation nationally across our main ministries.

Not sure. Maybe it's about having a voice. Learning about the challenges of the new Province and how are we going to act with/for our fellow Marists in the Pacific. It is an exciting time to be Marist! Especially on a global level.

**connection to peoples faith lives ... what motivates me ? I am in awe in what Marists are doing ... getting this sense ...**



Being in communion with one another  
Being on mission with one another  
Sharing faith with one another

I hope it is a place for dialogue and discernment; it is a place to speak our mind and our heart

**I'm keen to learn and listen and hear more points of view and hopefully take that back into my ministry with MYM and Game Changers. Maybe my perspective and experiences will be a good voice for the young people we work with in this process**

**Provide extra growth/fertilisation for the Association to continue to grow**

**My love of Mary**

**Trying to support others in guiding the Association. Hoping to find ideas for the local Association group to invite and support others. Challenging to encourage people to take that first step to join and participate in the Association.**

I hope it is an opportunity to listen, so the people who invest too much in the Marist charism.

**Special projects that align with the challenges facing young people today in schools eg. school refusers.**

**Creativity!**

**Aspiration**

Hopeful about the future; pivot to take action  
create the space for animation

**a joy in relationship with people ... not a job to do .. the joy of my faith is calling me to be this person .. to be with others...**

A strategic direction: where will we be in 3 years time. Not just in terms of membership, but vision, goals, where will we be placed for the future. Can't just be networking. Critical to setup strategy and work towards it.

Great for us to talk and engage with people beyond our location on a regular basis, even online.

**Being faithful to the traditions and Marist ethos and continuing to build upon them going forward. It's a challenging qstn. Willingness to listen and share stories.**

**Just happy to be here. I missed the other two Assemblies and am looking forward to being part of it. My line in life at the moment is 'just show up' and 'get out of the way'**

To see like-minded people again after a long time.

Assembly will bring understanding and overarching guidance to the group.

Want this assembly to be an opportunity to 'do something meaningful'!

**Synodality: this gathering is in this tradition and can be a good example of the importance of the Church gathering together to pray and discuss significant issues. Hope to strengthen our own faith but also strengthen the cohesion, strength of unity of the Marist family.**

**We need to revisit using the technologies that we've now learnt, to help connect with each other (the big family) more often.**

**A newness! An opportunity to be creative and think outside the square, think about what is relative to people.**

We hope we listen to ideas

**It's just so exciting that we can all get together again. Different age groups, wonderful to hear young people, so exciting to have young people involved. The energy that young people give us!**

**Grow in the way we are Marist - not fall into the talk/words/stories of the past but look for ways that we may share this story in fresh ways**

**Spirituality for its members. Hope the assembly will provide people with good 'God contact' or spiritual experiences. That people will identify with and is enhanced.**

**I hope that we can rediscover a modern spirituality, relevant to all the people we work with.**

**As Marists how are we responding to the needs of young people post-COVID?**

**What now for the "Young Professionals" demographic?**

How do we draw our energies, inspirations, and visions - our disruptive edge - and form a stream of life that flows into the broader Church and our Country.

**Ministry suggestion: Opportunity to offer exchange programs across the Marist world - local host schools; mentoring, school leadership etc.**

**Direction**

Clarity with the direction we will be heading. Some form of structure that assists the way local coordinators respond and lead their groups.

**We've been working on this for a long time and there has been a real evolution, ending with this desire for dreaming and connection. What is our disruptive edge? Even just our size, scale and diverse makeup are already disruptive! Connecting in one place will be so powerful**

**Group 2**

- More conversation. More action. Bringing enthusiasm.
- Consolidation. Affirmation. Recognition of what the spirit is doing with us. Where there is uncertainty, the Holy Spirit is there.
- Familiarise myself with the different facets of the Marist arms. There is such a wide and vast array of experiences I want to learn about. I will bring my youth perspective.
- Connectivity and see what's out there. It will be great to get to know the young people involved, especially the primary schools. Enthusiastic about implementing.
- Bringing a bit faith and rebellion!

Hope that it will be a time to re-energise the Marist Ministries. At the dawn of the new province we should reflect upon and re-articulate our Marist mission.

Looking forward to a face-to-face gathering to which we will bring our enthusiasm, our openness to see where-to-next, a willingness to learn from others and opportunities to share when we go back to our communities after the Assembly.

Finding ways of incorporating our "disruptive edge" in the classroom practically, realistically, concretely

## Q2

\* time for sharing, time for growing, for meeting new people, celebrating our charism and who we are. don't do this enough in our daily lives. Hope I can bring some values to the discussion.

\* looking forward to seeing some people who haven't seen in a long time. Like coming home for Christmas - food for your soul. so much energy when we meet. expanding that Marist love.

\* Meeting people again.

