

# CO-CREATORS

## of a common future

Co-creadores de un futuro común • Co-créateurs d'un avenir commun • Cocriadores de um futuro comum



Encuentro Comisiones Continentales  
de Laicado, L'Hermitage 2016



FMS  
secretariat of the laity  
secrétariat des laïcs  
secretariado de leigos  
secretariado dos leigos



## CONTENT

This document collects the contributions worked out in the Continental Commissions Meeting held at the Hermitage to furnish the eventual proposals for the General Chapter. The Secretariat of the Laity organized the information, keeping the essence of the contributions. After this and being faithful to what emerged at the Hermitage, the specific proposals for the General Chapter must be worked out. As a whole these reflections are valuable to take into account for regional and provincial processes.

## ISSUES

1. CHARISMATIC ITINERARY (*BEING A LAY MARIST*)
2. CHAMPAGNAT MOVEMENT OF THE MARIST FAMILY
3. BONDING AND BELONGING
4. LAY ARTICULATION
5. COMMUNION BROTHERS AND LAY
6. INITIAL AND ONGOING FORMATION PROCESSES FOR BROTHERS AND LAY
7. OPEN DIALOGUE ON AUTONOMY, COMMUNION AND ASSOCIATION.

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## **CHARISMATIC ITINERARY (*BEING A LAY MARIST*)**

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### **A. *Consensus on the 7 proposed statements.***

1. The path of communion brothers & lay needs to determine the essential features of lay Marist identification at the international level together with a few general criteria of formation pathway, in such a way that all the different expressions of the charism can be integrated in the it.
2. The pathway proposed in the document *BEING A LAY MARIST* may be the institutional reference for the lay people who want to follow Jesus in the Marist way, open to future modifications or improvements.
3. In essence the processes presented in the document, the identity features, criteria... respond to the objective of providing a path for charismatic bonding for lay people that eventually becomes a choice of life.
4. We agree that the experience of the formation pathway will demand attention to personal processes, offering various options of commitment to the charism, born of freedom and personal discernment.
5. For some, the process of lay identity can be completed in an associative expression, as an international group. So it is convenient to discern and propose the ways of recognition of the Marist lay identity in some kind of association or group for those who wish to.
6. The document is not a training program but the reference that must guide the development of specific vocational pathways that each province or region want to propose. They must seek an adaptation and an inculturated translation of the richness of the charism and the global proposal of the Institute in the local context.
7. Developing and promoting vocational processes implies creating conditions to make possible its animation (train the trainers, animation commission, training programmes, resources...), both at provincial and international level.

### **B. *Proposals***

#### **1. Being Marist Lay, the document**

- Make it known as a provincial option. Socialize it at regional, provincial and local levels.
- Enrich it from the experience, other contributions (regions, documents, Church...).
- To “BE” the document, sharing the content through witnessing. Witnessing “Being Lay Marists” the document in a community context.

- Formation in reading the document within a spiritual way rather legal, academic, cerebral.
- To reflect it in lay groups. Listening to brothers' feedback.
- To open ourselves to internationality in vocational processes.

## **2. Formation Pathway**

- Formation to live my Marist-ness more fully.
- For each stage of engagement, we would like some non-negotiables of formation:
  - Content (mission, spirituality, community)
  - Ideal processes/suggested processes
  - Ideas shared across AU
- Using many types of media to engage people (written, web, apps, video, etc.).
- Ensure it is recognized in the broader Church context, building the Marian face of the Church.
- Some shared international resources to build our internationality.
- To train people to accompany lay people who want to join the process.
- Make both regular revision and implementation of the process possible.

## **3. Development in the AU**

- To reinforce-enhance continental, provincial structures for animation.
- To involve brothers and lay people in developing the proposal.
- To integrate – articulate provincial processes for formation, vocational ministry, spirituality.
- Availability of credible formators to lead along a formation pathway (a common formation process for all the Marist Institute that can be in each AU).
- Availability of formators to lead an accessible, inclusive and open formation pathway. A formation process for the whole Marist Institute to be concreted in each AU.



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## CHAMPAGNAT MOVEMENT OF MARIST FAMILY

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### ***A. Insights and guidelines to build up proposals for the General Chapter.***

Figures represent frequency.

#### **1. IDENTITY OF THE MOVEMENT**

- Incorporate CMMF in the institutional itinerary of the lay marist vocation (BEING LAY MARISTS). (28)
- To support the international dimension through global structures of animation and formation. (18)  
Organization: Ensure integration with adequate structures.
- To recognize the singularity of CMMF into the broader Marist reality promoting mutual enrichment. (9)
- To promote the integration of the CMMF in the general organization for the A.U. (6)
- To recognize the new Project of Life as an update expression of the Marist laity. (3)
- Continue to support the CMMF's way of living the charism amongst the new expressions of Marist laity.

