

**A Champagnat Marist Prayer Resource for Advent 2016**

**District of the Pacific**



A Champagnat Marist Prayer Resource for Advent

What is in the resource?

The resource comprises:

* A theme developed from the Gospel of the day
* The readings and psalm of the day
* An opening and concluding prayer
* A reading from a Champagnat Marist source related to the theme of the Gospel for the day
* Three intercessions, to which you may add additional prayers

How to this resource could be used:

The Advent Prayer Resource is designed to assist in focusing our community prayer on the Gospel reading of the day as we journey through the season of Advent. The resource is flexible and could be used on its own or as part of another form of community prayer.

A suggested process:

As part of the community prayer:

* Read the Gospel of the day.
* Then allow several minutes of silent reflection.
* Then invite the participants to share any reflection they may have on the Gospel and/or the Champagnat Marist reading.
* The psalm of the day could be used as a response to the readings and reflection.

Preparation for Community Prayer:

As part of the preparation for community prayer:

* Read the Gospel for the day,
* Read a Scripture commentary. An online commentary from the Society of Jesus in Ireland is available at <http://livingspace.sacredspace.ie>
* Make a short note of what emerged for you from the reading.

Why was the resource developed?

Our recent General Chapters have all urged us, as part of the ongoing process of centring our lives on Jesus Christ, to deepen our personal and community prayer. One way to assist this is to develop a style of community prayer based on the Gospel reading of the day.

Brothers Today has developed this resource, based on the Gospel theme, as an example of one approach to a Gospel centred style of prayer.

Advent 1 – Sunday 27 November | Stay Awake!

**Prayer**

Gracious God,
in this Advent of expectation

you call us to be awake and ready
to recognise the signs of your
kingdom in our midst

A kingdom of justice and mercy,

of joy and of peace.

May we be aware of your presence in our lives.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 2:1-5 | The Lord will gather the nations to form the kingdom of God**
* **Psalm 122 | I was glad when they said “let us go to the Lord’s house”**
* **Romans 13:11-14 | The time has come, our salvation is near**
* **Matthew 24:37-44 | Stay awake, you must be ready**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, par. 73**

As mystics we perceive “the footprints of God” in all the events of life. Through a reading of our reality in faith, we are taken beyond appearances and surface meanings, and brought into the depths of each situation. Our prayer becomes, *Oh Lord, how great is your love!* And with a deep trust that comes from knowing we are profoundly loved, we confidently open our hearts to God’s will.

**Intercessions**

We pray that we may use this time of Advent to examine all of our relationships with others, material possessions and God. Lord hear us.

We pray for those trapped in the darkness of addiction, that they may be freed. Lord hear us.

Lord, help us to recognise you and respond to you in love through every person and every experience of this day. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Loving God,

You loved the world so much
that You gave us Your only Son
to be our Saviour.

When Jesus humbled himself
to be born among us
and take on our humanity,
he fulfilled the plan You formed long ago.

Jesus opened for us the way of salvation.

In this Advent season,
we watch in expectation for the day,
hoping that the salvation promised us will come,
when Christ our Lord
will come again in his glory. Come Lord Jesus!

Advent 1 – Monday 28 November | A Place for All

**Prayer**

Gracious God,

we pray that we may have the same faith
as Jesus speaks about in the gospel.

May the faith that can move mountains

also move our hearts
as we prepare for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We make this prayer through
Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 4:2-6 | There will be unlimited joy for those who are saved**
* **Psalm 122**
* **Matthew 8:5-11 | Many will come from east and west to take their place in the kingdom**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - A Revolution of the Heart, p. 9**

Many of us realize that the worlds in which we live can no longer be expected to carry the faith for us. The time is long past when we could count on living in a Christian culture, or even on being surrounded by believers. Even in some of our Marist communities, those among us who wish to have a vibrant life of faith cannot count on some in the group for support.

So, here at the dawn of a new millennium, more than a few of us long for a God who will dwell at the centre of our lives. One to whom we can relate easily, and who will provide depth of meaning and an answer to our ultimate concerns. This is the God around whom we long to renew our spirituality and build a life of personal and communal prayer.

**Intercessions**

We pray for all those who show genuine concern for their neighbours and bring peace of mind and heart to those who suffer from our inhumanity to others. Lord hear us.

We ask your blessing, Lord, on those who show real concern for the spiritual and material good of their neighbours. Lord hear us.

Lord, increase our faith as we wait in hope for the coming of the Saviour. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| God of hope, be with us as we begin this Advent journey.Increase our faith, Show us your ways,Teach us your paths, | That we might walk with you more closely,Our hand in your hand,Our feet in your footsteps,That we like Mary and MarcellinMay be your willing servants.Amen. |

Advent 1 – Tuesday 29 November | Openness to Revelation

**Prayer**

Loving God,
you reveal great things to your followers,
especially those with a humble and open disposition.

Help us to set aside our fears and hesitations,
and to embrace you more wholeheartedly
in this season of active preparation for your coming among us.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 11:1-10 | The Spirit of the Lord rests upon him**
* **Psalm 72**
* **Luke 10:21-24 | Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, pars. 19-20**

Marcellin taught the first Brothers: To make Jesus known and loved is the aim of our vocation and the whole purpose of the Institute. If we were to fail in this purpose, our congregation would be useless. In saying this, Marcellin clearly expressed his conviction, and a growing conviction for Marists today – the centrality of Jesus in our life and mission.

For us Jesus is the human face of God. In a privileged way we encounter him in the three special Marist places, where Jesus reveals God to us.

**Intercessions**

Lord, open our eyes, ears and minds to the mystery of your revelation in our daily lives. Lord hear us.

Lord, help us to welcome the Word of God into our hearts, as a beautiful gift and a privileged encounter with you. Lord hear us.

