

BONDING, COMMITMENT, ATTACHMENT AND BELONGING OF LAY PEOPLE TO THE INSTITUTE AND/OR THE MARIST CHARISM

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INTRODUCTION

The document is a combined report of the Procurator General's Office and the Laity Bureau of the Marist Brothers on an ecclesial topicⁱ of considerable importance to the future of the Marist charism: the bonding, commitment, attachment and/or belonging of lay peopleⁱⁱ to the Institute or some other wider ecclesial structure related to the founding charismⁱⁱⁱ of Marcellin Champagnat.

The XX General Chapter (2001) made the following recommendation to the General Council: *To undertake a study of various forms of belonging to the Institute and to allow lay people, in agreement with their Provincial and his Council, to live various forms of Marist commitment (ad experimentum). Based on these experiences, the General Council will put the juridic framework into place to enable the XXI General Chapter to eventually make a decision on this matter.*^{iv}

Similar expressions to this attachment and belonging are repeated in the Chapter message^v and, even more strongly, in the final message of the International Assembly on Marist Mission, in Mendes (Brazil) in September 2007^{vi}. It was at this gathering that mention was made not only of belonging to the Institute but of *new forms of attachment to the Marist charism.*^{vii}

In spite of this insistence, in the years following the XX General Chapter there has been little progress on this matter, especially because, above all, work had to be done on coming to terms with just what a personal commitment of lay people to the founding Marist charism, in the Champagnat tradition, might mean. Connecting to a charism presupposes a gift of God that one has to be aware of receiving. This does not happened apart from a process of discernment that includes the following steps: information, invitation, welcome, formation, accompaniment, confirmation in one's experience of the charism, commitment, some basic structures that open up the vocational dimension of being a lay Marist ...

On the other hand, it would have been difficult for forms of juridical attachment to emerge at the Institute level if there has not been some concrete experimentation in the administrative units. Lay people themselves, once they become aware of having received a gift (charism), will seek the best way of becoming integrated into and attaching themselves to the Institute and the Marist charism.

In the matter of attachment to the Institute, as Brothers and lay people we have to find new juridic structures that involve both parties since it is not something that can be done unilaterally. If lay people decide to move towards an attachment only to the charism of Champagnat, it is up to them to choose their own organizational structure to embody a new expression of the charism. In such a case, the Church would have to ratify that it is really the Marist charism of Champagnat.

The General Administration of the Institute can certainly launch a reflection to help understand better what is meant by bonding, commitment, attachment and belonging to the Institute of the

Brothers or to other new structures that embody the Marist charism of the Founder. This is what we are trying to do in this report, knowing that it is not definitive, that additional reflections are needed before we have any success in giving concrete shape to new Marist realities faithful to the heart of Champagnat. One such reflection is to be found in the document *Around the Same Table: The vocation of lay Champagnat Marists*.

We begin with a short historical overview of the relationship between laity and Orders or Institutes of Consecrated Life (CL) after Vatican II (Chap. 1). Similarly, we trace the juridical, canonical history of the CL (Chap. 2). This can give us another perspective on the evolutionary (dynamic) character of institutions born from a founding charism. Then, we present various existing examples of Marist commitment and attachment (Chap. 3), as well as different future possibilities for Marist Laity in the Champagnat tradition (Chap. 4). We conclude with some recommendations for the coming General Chapter and Administrative Units around the world (Chap. 5)

1. HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LAY PEOPLE AND CONSECRATED LIFE

1.1. Laity in the Church

Vatican II defined the Church as the People of God.^{viii} Justifying the oneness of the Church, it spoke of the common dignity of all its members and the vocation of all to perfection and holiness. We all need one another, we form one single body and we are to be at the service of others.

The apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici* of John Paul II (1988) helps us understand this model of the Church and the relationship between CL and lay people: *In Church Communion the states of life by being ordered one to the other are thus bound together among themselves. They all share in a deeply basic meaning: that of being the manner of living out the commonly shared Christian dignity and the universal call to holiness in the perfection of love. They are different yet complementary, in the sense that each of them has a basic and unmistakable character which sets each apart, while at the same time each of them is seen in relation to the other and placed at each other's service.*^{ix}

1.2. Lay people and the Consecrated Life

As we will see later, all throughout history alongside different forms of consecrated life, there have always been groups of lay people, men and women, who have manifested a special interest in sharing in the riches of the founding charisms of CL. At the same time, they have contributed their support to CL in being able to better develop its specific mission.

This relationship has grown following the theological reflection inspired by the second Vatican Council and certain historical changes that have impacted on the apostolic activities pursued by CL. On the one hand, lay people feel that they are carrying out their own ecclesial mission. On the other hand, the CL needs the help of lay people to better develop its apostolic work in a world that is becoming ever more complex. We are not talking here in simply functional terms but of a relationship that has its roots in the charism of CL and of the Church itself: more and more lay people feel called to live out the founding charism of different orders and congregations of CL.

We can characterise relationships between lay people and Religious after the Council using the following three phases:

- **Involvement of lay people in the works of Religious as a result of changed circumstances** (1965-1988). People were invited to contribute to apostolic works that the Institute had decided on to attain objectives also determined by the Institute. What was asked of lay people was that they be professionally competent and live a life that generally conformed to the principles of the Christian faith. 4
- **Choice of lay people for ecclesiological reasons** (1988-1996). What was asked of lay people was a strong commitment to the ongoing development of apostolic works, giving Christian witness with a vocational sense, and a coherence between their lives and values. Lay people had to become better acquainted with the charismatic inspiration on which the work was founded. Times of formation in spirituality and charism were organized
- **Taking communion with lay people as the fundamental perspective** (from 1996 on). Certain lay people are considered co-responsible for the charismatic inspiration of the work. Knowledge of and commitment to the charism are demanded of them. Beyond the dimension of work, one's personal life matters. What we have now is that some people are choosing a vocation of service and to belong to a charismatic family. Co-responsibility for managing works is a consequence.^x

These phases correspond with the theological reflection and doctrine to be found in official documents of the Church of this period. The thinking behind the Church synods on vocations within the Church has led to an analysis of what is particular about each state of life existing in the Church.^{xi} From this we can affirm that each of the vocations to lay life, to ordained ministry and to Consecrated Life are paradigmatic, given that all vocations of whatever form can be related to them in some way. Moreover, each one of them is at the service of building up the Body of Christ in history and Christ's mission in the world.^{xii}

John Paul II expressed this well in his apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1996): *Today, often as a result of new situations, many Institutes have come to the conclusion that their charism can be shared with the laity. The laity are therefore invited to share more intensely in the spirituality and mission of these Institutes. We may say that, in the light of certain historical experiences such as those of the Secular or Third Orders, a new chapter, rich in hope, has begun in the history of relations between consecrated persons and the laity.*^{xiii} *The participation of the laity often brings unexpected and rich insights into certain aspects of the charism, leading to a more spiritual interpretation of it and helping to draw from it directions for new activities in the apostolate.*^{xiv}

1.3. Marist Laity and the Institute of the Marist Brothers

We know that numerous like-minded lay people and benefactors have been part of our history since our beginning. They shared the spirituality of the Brothers and supported their mission. Among these, mention should be made of the Association of former Marist Students which, from as far back as the 19th century, wanted to be active in maintaining the religious spirit that the Brothers had imparted, support their local school and defend it against the attacks of anti-clerical forces in France at that time. This Association has spread out over time although its strength and clarity of purpose have varied.

Towards the middle of the last century, many lay people (teachers and ancillary personnel) began to work in most Marist works, thanks to spectacular population increase and to education laws that demanded better qualifications. In the beginning, they were seen more as “*an unavoidable necessity*” than a sign of the Spirit. They were regarded as *employees*, engaged to help the mission

of the Brothers. It was only later, after Vatican II, that they began to be seen as co-workers in the one mission of the Church.

Little by little the Brothers realized the considerable evangelizing resource that committed lay people could bring if they held to the ideal of education of M. Champagnat. Work with *parents of students* and their associations also revealed the importance of work with those who were so centrally involved in the education of children and young people. Throughout this period (1970-80), many formation courses in Marist spirituality and mission were organized. Marcellin and his charism were more and more known and valued by lay people. Progressively, some of them felt inspired to live out this spirituality and to get involved in Marist mission over and above their work contract or beyond the time when their own children were at a particular school. This phenomenon, inspired by the Spirit and supported by many Brothers, led to the establishment of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family (CMMF), approved by the General Chapter (1985).

In a good number of Provinces of the Institute, the 80s saw a significant development in methods of youth ministry and in volunteering which, when coupled with Christian and Marist accompaniment, led youth to question themselves on how to live out their Baptism. It inspired in them the desire to remain committed to Marist spirituality and mission, whether their professional work was in formal education or not.