#### **2. ORGANIZATION & INTERNATIONALITY**

- To support the organization of a first international meeting of CMMF (identity, articulation, representative...) (11)
- Encourage the formation process of laity in new areas where CMMF is unknown. (7)
- To promote provincial and international animation structures to accompany specifically the CMMF. (4)

#### **3. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BROTHERS**

- That younger Brothers in formation are exposed to the thinking, documents, and reality of lay marists. (7)
- To participate in parts of Brothers ongoing formation programs (Joint formation).
- Whenever possible, joint formation of Lay and Brothers is prioritised as critical for our Marist future.
- To consider the new brother and lay relation.

#### **4. FORMATION**

- Encourage ongoing formation and renewal of CMMF as one expression of Marist lay life. (1)

- Formation proposal: Take care holistic formation, accompanying the process, from a vocational perspective. (1)

## **B. Other items**

- That an explanation of how to live Marist life in the fraternities is given more precision and clarity. (1)
- That each expression of the Charism have an “integration plan” for how they ensure communion with each other.
- That all the expressions of “Marist” are captured and shared, so they are known and understood by all. (CMMF, association, Ad gentes, Lavalla 200...).
- A commitment to provide accompaniment with appointed Brothers (solely in supporting roles).
- Vocational ministry in the Movement.
- With a specifically mission.
- Systematic formation (itineraries)
- To be part of the provincial identity and mission.
- To have a look further than the Province.
- To create a Marist community as a reference.
- FOR THE LAITY IN GENERAL
  - Encourage all provinces to support a “Laity Commission” to support the formation and growth of Lay Marist life (brothers and lay together) (13)
  - Create a task team to work on the following deliverables: common name, training of the animators for the lay marist groups, common formation process for the members. (13)
  - Emili said: “there is not turning back”. Consider review of 164.4 to note that the many expressions of lay marists are a renewal of the Institute, not merely an “extensión” (8)
  - That we develop a common international formation guide that is suitable for Brothers and Laity in whatever expression of “Marist” they identify with. (4)
  - Lay leaders formation. (3)
  - To recommend from the Secretariat of Laity that the A.U. promote the formation and accompaniment of lay leaderships. (2)

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## BONDING AND BELONGING

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### A. *Essential elements for any kind of association.*

Elements coming out from the tables

1. Personal process of discernment and formation
2. Internationality as a result of a regional process.
3. A process of personal discernment of the personal-charismatic-vocation for adhesión.
4. International global belonging.
5. Clear Public – visible association.
6. Unifying structure with provision for local variation, including the contribution of Lay and Brother Marists.
7. Formation process including a rite of passage with symbols.
8. Belonging to the charism (vocation, formation, discernment).
9. Sense of community (mutuality, fullness, evangelic visibility).
10. A structure that will provide unity and a sense of direction.
11. A community that is binded by mutual trust and commitment both for spirituality and mission.
12. Discernment processes (vocational, charismatic...).
13. Personal option to live in community.
14. A common Marist presence – voice in the Church (canonical structure), that enables a stable – significant presence of Marists for mission (which needs processes, discernment, formation, vocation and ways of belonging).

### B. *Bonding and Belonging Proposals*

1. *An international structure that gathers/unifies Marist life*
  - Appoint a task team to identify and recommend a new international structure that will provide unity, direction and growth of Marist life.  
The tasks of that team should imply :
    - Structural matters.
    - Mandate levels.
    - Funding.
    - Communication channels and links.
    - Incorporating mission, spirituality and community.
    - Collaboration mechanisms.
    - To have a shared international common Marist vision that provides unity (respecting cultural specificities).

2. A way of belonging to an international association .
  - Create an international Lay Commission of Brothers and Lay to support all Administrative Units with:
    - Leadership.
    - Structure Guidelines.
    - Administration.
    - Formation.
    - Resources.
  - That the General Council create a team of Brothers and Lay to put together a proposal of an International Lay Association.
  - To create a Marist International Community that joins together the different / various expressions of belonging / bonding.
  - To create a Lay Council / Laity Assembly / from belonging.
  - Work towards a Lay Marist International Assembly.
  - Have a common lay insignia / symbol for the Marist Laity.
  - Consider the possibility of a new canonical structure to enable a common (Brothers and lay) Marist presence and voice in the Church.
  - Have an unifying international Marist Vision Statement (respecting cultural specificity).
  - To create an international council to deepen in the different laity structures that exist (unity in the diversity)
3. Association and vocational pathways
  - That the AUs build vocational pathways according to the document “Being a Lay Marist.”
  - Put forward the Global Framework as a reference for all Marist Lay expression.
  - In the spirit of communion and new expression of Church, we invite the General Chapter to:
    - ✓ Consider, endorse the global framework « Being a lay Marist ».
    - ✓ Actively promote the global framework to every AU as a means of ensuring the vitality of the Marist mission.
  - To implement in the AUs the formation process developed at the document « To be a lay marist ».
  - Ensure training processes and vocational discernment at AU level
  - Training for leadership and support of this new reality
  - To clear the focus for a international laity belonging for all
    - Vocational charismatic ⇔ Organization, management, mission
  - To develop processes of discernment that accompany a possible provincial / regional belonging.
  - Promote forms of recognition of the lay Marist vocation.
  - To promote provincial bonding experiences.