Lord, may all Champagnat Marists encourage one another and the young people confided to our care. May our relationships with others be marked by joyful simplicity and wholehearted generosity. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God, loving Father of us all,
we are encouraged to confidently welcome
and share your message
despite our limitations.

May your kingdom be proclaimed.

May your gifts be received.

May we live in charity and authenticity
and thus reveal you in today’s world.

Amen.

Advent I – Wednesday 30 November | Follow Jesus

St Andrew

**Prayer**

Loving God,
you challenge us this Advent,
this time of preparation,
to put aside our pride
and to understand our need for
repentance and forgiveness.

Purify our hearts and sanctify our lives.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Romans 10:9-18 | Faith comes from what is heard**
* **Psalm 19**
* **Matthew 4:18-22 | Immediately they left their nets and followed Jesus**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Marvellous Companions, pp. 9-10**

But God has also entrusted himself and his work to our care, and in so doing has invited us to make Jesus Christ the centre and passion of our lives. In accepting this invitation you and I become his disciples. That fact alone renders unnecessary any imagined wall standing between our mission and community.

The members of our 20th General Chapter said much the same in their *Message*. “Like Mary,” they challenged us, “let Christ be the centre and passion of your life and the life of your community.” Our identity as disciples of Christ lies at the heart of our mission *and* of our life together as brothers in community.

**Intercessions**

We pray that we may be open to hear, to see and to understand the message of Jesus. Lord hear us.

We pray that we may be open to the healing presence of Jesus Christ. Lord hear us.

We pray that we may follow faithfully the way of Jesus Christ, to tell courageously the truth of Jesus Christ, and to live joyfully the life of Jesus Christ. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Gracious Father,
your words are spirit and they are life.

Through the prayers of St Andrew,
make us true disciples of Christ,
eager to spread the Good News by word and example.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Advent 1 – Thursday 1 December | Doing the Father’s Will

**Prayer**

God who dwells with us,

we pray for one gift this Advent;

we pray for a change of heart.

For any relationship with you

is more an affair of the heart than of the head.

We pray for hearts open enough so that we can,

like Mary, take you at your word

and not demand that all of our questions

be answered at that outset.

We pray too that our hearts be as fruitful as Mary’s

and eventually as passionate, on fire,

full of love for Jesus and His Good News. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 26:1-6 | Let the upright nations, the custodians of truth, enter**
* **Psalm 118**
* **Matthew 7:21, 24-27 | Whoever does the will of my Father will enter the kingdom of heaven**

**Champagnat Marist Reading – Constitutions #43**

The call to live evangelical obedience for the Kingdom involves communities, Provinces, and the Institute itself in a constant search to know God’s will. It is not always easy to be sure of what He asks

of us, especially in times of profound change and renewal. We discern it in prayer, so as to arrive at a decision in concert with our Superiors. This discernment in the Holy Spirit calls for a spirit of faith, attentiveness to the word of God, fidelity to the charism of the Institute, an accurate reading of the signs of the times, and a putting aside of particular interests of individuals or groups.

**Intercessions**

We pray for a disciple’s heart that is open to the action of the Holy Spirit. Lord hear us.

Lord, we pray that we may be like the sensible person who listens to your word and acts on it.

Lord hear us.

Lord, as we prepare for Christmas, help us to find the right balance between action and prayer in our lives. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lord, what you will, let it be so,Where you will, there we will go,What is your will, help us to know. | Because you will it, it is best,Because you will it, we are blest,Until in your hands our hearts find their rest.Amen. |

Advent I – Friday 2 December | That we may see

**Prayer**

God of life,
as we begin this period of Advent,
may we see Your unconditional love for us
in the birth of Jesus.

As we rejoice in the birth of our Saviour
renew our faith in the
healing presence of Jesus in our lives. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 29:17-24 | In that day the eyes of the blind will see**
* **Psalm 27**
* **Matthew 9:27-31 | Their belief in Jesus brought the cure of the two blind men**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, pars. 88-90**

We pray in all situations, with creativity and generosity. No matter the difficulties and struggles of daily life, no matter the limitations and injustices we live with, we continue to see the blessings of God upon us and those we love. Like Mary in her Magnificat prayer, we are grateful to God who has blessed us.

In our times of solitude, we cultivate an interior life that strengthens our love of, and communion with, the world. In this way we become more sensitive to life. Though we experience the poverty of our limitations and failures, we also recognize the beauty and wonder of humanity and of all creation.

Day after day, we feel called to commit ourselves to the world; to contemplate the world with the eyes and the heart of God. Our spirituality draws us to deepen our relationship with Christ and in trust to give ourselves in service in community living and mission.

**Intercessions**

Lord, heal our blindness when we cannot see your will for us. Lord hear us.

Lord, as you came to us a s a child; give us the insight to see your redeeming love for us.
Lord hear us.

Lord, give us the courage to spread your Good News among all those we encounter. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God of love,
in the birth of Jesus you show us
your personal love for each one of us.

Give us a stronger belief in, and love for
Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

Amen.

Advent 1 – Saturday 3 December | The Kingdom is at hand

St Francis Xavier

**Prayer**

In your time, Saving God
You walked upon this earth
And in your time
Became one of us
To show what we could become.
Remind us always
As we look at our lives
In comparison with yours
That at the centre of all things
Is the saving Grace of God. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26 | If you have mercy the Lord God will be gracious when you cry**
* **Psalm 146**
* **Matthew 9:35, 10:1,6-8 | When Jesus saw the crowd he felt sorry for them**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Making Jesus Christ Known and Loved, p. 39**

I believe Marcellin might also raise some troubling questions. Honest questions, but disturbing, nonetheless. Questions such as: Does sufficient evidence exist to prove that you and I are bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to poor children and young people here at the outset of the third millennium? When the Christian young people entrusted to our care move on from our programs and institutions, have they come to know and love Jesus Christ? Are the teachings and values of his *Good News* evident in their day-to-day lives?