From this time, reflection and lived experiences of highly committed lay people and of Brothers in contact with them, as well as the impact of the canonization of Marcellin Champagnat (1999), led to an increasing process of conceptualization of what was happening. As a result, people started to talk about *shared mission, shared charism, common Marist vocation, particular Marist vocations*. This line of thought led the XX General Chapter (2001) to express the firm conviction that *the Spirit of life is leading us along this common road.*^{xv} In this light, the recommendation of the last Chapter to the incoming General Council *to promote reflection and opportunities for belonging and juridic connection to the Institute,*^{xvi} should not surprise us.

2. HISTORICAL STUDY OF JURIDICAL, CANONICAL MATTERS CONCERNING CONSECRATED LIFE

From the very beginning of the Church men and women have set about following Christ with greater freedom and imitating Him more closely through the practice of the evangelical counsels, each in his own way leading a life dedicated to God. Many of them, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, lived as hermits or founded religious families, which the Church gladly welcomed and approved by her authority. So it is that in accordance with the Divine Plan a wonderful variety of religious communities has grown up which has made it easier for the Church not only to be equipped for every good work (cf. 2 Tim 3:17) and ready for the work of the ministry-the building up of the Body of Christ (cf. Eph. 4:12)-but also to appear adorned with the various gifts of her children like a spouse adorned for her husband (cf. Apoc. 21:2) and for the manifold Wisdom of God to be revealed through her (cf. Eph. 3:10).^{xvii}

2.1. The process by which the Church accepts the charismatic initiatives of Founders

Throughout two millennia of Church history, Consecrated Life has been constantly developing new paradigms and ways of describing itself.^{xviii} The creativity of the Holy Spirit surpasses the limits and structures that we impose on the various states of life, surprising us continually by innovations. It is enough to recall the doubts of so many honest people of the Church when the Franciscan

movement appeared, so different from monastic practices in its down-to-earth manner of living consecration to God. A saint was needed as well as a charism such as that of Saint Francis for there to emerge a way of living Consecrated Life in the heart of cities.

In popular language, there has been a succession of names: *monks, brothers, fathers, regulars, religious*; now we speak of *consecrated people*. Yet these names never completely encompass all that the Spirit is doing since the same activity of the Spirit is evident in all forms of Christian life: all are called to be one with God, to live out the consecration of our Baptism.

So, from the juridic point of view, we can speak of the passage from the variety of expressions of CL in the first centuries to the identification of this style of life with the monastic life. At some point in time, monks had to make room for the mendicants. Soon after, the proliferation of foundations of Priests Regular led to the identification of CL with those who had as common denominator the religious profession of solemn vows. The 19th century witnessed the rise of an impressive number of congregations or *secular* societies (with simple vows) which led to the identification of CL with the profession of public vows (Code of Canon Law of 1917).^{xix} Recently, in the middle of the 20th century, we saw formal approval of Secular Institutes^{xx} and to their inclusion in recognized forms of CL. The 1983 Code speaks of new forms of CL^{xxi} (cf. c. 605), of which the Holy See has already approved a good number.^{xxii} In some of these Institutes, for example, men and women can live in the same community and bonds of consecration are allowed for married persons still living as a couple.^{xxiii}

The normal process undertaken by the Church when faced with each of these changes of paradigm has been to follow these three steps in chronological order:

- a) The life of the founder and of his first disciples caused astonishment, amazement and questioning among the People of God. A study by some authority was carried out.^{xxiv}
- b) Various spiritual writers and theologians systematised the novel aspects of what was emerging, provided explanations and integrated them into the literature and thinking of the Church of that time.
- c) Church Law recognized their existence and gave them official and canonical standing.

Canon Law always marches behind what is new in the life of the Church. What is new gets official recognition after a period of testing in regard to validity and to it being a gift of the Spirit. For this reason, for as long as the Holy Spirit remains active in the Church, the Law will always encompass only imperfectly the reality of life and holiness of its members.

2.2 A novel element in the charismatic intuition of Champagnat

It is interesting to grasp this dynamic vision of the history of CL since our Institute was born in one of these moments when the paradigm was changing when Institutes with simple vows began to proliferate. Champagnat conceived of us as one of these new Institutes.

From the 16th century on, Institutes began appearing in the Church in which people made profession of simple vows. This fact was the source of a capital difference between:

- The Orders, with their solemn profession (the person, when making vows, gave himself to God in such a way that, from that moment on, all possible personal acts were annulled. This has juridic consequences when the person acts against the vows: e.g. by marrying (chastity), by buying or selling (poverty); or by denouncing something to a court of law (obedience).

- And the new Institutes,^{xxv} with their profession of simple vows (where acts against the vows are valid because, in making his vows, the person has sworn only not to do these acts without seeking to annul them before the event).

Solemn vows was a clear mark of separation of Religious from other people who were not Religious since these latter did not pronounce solemn vows. The juridic framework of the Religious life conformed with the demands of the solemn vows. In the view of the Church at the time, the profession of simple vows did not provide entrance to Religious life,^{xxvi} even though civil law, especially after the French Revolution, did not recognise the capacity in solemn vows to annul contrary acts.

The long process of acceptance of these new Congregations by the Church took more than a century. It followed the three stages mentioned above:

- a) The proliferation of new Institutes, with a ready welcome and recognition from the People of God and the appearance of many fruits of holiness and ministry;
- b) Theological reflection on the topic, progressively recognising their character as Religious;
- c) Approbation from Church authorities, initially parallel to the juridic code of the day and later by changing the code in question.

That is to say that prior to the 19th century there was no canon law that regulated the approval of Congregations with simple vows by the Holy See.^{xxvii} Throughout this century numerous Congregations with simple vows requested the pope to grant them recognition and more than a hundred of them, mainly of Sisters, were granted this in the first 60 years.^{xxviii} Because of this multiplicity of new foundations,^{xxix} Cardinal Bizzarri, who was secretary to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars (SCER), by order of Pius IX, produced a *Methodus*^{xxx} for these approbations in 1854.

The official doctrine of the Church, however, continued to recognize as Religious only the members of Orders with solemn vows,^{xxxi} while the new Institutes, in their hundreds by the end of the 19th century, were called Institutes or secular Congregations and their members were not recognized as Religious.^{xxxii}

It is true that some jurists, after 1850-60, began to consider that Institutes with simple vows had all the essential elements needed for their members to be considered Religious.^{xxxiii} Two lines of description of the religious state emerged. On the one hand, juridically, the religious state in relation with the statutes of canon law; on the other hand, theologically, in relation to the moral status and style of life. Common doctrine of the time accepted that profession of simple vows participated in the religious state in a theological sense but the Church did not agree to their members being religious in the juridic sense.^{xxxiv}

The first official document that touched on the question of the juridic definition of the new Institutes was the Constitution *Conditae à Christo*, of 1900.^{xxxv} The Constitution recognized the power of Bishops to erect a Religious Institute within their own territory and provided some clarification of their juridic status. All Orders with solemn vows were considered of pontifical right. Some Congregations with simple vows were considered of pontifical right, by concession of the *decretum laudis*, while the rest remained of diocesan right. Soon afterwards, in 1901, some *Normae*^{xxxvi} were published. These were a codification of the rules that had been followed up till

then by the SCER in approving new Institutes with simple vows. It was only with the 1917 Code of Canon Law that full recognition as Religious was given to Institutes with simple vows.^{xxxvii}

2.3. Another novel aspect of the charismatic intuition of Champagnat

We can summarise the first 50 years of our history by what is written in the first article of our Constitutions:

On January 2nd, 1817, Marcellin Champagnat founded the lay religious Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary. He saw it as forming a branch of the Society of Mary.^{xxxviii} In 1863 the Holy See approved us as an autonomous Institute of pontifical right. While respecting our original name, it gave us the title of Marist Brothers of the Schools (F.M.S. Fratres Maristae a Scholis). (C 1).

This article reminds us, moreover, of the second novel aspect of our origins, even more advanced for its time than being an Institute with simple vows: namely, its link with the project of the Society of Mary undertaken by the group of seminarians at Fourvière.

