



Reflection from the Superior General

September 12, 2026

"I reflect on the name I bear, what a source of hope, of reassurance! The name of Mary that we bear was not given us by men; it came to us from heaven." (J-C Colin)

Dear Confreres,

Greetings from Dublin where I am convalescing after my recent heart surgery. I would like to express my thanks for the many expressions of prayer and support I have received during this time. It has been a great source of encouragement to be supported by the prayers of so many.

I would also like to thank Juan Carlos Piña, vicar-general, for taking on many extra responsibilities during the time I have been indisposed. While I hope to return to Rome soon, this will depend on a medical review later this month.

On the 12th September Marists around the world will celebrate the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary. It is a day when we recall our initial commitment to the Society. God, through Mary has called each of us by name to serve him in the Church. It is a day to remember our calling, our vocation, with gratitude and appreciation. None of us are "worthy" before God, yet God works through "earthen vessels" to accomplish great things and to build up God's kingdom.

And the Society has indeed accomplished great things through our many ministries. And it continues to do so. Even in places where we are diminishing and have to withdraw from, it is striking how much people appreciate the commitment and service Marists have shown them over the years. So many of our confreres have embodied the "spirit of Mary" in their lives and ministry – a spirit of compassion and inclusion, especially towards those who are struggling or who are on the margins.

Today too is an opportunity to renew our vows, to renew our commitment to serve the Church in the Marist way, to be, in the words of Fr. Colin, *"missionaries of action and missionaries of prayer"*. Our Society has an outward-facing, missionary orientation, prepared to go to the ends of the earth in proclaiming the Gospel. Today's feast, therefore, calls us out of our comfort zones and to be courageous in wanting to "make the whole world Marist". On a personal level, it calls each of us to be purged of self-interest and the "lust for power". Instead, we honour the name of Mary best, when we let Christ be seen while we remain in the background. Despite our fragility, let us reiterate our complete trust in God and Mary and renew our commitment to continue the work of Mary in the family that bears her name.

Wishing you all a blessed Feast.

Fraternally,

Declan Marmion, S.M.