



# MARIST VOCATION YEAR

# 7

## MARIST Experiences

### 5. WHO IS YOUR FAVOURITE MARIST FIGURE?

**Dani Argibay (LM) (España):** It is hard for me to think of only one figure that helped me to deepen in my Marist vocation, but something that has always helped me is that image of the Society of Mary like a tree with 5 branches. Having been able to meet fathers, sisters, missionary sisters, brothers and also lay Marists and having been able to share my faith and my vocation with them has helped me to deepen my vocation without a doubt.

**Fr. Larry Duffy, sm (Ireland):** A great spiritual influence on me was Donald Kerr, Marist priest, who was my novice Master and also responsible for the formation afterwards for six years. He was a brilliant man as a historian of some renown, but he was so humble in his whole approach. You wouldn't know by meeting him that he had such brilliance, so well hidden, but the thing that struck me most about him was his gentleness and his vulnerability and he was a very sensitive man and in fact, he was very sensitive and aware of what was going on people.

**Fr. Alejandro Muñoz, sm (Mexico):** I would like to share today about the person who most inspired my Marist life from the beginning, who was Juan Pujebet; a French Marist, Jean Pujebet, who worked here in Mexico and who founded houses for the rehabilitation of young people in situations of violence and drug dependence. I met him in the parish to which I belonged and he greatly impacted and inspired me with his testimony of faith, piety, love for Jesus and love for Mary.

On this last topic, we wanted to ask Marists from all over the world and from all branches of the Marist family a few questions about vocation. You can read their responses below and you can also find the video following this link: <https://bit.ly/mvy7vid>

We encourage you to share in the community what their answers suggest to you and that you also answer these questions.

### 1. WHAT ATTRACTED YOU FIRST TO THE MARISTS?

**Br. Aílto Ferreira, sm (Brazil):** What attracted me the most about the Marists was the simplicity and acceptance with which each Marist received me. And that special way, that maternal way that only Marists have to welcome all people.

**Sr. Judith Moore, smsm (New Zealand):** As a schoolgirl, I heard many stories from Marist missionaries working in the Pacific. I decided to become an smsm sister to give my life to God, to help to spread the Gospel and to serve the needy in any country.

**Fr. Kevin Medilo, sm (Philippines):** Two things that attracted me to the Marists, first is the mission and second is community living. Mission, because Marists try to serve the poor and those who are marginalized in the society. Second, community life. Marists live together as a community, witnessing the Gospel, witnessing God's love and mercy and doing missions in ministry together.

### 2. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE MARIST LIFESTYLE?

**Br. Ivan Vodopivec, sm (England):** What I appreciate about our Marist life is that no matter how challenging the mission may be, Marists are always there to support you and to encourage you. And when things are really gone well they share in your joy and your success.

**Sr. Teri O'Brien, sm (Canada):** I like that our mission to continue Mary's presence involves all Marist branches. We try to live simply and generously, our communities are prayerful, welcoming, reaching out to those in need. Caring for our common home involves us all.

**Fr. Youssouph Stev Youm, sm (Senegal):** What do I like about the Marist lifestyle? When we ask this question, we often think of the simplicity of the Virgin Mary. This is true, but what I find quite original, what I find quite spectacular, is the fact of taking the Virgin Mary in her entirety, in her totality, and integrating her into our lives. We become Mary's for the present world and for me that is the meaning of being Marist Marie-ists, Mary in the present world. This is what I like about this life, this Marist way of life.

### 3. WHAT WAS YOUR BEST EXPERIENCE AS A MARIST IN THE MISSIONS?

**Fr. Rafael Ramila, sm (Spain):** On Mission Sunday in 2006, I had an impressive pastoral experience. I was going to celebrate mass in Talba, in the central jungle of Cameroon, and they told me that a girl was dying and she asked to be baptized. Xavérie, 22, was dying in a shack, victim of AIDS. I verified that she believed in the Lord Jesus, we prayed the Lord's Prayer together and I baptized her. She died two days later.

**Fr. Raymond Pelletier, sm (Canada):** It's not a life of pleasure, it's a life where you give yourself totally. I didn't expect it. During the pandemic, Father General asked me to be the novice master, exceptionally for one year. Because of the pandemic, I said yes. And I think it was the most beautiful experience of my life in mission to say yes to a Superior General who looked in disarray because he had no novice master. He had to find a novice master immediately.

**Fr. John Larsen, sm (New Zealand):** We can't really give one experience. The whole life of the missionary it's been full of prayer and that prayer bearing fruit on serving people. When that happens, they've been the best moments; being with the person who is sick; being with the kid who is in trouble; giving the sacraments; celebrating weddings; the Eucharist. These are moments of grace in technicolour, and they've been the best moments in the mission.

### 4. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A YOUNG PERSON WHO IS CONSIDERING RELIGIOUS LIFE?

**Sr. Maria Aparecida Cangussu, sm (Brazil):** Dear young man, dear young woman. Each person has their own way of responding to the individual call of God in their hearts. Spend some time in your life listening to where God wants you to be happy! How about getting to know the Marist way of being? And experience being like Mary.

**Br. Jaime Pérez Martínez, sm (Mexico):** Entering religious life as a young person above all means stopping a little, to slow down for a while (for a person like me who loves running). But it is also learning to walk together with other brothers and more so now that synodality is in fashion because of Pope Francis. It is an experience that challenges us but slowly puts us back in motion, and with a new energy that moves us as a community.

**Fr. Miguel Angel Contreras, sm (Peru):** That they allow themselves to be led by God, may they be people open to the Spirit. Above all, that they respond to the call that God has for each of them, to see which path or which option He wants to lead them to fulfil themselves as human beings contributing to the Kingdom of God.