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## LAY ARTICULATION

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### A. *The core of the reflection and the contributions*

#### 1. *Communion. Specific identities*

The meaning of Communion lies in the power of the specific identities. We take on the challenge of promoting a solid and well-formed lay leadership in our Administrative Units, so that brothers and lay people may sit together at the same table of the shared charism, complementing each other with our vocations and being co-responsible in the vitality of the charism. We feel that this challenge requires a profound vocational option from the laity, and a great generosity from the brothers in order to create the necessary conditions for this journey of communion.

- The mission should be at the centre. There should be a clear reference to the mission, even though it is implicit in the charism.
- There cannot be real communion without strong specific identities that stem from the charism.
- Leadership. Co-responsibility:
  - ❖ Empower the laity.
  - ❖ Study and suggest ways to have a strong, mature and autonomous leadership. Symmetrical, horizontal relationship;
  - ❖ We talk about a “shared charism”: how can we include this in the structure?
  - ❖ Establish teams of brothers and lay people at all levels.
- Vocational option
  - ❖ Identities: how can we help each other live out our personal option (family; celibacy; religious life; priesthood) as Marists?
  - ❖ The journey of a lay person should be the result of a profound vocational option which may lead to a formal commitment.
- To create conditions
  - ❖ Taking up the responsibility of Provincial Councils to promote lay leadership by providing formation opportunities, involving the laity while respecting their lay realities (family).
  - ❖ Growing in communion requires creating the right conditions, timeframes, resources, spaces. Animating vocational processes requires full time and resources.
  - ❖ The Institute should facilitate taking the first steps of implementation and organization (free lay people from some of their duties, finance, travels...).

## *2. Lay formation processes*

The animation of lay formation processes or vocational itineraries is the responsibility of everyone, but especially of the laity. The future of the Marist charism lies in creating and supporting these processes. The Regions and the Institute should promote the training of lay men and women who can encourage and accompany these lay processes. This training should be systematic and on-going.

- Promote training of formators.
  - ❖ A new edition of the Lay Animators Course at the Institute level.
  - ❖ Training in accompaniment, to accompany lay vocational processes.
  - ❖ Promote training of Brothers in the context of Brothers-Lay Communion.
- Coordinate formation processes at the Institute level, as well as regional and local levels. Propose a basic formation plan. Draft a formation guide.
  - ❖ Joint formation. Shared formation.
  - ❖ Establish an on-going formation centre for lay people.
- Identify young lay leaders.
  - Try to involve lay people who are not close to the mission.

## *3. International structure*

Promote a lay leadership in relation to an international structure (association) incorporating all lay men and women who wish to live the Marist charism, to help each other and together promote the charism in the world. Both the structure and its leaders are at the service of those who want to follow Jesus in the Marist style, attentive to the different groups and sensibilities of the Marist world.

- Create an international structure that incorporates all the lay men and women who wish to live out the Marist charism. This international structure is for common elements (charism), but the form and expression may change.  
Structures and leadership that stem from a spirit of communion. Structures that smell like community, without losing the soul of the charism.  
A structure at the service of the mission for those who want to follow Jesus.
- The starting point for an international structure is provincial and regional processes.  
We must respect all different sensibilities and differences at the local level. Any forms and structures should vary from one place to another.
- Promote lay autonomy.
  - ❖ Organized laity to choose their representatives.
  - ❖ Establish a Lay Council representative of all lay profiles as of the 2017 General Chapter.
  - ❖ A structure that is independent from the brothers? Or some form of shared leadership?

- ❖ Lay structures need to be led by lay people.
  - ❖ The Institute should provide financial support for a limited period of time while an association is being established. Sustainability;
  - ❖ International association of lay people and brothers.
- Set up a think-tank to study how the association should be.