**Intercessions**

May we be carriers of the Good News by becoming shepherds leading the sheep to where they belong. Lord hear us.

May we have the courage to accept the call from the Good Shepherd to liberate people from all binds them. Lord hear us.

Lord, we ask your blessing on those who labour in the fields among the needy to bring hope into their lives. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In your time, Mighty GodYou will come in gloryAnd in your timeGather the harvest From one end of this earth to the other.Your saving power reaches the ends of the earth.  | Through the prayers of St Francis Xaviermay we become more aware that at the centre of all things is Your love and mercy. Amen. |

Advent 2 - Sunday 4 December | Repent, the kingdom of God is close at hand

**Prayer**

Lord of heaven and earth,
you govern all things according to your love.

May the light of the Gospel
scatter the darkness of the world,
And may you open the hearts of all
who remain blind to the Truth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 11:1-10 | God judges the poor with justice**
* **Psalm 72 | May the king to judge with your righteousness, O God**
* **Romans 15:4-9 | Christ, the hope of all people**
* **Matthew 3:1-12| Repent, for the kingdom of God is close at hand**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Evangelisers in the Midst of Youth, par. 69**

We are invited to be prophets in our time, to listen to the calls that God is sending us through the lives and suffering of so many brothers and sisters who find themselves at the margin of society. In these specific conditions, feeling a responsibility to proclaim the Gospel and denounce the profaning of God’s face present in each person, our mission takes shape and becomes set, enriched by the particular goings-on in the world around us. In this process we approach young people and open our eyes to their dreams and plans and their genuine challenges. This offers us the wherewithal to truly become builders of justice and peace in the world. Ours is a prophetic Church in tune with the prophetic vocation of youth.

**Intercessions**

We pray that our faith may make a difference in the world. Lord hear us.

We pray that all nations may know true and lasting peace. Lord hear us.

We pray that we may be attentive to the prophets in our time. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Almighty God,

You sent John the Baptist into the world
to prepare the way for Your Son.
May we also prepare a place for
Your Son in our hearts.

Give us the conviction to actively work
for a more just world
on which all of creation
reflects Your goodness and grace.

Grant this through our Lord, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Advent 2 - Monday 5 December | We have seen wonderful things

**Prayer**

Gracious God,
open our hearts to prepare the way for the coming of Christ.

Open our hearts to your Word,
and instruct us in your ways of compassion.

May we become beacons of light
where there is darkness,
transforming our world, day by day.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 35:1-10 | God will come and save you**
* **Psalm 84**
* **Luke 5:17-26 | We have seen wonderful things this day**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Marvellous Companions, p. 70**

Our rediscovery of Scripture in the years that have followed Vatican II has changed our vision of God significantly. No longer consigned to the role of distant purveyor of history, He is at last able to be himself. Rest assured that God is fully invested in our world’s transformation. The gospel stories remind us that where life was diminished, Jesus restored it; where the human spirit was imprisoned, he made his presence felt by liberating it.

**Intercessions**

Most provident God, you promised us that the desert shall rejoice and bloom, may all people find sufficient water of spirit and truth to satisfy their thirst. In trust we say, **our God is here**.

May the eyes of the blind be open. Grant us the gift to recognise our own blindness.

In trust we say, **our God is here**.

Your highway shall be called the holy road. Grant us the courage and understanding to share in the burdens of our companions on the journey. In trust we say, **our God is here**.

**Prayer**

God of wondrous deeds,
your grace and mercy astound us.

Make us more aware of your vision of truth and love,
of justice and peace.

Strengthen us as we prepare the way
for your coming among us.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Advent 2 – Tuesday 6 December | God’s unfailing care for us

St Nicholas

**Prayer**

God of gentleness,

you gather us into your arms as a shepherd gathers his lambs.

May we hear Jesus’ voice and follow him
our way, our truth and our life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 40:1-11 | God consoles his people**
* **Psalm 86**
* **Matthew 18:12-14 | God does not will that the little ones be lost**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Marist Bicentenary - Message of Br Emili Turú SG, p. 1**

It was January 2, 1817. Marcellin Champagnat returned home with two young men. He dreamt that they – together with many more in the future – would carry the Gospel to the children and young people most in need. We consider this as the date of foundation of the Marist Institute. January 2, 2017 will mark the bicentenary of this event. What a wonderful moment to recall with grateful hearts, all the good the Holy Spirit has accomplished in the Church and in the world through the Marist Institute. In the course of these 200 years, many generations of children and young people have benefited from Marist education throughout the five continents. At the same time, it will be an opportunity to ask forgiveness for our infidelities and for the times we have failed to serve faithfully the children and young people entrusted to our care. But, above all, it must be a moment to launch ourselves into the future, into the third centenary of our Marist Institute. What a wonderful opportunity for A NEW BEGINNING!

**Intercessions**

You gather us together as a shepherd gathers his flock. In confidence we pray, **be merciful to us, O** **God**.

You show us your love through the wonders of creation. May we be sensitive to all living creatures.

In confidence we pray, **be merciful to us, O** **God**.

You comfort the sorrowful and give strength to the weary. Grant all who work in the health services the gift of compassion. In confidence we pray, **be merciful to us, O** **God**.

**Prayer**

God of new beginnings,
renew again our trust in your saving power
at work in our lives and in our world.

Through the intercession of St Nicholas
may we bring the Good News of Jesus
to children and young people most in need.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Advent 2 – Wednesday 7 December | Come to me

St Ambrose

**Prayer**

Gracious God,
you heal and restore all of creation.
Make us steadfast as we prepare for the fulfilment
of your kingdom.
A kingdom of justice and peace,
of love and mercy.

