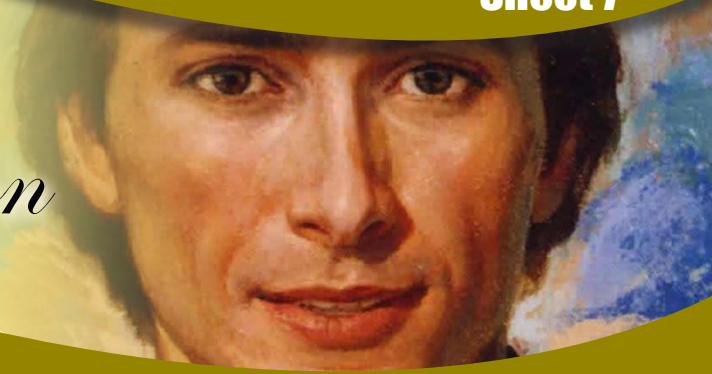


# Maturing in one's Marist vocation

Gathered around the same table



The journey of growth in one's Marist vocation, whether as a religious or layperson, must be grounded in faith and trust, and inspired by dreams of the future. It requires a discovery of like-minded companions and sharing the journey together with them.

In his circular, « *Walk peacefully, yet with a sense of urgency* » Br Benito Arbués tells a beautiful American legend :

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*« From time immemorial a certain Indian tribe had their settlement at the foot of a high mountain. When the its leader became seriously ill, he summoned his three sons to his bedside. « Go up the sacred mountain, » he said. «The one who brings me back the most precious gift will succeed to the chieftainship. »*

*The first son returned with a very rare and beautiful flower.  
The second brought back a magnificent multicoloured precious stone.  
The third told his father, « I didn't bring back anything. From the top of the peak, I could see that on the other side there are magnificent pastures and a crystal-clear lake. I was so impressed with the sight, that I decided not to bring anything. Instead I return with the news that migrating there will be of enormous benefit to our people. »*

*And the chief replied : « The role of chief will fall to you, because you have brought me the gift of a vision of a better future for our tribe. »*

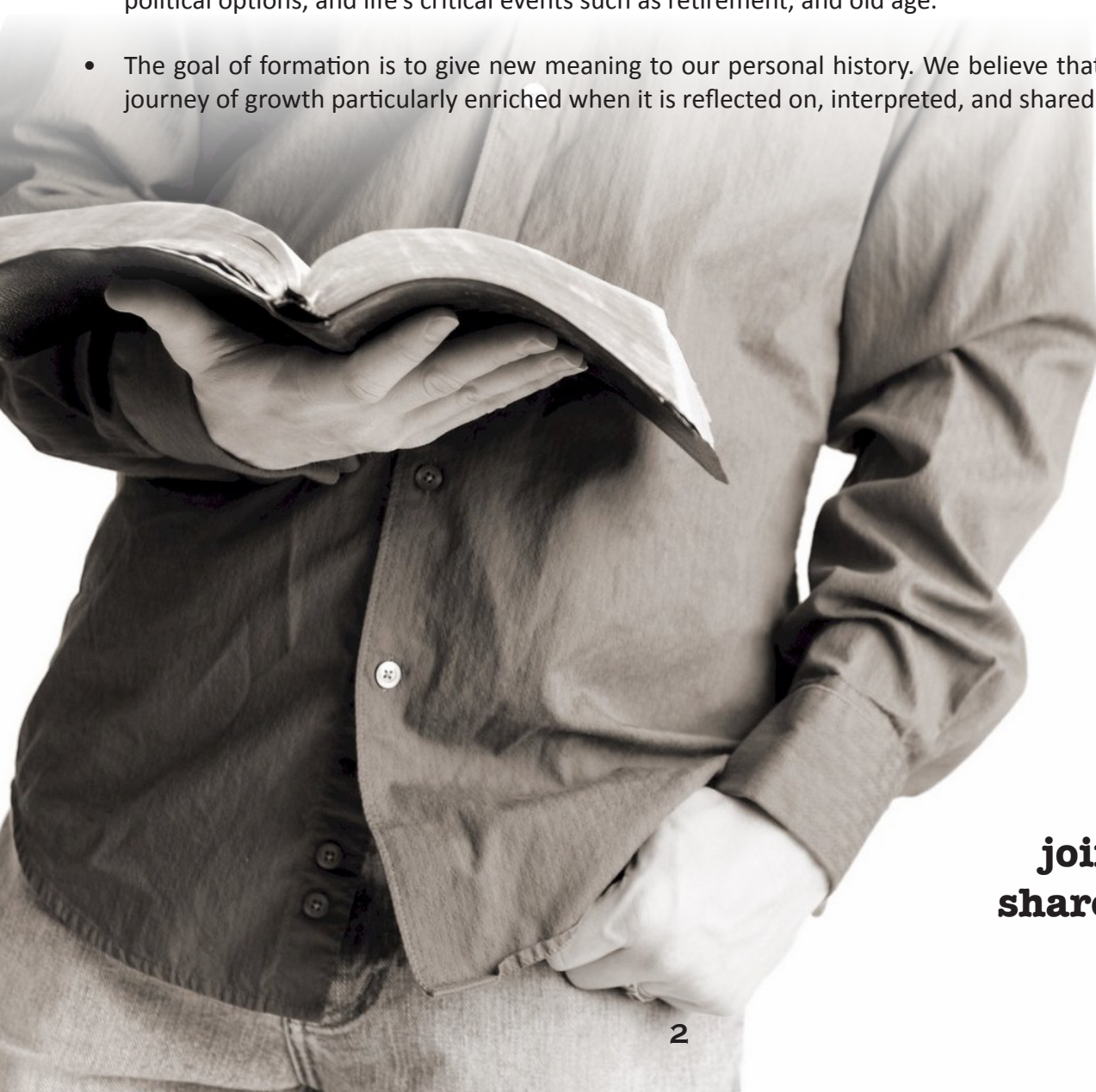
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## Living out our lives as continual growth