#### 4. *An adequate lay articulation*

The journey of communion undertaken by the Institute requires an adequate lay articulation at all levels. Such articulation does not seek power, but service and commitment, and is linked to the "soul", not to mere management. This lay articulation at all levels (provincial, regional and international) should be supported by a clear charismatic commitment of the laity involved and by a fraternal willingness of the Provincial Councils.

- Evaluate the functioning of existing structures.
- Lay articulation at the provincial, regional and international levels. It requires teams that are available and supportive in articulating and energizing the mission.
- Interconnection with other structures of the Institute.
- Service and commitment rather than power and mere management. "Soul" and management should go hand in hand. How to do it? Management is important, but it should serve the mission.
- Service and commitment to the mission. Go to the peripheries. Committed to the service of the Church and the Institute.
- Lay people clearly committed to the charism. Identify processes and criteria to ensure a clear commitment to the charism.
- Fraternal disposition of Provincial, Regional and International Councils. Commitment of every Provincial Council. Occasionally, convene Extended Provincial Councils.

### **B. *Language issues***

- Mission- charism:
  - Charism lived through the mission, spirituality, community.
  - Charisma is the gift, gift. Mission is our job.
- Joint / Soul / Stile / Identity
- Training / vocation.
- Caring the context of some words: generosity, mission, soul) to facilitate mutual understanding

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## BROTHERS – LAITY COMMUNION

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### A. *Contributions and proposals*

#### 1. *Charismatic family in communion.*

The common house of Marist charism unity Brothers and Lay people. This house is for all those who want to live the fraternity, the spirituality and the mission inherited from St Marcellin Champagnat which could be shared and spread. The lay movement or association participate in this heritage and with the Brothers form a family of Jesus disciples in Mary's way. As a charismatic family we assume the diversity of identities or groups around the same charism but every common project in the family is understood in a common equal and fraternal participation between Brothers and Lay people.

*(27 participants agreed, 12 would improve it)*

- It is more a statement than a proposal

#### 2. *To promote concrete forms of communion.*

In the common house of the charism, and gathered around the same table, we have the conviction that our specific vocations (without confusion) enlighten mutually and we are one each other a permanent source of richness. Our understanding and beauty of our every vocation grow up sharing life. So we invite the Administrative Units, to promote animate and accompany concrete way of communion such as mixed communities, retreats, joint formation, mission project, internationality...

*(37 participants agreed, 4 would improve the text)*

- First challenge: each AU/province must explore which structure of communion can fit its context (dialogue with the Provincial Council and the laity).

#### 3. *Lay path towards autonomy / maturity.*

We think we should define the ways of laical autonomy for promoting a real communion with the brothers. Maturity is not dependence nor paternalism. This suppose for laity promoting a vocational and formative process and associative structure which can lead processes of charismatic vitality, formation of laical and mixed communities, a laical organisation at regional and international level.

*(25 participants agreed,. 14 would improve it. 1 did not agree(.*

- The aspect of lay autonomy needs clarification.
- Emphasising the importance of invitation.
- Such a definition implies a solid proposal for training and vocational processes for lay people and brothers.

- Talk about economic sustainability in missionary terms.
- Define the scope of the associated terms and Association and Marist communities of reference.
- Lay people should be represented on all appropriate commissions at Institute level.
- Internationally, we can think more in terms of a network of Marist (less structure). Secretariat of communion and lay vocation.

4. *Spirituality centre or schools that promote communion.*

Marist mission among children and youth offer to Brothers and Lay a great space for communion. Opened to solid communion projects such as the creation of schools of spirituality, the participation in common formation centers, a shared presence in border areas. We feel that we can be more creative and positive in establishing schools and spirituality centers at regional level as references of institutional renovation around Christ's gospel, as an answer to interiority call, as vocational sense and support for Lays and Brothers.

*(36 participants agreed, 6 would improve the text).*

- Expand the concept of mission and the differences with Works.

5. *Charismatic and economic support.*

The strength of the personal option sustain the living of the Marist charism. Both Lay and Brothers enrich the charism and also enrich each other in their respective vocations. Hence a solid spiritual communion is developed. Nonetheless, a Lay associative structure must seek for financial resources. Some of these resources can come from its members, but it is from the purpose and support of the Institute that it will be possible to maintain its international character and its support to the Marist mission in our world. Marist reference communities will ensure the presence of the Marist charism in the works of mission.

*(13 participants agreed, 28 would improve the text).*

**B. Other proposals**

- We have so much positive agreement and acceptance of conceptual ideas- we are hungry for concrete actions.
- The first concrete action is to develop and use common "lexicon" across the Institute. Without confusion – Brother + lay.
- Can we have an audit of all the efforts towards communion in each Province/AU, so that we can share the good ideas.