The Society of Mary had wanted to be a Congregation with four branches : priests, brothers, sisters and lay associates. In the *Summarium regularum Societatis Mariae* presented in December 1833 for pontifical approval, it was written: *As was mentioned above, the Society, such as it was conceived at the beginning and as we have tried to implement, is made up of a number of religious orders : 1st the order of priests, 2nd the order of lay Brothers, 3rd the order of religious sisters, and 4th the fraternity of lay people living in the world.^{xxxix}*

The Holy See did not approve the original project with its four branches since it was probably too advanced for the time.^{xl} The Cardinal responsible described the project as *monstrous* in his presentation to the Plenary of the SCER: “15. *His monstrous plan which is without precedent in the history of religious Institutes (...)* 16. *Fr Colin (elected as provisional Superior by his colleagues within the Society and who is in Rome actively seeking pontifical approval, is also convinced that this plan is monstrous.*”^{xli}

Each of the branches had to obtain its own approval as an independent Congregation. The first to be approved, helped by the need felt by the Roman Curia to send missionaries to French Polynesia, was the branch of priests,^{xlii} today known as the Marist Fathers with the initials SM, a clerical Religious Institute of pontifical right. The Marist Fathers were approved by the SCER^{xliii} and a few days later by the Pope^{xliv}. Immediately one of the priests committed to the project, Fr. Pompallier,^{xlv} was named Vicar Apostolic of western Oceania^{xlvi} and ordained Bishop. It should be remembered that Champagnat was the third Marist Father to pronounce vows on 24th September 1836.^{xlvii}

Shortly afterwards, Fr Colin, Superior General of the Marist Fathers, spoke to the 2nd General Chapter of the Institute of his conviction that the time had come for the Brothers to govern themselves and obtain their own papal approval since the Holy See would not countenance the project of four branches for the Society of Mary.^{xlviii}

The Congregation obtained the decree of its suitability on 9th December 1859,^{xlix} and after a lengthy period of negotiation, papal approval on 9th January, 1863,^l with simultaneous approval of the Constitutions *ad experimentum* for five years.^{li} The time of trialling the Constitutions was extended thanks to indults received from the SCER in 1876, 1883, 1887 and 1893.^{lii} Definitive approval of the Constitutions was obtained only in 1903.^{liii} After the promulgation of the Code of

Canon Law in 1917, the Institute revised and adapted its Constitutions, gaining approval of them in 1922.^{liv}

Our identity is the fruit of almost 200 years of history guided by the hand of God. We are absolutely convinced of the truth contained in article 164 of our Constitutions: *Our Institute, a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church, is a grace forever relevant to the world.* We can acknowledge, however, that the identity of the disciples of Champagnat has been reduced to a single branch whereas the original project of the founding charism foresaw a whole tree. This was the project for which Fr Champagnat gave his whole life.^{lv}

We are very accustomed to identifying the founding charism with the project of Religious life as such in which this charism took shape historically. However, we have to be able to distinguish between the concept of *founding charism* and the concept of *the project of Religious life* in which the juridic or canonical form does not always fully translate the intuition of Founders because of resistance and misunderstandings of Curia bodies or canonists. This being true, we can see the founding charism as *a way of living the Gospel* or *an overall manner of living out one's Baptism*, open to expression in different forms of Christian life.

For more than 150 years the Brothers did not concern themselves with this inspirational tree that is at the origin of our foundation. Urgent matters related to our growth and organization and the multiple needs to be met in the field of education, all meant that we limited ourselves to a single branch of the tree.

The Gospel-inspired 'madness' of the first Marists of Fourvière remained paralysed in the 19th century by the Holy See and the historical challenges over the years. The relationship between the priests, the sisters and the Third Order adopted the standard pattern existing in the Church between the first, second and third orders of a single religious family and so lost its original 'revolutionary' character. Today it seems that throughout the whole Church and among us, the Holy Spirit is dragging the heirs of Founders from a deep sleep and from blindness -Founders who were so extraordinarily ahead of their time.

1. MARIST LAITY BORN OF THE CHARISM OF MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

3.1. The need for public symbols that express a commitment?

In recent years, a good number of lay people have taken up positions of high responsibility in the apostolic works of the Institute: Province commissions of youth ministry and education, management, and even Marist formation and financial administration. Many of them are leaders of educational and social works. In some Provinces trials have been made of splitting the business of the Provincial Council into one part dealing with management and mission, having lay people present, and the other part dealing with the internal life of the community of Brothers.

Working co-responsibly with lay people has increased enormously within the Institute but there is still some doubt in some Brothers – and also in some lay people – about the degree of commitment of these lay people in the Christian and Marist life. Certain responsibilities seem to demand a commitment of attachment or belonging to a Marist structure. *Professional* responsibilities alone or those associated with *friendship* are not enough. There is a perception that there is a human, life-giving need for *public symbols* that express an interior attitude.

On the other hand, in many Provinces there are lay people who feel themselves Marist and want to make a public commitment to this effect. They are asking the Institute of Brothers for some recognition in this regard. What type of commitment is being spoken of here? Most already have a contract relationship (of employment) with the Institute, but not all. We have to be more precise about the meaning given to terms such as bonding, commitment, attachment and belonging so as to be able to grasp more clearly as a consequence the different thoughts that could be entertained on this matter:

- **Bonding:** supporting a cause, person or institution
- **Commitment:** contracting an obligation that is known to others
- **Attachment:** submitting oneself to an obligation to an institution
- **Belonging:** becoming part of an institution.

3.2. Various examples of contemporary relationships between lay people and the Institute and the Marist charism throughout the world.

▪ *Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family :*

Statute 164.4 of the Constitutions of the Brothers defines the CMMF as *an extension of our Institute ... made up of people who find themselves attracted to the spirituality of Marcellin Champagnat*. The members of the Movement group themselves into fraternities. It is clearly a relationship of **attachment**; the CMMF depends on the Institute of Brothers.^{lvi} It has the structure of the old Third Orders. But the personal commitment is not made explicitly public. The Br Provincial recognizes the fraternity as a group and not each member personally.

One case in particular merits attention: the experience of some members of the fraternity *Henri Vergès*, in Nîmes (France). In 2005 they asked to make a commitment^{lvii} of fidelity to Marist mission and charism. This promise was received by a delegate of the Br Provincial. This is an example of **personal commitment, pronounced in public**, during a Eucharist. There are other fraternities that have made similar requests.

▪ *Affiliates of the Institute^{lviii} or of the Province*

According to N° 8 of the Constitutions : *Certain people can be affiliated to the Institute ... they share in our spiritual benefits*. Reference is made to *sharing in the spiritual benefits* of the Institute of Brothers as is made clear in the preceding paragraph. Affiliates are people (men and women; lay people, priests and Religious) *who have shown remarkable and prolonged dedication to support the life and mission of the Institute and who give an authentic witness of Christian life*.^{lix} Mediated by the Provincial Council, the whole Institute, through the General Council, recognizes them in a special way. It is a form of attachment, accepted by the affiliates themselves, but they make no public commitment.

In recent decades, another form of recognition has appeared at the level of Provinces: affiliation to the Province^{lx}. These affiliations depend solely on the Provincial Councils concerned.

- ***Communities of life : Brothers and Lay people***

In the past 20 years the Institute has seen the appearance of communities of Brothers, open to the presence of lay people, men and women. Lay people themselves, sometimes guided by Brothers, have asked to live in such a setting.

Three different forms of such communities can be distinguished, depending on the main objective they pursue : *communities that welcome lay Marist* volunteers (the presence of lay people could last from a couple of weeks to some years); *communities of vocational discernment for young adults* (the duration of stay is normally for some months up to a year); *communities that have a project in common of life and mission* (of longer duration). Some of the latter communities already have more than 10 years of experience and the Lay people and Brothers do not necessarily live together in the same house.

There are more than 20 communities of shared living of Brothers and lay people^{lxi} in 14 AUs of the Institute. One of these, at Sucumbíos (Ecuador), has also been inter-congregational for 12 years. In some Aus, the names of lay people (single, married, with children) figure in writing on the appointment lists of the Province, side by side with the Brothers. Normally they have a project of community life and a mission project at the same time.

This is a relationship of **attachment**, from both sides: the lay people who ask and the Brothers who welcome. The lay people are not in the habit of making *public* commitments. Provision can be made for work or insurance for volunteers who leave their own country. In every case, there is authorization from the Provincial Council for the community of Brothers to take in lay people and for these lay people to get involved in the life of the community.

- ***Private Association of the faithful: The « La Valla Mulhouse » Community***

On 1st September 1996 a community of shared life, lay people and Brothers, began at Mulhouse (France), with the permission of the Br Provincial of Beaucamps-St. Genis and the Bishop of the diocese of Strasbourg. On this occasion a married couple asked for the presence of Brothers to develop a Marist ministry among the children and young people of Mulhouse. Thirteen years later, the community still exists with the married couple and two Brothers, as well as an extended community of adults and another of young people. Its apostolic work is to animate the Christian life of young people in the town after they have received Confirmation.