\* we have grown since that last Assembly. want to see newer, younger faces - they are the future!

\* to see how we can move a bit more outside the box - a lot to do with schools, and with other Associations within the Marists that we tend to attract people. want to attract young people, at Universities - how do we connect with those?

\* i bring my story of who I am and what I've done.

\* two phases of we Marists, and as Marists - excited about the next phase and hope Assembly brings focus to this.

\* there's a movement into another space. how we attract people, is by our own story and example. but hope we begin to shape this next phase.

\* bringing enthusiasm and commitment

\*want to know what we want to do this time, and how we are going to do it

**It's an opportunity to increase our diversity in who becomes part of the Association. Can we think beyond Brothers and teachers? What about the youth who leave our schools? Can the Association embrace them? Doctors, lawyers, business owners can be part of the network.**

Sometimes it is difficult to re-animate, and Covid has made it difficult to meet etc, the Assembly process is important to give us the opportunity to re-imagine where we are going and how we can do this

**Listen to people especially the poor. To take the Statement from the Heart seriously. Invitation is to listen during this assembly and to take people seriously. The focus of the Assembly is on people and for all to be humble to respect others and hear what they are saying.**

In light of a society where fewer people know God, what is our way of opening and creating spaces to make God feel known and experienced (encountered), using our disruptive edge to cause transformation.

Ensuring that we reach out to Marist friends that are not connected to our Marist schools and ministries. That connect with the charism and want to be part of the Marist family but are no longer connected. Are in different vocations and walks of life. Our focus is currently very school focused.

**Diversity in terms of age and role. How can we model something which is inviting for young people? How can we create something which is helpful for them?**

**The importance of developing faith. Need a vigorous Marist Association to set our hearts on fire! Something that we have to share/inform others when we return home.**

**To help the spiritual poor.**

To reignite my passion, be inspired by the passion the Brothers show

**Ministry - option for financial support for Marist Mission (MSoL)  
- salary sacrificing/ East Timor coffee etc.**

**the value of community is so important. As we go into this assembly, 2 or 3 questions that we can all focus on, then give it some reflections so we can see where we are up t, and where we can go to.**

Ensure that there are pathways post MYM for people to connect in to grow the Marist family.

**we have some momentum and the opprtunity to now take the next step!**

**hunger for formation, the Marists do it so well! connecting and being together again**

**Clarify the purpose of the Association give direction and to help attract more people**

Nourishing prayer life and faith journey.

Strengthen our Marist commitment to stewardship and Laudato Si'

Strengthen our Marist commitment to our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

Being Marist is about being family – bring Marist spirituality down to being family and addressing Mental Health.

The whole spirituality survives and continues for another 150 years with lay involvement. We don't want to lose it or leave it to others.

We need to be good role models for our students, especially those on the margins.

We need to focus on the students in our community who Marcellin would be drawn to helping.

Promote our wellbeing to help us to continue our work.

**As many groups are walking away from face to face gatherings... hoping to commit to continuing face to face and to rebuild connections**

Openness

There is an irony (and perhaps its God's disruptive Spirit) that this occurs at roughly the same time the Plenary is occurring - how will our Assembly be different?

New ideas

Personal refreshment

The richness of the prayer

It is a chance for my family to gather and focus on faith

Reaching out to the community

A chance to meet and explore ways to reach out to each other

Explore the disruptive edge and keep it alive - lets not institutionalize ourselves - the speakers modelled this well tonight.

Have a sense of being empowered and identify our sphere of influence

This is a home base gathering where i can be myself

What was the last two years like for me and what do I want now and what have I returned to that I did not want to return to.

Pentecost is the realization that the spirit is already at work - the Assembly is the empowerment of our Baptisimal call.

Making Jesus known, lived and loved.

Some are focusing on the wonderful opportunity simply to be together.

Information, formation and transformation

Who draws the charism out of me?

**Purpose statement**

**Opportunity for people to share and listen**

Challenge each other to action. Ways that meaningfully connect with the most vulnerable in our communities.

Seeking ways to draw on individual charisms for the service of the broader Association, so that the responsibility doesn't sit on the various Councils or Boards but a true sharing of Marist life

To explore ways that keep those who are outside schools and Marist ministries connected.  
What pathways are there for formation for those who fit in this space?

To be more connected in faith.

**Mechanisms to reflect diversity across Marist Ministries within the association.**

**- People will accept the opportunity to connect and embrace new ways of doing things.**

- To be able to create opportunities to make the most of our Marist communities across the globe

- To know that we are all on our own journey and can give different amounts of time and resources given our own needs, and to know that this is ok.

**To be affirmed, encouraged and strengthened in whatever it is we do wherever we are. To know that we are not alone in what it is that we do, that it is important and worthwhile!**

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