We make our prayer through Jesus our brother.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 40:25-31 | God gives strength to the weary**
* **Psalm 103**
* **Matthew 11:28-30 | Come to me**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Fidelity to the mission in situations of social unrest, p.102**

When the Constitutions tell us that our ways of being and acting draw their inspiration and guidance from the attitudes that made Mary the perfect disciple of Christ (cf. C 4), they are asking us to live her spirit. … l ask Mary to give to me and to each one of my Marist Brothers that attitude of attentive listening, prompt obedience, simple commitment to people, trust, strength, humility and serene joy.

Br Benito Arbués

**Intercessions**

Jesus, you invite us to come to you to and find rest for our burdens. In confidence we pray, **come, Lord Jesus.**

You show us the love of a caring God, may our lives witness that the time of salvation is now.

In confidence we pray, **come, Lord Jesus.**

You call us to be gentle of heart, may we be your gentle presence for others. In confidence we pray, **come, Lord Jesus.**

**Prayer**

God of love,
you invite us in Jesus to lay down our burdens and to be gentle of heart.

Help us to be open to your unconditional love.

Teach us your ways of mercy and love
that we may show your compassion to all people.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Advent 2 – Thursday 8 December

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**Greeting to Mary**

O with what joy we sing of Mary, a woman of great love,
whose openness and loving kindness,
gave birth to God’s own Son.

Mary, O so gentle and discrete, be with us as we pray,
to know the whisper of His presence,

The wonder of His love.

**Prayer**

Gracious God,
may the life of Mary, preserved from sin,
help us to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Open our hearts to your Word,
and help us to respond generously, as Mary did.

May we become beacons of light
where there is darkness,
transforming our world, day by day.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Genesis 3:9-15,20 | I will place enmity between your seed and the seed of the woman**
* **Psalm 98**
* **Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12 | God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world**
* **Luke 1:26-38 | Rejoice, favoured one, the Lord is with you**

**Marist Reading**

Mary is, for each one of us, the sign and reality of the Kingdom already here and still to come. During the time of Advent Mary is, more than ever, the way which leads to Jesus. Without waiting for the morrow she is already living, in every detail of her daily life, the values of the kingdom which her Son is coming to establish.

**Dialogue Prayer** (from the Constitutions)

* Mary lived out her whole life in the spirit of her “Fiat”.

*She is blessed because she listened to the word of God and carried it out. (C. 38)*

* As Champagnat Marists, Lay and Brothers, we come to Mary, the Handmaid of the Lord, to be schooled by her, and we respond to her call:

*“Do whatever he tells you”. (C. 38)*

* Faithful handmaid, she lives out her YES even to the Cross.

*Mother, she ponders in her heart what Jesus does, and relates his actions to the words of Scripture. (C. 67)*

* We contemplate her, hidden and unknown in the world, faithful in her mission of bringing God to us.

*Patiently she awaits God’s hour. (C. 84)*

**Intercessions**

Let us praise God who has given us Mary as a model of holiness. We pray:

*Mother of Christ, teach us to hear the word of God.*

Be praised in Mary, comforter of the afflicted; teach us to be a healing presence in the lives of others.

*Mother of Christ, teach us to hear the word of God.*

Be praised in Mary, help of Christians; help us to proclaim the Gospel with our lives.

*Mother of Christ, teach us to hear the word of God.*

Be praised in Mary, Queen of Peace; give us forgiving hearts and bless our world with the peace that only you can give.

*Mother of Christ, teach us to hear the word of God.*

**Prayer**

Loving God,
you have given us Mary, the mother of Jesus
to encourage and guide us on the way to union with you.

Let her life of loving obedience and prayer
be a beacon of light for us
as we seek to follow your Christ.

We ask this in the name of that same Jesus Christ,
the Eternal Word,
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, forever. Amen.

Advent 2 – Friday 9 December | God’s wisdom

St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin

**Prayer**

God of life,
help us to look forward
to the coming of your Son
who shoulders our yoke and lifts our burdens
that we may be enabled to proclaim
the coming of your Kingdom.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 48:17-19 | If only you had listened to my commandments**
* **Psalm 1**
* **Matthew 11:16-19 | They listened neither to John nor the Son of Man**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, par. 109**

With God’s grace we engage in the challenging journey of growing into that inner harmony that attracted people to Jesus - humble and gentle of heart. We cannot grow towards our potential as human beings without being involved with others, and responding to the support and challenges posed by those who share our journey most intimately.

**Intercessions**

Lord, we thank you for your Word which lightens our way and lifts our burdens. Lord hear us.

Lord, lighten our burdens, grant us we ask your forgiveness and healing. Lord hear us.

Lord, bless those who are overburdened and give them your peace. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God of compassion and love,
we thank you for your Word today
as we prepare for the birth of Jesus,
our way, our truth and our life.

Through Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Amen.

Advent 2 – Saturday 10 December | Recognising the Saviour

**Prayer**

Father, as we prepare for the birth of your Son, Jesus,
help us to discern your holy will in our lives
and make our hearts obedient to the prompting of your Holy Spirit.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Ecclesiasticus 48:1-4, 9-11 | Elijah came to them**
* **Psalm 80**
* **Matthew 17:10-13 | Elijah has already come and they did not know him**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Revolution of the Heart, p. 34**

The members of our 20th General Chapter challenged us “to centre our lives and communities in Jesus Christ, like Mary, with passion and enthusiasm, and to implement processes of human growth and conversion which promote this.”

Their Message is a challenging one, but not without its own measure of joy. Certainly, today joy must be very evident in our life and mission as Marcellin’s brothers. As one of our brothers said to me recently: “Wouldn’t it be wonderful for you and for me to come to the end of our Marist life and wonder if there was any merit in it at all, because we had enjoyed it so much?”