After some years of journeying together and in view of future difficulties that other Brothers might find in replacing those who were in the community, a decision was made to set up a *Private Association of the Faithful*, approved by the diocese of (2005), so as to preserve its Marist identity whether there are Brothers or not. This is a Marist community « *ad experimentum* » built on this new experience of Brothers and Lay people following the same founding charism and the same Marist mission.

- ***Conventions on using the name “Marists” or “Champagnat”***

In some AUs conventions have been signed by groups of people with juridic personalities who run institutions and who want to bear the name *Marist* or *Champagnat* in their official designation, or who want to adopt Marist pedagogy in their program, based on the spirituality of Champagnat. They make a commitment to allow the Marist authorities of the Province to exercise some oversight and, at the same time, they request help in regard to Marist formation and accompaniment of their own growth. The signed agreement has status in civil law, based

on the laws of the country. These conventions normally have a fixed term, renewable as long as both parties agree. This is an example of **civil attachment**, not canonical. Some examples of these :

- *Instituto Valladolid* of Morelia, *Instituto México* of Mexicali and *Universidad Marista de Mérida* (Province of México Occidental).
- *Colegio Maristas Champagnat* of Uberlândia and *Colegio Marista* of Patos de Minas (Province of Brazil Centro-Norte)
- Something similar can be seen in the group *Misioneros Maristas* in Ciudad Juárez (Province of México Occidental), made up of young adults, Marist ex-students, who engage in a range of pastoral and solidarity activities with young people in one of the poorest parts of the town and who make annual promises in front of the local Church.

▪ **Other commitments of lay people under study: Canada, Sydney**

In November 2001, the *Marist Movement of Quebec (MMQ)* began, made up of Brothers, former Brothers, teachers, ex-students, priests, members of the CMMF, and others. They hold an annual gathering (Forum) for two days. They have given themselves a set of statutes and objectives, determined democratically by the participants. Their aim is to become better informed about and share in Marist life, to celebrate it and promote it into the future. In 2006, eight lay members of MMQ requested official recognition as *lay Marists*. The Provincial Council approved this request and this recognition was celebrated during the annual Forum. The following year, two others asked for this recognition. This is a recognition of an **attachment to the experience of the Marist charism**.

Since the terms of this recognition were not very clear, the MMQ, with the help of the Provincial Council, have begun a reflection on the possibility of defining some *commitments regarding charism, spirituality and mission*, animated, accompanied and ratified by the Provincial Council.^{lxii} In this case, it would be an **attachment to the Institute of the Brothers**, in line with the recommendation of the XX General Chapter^{lxiii}.

The Province of Sydney held a Province Mission Assembly in March 2009. One of its conclusions was to recommend that *the Province adopt the practice of welcoming lay people to make a covenant commitment to live and minister as Marists in the charism of St Marcellin Champagnat and with a contemporary Marist spirituality*.^{lxiv} This would be an **attachment** similar to the preceding example.

▪ **Other lay Marist movements**

Besides the Marist Movement of Quebec, there are types of Marist lay movements that are more or less structured, the fruit of the decision and creativity of a group of lay people and / or of some Brothers. The list that follows is simply of those we know about, without entering into details about their organization: *Movement of Lay Marists of Catalunya* (L'Hermitage), *Communities of Marist Spirituality* (Compostela, Spain), *Groups of lay Marists in Melbourne, Australia*, *Movement of Lay Marists in Nigeria*, *Association of former Brothers* (Mexico). These are groups that express a **bonding** with the Institute and the Marist charism. In some cases, their existence has been approved and encouraged by their corresponding Provinces and so the term **attachment** could be used. Some of these movements foresee **personal commitments** being made.

- ***Associations and Federations of Former Marist Students***

As was mentioned in section 1.3., the *Former Marist Students* were the first lay groups to be organised in the history of the Institute. The first references in writing to this group date from 1865, from Beaucamps (France). The highpoint of this movement was between 1950 and 1985, with the establishment of numerous associations at local, Provincial, national and continental levels and of the World Union of Marist Ex-students. Today, their membership is much less and their strength reduced, especially at the local level. According to their statutes, there is **link with the educational works and the Province** but the personal involvement of each of its members – and of the associations as such – with the Marist charism, spirituality and mission is not very clear. In some countries a good number of ex-students have joined the CMMF or other movements and communities.

- ***Personal commitments***

To end this section, it is necessary to mention a phenomenon that is gathering force: lay people, either individually or as couples and families, who ask Provincials and their Council (or the Superior General and his Council) to be sent to whatever Marist mission they judge best. Often this means leaving their normal home, including to take up a mission *Ad Gentes*. Other times, they take up the responsibility of some Marist apostolic work, freeing the Brothers to go to more needy parts of the country. In such cases, a commitment is made by both parties, that is a genuine **attachment to the Province and/or the Institute**, covered by a work or volunteer contract that has legal status.

Similarly, mention could be made of the commitment of numerous lay people as Principals, bursars, members of various Province commissions, and so on. It is hard to define in such cases whether it is simply a work commitment or a Christian commitment, or a personal commitment to the Marist charism. The same remark could be made of all the people employed in Marist educational communities or the volunteers supporting Marist mission.

3.3. **Current representation and self-description of Marist lay people in the Institute**

The Marist laity has not taken shape from an original core group as was true for the Institute of Brothers but as a result of the character and organization of each AU. So, while there are many similarities from one Province to another, there are also many differences.

- ***The Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family (CMMF)***

The CMMF has no centralised structure for the whole Institute, but normally develops some structures at Province level, the fraternities being quite diverse. Most of the 19 AUs where the movement exists have a Province organization and some fraternities are co-ordinated by a Province commission of lay delegates and a Brother Assessor appointed by the Province. In this sense, there has been an increase in the autonomy of lay people. Up till now, an *American gathering* (2005) and a *European gathering* have taken place and these have brought out the many riches of the CMMF in each country, challenges coming up and dreams for the future. In 2010, a second European gathering is planned and a meeting of animators and assessors of the fraternities in Brazil, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the movement.

Following the European gathering, a *European Council of delegates of CMMF* (2007) was set up. This body meets annually and has assumed the task of reflection, animation and distribution

of information and formation resources to the 60 fraternities in Europe. Likewise, in Brazil, the CMMF is co-ordinated at the level of *UMBRASIL (the Marist Union of Brazil, an inter-Province body)*, by a sub-commission – Religious Life and Laity – that meets several times a year. Also, many AUs or countries have developed the custom of having an annual meeting of all the fraternities and other formation moments, retreats, etc.

- ***Lay people at General Chapters***

Other than the symbolic presence^{lxv} of the Marquise *De la Grandville*, benefactor of the Institute, at one of the sessions of the 2nd General Chapter (1852-54), the first time lay people participated at this level was when 19 lay people attended the XIX General Chapter in 1993. At the 2001 Chapter there were 17. 10 lay people are due to be present at the XXI Chapter in 2009. In none of these cases is there any question of representatives chosen by lay people themselves but rather they are present by invitation of the General Council to people involved in a range of apostolic activity to represent the various regions of the Institute.

- ***Commission of the Laity and the Extended Office of the Laity***

In 2002, for the first time, a *Commission of the Laity* was established, dependent on the General Council, made up of four Brothers: three General Councillors and a secretary. In 2006, this commission was changed into an *Office of the Laity*, made up of a Director – a Brother – reporting to the Commission of mission. As support to this new structure, the General Council approved the creation of an *Extended Office of the Laity (2007)*, made up of two Brothers – one of whom was the Director – and three lay people. They meet for one week each year and thereafter keep in touch by internet. The initial goals of this new structure are:

1. To ensure a greater participation of lay Marists in the Office, through reflection and leadership of certain events at regional and Institute level, leading to a broader institutional vision of Marist laity.
2. To enable better co-ordination between the Office and each region and AU of the Institute, and vice versa.

- ***The International Assembly on Marist Mission (2005-2007)***

In 2004, the General Council named an international commission to prepare an international assembly on Marist mission. This Assembly had several phases : local, provincial – in some cases regional – and international, at Mendes, Brazil, in September 2007. Around 20,000 people, lay for the most part, took part in the different phases of the process. For the first time, lay people were represented simultaneously at provincial, regional and international levels. 50 Lay people and 44 Brothers attended the gathering in Mendes, including the delegates from the AUs, the General Council and other members of the General Administration.

- ***Lay people in international and continental commissions***

From 1995 onwards, it has been customary to have lay people in our various international commissions whether it be for preparing documents, or for reflection, co-ordination and leadership of various events. The following list shows the dates when some of these groups concluded their work:

- Editing the text, *In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat : a Vision for Marist Education Today* (1998)
- Consultative group of Lay people to reflect on topics related to Marist laity (2005)
- Editing the text, *Water from the Rock* (2007)
- Editing the document on *Marist Youth Ministry* (2009)
- Preparing a *Post-graduate program in Marist formation and mission*, in union with Marist Universities (2009)
- Editing the text, *Gathered Around the Same Table* (2009).

