



The young priest, Marcellin Champagnat, saw a need in a time of great challenge, and followed through in establishing small schools in villages and towns. He saw education as the force that could help France reestablish 'good Christians and good citizens'.

From a young age as a country boy Marcellin showed enterprise, foresight, common sense and pragmatism. As a young seminarian when home on breaks from study he demonstrated that he was a born teacher, attracting children and adults to attend his catechism lessons.

## CONTENT

His context was the French Revolution and its devastating aftermath. His milieu was a large family in which he learned the wisdom and spirituality of loving parents; and subsequently his colleagues in the seminary who dreamed of a new Church.

The young Jean-Baptiste Montagne's death was the turning point in his decision to begin village schools. "We must have others to teach the poor country children!"

## QUOTATIONS

*IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT* (Marist Education Document)

[https://www.champagnat.org/e\\_maristas/Documentos/missaoEducativaMarista\\_EN.pdf](https://www.champagnat.org/e_maristas/Documentos/missaoEducativaMarista_EN.pdf)

53. Marcellin Champagnat lived among children and young people, loved them with passion, and devoted all his energies for them. As his disciples, we also experience a special joy in sharing our time and our persons with them, we resonate with their aspirations, we are filled with compassion for them and we reach out to them all in their difficulties.
69. The core of Marcellin Champagnat's vision of mission was "to make Jesus Christ known and loved". His saw education as the way to lead young people to the experience of personal faith and of their vocation as "good Christians and virtuous citizens".

*WATER FROM THE ROCK* (Marist Spirituality Document)

[https://www.champagnat.org/shared/documenti\\_maristi/AcquaRoccia\\_EN.pdf](https://www.champagnat.org/shared/documenti_maristi/AcquaRoccia_EN.pdf)

6. The group's way of living the Gospel was a reflection of the character, values, and spirituality of its leader, Marcellin Champagnat. His spirituality was deeply influenced by his own personality. His first disciples remembered with affection the Marcellin they knew: open, frank, resolute, courageous, enthusiastic, constant and equable. His whole life gave witness of a person with a practical disposition, a man of action, and of humility. This enabled him to draw together from various sources a simple and down-to-earth spirituality.

15. *We are inspired by the vision and lives of Marcellin and his first disciples as we journey to God. While we share such a pilgrimage with many, we are conscious of our own distinctive style. We are gifted to share in that transforming experience of being, with Mary, loved unconditionally by Jesus. From this flow the particular characteristics of our manner of being followers of Champagnat.*

## REFLECTION

SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS OR REACTIONS TO THESE READINGS

- What you have learned about Marcellin from these Marist documents?
- What questions stay with you about Marcellin and his early work?
- What qualities do you see manifest in our Board deliberations from these Marist documents?

## PRAYER

Creator God, you inspired Marcellin Champagnat to trust you in all things.  
From his earliest days he came to know you through the goodness of his family.  
Throughout his life he came to know you more deeply at the 'crib, cross and altar'.

Continue to strengthen us who follow in his footsteps to also come to know Jesus Christ better  
and to make Him known and loved among those we serve and to one another.

Continue to inspire us to be faithful to his vision for the education of the young  
and to your evolving mystery within our lives.

Amen.

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