So, my Brothers, let us be up and doing. The challenge we face is clear, and we have the resources to contend with it. But hasn’t the challenge ever been the same, beginning with our foundation on 2nd January 1817? Marcellin put it very simply: “To love God,” he said, “to love God and to labour to make God known and loved – this is what a brother’s life should be.” In giving us this description of our vocation, he was reminding us that at the heart of our identity as Little Brothers of Mary, now as then, must be found, first and foremost, Jesus Christ and his Good News.

**Intercessions**

We pray that we may remain faithful to proclaiming the Kingdom of God through our words and actions. Lord hear us.

We pray for those who courageously witness to the Gospel in areas where the Church is persecuted. Lord hear us.

We pray for all those who have committed their lives to building relationships of peace and justice. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God our Father,
open our eyes to your presence in our lives and in our world
that we may perceive and announce Christ’s saving presence
to all who wait in darkness.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Amen.

Advent 3 – Sunday 11 December | Rejoice in the Lord

**Prayer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| At this Advent-time we remember Mary and Joseph,giving thanks for their faithfulness,courage and obedience,stepping out into the unknown,in the strength of your Spirit,playing their partin the fulfilment of your planto bring your prodigal people home again. | We pray that their examplemight be the pattern of our lives.That when your gentle whisperbreaks through the clamour of this world and into our small corner,we might be ready to listen,and having listened, to act. Amen. |

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 35:1-6, 10 | God will come and save us**
* **Psalm 145 | I will proclaim your greatness, O God**
* **James 5:7-10 | Be patient, do not lose heart, the Lord will come**
* **Matthew 11:2-11 | Are you the one who is to come?**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the rock, par. 66-67**

In this relationship with God, we experience ourselves as unconditionally loved. A love that draws us ever more deeply into this relationship and, at the same time, more deeply into relationship with all of life. With Mary we experience life as a wonderful gift from God: *Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty has done great things for me*.

We find ourselves yet again hungry, not this time for meaning and purpose, but rather to know this God more and more and to become God’s loving presence in the encounters of our day.

**Intercessions**

We pray that we may recognise Christ in the presence of our brothers and sisters. Lord hear us.

We pray that all new born infants may be welcomed into homes of love. Lord hear us.

We pray in this Advent season that Jesus Christ may increasingly become the centre of our lives. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Rejoice in the Lord alwaysShout out his nameFor God is with usOur God is with usThe God of our salvation In whom alone we trust.Rejoice in the Lord alwaysShout out his nameFor God is our loving FatherHe draws us home to himselfBy streams of living waterWhere we shall thirst no more. | Rejoice in the Lord alwaysShout out his nameHe knows our thoughtsUnderstands our heartsAnd enables us to becomeThe people we are meant to be.Amen. |

Advent 3 – Monday 12 December | Our Lady of Guadalupe

**Prayer**

God of hope, who brought love into our world, be the love that dwells among us.

God of love, who brought peace into our world, be the peace that dwells among us.

God of peace, who brought joy into our world, be the joy that dwells among us.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17 | A star from Jacob will arise**
* **Psalm 25**
* **Matthew 21:23-27 | John’s baptism: where did it arise from?**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, par. 74**

To welcome God in this way, we need to develop an attitude of openness. With God’s help we grow into being an attentive listener to life, reflective and perceptive when reviewing the events of our life, and generous in responding to the invitations of the Spirit contained within the substance of our days.

**Intercessions**

Let us pray for one another that the Lord will open our minds and hearts to be true to the message He gives us through His word today. Lord hear us.

On this feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we pray that like Mary, we may hear the Word of God and respond generously to His call. Lord hear us.

We pray that like John the Baptist, we may be heralds of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Loving God,

you sent your Son among us,

born of a woman, to be our Messiah.

Open our hears to hear your Word,

and our hearts to recognise you

present in the daily events of our lives.

Help us, like Mary, to say “yes” to all that you ask of us.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Advent 3 – Tuesday 13 December | Belief in God

St Lucy

**Prayer**

O God, Enlarge our hearts that they may be big enough to receive your Word.

Expand our hearts that they may be a shelter for those in need of healing.

Stretch our hearts that they may be a place of nourishment for those who hunger for truth and justice.

Enlarge our hearts until they become your kingdom here on earth.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13 | Messianic salvation is promised to all of the poor**
* **Psalm 34**
* **Matthew 21:28-32 | John came and sinners believed in him**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, par. 80**

Daily contact with the Word of God allows us to connect with our personal journey from the perspective of the History of Salvation. It takes us beyond our personal window on life to the larger window of the journey of the People of God.

**Intercessions**

Lord, we pray that we may see the world through the eyes of poor children and respond with compassion to their needs. Lord hear us.

Lord, we pray for those who doubt your existence. May our lives witness your love.

Lord hear us.

Lord, we ask the grace for every child to discover their infinite dignity as your son or daughter.

Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Jesus, once again this Advent,

we rejoice in your accepting us,

ceaselessly seeking us,

freely treasuring us

with love older than the earth itself,

or the distant stars,

yet ever new each day.

Amen.

Advent 3 – Wednesday 14 December | The Good News is proclaimed

St John of the Cross

**Prayer**

God of wonder,
you cause springs to burst forth in dry lands,
deserts to bloom and the rough path to be made smooth.

Release us from all that holds us back from accepting
your grace in our lives.
We make this prayer through Jesus,
who lives with you and the Father.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25 | Let the clouds rain down**
* **Psalm 85**
* **Luke 7:19-23 | Tell John what you have seen and heard**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, par. 124**

Marist spirituality, being apostolic, is lived out on mission. The mission of Marist apostles is born of the experience of being loved by God and of our desire to actively participate in the mission of Jesus.

