

# Reflection from the Superior General

## Rejoicing in the grace of our Founder...a gift for everyone

As younger Marists some of us were not so familiar with the life and teaching of our Founder, Father Jean-Claude Colin. Sometimes he seemed a remote figure from a distant age. More recently we have all enjoyed the opportunity to come to know and appreciate him more profoundly. This enlightenment unites us as Marists, gives us a renewed identity and sense of mission, and helps us to appropriate our beautiful charism which we can share abundantly with others.

Jean-Claude's life and vision have become more accessible over recent decades because of the work of so many Marists who have been making the sources more available to us. Now we can see more clearly what a spiritual giant he really is. Most recently, some of us have found Father Justin Taylor's work, "Reluctant Founder", a wonderful encouragement as we come to know Jean-Claude better as a Founder and as a confrere. Early next year a condensed version of that life, also by Justin, will be published in several languages making our Founder's story more accessible to a wider audience.



Sometimes Marists have been helped to understand Jean-Claude and the early Marists by way of renewals or with pilgrimages around the Marist places, either in France or in other important scenes of Marist history in the world. Recently we have prepared a walking-Camino over about one week in the Bugey mountains to provide the opportunity for some Marist pilgrims to follow in the steps of the early Marists.

It is time for us to propose the richness of our Founder's spirituality to a wider world. Vatican II called us to renewal by returning to our sources. Jean-Claude's life and mission is a rich source of renewal. While he is a man of his time, his virtue and his spirituality are perennially inspiring.

We re-committed ourselves to working towards Jean-Claude's beatification and canonization at our last Chapter. (#114). Recently the process of his "Cause" advanced from the diocese of Lyon to the Vatican. We now need to encourage his veneration widely and establish that there has been a miracle or two in response to prayer exclusively through his intercession. The beautiful icon of Jean-Claude Colin with Mary is helpful. When we work for his "Cause" we present Jean-Claude as truly a Saint for our times.

We celebrate his death anniversary every November 15, an annual Marist fiesta.

We now have a team of Marists called the "Colinian Cause Network", with one Marist from each unit meeting together regularly by Zoom. They are proposing, and we are endorsing, that every Marist, individually or in community, pray a novena this November leading up to his death anniversary. You can find the novena here: [www.jeanclaudecolin.org/resources/novena](http://www.jeanclaudecolin.org/resources/novena) The goals of the novena are to help each of us to grow in our veneration for the Founder and also for us to ask for some "special grace", large or small, or for a miracle, through the exclusive intercession of Jean-Claude.

Each theme of the novena prayer helps us to focus on a particular quality exemplified by Jean-Claude: his personal holiness, his discipleship, his forbearance in physical sufferings, his passion for God, his joy in adversity, his gift of discernment, his efforts to overcome his failings, his life of profound prayer and, especially, his filial love of Mary.

We give God thanks for the wonderful grace of Jean-Claude's life, mission and spirituality. This grace is available as a source of renewal for everyone.

*John Larsen s.m.*