In addition, many lay people have been members of regional and continental commissions, dealing with mission, solidarity, education administration, etc.

- ***Provincial Commissions for the Laity or shared mission***

In some Provinces, commissions for the laity have seen the light of day. They are responsible for reflecting, animating and carrying out activities that will foster a greater engagement by Lay people with the Marist charism, spirituality and mission. Obviously, very committed lay people make up the majority of these commissions.

4. Future Possibilities for laity connected to a charism originating in Consecrated Life:

4.1 Teaching of the Church

In recent official Church documents that deal with the Consecrated Life (CL), there is no lack of references to relationships between Religious and Lay people, underlining the idea that lay faithful can share in the charisms of Institutes, because they feel called to do so by God, and that this reality is the source of a future that is rich in hope.

For example, the most important document on CL since Vatican II, *Vita Consecrata*, speaks of relationships between Religious and Lay People in paragraphs 54 – 56:

A significant expression of lay people's sharing in the richness of the consecrated life is their participation in various Institutes under the new form of so-called associate members or, in response to conditions present in certain cultures, as people who share fully for a certain period of time the Institute's community life and its particular dedication to contemplation or the apostolate. (VC 56a)

In 2002, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life published a document called *Starting A fresh from Christ*^{lxvi}. In No 31 of this document, it is stated:

In this line we can see that a new type of communion and collaboration within the various vocations and states of life especially among consecrated persons and laity is beginning. Monastic and contemplative Institutes can offer the laity a relationship that is primarily spiritual and the necessary spaces for silence and prayer. Institutes committed to the apostolate can involve them in forms of pastoral collaboration. Members of Secular Institutes, lay or clerical, relate to other members of the faithful at the level of everyday life.

The new phenomenon being experienced in these days is that some members of the laity are asking to participate in the charismatic ideals of Institutes. This has given rise to interesting initiatives and new institutional forms of association. We are experiencing an authentic re-flourishing of ancient institutions, such as the secular orders or third orders, and the birth of new lay associations and movements linked to religious Families and Secular Institutes. Whereas at times in the recent past, collaboration came about as a means of supplementing the decline of consecrated persons necessary to carry out activities, now it is growing out of the need to share responsibility not only in the carrying out of the Institute's works but especially in the hope of sharing specific aspects and moments of the spirituality and mission of the Institute. This calls for an adequate formation of both consecrated persons and laity to ensure a collaboration which is mutually enriching.

Whereas in times past it was especially the task of religious men and women to create, spiritually nourish and direct aggregate forms of laity, today, thanks to an ever increasing formation of the laity, there can be a mutual assistance which fosters an understanding of the specificity and beauty of each state of life. Communion and mutuality in the Church are never one way streets.

On September 8 2007, the Congregation for Catholic Education published the document *Educating together in the Catholic Church*.^{lxvii} This document insists on the necessity of real communion in any mission of education and on the importance of joint formation programs for Religious and Lay People. In No 28 it says,

The development of "spiritual families", of groups of "associated lay people" or other forms that permit the lay faithful to draw spiritual and apostolic fruitfulness from the original charism, appears as a positive element and one of great hope for the future of the Catholic educational mission.

4.2 Possible juridic structures for the Marists of Champagnat

At present, we disciples of Champagnat have at our disposal internationally two juridic structures recognised within the Church:

- A lay Religious Institute of pontifical right: *The Little Brothers of Mary*.^{lxviii}
- A movement, with the structure of a Third Order: *The Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family*.^{lxix}

This current situation does not reflect as well as we would like the path of communion that we are already living as a gift of God since juridically the structure of a Third Order seems to be subordinate to that of the Religious Institute and the members of a Third Order seem to be more related to the spirituality of the Institute than to its life and mission.^{lxx}

What room does current canon law provide for us to give ourselves a new structure that will allow us to share life, animation, governance responsibilities and decision-making in Marist mission? What we want is to offer the best response we can to the needs of children and young people, and to be more faithful to the vocation and mission God is calling us to.

The Church recognises the juridic personality^{lxxi} of groups of people or entities^{lxxii}. The most typical example of such a group of people is a Religious Institute like the Marist Brothers. Is it conceivable to imagine a juridic change for our Institute? If it was just a matter of attending to

mission objectives, the idea of moving to the juridic identity of a **Society of Apostolic Life**^{lxxiii} might be more suitable and would allow us to attain the communion of life and co-responsibility in mission we are speaking of. But would this respect the vocation that the Brothers feel called to? Would this be in line with the founding intuition of Champagnat? 17

Most of the corporate groups in the Church, however, are **associations of the Faithful**. Probably the constitution of such an association would be a sufficient response to the fore-mentioned desires. Canons 298 and 329 speak of these associations.^{lxxiv} Who can recognise an Association of the Faithful as an entity within the Church and, at the same time, grant it a juridic personality? Canon 312#1 provides the answer.^{lxxv} A distinction is made depending on the geographic extension envisaged by the new association. In our case it would be good to think of becoming a universal association or, at least, as international one as our Institute. For this reason, we would have to seek the approbation and recognition of the Holy See.

Depending on the type of association we want, the agency responsible for recognition would be either the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (if we give prominence to the role of the leadership of the Institute and the level of commitment of all its members, up to a kind of consecration, thereby creating a type of Third Order or groups of associates or collaborators) or the Pontifical Council for the Laity (if we give prominence to charismatic intuition of Champagnat and its openness to all vocations and degrees of commitment, thereby creating a kind of movement).

One other possibility would be to set up a juridic structure in which we place in common a set of goods at the service of our mission. In this case we would be looking for the approbation of a foundation, specifically a **Pious Foundation**.^{lxxvi} Canons 1299 and 1310 speak of this. Here Canon Law entrusts each Bishop with the role of special oversight over the goods that the foundation owns in his diocese as it seems difficult to think of a universal or international foundation that we might be more interested in as followers of Champagnat. In any case, if this was the option chosen, the agencies of the Holy See able to approve and recognise such a foundation would be the same as those mentioned above.^{lxxvii}

There is no point in considering possibilities opened up by various civil legislations since it is inconceivable to think of universal or international approbation at this level. In every case, the Statutes of the Institute of the Brothers foresees how to go about obtaining approval for a work, a Province or District, or the whole Institute as a civil juridic person.^{lxxviii}

In order to be able to find an ecclesial juridic structure that allows us to reach our goal of real sharing of life, with all its consequences, we need to reflect more deeply and to do some experimenting in the coming years at the local, provincial and regional levels.

Some light on this reflection can come from remembering that the initial project of the Society of Mary foresaw four branches: priests, brothers, sisters and lay associates. A structure similar to this proposal is the basis of most current **ecclesial movements** (which are, according to Canon Law, association of the Faithful, almost all of them having a nucleus of consecrated members) that group together people of very diverse states of life.^{lxxix}

5. Recommendations to the 21st General Chapter and to Administrative Units

The words of No 26 to 30 of the Document *Choose Life* of the 20th General Chapter retain their value as well as the recommendations and mandates that deal with this issue.^{lxxx}

In line with these recommendations we propose that the 21st General Chapter:

A. Recommends to all Administrative Units:

- ✓ To draw up formation programs with those Lay people concerned that are best suited to the needs of those who want to live their Christian life as Marists of Champagnat, as well as identifying possibilities for quality personal accompaniment (both human and spiritual in character).
- ✓ To give priority to joint formation programs for Brothers and Lay People, built around sharing mission, spirituality and life. The main goal of these programs is to deepen all aspects of the Marist identity of participants.
- ✓ To promote the setting up of communities with Lay members to respond to the needs of young people, especially the most abandoned.
- ✓ To promote, welcome and commit ourselves within various types of association with Lay people that develop, allowing some Brothers to work with or become part of these groups where this is foreseen.
- ✓ To facilitate the movement of Brothers and lay people from one Province to another as a stimulus to solidarity projects or others directed at evangelisation or education.