God is passionate about the world and its people, and Jesus expresses this love by a ministry of teaching and healing. I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly. Like Jesus we recognise the urgings of the Spirit within, calling us to witness to this Good News. Out of these inner promptings, the mission of the Church is born: to proclaim the Kingdom of God as a new way of living for humanity, a new way to relate with God. We join in this mission of the Church as we look upon the world with compassion.

**Intercessions**

O Lord, come to all who wait in darkness and fill them with your light. Lord hear us.

O Lord, come to your Church and renew it through the power of your Spirit. Lord hear us.

O Lord, come into our broken world and give us your peace. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God of love,
in the birth of Jesus you show us
your personal love for each one of us.

Give us a stronger belief in, and love for
Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

Amen.

Advent 3 – Thursday 15 December | True Response to God’s Word

**Foundation Day of the District of the Pacific 2013**

**Prayer**

God of life,
you revealed your Son through the message of an angel.

Give us the grace to discern where you are breaking into our lives,
And the courage to respond to your call.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 54:1-10 | The Lord has called you back**
* **Psalm 30**
* **Luke 7:24-30 | John is the messenger who prepares the way of the Lord**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, pars. 18 & 50**

18. We endeavour to develop our relationship with God so that, just as for Marcellin, it is our daily source of renewed spiritual and apostolic dynamism. This vitality makes us daring, despite our short-comings and limited resources. Drawing from Marcellin’s experience we embrace the mysteries of our life with confidence, openness and self-giving.

50. In such human situations we discover God as the one for whom our hearts really yearn. We realise that this longing is not of our making but primarily the work of God’s Spirit within the depths of our being. With trust, we can open ourselves and come to an experience of God.

**Intercessions**

Lord God, we pray that we may find you in the love we have for one another. Lord hear us.

Lord God, may we like John the Baptist be heralds of your presence in the world. Lord hear us.

Lord, that we may be open to the movement of your Holy Spirit in our lives. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God, source of all gifts,
may the joy you promise be with all Champagnat Marists.

May this blessing take us in haste
to those on the margins of life,
the ‘cribs’ and ‘stables’ of our world.

Amen.

Advent 3 – Friday 16 December | Christ is the light of the world

**Prayer**

Loving God,
you transform our lives when we are open to your Word.

Gift us with courage that we may listen more attentively
to your presence in our lives.
We make this prayer through Jesus,
who lives with you and the Father.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 56:1-3, 6-8 | My house will be a house of prayer for all people**
* **Psalm 67**
* **John 5:33-36 | John was a burning and shining lamp**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Revolution of the Heart, p. 6**

History can be a wise teacher, but only if we are attentive students. At the end of the periods of change and transformation in the history of consecrated life, these three elements appear to remain: prayer, community, and ministry. They may be present in a new form, but somehow we have come to expect that any way of living that calls itself religious life will include these three aspects.

Within the legacy of our traditions, we will be better equipped for the challenging work of re-imaging our life in community, manner of praising God, and ministry if we have developed the habit of prayer, a capacity to listen, and, finally, a willingness to act with courage and determination.

**Intercessions**

Jesus, you are the light in our darkness - may we see meaning in or struggles.

**Jesus, you are the joy of our salvation.**

Jesus, you feed us with the bread of life - move us beyond our selfish desires to be a leaven for others.

**Jesus, you are the joy of our salvation.**

Jesus, you invite us to work in the vineyard - may we be faithful workers.

**Jesus, you are the joy of our salvation.**

**Prayer**

God of love,
in the birth of Jesus heralds the good news in our lives.

May our hearts open to receiving your gift.

May we grow stronger in our love for
Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Amen.

Advent 3 – Saturday 17 December | The Whakapapa (Genealogy) of Jesus

**O Sapientia**

O Come, O wisdom of our God most high,
guiding creation with power and love,
come to teach us the path of knowledge. (Isaiah 11:2-3)

**Prayer**

Wisdom of God most high,
you guide creation with power and love.

Teach us this Advent
the path of wisdom.
We make this prayer through Jesus,
who lives with you and the Father.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Genesis 49:2, 8-03 | The sceptre shall not pass from Judah**
* **Psalm 72**
* **Matthew 1:1-17 | A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, pp. 114-115**

A mystic person is one who, through prayer and contemplation of the divine mystery, wants to reach a deeper communion with God. Communion with God is at the same time a gift from God. We know that God can be known through Revelation which reached its highest point in Christ. However, this knowledge we might have of God can be pursued in a discursive or intellectual manner as theologians do, or through a prevalent approach of a loving and prayerful contemplation of God and His mystery. It is mystical knowledge.

Such knowledge is more an intuitive knowledge of God who wants to be in communion with people, and who is calling people to be in communion with Him. Therefore the aim of the Christian mystic is one’s communion with God.

Mystical knowledge is a gift of God that no human effort can produce. However, this gratuitous gift can only have an effect in the human person if one is freely open to welcome it and freely answers with love to God’s initiative. It usually grows only through a considerable time of desert-like experience in the exercise of solid faith and generous love.

**Intercessions**

O Lord, come to all who wait in darkness and fill them with your light. Lord hear us.

O Lord, come to your Church and renew it through the power of your Holy Spirit. Lord hear us.

O Lord, come into our broken world and give us your peace. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God of love,
in the birth of Jesus you show us
your personal love for each one of us.

Give us a stronger belief in, and love for
Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

Advent 4 – Sunday 18 December | Come, rescue us with your mighty power

**O Adonai**

Come O Leader of ancient Israel,
giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai,
come to rescue us with your mighty power. (Isaiah 11:4-5)

**Prayer**

O God of might,
you revealed yourself to Moses in the burning bush.

You continue to reveal yourself
through your Son, Jesus.

