

# Marist Millennium Pledge

*A process of formation in the Marist spirit.*

## Why?

We often get lost in the mundane process of life. Getting caught up in the busyness of life. The pressures that work places on us to perform more and more or the demands of family commitment can at times stifle our spirit. At these moments, we may lose a sense of meaning in our life. We can allow the culture for success or the culture of entertainment to dictate our direction. This often means that life is very shallow as we chase one great idea and move to the next. We may not get a chance to stop and enter deeply into the spiritual life.

## Mary's Yes

As a Marist, we try follow and model Mary in our own life. The "Yes" is not just the "yes" to the invitation which we may have somewhere along the journey of life. The "yes" can appear in many different forms. Following Mary is an ongoing process of discernment and discovery, of entering into the deeper reality of Mary's spirit alive in us.

## Millennium Pledge

The "Millennium Pledge" is one tool we can use to help structure our discernment and way of living. Across a total of 12 months a person is invited to discern about ten things where God is calling them to follow Mary and Jesus. These commitments will take time to emerge. Over several months, through our own prayer life and our encounters with spiritual friends or Marists these pledges will begin to appear. There is no rush this process.

## Commitments

These commitments will allow us to move deeper into the reality of following Mary's way to Jesus. They may be different or similar to other Marists. This is ok as they mark different moments along the road of faith. However, like a tuning fork which resonates at a certain pitch, a second tuning fork, when brought closer, will begin to sing like the first folk. Thus, our lives resonate with the pitch of what it means to be Marist. The commitments we make bring us closer to the life of Mary living in us as she follows Jesus.

## Beginning

How will the Millennium Pledge begin? Through prayer. Pray this prayer with your family or community present with you each week. You may want to ring a tuning fork or bell before you pray this prayer to remind you that your life resonates in the way of Mary.

## Marist Millennium Pledge Prayer

Dear Lord,  
I wish to follow Your mother Mary.  
Inspire me to find the things in my life  
that will bring me closer  
to being Mary's hands, mind and heart.  
May I bring the love of God living in me  
to care for the poor, the needy, and the forgotten.  
Call me to go beyond my comfort zone  
to bring hope to the world and a future  
not my own.

Teach me to be open to Your way.  
To listen.  
To ponder.  
To feel joy.  
To be brother or sister to others.  
Especially in times of struggle.  
Enable me to be committed,  
to Mary's way in my life,  
to follow your Son Jesus.  
Amen.



*The Black Madonna and Child in the Fourviere Chapel in France*

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## Writing

After some time of discernment, each commitment will emerge in your heart. Write them down and place them in a sacred place like a journal or prayer space. Return to them regularly to remind you of what you are committed to.

## Christmas Time

It is hoped by the end of the year, around Christmas time you would have found these ten pledges and be committed to living them each day. During the year, have a conversation in regularly with your priest, spiritual friend or other Marist what you have been committed to. Write them carefully on a scroll and tie them up with a ribbon. At Advent take them to your church and place them near the altar like the early Marists did in Fourviere in France in 1816. Ask the priest, spiritual friend or other Marist to pray the prayer below with you...

## The New Year

At the new year, January 1, on the Feast of Mother of God, let the Millennium Pledge begin again in your life. Pray the Millennium Pledge prayer for the new year. After some time, through discernment, conversation and personal prayer, some of your commitments will appear again, whilst others will be born anew.

## Finally

May your search, discernment and commitments resemble the person of Mary hidden in you. May the Marist Millennium Pledge awaken to live a deeper reality of God in your life.

## *Marist Millennium Advent Prayer*

Dear Lord,  
During this time of Advent,  
we follow Mary as our inspiration.

Mary, may we like you and with all the church  
seek to bring to birth Jesus in our own lives.

We thank you for the commitments  
we have made throughout this year,  
for these Marist Millennium Pledges.

Let the gifts we bring,  
to you at Christmas,  
resemble your Son Jesus.  
May all people  
sing the glory  
of God living in creation.  
Amen.



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