B. Takes decisions with the intention of:

- ✓ Evaluating the journey of the CMMF over past years and its projection into the future. This would involve steps to allow members to bring up to date the Life Project of the Movement to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the publication of this document (1990) and the 30th anniversary of the existence of CMMF (1985).
- ✓ Requesting the preparation for the 22nd General Chapter of a report on formation programs undertaken in the AU, clarifying the pathways of initial and ongoing formation and of personal accompaniment, in keeping with our charism, to facilitate the development of the vocation of Lay Marists of Champagnat.
- ✓ Promoting, in various parts of the Institute, the living out (*ad experimentum*) of different forms of commitment^{lxxxix} to the Marist charism by Lay people interested in pursuing this path, in such a way that over the coming years a good number of AU will have some serious ‘trials’ happening.
- ✓ Requesting that a report be presented to the 22nd General Chapter on these ‘trials’ related to commitment made in the AU, specifying what types of juridic are the most appropriate in line with our charism in facilitating forms of belonging and commitment.
- ✓ Changing the Proper Law of the Institute (Constitutions and Statutes) to enable the establishment of new structures that are truly co-responsible, Brothers and Lay, in regard to the planning, animation and management of works.^{lxxxii}

ⁱ This is a topic that concerns more than the Marist Brothers; in one way or another, nearly all the institutions of Consecrated Life are working on this today. The magisterium of the Church has encouraged people to take their reflection further and to undertake some relevant trials: the apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1996), 54.2, 55.2; *Starting Afresh with Christ* (2002), 31; a document of the Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating together in the Catholic Church*, 28-29

ⁱⁱ Throughout this document, *lay people* refers to both men and women.

ⁱⁱⁱ We are using the expression *founding charism* in the sense given to it by Antonio Botana FSC, in *Sharing charism and mission with lay people. The Gospel Family as horizon*, Notebook 62 of the collection Frontera-Hegian, Vitoria, 2008. The founding charism, which belongs to the Church, is to be distinguished from its historical concretization in a determined Institute of Consecrated life, in our case, the Institute of Marist Brothers. The founding charism is open to all states of life; by contrast, the way this is followed through in history in religious life is linked to another charism, that of the consecrated life. This is the specific meaning (founding charism) is used throughout this document whenever we speak of charism of Marist charism. That is, it does not refer to the founding charism applied to the Consecrated Life of the Brothers.

^{iv} XX General Chapter, *Choose Life*, 47.3

^v XX General Chapter, *Choose Life*, 30, 44.7 et 47.5

^{vi} Mendes Document: 1.6, and particularly its second call: *Champagnat Marists in partnership*.

^{vii} Mendes Document: 2 Vocation-3

^{viii} Cf. *LG*, chap. 2

^{ix} *CL*, 55.3

^x Cf. S. LA PEGNA, *Il rapporto fra consacrati e laici nella vita religiosa*, Bologna 2008, 133-134.

^{xi} Cf. *Vita Consecrata*, 4a. *Vita Consecrata* is the apostolic exhortation delivered by John Paul II on 25th March 1996, after the Synod of October 1994 on *The Consecrated Life and its mission in the Church*. It can be found on the internet. From here on we will refer to it by the initials VC.

^{xii} Cf. *VC*, 32c

^{xiii} *VC*, 54.2

^{xiv} *VC*, 55.2. Similar statements can be found in the document of the Congregation for institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life “*Starting Afresh from Christ*” (2002) : *The new phenomenon being experienced in these days is that some members of the laity are asking to participate in the charismatic ideals of Institutes. This has given rise to interesting initiatives and new institutional forms of association. We are experiencing an authentic re-flourishing of ancient institutions, such as the secular orders or third orders, and the birth of new lay associations and movements linked to religious Families and Secular Institutes. Whereas at times in the recent past, collaboration came about as a means of supplementing the decline of consecrated persons necessary to carry out activities, now it is growing out of the need to share responsibility not only in the carrying out of the Institute's works but especially in the hope of sharing specific aspects and moments of the spirituality and mission of the Institute. This calls for an adequate formation of both consecrated persons and laity to ensure a collaboration which is mutually enriching. When the understanding of the charism deepens, new possibilities of living it are discovered. (31)*

^{xv} XX General Chapter: *Choose Life*, 29.

^{xvi} Cf. XX General Chapter: *Choose Life*, 47.3. See the *Introduction* of this document (2nd paragraph).

^{xvii} *PC* 1. The initials *PC* indicate *Perfectae Caritatis* promulgated by Vatican II on 28 October, 1965. It can be found on the internet.

^{xviii} Cf. G. ROCCA, *Per una storia giuridica della vita consacrata*, in GRUPPO ITALIANO DOCENTI DI DIRITTO CANONICO (ed.), *La vita consacrata nella chiesa*, Milano 2006, 35-69. This is an interesting study presented at the XXXIInd Study Workshop (2005) organised by this group of canonists. The book containing this article is a collection of the acts of this meeting. Rocca makes the remark that his work focuses mainly on the West, where the greatest variety of juridic forms and structures is to be found.

^{xix} The fact of a vow being public is not related to the number of people present when the vow is made. A vow is public when it is received by the legitimate Superior of the person making the vow in the name of the Church. It is private when this is not the case (cf. c. 1192 § 1). This is why vows are only public when they are pronounced within a structure that has been approved by the Church, with a recognised authority structure. For example, this is the case of a Capuchin who makes his vows into the hands of his Superiors. One of the faithful who makes a vow with the permission of his/her parish priest is making a private vow.

^{xx} While members of Religious Institutes are characterised in the present Code by consecration with public vows and community life, members of Secular Institutes are characterised by consecration alone, with no obligation of community life, and those of Societies of Apostolic Life by community life, with no obligation of consecration. In Secular Institutes, the bonds of consecration to God are not necessarily religious vows; they can be promises, commitments, private vows etc.. Their members opt for living out their consecration in the middle of the world, in the ordinary circumstances of other lay faithful (living alone, in their own family or in groups of their institute) with the aim of sanctifying their world from within. (cf. c. 710, 713 § 1 and 714).

^{xxi} The present Code seeks to leave the door open to welcome new inspirations of the Holy Spirit in this field of consecrated life. For this reason, there is provision made for forms of consecrated life with new elements that go beyond what is covered by the existing juridic framework can be approved directly by the Holy See when it acknowledges them as new forms of consecrated life (cf. c. 605). Article 62 of *Vita Consecrata* reminds us that : *The originality of the new communities often consists in the fact that they are composed of mixed groups of men and women, of clerics and lay persons, of married couples and celibates, all of whom pursue a particular style of life. These communities are sometimes inspired by one or other traditional form adapted to the needs of modern society. Their commitment to the evangelical life also takes on different forms, while, as a general rule, they are all characterized by an intense aspiration to community life, poverty and prayer. Both clerics and lay persons share in the duties of governing according to the responsibilities assigned to them, and the apostolate focuses on the demands of the new evangelization.* (VC 62)

^{xxii} Cf. *Anuario Pontificio 2009*, Vatican City 2009, 1748-1749.

^{xxiii} Even though it must be taken into account that N° 62 de VC states that: *Worthy of praise are those forms of commitment which some Christian married couples assume in certain associations and movements. They confirm by means of a vow the obligation of chastity proper to the married state and, without neglecting their duties towards their children, profess poverty and obedience. They do so with the intention of bringing to the perfection of charity their love, already "consecrated" in the Sacrament of Matrimony. However ... these forms of commitment cannot be included in the specific category of the consecrated life.*

^{xxiv} Article 12 of *Mutuae Relationes* states: *Every authentic charism implies a certain element of genuine originality and of special initiative for the spiritual life of the Church. In its surroundings it may appear troublesome and may even cause difficulties, since it is not always and immediately easy to recognize it as coming from the Spirit. Mutuae Relationes* is a set of directives issued conjointly on 14 May 1978 by the Sacred Congregations for Religious and Secular Institutes and for Bishops. This document can be found on the internet.

^{xxv} Until the Code of 1917, and for some years after, these Institutes were imprecisely named Institutes with simple vows, Congregations with simple vows, Secular Congregations or new institutes (cf. SASTRE SANTOS, *La mise en ordre des instituts à vœux simples selon les Normes du Saint Siège (1854-1958). Introduction et textes*, Rome - Madrid 1993, 11. Further reference to this work of Sastre will be by the title *Mise en ordre*. SCER is the set of initials corresponding to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, the name of the Roman dicastery responsible for religious life until 1908. From 1908 it was known as the Sacred Congregation for Religious with initials SCR. There have been later changes to the name of the dicastery.