Come to us and set us free from all that
blocks our complete acceptance of your unconditional love.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 7:10-14 | The virgin will conceive**
* **Psalm 24 | The world and all that is in it belongs to the Lord**
* **Romans 1:1-7 | Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God**
* **Matthew 1:18-25 | Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, pars. 21**

*At the Crib we find the innocence, simplicity, gentleness and even weakness of a God who is capable of touching the hardest of hearts. ... There is no room for fear of a God who became a child*. We come to know a God who has pitched his tent in our midst, and whom we call ‘’brother.’’

**Intercessions**

Lord, you call us to be salt for the world. Give us your strength to confront unjust structures in the Church and the world. Lord hear us.

Lord, you call us to be light for the world. Give us your strength to demand accountability, transparency and honesty of those in authority in the Church and in public office. Lord hear us.

Lord, you call us to be yeast for the world. Give us your strength to proclaim the Good News through our words and actions. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Loving God,
you are the light that gives light to our way.
You are our hope as we await the coming of your Son.

May we like Mary have Jesus constantly in our hearts.
Amen.

Advent 4 – Monday 19 December | Chosen by God

**O Radix Jesse**

Come O Flower of Jesse’s Stem,
sign of God’s love for all his people,
come to save us without delay. (Isaiah 11:1, 10)

**Prayer** (*Dom Helder Camara*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lord, do not smile and say You are already with us.Millions do not know you,and to us who do, what is the difference?What is the point of your presenceif our lives do not alter? | Change our lives, shatter our complacency.Make your word flesh of our flesh,blood of our blood,and our lives purpose.Take away the quietness of a clear conscience,press us uncomfortably.For only then, that other peace is made,your peace. Amen. |

**Readings**

* **Judges 13: 2-7, 24-25 | The birth of Samson was announced by an angel**
* **Psalm 71**
* **Luke 1:5-25 | The birth of John the Baptist was announced by Gabriel**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Water from the Rock, par. 60**

*God chooses individual men and women and calls each of them by name. He leads them into the desert and there he speaks to their hearts. … By his Spirit, he transforms them constantly leading them more deeply into his love in order to send them out on mission*. The more we come to know God, the more we come to know the deepest meaning of our lives. We grow in the knowledge that we are part of God’s project for the world.

**Intercessions**

Lord, comfort your people and clothe us with your compassion. Come to save us without delay.
Lord hear us.

Lord, calm our anxieties, lighten the darkness that surrounds us. Come to save us without delay. Lord hear us.

Lord, surround us with your love and anoint us with your peace. Come to save us without delay. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| God of love, we pray with a joyful heart that Jesusbe born among us again this Christmas.Instruct us in your ways of compassionso that we may extend your love and mercy to all people. | We ask this through Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word,who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, forever. Amen. |

Advent 4 – Tuesday 20 December | Open to receive God’s word

**O Clavis David**

Come O Key of David,
opening the gates of God’s eternal kingdom
come and free the prisoners of darkness. (Isaiah 22:22)

**Readings**

* **Isaiah 7:10-14 | The virgin will conceive**
* **Psalm 24**
* **Luke 1:26-38 | You are to conceive and bear a son**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - In Her Arms or In Her Heart, p. 53**

Marcellin meant us to be apostolic religious in the way of Mary. What does that mean exactly? In the biblical texts, the mother of Jesus questions, pursues her son, gives orders, and travels. Actually, she travels a lot. Mary sets out “at once and in haste” to visit her cousin Elizabeth, makes the definitive pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and at Pentecost is part of the believing community into whom the Spirit of God breathes life and sends forth on mission. Yes, Mary’s story is characterized by movement, by passages from one moment of meaning to another.

Such an outlook is essential for anyone who claims membership in an apostolic Institute that bears her name. Unfortunately, some of us have come to resemble more the members of monastic congregations, with their commitment to a specific monastery and place. In contrast, we are meant to be itinerant, to move to those places where the need for evangelization is most urgent.

As a rural woman, she travelled beyond village boundaries to give birth to God among us and to serve as a witness to his salvific death. We, too, are called to go to those places where the Church is not, bearing God’s Good News to poor children and young people. Where we have lost this ability, we must restore it to its proper place in our lives.

**Intercessions**

We pray for the prophets in our midst who challenge us to read the signs of the times. Lord hear us.

We pray for all those who are sick and suffering at this time, may they experience your healing presence in their lives. Lord hear us.

We pray that broken relationships may be healed and restored. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

King of Kings and Lord of Lords,
we wait in anticipation of your coming.
Help us to prepare your way
by straightening our hearts.
Fill our hearts with your love and compassion
that we may be instruments
of your peace in our world.

Amen.

Advent 4 – Wednesday 21 December | God will renew you by his love

St Peter Canisius

**O Oriens**

Come O Radiant Dawn,
splendour of the eternal light, sun of justice,
come and shine on those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death. (Isaiah 9:1)

**Prayer**

God of power and might
you revealed the coming of Your Son
into our world through the message of an angel.

May we attune our hearts to the many ways you enter our lives,
and respond as Mary did to your invitation.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Song 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18 | My beloved comes**
* **Psalm 33**
* **Luke 1:39-44 | Why am I honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - He gave us the name of Mary, pp. 12-13**

With Mary, who sets out in haste, we feel called to live our lives in service and to bring Jesus to others. In this service, the most vulnerable children and young people have preference. With them and for them, together with many other persons of good will, we contribute to making the world a better, more habitable and fraternal place. Our perspective for looking at the world is that of Jesus, who, as he prepares to wash the feet, looks at it from below.

**Intercessions**

Lord, come to all those who wait in darkness. **Lord, renew us by your love**.

Lord, give peace to those ravaged by war. **Lord, renew us by your love**.

Lord, bring comfort to the sick and suffering. **Lord, renew us by your love**.

