



To many people of his time, Marcellin Champagnat wasn't the obvious person to start a school system. He had a limited formal education. He lacked any financial resources. However, he trusted that God would provide. Marcellin didn't have a ready-made plan of how to start a religious order or a global network of schools. He simply saw a need, reflected on it, and trusted that God would provide what was required to bring it to completion. Marcellin made the path by walking it.

CONTENT

The construction of l'Hermitage is perhaps one example of Marcellin's Trust in God. In 1824, Marcellin and the early Brothers commenced work on a vast 5-story stone building to accommodate 150 people. This was only seven years after the foundation at La Valla and just a year or two after the Institute had passed through its first serious vocation crisis.

A number of people cautioned Marcellin that it was imprudent to undertake this project without financial resources. Marcellin agreed that it would be extremely rash to undertake such a project relying only on themselves. He was relying on Providence.

Marcellin believed that the new recruits and the expanding number of schools was a sign of God's favour. "Since [God] favours this Congregation, it is proof that he wills it; and if he wills it, he will send us the resources to construct a suitable house". (*Life*, p. 294)

QUOTATIONS

WATER FROM THE ROCK (Marist Spirituality Document)

https://www.champagnat.org/shared/documenti_maristi/AcquaRoccia_EN.pdf

17 Marcellin's relationship with God, combined with knowledge of his limitations, explains his unbounded confidence in God. The depth of this trust amazed those who worked with him, and scandalized some who judged his actions as reckless. In his humble way, Marcellin saw God at work, and so acted with courage and commitment.

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.

A PATH TO EDUCATION AND MATURITY IN FAITH (Marist Youth Ministry)

https://www.champagnat.org/shared/bau/PJM_Mistica_EN.pdf

Increasingly convinced that God was calling him and guiding him in that small village Champagnat experienced one of the fundamental events related to the new step God called him to take: being a founder. Undoubtedly, that new step demanded a lot of him: to reconsider and restructure his plan for his life, mainly balancing the task of a priest with the will to begin a religious congregation. He never let discouragement

bring him down. Life is about launching into a challenge; it is discovering what God expects of us through our projects, in an attitude of mutual trust between us and God.

MAKING JESUS KNOWN AND LOVED (Marist Circular)

<https://champagnat.org/en/circulares/making-jesus-known-and-loved/>

[Marcellin's] was a practical Christianity; he had the ability to find solutions that fit the problems that faced him and a flair for bringing out the best in others. And in the midst of the doubts and preoccupations that must have been his, he was sustained by his simplicity, unfailing trust in God's presence, and reliance on Mary and her protection.

REFLECTION

SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS OR REACTIONS TO THE READINGS

- A word or a phrase from the text which resonated with you.

PRAYER

Creator God, you inspired Marcellin Champagnat to trust you in all things. Continue to strengthen us who follow in his footsteps that we may grow in openness to you and in acceptance of ourselves and others.

Enable us to drink more consciously from the "Water of the Rock", and the charism that you have gifted to the Church.

Continue to inspire us to be faithful to your evolving mystery within our lives, your evolving presence within our world, your promise of the fullness of life and resurrection.

Gift each one of us to share your Good News with the people who come into our lives, and may we continue to experience your Good News in and through them. We ask this in confidence through Jesus our brother. Amen.

Mary Our Good Mother, *pray for us*
St Marcellin Champagnat, *pray for us*

