



Reflection from the Superior General

Dear Confreres,

Greetings from Rome! By now many of you will have received the Statements and Decisions of the 2025 General Chapter which had as its theme “With Mary at Pentecost”. They represent the fruits of a synodal discernment process involving prayer, reflection, listening and discussion.

The Chapter statements and decisions form a programme of work not only for the incoming General Administration but for each of us personally and as communities to live our Marist vocation in new and deeper ways and in the words of Pope Leo to us “*to be attentive to the signs of the times*”.

The Chapter also invited us to see ourselves as part of *one* Society and to collaborate more closely with each other across Provinces and units for the sake of our mission – which is to form a Church with a Marian face, a Church that embodies inclusiveness and compassion. This collaboration will likely entail the merging of some Provinces and units and the continued development of international mission communities that are intercultural and intergenerational in character.

We were fortunate to have some lay observers at our Chapter who spoke to us about the importance of Marist community life as a witness in a divided world. As our Chapter statement on community life puts it: “The mission of the apostles to the world ... was founded upon their communion forged in the upper room where, gathered around Mary, they became “one in mind and heart”. The Chapter encouraged us to develop new forms of living community life for mission by establishing communities that are prayerful, characterised by a simple lifestyle and a warm welcome to people of all ages, religions, and backgrounds. Moreover, the quality of our community life is linked to our ability to attract vocations. Many young people are searching for a sense of community and purpose, and a vibrant Marist community can be a site of accompaniment, prayer and support on their journey.

Regarding Marist mission today, the Chapter was realistic enough to acknowledge our ageing and diminishment in many parts of the congregation. It also accepted that not all confreres can participate in international mission communities. At the same time, the Chapter invited us to audacity and newness, to discern how the Spirit might be calling us to serve new needs, and “to establish the Church where it does not exist and to renew existing communities” (Const. 14). Our work with youth, migrants, refugees and the poor through formal and non-formal education will continue. The Society also remains open to accept mission projects which others may be reluctant to undertake.

It is my hope that the resolutions and orientations of the Chapter will provide a clear and helpful direction for leadership at all levels of the Society for the next eight years.

I hope too that Marists everywhere will embrace, as best they can, the spirit of the statements and decisions of the Chapter. This can be best done through meditatively re-reading and reflecting on them and through communal discussion in your communities and units.

Finally, a word of thanks to all those who took part in the Chapter and those who prepared it – especially the outgoing General Administration and the Preparatory and Steering committees as well as our facilitators. May the Spirit of Mary continue to flourish in the Society that bears her name so that we can be her presence supporting the Church in these uncertain and challenging times.

Declan Marmion, S.M.

Superior General

31 October 2025