**Prayer**

Radiant Dawn,

splendour of the eternal light, sun of justice,

we have heard again your promises of old and you vision for humanity.

In the coming of Christ free us from all that prevents their fulfilment.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Advent 4 – Thursday 22 December | Praise for God’s actions in our world

**O Rex Gentium**

Come O Desire of all the Nations,
keystone of the Church,
come and save us,
whom you formed from the dust. (Isaiah 9:5)

**Prayer**

God, our Father,
may your kingdom come, your will be done:
in our choices as we struggle with the complexities of our world,
and confront greed and the desire for power in ourselves,
our country and our world.

May your kingdom come this Advent.
Amen.

**Readings**

* **1 Samuel 1:24-28 | Anna gave thanks for the birth of Samuel**
* **Psalm - 1 Samuel 2:1, 4-8**
* **Luke 1:46-56 | He who has done great things for me is powerful**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Making Jesus Christ Known and Loved, p. 10**

Keeping Mary in mind is equally important. At the Visitation, she carried Christ to John the Baptizer with simplicity, generosity, and charity; she presented him to the shepherds and the Magi in the same spirit. And Mary waited until the first signs of faith stirred among the apostles and then stepped aside so that the focus could fall on Jesus. We do well to heed her example and imitate her ways.

**Intercessions**

Creator God, open our eyes to the wonder and truth of the Word made flesh in Mary. Lord hear us.

Lord, open our minds to the beauty of the promise of new redeeming life when our Saviour is born. Lord hear us.

Loving Father, may we follow Christ as faithfully as Mary did, and keep to the path he shows us to the fullness of life. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Loving Father,
we thank and praise you for blessing us with the great
things which Mary proclaims in her *Magnificat*.

In your tender mercy you care for each one of us,
and especially for those this world sees as lowly,
the poor, weak, outcasts and marginalised.
Help us to do all we can to bring these blessings
to all whom we meet.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Advent 4 – Friday 23 December | We learn to say ‘Yes’

St John Kanty

**O Emmanuel**

Come O Emmanuel,
our King and Giver of the Law,
come and save us, Lord our God. (Isaiah 7:14)

**Prayer**

Lord, as we come to celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus,

we thank you for the gifts that you have given us.

We thank you for the example of Mary and Elizabeth

in accepting your Word in their lives.

We thank you for the gift of the charism to Marcellin.

We thank you for our community and family.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Readings**

* **Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24 | I shall send Elijah as a sign that the day of the Lord is near**
* **Psalm 25**
* **Luke 1:57-66 | The birth of John the Baptist**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - Evangelisers in the Midst of Youth, pars. 67-68**

Creation continues throughout revelation. God introduces His Divine Presence to human beings from the first pages of the Bible and manifests His desire to establish a covenant with them. … [God] sends the prophets to remind us of the covenant entered into with God. The creative word of God is also the liberating Word of a God who inserts Himself in human history.

In the fullness of time God sent His only Son Jesus Christ. The Word of God became flesh to live among human beings. He came to put us in touch with that very God: “He who sees me sees the Father” (JN 16:9). He proclaims the Reign of God to all who find themselves “weary and downtrodden” - the poor, the sick, those rejected by mainstream religion, sinners, women and children. By His death and resurrection He transmitted divine life to all. In fact He had already proclaimed this: “I have come so they may have life and have it in abundance” (JN 10:10).

**Intercessions**

Lord, may our community share in the blessings of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Lord hear us.

Lord, may the virtues and blessings of the Holy Family be seen in the actions of the Champagnat Marist Family. Lord hear us.

Lord, give us the courage to spread your Good News among all those we encounter. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

God of love, we thank you for your servants, Mary and Elizabeth.

Their unconditional acceptance of your Word
gave birth your kingdom of love, justice and peace.

We thank you for the blessings we have received through their actions.

Give us the grace to work for justice,
that we may bring your love to those in need of healing.
Through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Advent 4 – Friday 24 December | God with us

**Come, O Lord, and set us free**

**Prayer**

Emmanuel, “God with us”,
like Zachariah of old, may we be conscious of your redeeming love
and you meet you in those whom we encounter,
in the Scriptures and the breaking of bread.

Amen.

**Readings**

* **2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16 | The kingdom of David will be established forever**
* **Psalm 89**
* **Luke 1:67-79 | From on high the rising sun will visit us**

**Champagnat Marist Reading - A Revolution of the Heart, p. 50**

The incarnational nature of Marcellin’s spirituality was the source of his practice of the presence of God; he had a passion for both the Lord and his mission. For Marcellin, Jesus was always close at hand. Consequently, his conversations with the Lord continued uninterrupted, and his confidence in him and abandonment to God’s will deepened over time. He often quoted the words of Psalm 127, “If the Lord does not build a house, in vain do its builders toil.”

Marcellin’s incarnational spirituality can be found in the wording of many of his letters. In an April 8th, 1839 note to Brother Marie-Laurent, for example, the founder wrote, “Your letter, my very dear friend, greatly aroused my compassion. Since then I never approach the holy altar without recommending you to Him in whom we never hope in vain, who can help us overcome the greatest obstacles.”

**Intercessions**

Loving God, help us to receive Jesus as Emmanuel and like John the Baptist, proclaim his message of peace. Lord hear us.

Gracious God, as you revealed your presence among us through Zachariah, may we too be aware of how actions give birth to an unfolding of God in our day. Lord hear us.

Mighty God, just as Zachariah announced the coming of a Messiah may we, by our joy in living, proclaim the coming of your Kingdom. Lord hear us.

**Prayer**

Father, reveal yourself to us so that we may know
how to welcome you as you become present to us
in the person of your new born Son, Jesus.

Help us to share the joy of his coming
with all whom we meet today.

Come, Lord Jesus.