

# *United in the mission*

Gathered around the same table

We Marists have not yet had two hundred years of life. But since 2 January 1817, many things have happened. According to the statistics of 31 December 2007, there were 3,940 Marist Brothers in the world, spread through 77 countries on the five continents. There are, of course others, men and women, working with the brothers in education, volunteer service, the missions and other services directed towards young people.

On the occasion of the International Marist Mission Assembly held in Mendès, Brasil, in September 2007, it was calculated that some 51,500 brothers and lay people were involved with about 497,300 children and young people in the Marist works and projects.



One  
**Heart**  
One  
**Mission**

Marist International  
Mission Assembly

## **International Marist Mission Assembly (Mendès 2007)**

In 2004 was launched the International Marist Mission Assembly which was going to unfurl in local, provincial and international phases. More than 20,000 lay people and brothers, divided into some 2,000 discussion groups, took part. The process reached its culmination in the Mendès meeting in September 2007, with the participation of 50 lay people and 44 brothers representing the whole Institute, present in 77 countries. For the first time, brothers and laity united to discover together the challenges the Marist mission has to face in today's world. Here are the five principal conclusions they have transmitted to us:

**1. *To live centred on Jesus.***

As Marists we are called to centre our lives passionately on Jesus Christ, by practising a spirituality of the following of Christ. Inspired by Mary, we make of our lives among children and youth the privileged place of our encounter with God.

**2. *To share the mission between brothers and lay people.***

As Marists of Champagnat, we believe that God is calling us to share our life and mission, in co-responsibility, men and women, in a spirit of trust, understanding and mutual respect.

**3. *Before all, to announce Jesus Christ.***

As Brothers and Lay Marists in communion, we affirm that evangelisation is the centre and the priority of our apostolic activity, in proclaiming Jesus Christ and his message.

**4. *To be attentive to the new challenges in education.***

At this time, we wish to emphasize in a particular way the right to education: an evangelizing education, an education committed to solidarity and social transformation, attentive to cultures and respect for the environment, and an education without discrimination which opens up places to those who are deprived of them.

**5. *To defend and promote the rights of children and youth.***

We believe that God is calling us, loudly, decisively and prophetically, for the defence and promotion of the rights of children and young people. This requires on our part the promotion of human rights through a Marist education that is critical, integral, in solidarity and inspired by the Gospel; denunciation of what oppresses children and youth; the opening of our hearts to the cries of children and youth, and a greater development of our presence in the areas where it is most needed.

**Called to share  
life and mission**





# Questioning ourselves and sharing

We read Chapter 2 on **Mission** (pp 38 to 51)

We study the paragraph : « **Co-responsible in the common mission** ».

- *The possibilities and tensions in the common mission.*
- *Our experience of the mission and its management.*
- *Future perspectives for the mission from the standpoint of the situation of co-responsibility.*

Our Marist mission is one, carried out through different tasks... we can share the Marist mission in any work lived in faith.

- *Have you a deep knowledge of the Marist mission?*
- *How do you live this mission personally in your daily life?*

Brothers and lay together, starting from our specific roles and common mission, we are searching to discover the dream (project) of God in order to revitalise the mission... We are called to help each other and mutually complete each other.

- *Brothers and lay, what is our contribution to the Marist mission?*

Many lay Marists live the mission by working as professionals in the works of the Institute. This relationship of work is a source of fruitfulness and can be also, at times, a cause of tension.

*Tell of an experience of yours that was a source of fruitfulness and another that you lived with tension.*

- *How would it be necessary to act so that such tension was not produced?*

# Lord, we want to be messengers of hope

(Prayer of the International Marist Mission Assembly,  
Mendes, Brasil, 2007)

Lord Jesus,  
You have called us to follow you  
in the manner of Mary and Marcellin,  
in a family of educators,  
lay people and brothers,  
living together the dream of letting  
every child and young person  
experience the great love  
God the Father has for him and her.  
Today, we look around us  
and become aware  
of the enormous needs  
of children and young people.  
We know that it is urgent to be able to count  
on messengers of hope,  
witnesses of your love.  
We want to journey together,  
brothers and lay people,  
entering more and more  
into Marcellin's heart,  
discovering new ways  
of reaching out to children and youth,  
living evangelical simplicity  
and making our work spaces  
of fraternity, solidarity and encounter.  
Conscious, Lord,  
of our lights and shadows,  
we ask of you « audacity and hope »  
to journey « in peace but in haste »  
amidst the challenges  
life throws at us today.  
Mary of Nazareth,  
Model of faith and devotion,  
pray for our family which is also your own!