^{xxvi} Sabbarese explains that it was absolutely forbidden to approve new forms of consecrated life other than of Religious Orders in the strict sense, as a result of the decree *De regularibus et monialibus* (Cf. CONCILE DE TRENTE, session XXV, Decret *De regularibus et monialibus*, in ISTITUTO PER LE SCIENZE RELIGIOSE DI BOLOGNA, [ed.], *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, Bologna 1991, 776-784) and the apostolic Constitutions *Circa pastoralis* (Pie V,

Const Ap. *Circa pastoralis*, 29 May 1566, in *BR*, IV, II, 292-294) and *Lubricum vitae genus* (PIE V, Const Ap. *Lubricum vital genus*, 17 Nov. 1568, in *BR*, IV, III, 47-48). BR are the initials to refer to *Bullarum, diplomatum et privilegiorum sanctorum Romanorum pontificum*, Rome 1745. These documents established that one could only speak of the religious state if the following two conditions were met: solemn vows, and papal enclosure for monks. (L. SABBARESE, « Nuove forme di vita consacrata [can. 605] », en GRUPPO ITALIANO DOCENTI DI DIRITTO CANONICO [ed.], *La vita consacrata nella chiesa*, Milano 2006, 84-86).

^{xxvii} Bishops had no right to approve the existence of a new Institute since the IV Lateran Council had forbidden the approval of new Orders. (cf. CONCILIO LATERANENSE IV, c. 13, in ISTITUTO PER LE SCIENZE RELIGIOSE DI BOLOGNA, [ed.], *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 242). Founders were obliged to obtain approval direct from the Holy See since the Pope was the only person who could lift a prohibition determined by a Council. Some Bishops gave local approvals by making use of the juridic categories of associations or confraternities, never those of Orders. This situation only changed with the publication of the *Methodus* to be spoken of below.

^{xxviii} The note on p. 93 of the *Acta Sanctae Sedis* 1 (1865) speaks of 198 approvals between 1800 and 1864. Reference can also be made to A. BIZZARRI, *Collectanea in usum Secretariae Sacrae Congregationis Episcoporum et Regularium*, Rome 1885², 487-488. This volume of Bizzarri will be referred to from now on by *Bizzarri*. In the Review *Analecta Juris Pontificii* 5 (1861) 52-103 ; 147-217 ; 24 (1885) 383-422 ; 26 (1886-1887) 954-977 there are articles describing the Secular Congregations that were approved and the process followed for doing this with an abundance of details.

^{xxix} The new institutes were the response of Religious Life to the conditions of the 19th Century: a liberal society, population explosion, industrial revolution, social questions, and so on. The known world was expanding and with it the need for the Church to be present and the opportunities for exercising works of mercy. This expansion forced a change of mentality and of the juridic framework of Religious life. Exercising works of mercy in a liberal society and working in the missionary fields of the Church were only possible for Religious with simple vows (cf. E. SASTRE SANTOS, *El ordenamiento* 20. 85). An excellent history of this period in France can be found in P. ZIND, *Les nouvelles Congrégations de Frères enseignants en France de 1800 à 1830*, Saint-Genis-Laval 1969.

^{xxx} SCER, *Methodus quae a Congregatione episcoporum et regularium servatur in approbandis novis institutis votorum simplicium Sacré*, 22 Sept. 1854, in E. SASTRE SANTOS, *El ordenamiento*, 187-189. The formula of approval for a new Institute states that it is approved as a Congregation with simple vows under the government of a Superior General, under the jurisdiction of Ordinaries, as found in canon law and the apostolic Constitutions.

^{xxxi} J. GRIBOMONT – J.M.R. TILLARD, «Religio (Religiosus)» in DIP 7, 1633. The initials DIP refer to the monumental work, G. PELLICIA – G. ROCCA (ed.), *Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione*, I-X, Roma 1974-2003.

^{xxxii} G. ROCCA, «Vœu» in DIP 10, 561.

^{xxxiii} For example, cf. D. BOUIX, *Tractatus de jure regularium* I, Paris 1857, 34.

^{xxxiv} Cf. G. LESAGE, *L'accession des Congrégations à l'état religieux canonique*, 182-184.

^{xxxv} LEO XIII, Constitution *Condita a Christo*, 8 dic. 1900, *Acta Sanctae Sedis* 33 (1900-1901) 341-347. The first chapter gives the regulations for those of diocesan right (pages 342-344). The second chapter gives the regulations for those of pontifical right (pages 344-347).

^{xxxvi} SCER, *Normae secundum quas S. C. Episcoporum et Regularium procedere solet in approbandis novis institutis votorum simplicium*, 28 June. 1901, in E. SASTRE SANTOS, *El ordenamiento*, 266-299.

^{xxxvii} G. ROCCA, « Vœu » in DIP 10, 563.

^{xxxviii} The history of the origins of the Society of Mary is well covered in the 4 volumes of the work : J. COSTE – G. LESSARD, *Origines Maristes* (1786-1836), I-IV, Rome, 1960-1967. The abbreviation OM will be used to refer to this work. There is a separate extract that contains the most important documents of relevance to the Marist Brothers: J. COSTE – G. LESSARD, *Origines Maristes, (1786-1836), Extraits concernant les Frères Maristes*, Rome, 1985. Abbreviation: *OM Extraits*.

^{xxxix} OM, I, 646.

^{xl} Cf. OM, I, 676-686.

^{xli} OM, I, 683.

^{xlii} Cf. OM, I, 796-814.818-820.833-835.854-857; OM, II, 676-685.

^{xliii} Cf. Decree, 11 March 1836, in OM, I, 851-853.

^{xliiv} Cf. GREGORY XVI, Apostolic Letter *Omnium gentium*, 29 abr. 1836, in Acta Gregorii Papae XVI, II, 106-107.

^{xliv} Cf. OM, I, 932.

^{xlvi} Cf. CONGREGATION FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH, Decree of nomination, 7 May 1836, in OM, I, 881-882 ; GREGORY XVI, Apostolic letter *Pastorale officium*, 13 May 1836, in Acta Gregorii Papae XVI, II, 109-110

^{xlvii} Cf. OM, I, 932.

^{xlviii} 11th June 1852. The intervention was recorded in the Acts of the 2nd General Chapter, pages 122-124, that are held in our archives, AFM 31.02. This same Chapter, in its second session in 1854, approved the Constitutions and Rules of Government of the Congregation (cf. FMS, *Constitutions et Règles du Gouvernement de l'Institut des Petits Frères de Marie, de Lyon* 1854).

^{xlix} SCER, Decree *laudis* of the Institute FMS, 9 Dec. 1859, in *Bizzarri*, 145. Our congregation was among the first to gain approval after the new *Methodus* of Bizzarri.

¹ SCER, Decree of approbation of the FMS, 9 January 1863, in AFM 351.700-12. The institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools was approved as a Congregation with simple vows under the government of a Superior General and under the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries.

^{li} FMS, *Constitutions et Statuts des Petits Frères de Marie*, en Brambila, 146-159. Abbreviated as C1863. The text finally approved held significant changes to that originally proposed (C1862).

^{lii} SCER, Indult of prorogation, 12 May 1876, in AFM 352.110-01 ; Indult of prorogation and order of publication of the Constitutions, 22 January 1883, in AFM 353.400-13; Indult of prorogation, 3 Oct. 1887, in AFM 352.120-01; Indult of prorogation, 3 May 1893, in AFM 352.130-01. The policy of the General Governments of the Institute, in view of the changes to the Constitutions imposed by the Holy See, was to try to obtain successive prorogations in the time designated as *ad experimentum* until they could convince the SCER to accept the Constitutions as proposed by the Institute.

^{liii} SCER, Definitive Decree of approbation of the Constitutions, 27 May 1903, in AFM 353.400-32. The text was published in FMS, *Constitutions de l'Institut des Petits Frères de Marie*, Turin 1906. New legislation of the French government (Minister Combes) led to the loss of civil authorisation of the Congregation, and consequently the forced exile of more than 500 Brothers. The General Government preferred to give way on questions in dispute with the Holy See in order to obtain definitive approbation of the Constitutions as a means of sustaining fidelity in times of persecution and of exile, as had become a reality. (cf. FMS, *Chronologie de l'Institut*, 180-184; A. LANFREY, *Une Congrégation enseignante*, 142-152).

^{liiv} SCR, Decree of approbation of the Constitutions, 4 April 1922, in AFM 354.111-31. The edited volume is in FMS, *Constitutions de l'Institut des Petits Frères de Marie*, Paris-Tournai-Rome 1930. Abbreviated as C1922.

^{lv} This idea will not be developed here. It has received rigorous and excellent treatment in the articles :

LANFREY, A., *Unité et diversité de la Société de Marie (SM) Mystique, histoire et droit canonique*, in *Marist Notebooks* 24 (2007) 27-34.

GREEN, M., *And New Tents too*, in *Marist Notebooks* 26 (2009) 25-46, especially pages 29 to 34.