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## PROCESSES OF INITIAL AND ONGOING FORMATION

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### A. Contributions and proposals

#### 1. Formation Guide

If following Jesus as Mary did is the element unifying lay and brothers' identity, there can be room for joint formation to enrich and support one another in our own specific vocations. The conclusions drawn at the *Forum on Formation* that took place at the Hermitage in 2015 invite us to ask the General Council to establish a Commission to draft a FORMATION GUIDE, to provide guidelines on shared pathways for the initial and on-going formation of brothers and lay people.

- *Following Jesus as Mary did as an icon of brothers and lay identity we propose that the General Council restructure the existing Secretariat of the Laity and Brothers Today, to establish a new commission including people from the AU level. This commission on communion and vocation will assess formation needs in light of the different lifestyles of brothers and lay and importantly consider accessibility and affordability of formation. A central depository of formation resources is also recommended.*

#### 2. Vocations ministry

Promote and take on a VOCATIONS MINISTRY Institute-wide, animated by brothers and lay people and intended for all vocations, especially Marist ones. This implies creating teams and programs where brothers and lay people integrate in a co-responsible way.

- Recognising a more expansive and inclusive definition of VOCATION which includes all lifestyles (married, single, religious, ordained).
- Having the greater authority of the invitation to Marist life from both lay and brother Marists.
- Focusing that vocation ministry is about mission of God and not equating to career or Utilitarianism.
- Future exploration of connecting Vocation Ministry with other branches of the Marist Family.

#### 3. The preparation of formators.

The integration of brothers and lay people in the preparation of formators for the vocational accompaniment processes for both laity and brothers. Adequate conditions (resources, time, etc.) should be given to these formation teams, at



regional and international levels. The accompaniment of these processes and pathways is a critical point for the future.

4. *Internacional Centres.*

INTERNATIONAL CENTRES for on-going formation should be open to joint formation experiences, by providing the necessary conditions for such services to the Marist life; for instance in facilitating the financial support to the Institute's Provinces and Regions. Formation programs in such centres, which involve the participation of brothers and lay people should be jointly planned.

- The focus of opening the formation centres (provincial, regional, international) would be the design of the formation programs both for brothers and lay people.
  
- Taking into account considerations for lay life:
  - ❖ Which will be designed jointly.
  - ❖ Creativity when it comes the methodology: online,...
  - ❖ Attentive to international sensitivities in the integration.

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## DIALOGO FINAL SOBRE AUTONOMIA-COMUNION Y ASOCIACION

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Recoge este apartado las participaciones personales que sobre estos dos grandes temas se presentaron el último día del encuentro. Su objetivo fue el de escucharse, dialogar y expresar opiniones, sin buscar respuestas o conclusiones.

A partir de las notas tomadas se ha buscado integrar ideas parecidas.

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### AUTONOMÍA LAICAL Y COMUNIÓN CON LOS HERMANOS.

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#### **Autonomía**

- Autonomía es lo contrario de heteronomía. Proceso de los adolescentes. Crecer e independizarse. Salir de la casa y convertirse en autónomo.
- Me sugiere aprender a caminar y estructurarme. Invitación a acoger una propuesta arriesgada con el compromiso con el carisma.
- La imagen de la familia es que los padres quieren y buscan que sus hijos crezcan y se independicen. Como laicos debemos tener un grado de independencia pero sin desligarnos de lo nuestro.
- Autonomía del laicado es un espacio en que los laicos toman sus propias decisiones de acuerdo con su vocación marista. También es un espacio de organización particular. Tiene sus desafíos.
- Ahora podemos sentir que es más claro el concepto de autonomía. Pero pareciera que aún debemos probar algo a los Hermanos y no creo que así debe ser.
- La imagen de la Trinidad es buena lección para este tema. Debemos ser autónomos. Antes nos definía lo que no era. Ahora me sumo en igualdad para expresarnos juntos.

#### **Proceso**

- La madurez de los laicos en la Iglesia y en la Congregación ha ido creciendo pero aún hay grados de dependencia. Los laicos necesitamos crecer y responsabilizarnos. Entonces juntos laicos y hermanos podremos caminar juntos.
- Autonomía laical es algo asumido que nadie discute. Cuando se habla de cómo se expresa en la práctica es cuando surgen dudas. Pensar en una estructura laical o en una estructura de hermanos y laicos...
- Autonomía como una relación. Un itinerario esencial y luego vocacional marista. ¿La estructura es resultado de esta autonomía? ¿O la autonomía es resultado de la estructura?