We are reading chapter 6 of the document “Gathered Around the Same Table”. Having recognised that our vocation is a call needing to be listened to and discovered, to be discerned and travelled in order to arrive at making happy and sound choices, we now pay attention to the importance of formation in following this route. (numbers 156 to 169)

We are clarifying what is our joint formation, then our specific formation and its continuity throughout life ( permanent formation )

- Formation done together, or rather shared formation, will deepen our awareness of what unites us as Marists. It's a prophetic step relevant to our manner of living the gospel. The sharing will help us deepen our understanding of our own vocation and enrich our appreciation of others. Such shared formation makes the phrase « a new kind of relationship between Brothers and laypersons based on communion » become a reality.
- Formation done together needs to be complemented by formation proper to our specific vocation. Growth in personal understanding of one's vocation as a lay Marist can deepen one's appreciation of the ordinary elements of life : engagement and marriage, care of one's children and of elders in the family, the workplace, political options, and life's critical events such as retirement, and old age.
- The goal of formation is to give new meaning to our personal history. We believe that life-experience is a journey of growth particularly enriched when it is reflected on, interpreted, and shared in community.



**joint training**  
**shared training**





# Questioning ourselves and sharing

We read Chapter 6 of « Gathered Around the Same Table »

We need to invite laypersons to begin a vocational journey in appreciating the variety of charisms and ministries in the Church.

To this end, we need to uncover aspects of our lives that are good news and help us to deepen our personal relationship with God.

- *What aspects of your life have helped you grow in faith ?*
- *What aspects have helped you in your formation as a Marist ?*

The formation process must be lived in a community setting.

Other persons help us to grow.

Without their support, we remain closed in on ourselves and our vocation is weakened.

- *Recall any laypersons or Brothers who have contributed to the deepening of your vocation.*

As in all vocations, living in a Marist way is continually being born in a process of discovery. We have been fascinated and won over by the ways of Marcellin and by the community of those living out his charism. Gradually we come to realise that God is inviting us to form part of this family.

- *In your experience, what are the essential elements to look for in the process of discerning whether one has a Marist vocation.*



## The Marist vocation is tailor-made for me

I often have doubts about my vocation. Is it really inspired by Marist spirituality? Remember that God continues to trace out our history, even if the paths he chooses seem to veer off the direct route. It took me some time to realise how simple the Marist vocation is, simple yet demanding. Bit by bit I became aware of this call in my life, as if this vocation was designed specially for me (Testimony from Brazil).

*Let us put our personal way of life in the hands of God our Father. Let us thank him for having called us by name to undertake a common journey with many brothers and sisters. After some minutes of personal prayer, let us recite the following prayer together :*

*Mary, in contemplating Champagnat,  
we discover that in you we have a guide,  
a companion for the journey,  
and a sister in faith.  
You are our model for following Jesus.  
Woman, your feet were covered in dust from the road,  
you were troubled and surprised by God,  
and you were called to trust in God and to give yourself  
without knowing all the answers as a pilgrim in faith.  
Jesus, you are the way, the truth and the life.  
May we, like Mary,  
be daring in taking on new projects  
that will help bring to birth a new and fresh kind of Marist life,  
that will affirm what is already being done  
and make it more creative and faithful to our charism.*

