

Marist Response to Laudato Sí (Marist Religious Leadership Teams, Rome)

We Marists, representing the one Tree with its several branches, gathered from 14 -16 January this year to study the encyclical *Laudato Sí* with a view to discerning how we might respond to Pope Francis' compelling words.

As each session about our Common Home unfolded, we became more aware of our common heritage as Marists. In the spirit of the Fourvière Bicentenary, we were led to reclaim the motto: *All for the greater Glory of God and the honour of Mary*. Other words which echoed again and again included: inter-connectedness, conversion, contemplation, collaboration, communion and deep gratitude. At the end of our gathering, we had a sense of being called **as a Marist Body** to give flesh to the common values expressed in various ways in our Charism and in *Laudato Sí*.

Francis challenges us: *'The mindset which leaves no room for sincere concern for the environment is the same mindset which lacks concern for the inclusion of the most vulnerable members of society.'* (L.S. 196) So, conversion is needed – and, as one of our members put it, this entails a change of “heartset” too.

Many of Francis' expressions seem to fit so naturally with our Marist way. One is the term **humanity's compass** (L.S.200). Surely it is this compass which leads us towards love, truth, justice, peace, mercy, connectedness and collaboration... towards a giving of “all for the greater glory of God” and a greater solidarity with our neighbour and the earth itself.

Less is more is another Francis expression, inviting us, Marists, to expand our capacity to be happy with less and grateful for everything – after the manner of Mary.

So where do we go from here?

Can we develop within ourselves and amongst those we work with and for,
a greater capacity for wonder and for gratitude?

Can we cultivate that “serene attentiveness which is capable of being fully present to someone,
without thinking of what comes next,
which accepts each moment as a gift from God to be lived to the full”? L.S 226

Can we embrace a “culture of care” that flows out from our community living
and permeates our neighbourhood and world?

But it will take....

Work Commitment
Prayer Spirituality Faith
Hope Simplicity Humility Harmony

...then planted in the soil of Nazareth it will put out shoots....
and from there we will see what we have to do

- *Marist General Councils: Fathers, Sisters, Brothers and SMSM*

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