### **Autonomía en comunión**

- Autonomía no excluye comunión. Autonomía es la vocación específica y comunión es el carisma.
- En comunión con los hermanos se tiene que expresar en dejar que los laicos crezcan, no controlarlos.
- El papa Francisco dice que cuando una congregación no se abre a la colaboración se muere. Autonomía es un grado de independencia, pero manteniendo los lazos.
- La imagen de dos personas viniendo a un matrimonio es más clara. Somos iguales porque la vocación laical es igual que la de Hermanos, es de igual a igual, no es relación de dependencia.
- El término de Familia carismática Integra este concepto de autonomía en comunión.
- Autonomía /comunión dos caras de la misma moneda. Pero la comunión pide identificación fuerte tanto de la vocación laical como de la del Hermano. Esta identificación supone un camino de autonomía y madurez para fortalecer las propias identidades y así dar sentido a la comunión.
- Hay dos palabras que surge de mi reflexión: Confianza y respeto son fundamentales en una relación. Esto debe haber en la relación de hermanos y laicos.
- Al hablar de vocación no debemos pedir permiso. El punto es si estamos preparados para asumir la responsabilidad del carisma. Autonomía no está opuesto a comunión o a independencia. Esto puede ser fuera de una estructura.
- La auténtica comunión garantiza autonomía. No puede haber niveles.

### **¿Cómo se puede hacer visible esa autonomía laical?**

#### **a) Estructura**

- ✓ Movimiento laical que recoja las distintas expresiones laicales.
- ✓ Estructura de *paraguas*.
- ✓ Estructura laical a nivel internacional donde se reconozcan los laicos que quieran vivir esta opción carismática.
- ✓ Consejos de laicos a nivel provincial, regional...
- ✓ Estructura que asuma a la familia carismática.

#### **b) Liderazgo**

- ✓ Esta autonomía del laico viene de una formación y noción personal de vivir el laicado como una vocación. Se expresa en una autonomía de toma de decisiones y también en una estructura o movimiento laical.
- ✓ Capacidad de elegir a los representantes laicos.
- ✓ Liderazgo laical
- ✓ Capítulo de laicos en cada UA
- ✓ Corresponsabilidad entre hermanos y laicos a todos los niveles

#### **c) Procesos formativos**

- ✓ Vivencia de procesos formativos laicales fuertes

## Otros

- Escuchar lo que habla el Espíritu en esta asamblea, analogía con Pentecostés.
- Cuando se habla de vocación laical hay que incluir también a personas que no trabajan en obras maristas.
- La conciencia de vocación laical no es muy clara ni muy desarrollada. Puede ser porque la Iglesia no lo ha favorecido. Por ello apostarle a la formación, para que el laico asuma su responsabilidad y le quede claro que su forma de vida es una vocación.
- Una vocación es asumir identidad, responsabilidad, creer y crecer en la vocación.

## ASOCIACIÓN

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### ¿Qué es nuevo en el tema de vinculación y pertenencia?

- La novedad es introducir los conceptos. Qué tipo de vinculación y pertenencia se introduce en este momento. Considerando que durante 200 años los hermanos han sido la referencia. Ahora es algo que va más allá del Instituto y que concierne al carisma.
- Si hablamos de lo nuevo es porque es algo nuevo. Es decir, no existe. Se está construyendo. Cuando se entregaron al Vaticano los documentos respecto a una asociación laical no se recibía respuesta porque era tan nuevo que no se tiene respuesta. Quizá por la internacionalidad o por integrar a Hermanos y laicos.
- La autonomía tiene que darse en los laicos, pero tener en cuenta que si una asociación de laicos es reconocida por la Iglesia, el que la supervisaría es el obispo.
- De acuerdo que el obispo debe supervisar. Y así se hace en Australia. Lo que hemos encontrado nuevo en Australia con esto es que a mucha gente no le preocupa lo que piense el obispo sino lo que concierne con los niños y jóvenes. En las asambleas los laicos deciden quienes los representan... Eso es nuevo.
- Tengo más dudas que reflexiones. En el documento de *Ser marista laico* se habla de asociarse a una estructura. En la última etapa habla de una vinculación después de un largo camino. Esto es diferente a lo que sucede en Australia o Canadá. Lo mejor es pensar en la imagen de *paraguas* y por ello no se tiene que terminar en una estructura puede quedar solamente en vinculación.
- Champagnat murió sin ser aprobada la congregación. El nombre de asociación no ayuda, pero hay que buscar algo que ayude a sostener la internacionalidad. Tener el propósito de llegar a algo. Tener un *paraguas* puede ser más útil que una sola estructura.

