

## Lavalla200> communities: Our Call



We live in a moment of change of epoch in history, a time of paradigm shift in our world, our Church, our way of being human, and, above all, our way of being Marist. Like Mary at the annunciation we are invited to see such change as the work of the Spirit.

As Marists following Champagnat, encouraged by new experiences of Marist life and mission by so many, we are responding to new realities, new needs: what is the *Missio Dei* in our world today?

We are moving beyond dreaming together for a new beginning, as we have done throughout the Institute in recent years in chapters and assemblies. It has been a “long” dawn but now there is daylight: a time for decisions!

We feel led by the Spirit, as perceived in the yearnings of individuals and the Institute. More than a strategic plan for a new future developed by ourselves, the Lavalla200> initiative is a prophetic response to the unexpected, dynamic action of the Spirit which brings hope, reconciliation and wholeness.

We believe that the Spirit is calling us to embrace a new way of sharing life in community: internationally, interculturally, with lay and brothers, with men and women, single and married, intergenerationally. Our relationships are core to our mission and central to a new beginning for Marists.

We are beginning a new form of Christian life in the Church, living in communion with no sharp distinction between Religious and Lay but respectful of different vocations, mutually enriching, all co-responsible for the life of the community and called to a shared mission that expresses our common charism in fresh ways.

We experience the Spirit of God within ourselves, within one another, within all of life and creation. We contemplate. We cultivate silence. We meditate on God’s Word. Our spirituality encompasses every moment of our lives: our love, our passions, our hopes and fears, our successes and failures, our choice to follow the lead of Jesus in his ministry to those excluded by society or religion.

Our apostolic engagement with and for vulnerable children and young people in their local context shapes our community and personal lifestyles.

Respectful of the presence of the Spirit in all people, cultures and religions, we adopt a posture of dialogue – listening, empathising, understanding, collaborating, networking with all people of good will, praying together, sharing our faith stories. We consciously seek to be the Marian face of the Church.

We know we are imperfect as individuals and as communities, in our educational, pastoral and social work. Humbly, then, but with personal conviction, we commit ourselves to one another and to the vision of Lavalla200>. It is worth the gift of our lives.

It is an annunciation moment for us and for all Marists: “Do not be afraid. Nothing is impossible with God”.