- Compromiso del Secretariado en este tema por lo que se revisaron estructuras laicales de otras congregaciones religiosas. Todas tienen asociaciones laicales, privadas o públicas. Todas hablan de una opción carismática. Todas hablan de procesos formativos y de una opción de compromiso. Todas hablan de estructuras locales, regionales, internacionales con un religioso como enlace.
- Retomar el símbolo del bambú. No solamente es una raíz, sino entrelazadas con otras.
- Hay que pensar en ese paraguas. No siempre es la estructura el camino. Me vinculo porque quiero hacerlo como respuesta a mi llamado.
- Mi experiencia de hacer visible un compromiso de cuidarnos unos a otros fue muy valiosa y eso puede ayudar a empujar y revitalizar más el carisma.
- Un hermano es hermano marista sin importar su nacionalidad. Yo creo que eso quiero ser un marista laico. Sin nacionalidad.
- Una estructura daría fuerza y sostén a los laicos. En mi misión en África trabajaba con los lasallistas. No es lo mismo estar solo que tener la pertenencia a una estructura. Descubrí poco a poco mi misión. Soy marista por decisión. Pero viví la diferencia entre pertenecer o no a una familia.
- La experiencia de ser miembro de una fraternidad. Al principio había muchos grupos de laicos maristas y poco a poco se fueron integrando al MCFM. Eso genera una sensación de internacionalidad. Esto para insistir que esto del gran *paraguas* debe realizarse. La palabra asociación genera ruido. Quizá es lingüístico. Estamos en un momento privilegiado. Muchos laicos quieren y tienen un compromiso con el carisma. Podemos ser signos reales de vitalidad no solamente de lo marista sino de la Iglesia.
- Lo nuevo de esta asamblea es que estamos compartiendo juntos en igualdad, con pasión, pero con respeto y sin pleitos, queremos caminar juntos en la misma dirección. Eso es muy bueno.
- Podemos olvidar que nosotros somos expresiones diferentes de Champagnat moviéndonos en la dirección correcta.
- Una palabra que puede ser mejor aceptada es la de comunidad o red. Lo sentimos más cercano y no genera tanta animadversión. Toda forma de vida necesita una estructura. Me parece infantil pensar que podemos crecer sin estructura. Ciertamente lo importante de la estructura son los procesos, pero hay que encontrar una forma de articulación.
- Necesitamos estructuras y necesitamos procesos.

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## FINAL DIALOG ABOUT AUTONOMY-COMMUNION AND PARTNERSHIP

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This section collects the participants' interventions on the last day of the meeting regarding these two important topics. The session was aimed at listening to each other, being able to dialogue and share opinions, without looking for answers or conclusions.

Based on the notes from this session, we have tried to merge the ideas that seemed similar.

### LAY AUTONOMY, AND COMMUNION WITH THE BROTHERS

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#### **Autonomy**

- Autonomy is the opposite of heteronomy. It is the process teenagers follow: growing and becoming independent; leaving home and becoming autonomous.
- It entails learning to walk and structure myself. It is an invitation to welcome a risky proposal of commitment to the charism.
- Within a family, the parents want their children's growth and independence and foster it. As lay people, we should have a certain degree of independence but without detaching ourselves from what is ours.
- Lay autonomy is a space in which lay people make their own decisions according to their Marist vocation. It is also a specific organizational space. It has its own challenges.
- We feel that the concept of autonomy is clearer now. But it seems that we must still prove something to the brothers, and I do not think that should be so.
- The image of the Trinity is full of wisdom regarding this topic. We must be autonomous. Some time ago, there were aspects that distortedly defined us. Today we join in an equal relationship to express ourselves together.

#### **Process**

- The laity in the Church and the Congregation have become more mature but there is still a certain degree of dependence. The laity need to grow and take responsibility. Only then lay people and brothers will be able to walk together.
- Lay autonomy is something no one disputes. When we discuss its practical expression is when hesitations arise. We should think about a lay structure or a structure of laity and brothers together.
- We should understand autonomy as a relationship. A basic Marist journey that becomes vocational in a second moment. Is the structure a result of autonomy? Or is autonomy the result of a structure?



### **Autonomy in communion**

- Autonomy does not exclude communion. Autonomy refers to the specificity of our vocations, while communion regards the charism.
- Communion with the brothers must be expressed by letting the laity grow instead of controlling them.
- Pope Francis says that when a Congregation is not open to collaboration it dies. Autonomy entails a degree of independence but keeping the links at the same time.
- The image of married people is clearer. We are equal because our lay vocation is equal to that of the brothers, peer to peer, not in a dependent relationship.
- The term 'charismatic family' includes this concept of autonomy in communion.
- Autonomy and communion are two sides of the same coin. But communion requires a strong vocational identity for both laity and brothers. This entails a process of autonomy and personal maturity to strengthen our identities and thus live a meaningful communion.
- Two words arise from my reflection: trust and respect, which are essential in any relationship. They should also be part of the relationship between brothers and laity.
- Regarding our vocation, we must not ask for permission. The question would be if we are prepared to become responsible for the charism. Autonomy not is opposite to communion or to independence. That could happen outside a structure.
- True communion guarantees autonomy. It is a yes or no question, there cannot be levels regarding this matter.

### **How can we make lay autonomy visible?**

#### **a) *Structure***

- ✓ A lay movement that integrates the different lay expressions.
- ✓ An umbrella structure.
- ✓ An international lay structure that can be a source of identity for the laity who want to live this charismatic option.
- ✓ Lay Councils at the level of Province, Region, etc.
- ✓ A structure that can integrate our charismatic family.

#### **b) *Leadership***

- ✓ Lay people's autonomy comes both from a formation process and a personal sense of living out a lay vocation. It becomes concrete in decision-making processes, and through a lay structure or movement.
- ✓ Capacity to choose their lay representatives.
- ✓ Lay leadership.
- ✓ Chapter of the laity in each AU.
- ✓ Shared responsibility between brothers and laity at all levels.

#### **c) *Formation processes***

- ✓ Experiencing deep lay formation processes.

### **Other aspects**

- We should listen to what the spirit is saying in this assembly, like in Pentecost.
- When we speak about lay vocation, we must include the people who do not work in Marist centers.
- Awareness of the lay vocation is not very clear nor very developed yet, probably because the Church has not favored it. That is why we need to believe and invest in a formation process that helps lay people take responsibility and clearly understand their life as a vocation.
- Vocation means discovering your identity, taking responsibility, and undergoing an open-ended growth process.

## **ASSOCIATION**

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### **Does the topic of bonding and belonging bring anything new?**

- The novelty lies precisely in the fact of using these concepts. What kind of bonding and belonging can we implement now? We must keep in mind that the brothers have been the only reference point for 200 years. But we are presently moving beyond the Institute, and centering on the charism.
- If we spend time talking about something that is new, it is precisely because of its novelty: it does not exist yet and is under construction. When we handed the documents concerning a Lay Association to the Vatican, the answer took some time because the matter is so new that there are no ready-made answers. This probably has to do with its international character or the integration of brothers and laity.
- Lay people must be autonomous but should also keep in mind that, if a Lay Association is recognized by the Church, local bishops would oversee it.
- We agree with being monitored by the bishops, as it happens in Australia. What we have learned with this in Australia is that many people are not concerned about the Bishop's opinion but about children and young people. The laity vote their representatives in the assemblies... That is new.
- I have more doubts than reflections. The document To Be a Lay Marist speaks about association through a structure. In the last stage, it mentions a link after undergoing a long process. This is different from what is happening in Australia and Canada. It would be better to think about the image of an umbrella, and therefore the process would not necessarily lead to a structure but to other forms of bonding.
- Champagnat died without seeing his Congregation approved. The term 'association' does not help but we need something that can give shape to our internationality. We

need to come up with something. An umbrella could be more useful than a single structure.

- Thanks to the Secretariat's commitment to this subject, we could review the lay structures of other religious Congregations. They all have private or public lay associations. They all speak of a charismatic option; formation processes leading to commitment; and local, regional, and international structures with a religious member acting as a link person.
- We should return to the symbol of bamboo. It has no single root, but a network of roots intertwined with each other.
- We must think about an umbrella. A structure is not always the way forward. I want to link to the Marists as a response to my call.
- My experience of making visible our commitment to care for each other was very enriching, and that can help push forward and revitalize the charism.
- A Marist brother is a brother regardless of nationality. I think that is what I want as a lay Marist, having no nationality.
- A structure would offer strength and support to the laity. I worked with the Lasallians during my mission in Africa. Being alone and belonging to a structure are not the same thing. I discovered my mission little by little. I am a Marist by choice. But I know the difference between belonging to a family or not.
- This is like the experience of belonging to a CMMF Fraternity. At the beginning, there were many lay Marist groups and little by little they joined the CMMF. It gives a sense of internationality. In other words, I would insist on implementing the large umbrella. The word 'association' makes too much noise. Perhaps it is a linguistic issue. We are in a privileged moment. Many lay people want or already have a commitment to the charism. We can be real signs not only of Marist vitality but also of Church life.
- The novelty of this assembly is that we are sharing together as equals, with passion and respect, without conflict, trying to walk together in the same direction. That is very good.
- We could forget that we are different expressions of Champagnat that are moving in the right direction.
- 'Community' and 'network' are terms that could find more acceptance. They are closer to us and do not generate so much animosity. All forms of life need a structure. I think it would be childish to think that we can grow without a structure. It is true that what matters is the process that the structure generates but we need to find articulation.
- We need both structures and processes.