^{lvi} “The person seeking to become a member of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family asks admission to a Fraternity. After a time of preparation, he or she can be admitted as a full member.” “The Brother Provincial or District Superior grants or eventually refuses official recognition of a Fraternity. This major Superior can also name a Brother as his delegate to the Movement, providing for its spiritual animation.” (*Life Project*, 6 and 22, in Br. Charles

Howard: *The Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family, Circulars of the Superior General, XXIX, pp. 421 et 427, respectively.*

lvii *“In the presence of the Most Holy Trinity,
I give thanks to the Lord
for having made me a brother of Christ and a member of His Church,
through Baptism, without any merit on my part.*

*In the spirit of Mary, and with the help of Saint Marcellin Champagnat,
I commit myself to live according to the Gospels,
and to serve the Church like him,
with a priority concern for the poor and youth.*

*In this commitment I count on the support of members
of the Fraternity “Henri Vergès”
and of the Champagnat Movement of the Marist Family.*

Holy Spirit, by your grace may I be a witness of Your Love.

*Virgin Mary, our Good Mother,
I confide to your maternal care my life ... * and my ministry.”*

** Each one is free to personalise his/her own life or commitment.*

lviii There could be a relation between Affiliation to the Institute with the practice begun by Fr Champagnat himself, found in the words of the letter sent to Mr M. Etienne Thiollière, on 18th January, 1837, where he says: *“We associate ourselves with you and your family, if you will allow us, in a special and particular way in a communion of the good done and the good works that are taking place and will take place in the future ...”* (Br. Paul Sester, *Chroniques Maristes*, vol. 5, *Letters of Fr. Champagnat*, N° 85, Rome, 1985, p. 231. In any case, official Affiliation within the Institute only made its appearance after the 13th General Chapter of 1932 (Manuscript in the *FMS Archives*, doc. 31.13.029, file 156, n° 5).

lix *Vademecum*, 55.1

lx *Vademecum*, 55.1

lxi The following are known to the Office of the Laity: Roraima (Amazonia), from Brazil ; Chichicastenango (Guatemala), from Central America ; Nueva Pompeya and Fraile Pintado (Argentina), from Cruz del Sur Province; Palawan (Philippines), from East Asia ; La Valla Mulhouse (France), from Hermitage Province; Mabiri (Papua New Guinea), from District of Melanesia ; Fitzroy (Australia), from Melbourne ; Badajoz (Spain), from Mediterranean Province ; Comitán, Ixtaltepec, Marqués de Comillas and Miravalles, from Central Mexico; Chinatú and Creel, from Mexico Occidental; Lower Hutt and Wellington, from New Zealand ; Quevedo and Sucumbios (Ecuador), from Norandina Province ; Horqueta, from Paraguay ; Comarapa (Bolivia) et Puerto Maldonado (Peru), from Santa María de los Andes Province; Masonga (Tanzania), from East-Central Africa.

lxii Marist belonging and commitment (Province of Canada)

Considerations :

- *Considering that the last General Chapter of the Little Brothers of Mary invited reflection on “the diversity of Marist commitments” (Action Plan #2).*
- *Considering that the last General Chapter invites “representatives of the different continental networks” to begin “a process of reflection on and participation in Marist Mission”, and that this was the main focus of the Assembly in Mendes.*
- *In view of the lived experience in Quebec, an attempt to unite Brothers and Lay People around the ministry of Marist Education.*
- *In view of the desire expressed in recent Forums to live the Marist charism in Quebec.*

The following steps towards commitment as a lay Marist :

1. Requirements in the process leading to such a commitment :

- a. To live in contact with the charism for a period of at least two years.
- b. To belong to a group of Marist life.
- c. To be actively involved in Marist mission, in a Marist work or other ministries
- d. To have personal accompaniment leading to a deeper internalisation of Marist values
- e. To take part in the various moments of formation that have been organised (retreats, forum etc.)

2. Process of commitment :

The lay person expresses his/her desire to make a commitment as a lay Marist after having fulfilled the requirements of the process, by making a written request to MMQ (the Marist Movement of Quebec) and to the Provincial Council.

- a. The person must take a break from their regular life routine for reflection in a spirit of discernment.
- b. He/she must be recommended by recognised members.
- c. He/she must be accepted by the duly constituted authorities (the Provincial and the President of MMQ)

3. Modalities of commitment :

- a. 1st period of commitment :
The lay Marist makes a commitment to remain faithful to the above mentioned process for a period of three years.
- b. Renewal of commitment:
 - The lay Marist may renew his/her commitment every three years.
 - He/she expresses the desire to renew the commitment to the relevant authorities, in writing.
 - At each renewal, the steps a,b,c of the process of commitment must be repeated.
 - The person is invited to review (evaluate) his/her journey and to express the motivations for renewing commitment.
- c. The first commitment is made in public at some celebration.
- d.

^{lxiii} To undertake study of the various forms of belonging to the Institute and to allow lay people, with the agreement of Provincials and their Councils, to live (ad experimentum) various forms of Marist commitment. On the basis of these experiences, the General Council will put into place the juridic framework needed eventually for the XXI General Chapter to make a decision on this matter. (Choose Life, 47.3).

^{lxiv} SYDNEY PROVINCE, MISSION ASSEMBLY 2009, *Developing co-responsibility for Marist life and mission, Individual commitments*, 2.1, 31 March 2009, a pdf document. The following precisions were added :

- Individuals propose themselves in writing to the Provincial and Council who will consult local Marists on the appropriateness of someone taking this step. After a favourable discernment, the individual will make their commitment in the local Marist community with the Provincial or local community leader confirming this.
- Making a covenant commitment of this type is a personal step. It certainly signifies a sense of belonging and life focus. It does not involve, however, any additional obligations or privileges in life or ministry for the person or the Province.
- Not all lay Marists will choose to make such a commitment.
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^{lxv} On 2nd June 1852, the Marquise De la Grandville participated in one of the sessions of the 2nd General Chapter in recognition of the gift she made to the Institute legally of the property at Beauamps in the north of France (Cf. Acts of the 2nd General Chapter, p. 36, conserved in AFM 31.02).

^{lxvi} CONGREGATION FOR THE CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, Instruction 19 May 2002, in *Enchiridion Vaticanum*, XXI, n. 372-510, 311-367.

^{lxvii} CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION, Educating together in a Catholic School. *Shared mission between consecrated persons and lay faithful*, Vatican City 2007.

^{lxviii} An Institute is called lay when it is recognised as such by the authority of the Church and when, in virtue of its nature, character and aim, it has a function determined by its Founder or its legitimate tradition that does not involve the exercise of the sacred orders (c. 588 § 3). *An Institute of Consecrated Life is said to be of pontifical right if it has been erected by the Apostolic See or approved by a formal decree* (c. 589). *A religious Institute is a society in which the members pronounce, by their proper law, public perpetual vows or temporary vows to be renewed when their time is over, and lead a fraternal life in common* (c. 607 § 2). The only members of an Institute are those who make religious profession, as is indicated by c. 654. *By religious profession, the members commit themselves by public vows to observe the three evangelical counsels. They are consecrated to God through the ministry of the Church and they are incorporated into the Institute with the rights and responsibilities defined by their law.*

^{lxix} *The relevant Statute with which the Movement was set up says : The Marist Family, an extension of our Institute, is a movement of people who are attracted to the spirituality of Marcellin Champagnat. In this Movement, affiliates, young people, parents, co-workers, ex-students, and friends grow in the spirit of the Founder in order to live it out and to spread it to others. The Institute animates and co-ordinates the activities of the Movement, putting appropriate structures into place. (c 303 ; 677,2) (C 164.4).*

^{lxx} It is enough to read the canons cited at the end of C 164.4: *The associations whose members engage the world in the spirit of a religious Institute, who live an apostolic life and tend to perfection under the higher direction of this Institute and (the Superiors and other members of the Institute), are called Third Orders or bear another appropriate name* (c. 303). *If associations of faithful are linked to Institutes, such Institutes will help them, taking special care that they are filled with the authentic spirit of their particular family* (c. 677 § 2).

^{lxxi} Cf. c. 113 § 2

^{lxxii} Cf. c. 114 § 1

^{lxxiii} Canons 731 - 746 speak of them. Societies of Apostolic Life, as we have stated above, are characterised by community living, with consecration not being obligatory (cf. c. 731).

^{lxxiv} It may be of interest to add here a canon that speaks of the possibility of Religious belonging to associations of faithful. *Members of Religious Institutes may join associations in accordance with their proper law and with the consent of their Superior.* (c. 307 § 3).

^{lxxv} *In the erection of public associations, the competent authority is : 1. For universal and international associations, the Holy See ; 2. For national associations which in consequence of their erection are destined to carry out their activity across the nation, the Conference of Bishops for its own territory ; 3. For diocesan associations, the diocesan Bishop in his own territory, but not the diocesan administrator, except for associations whose erection is reserved to others by apostolic privilege* (c. 312 § 1).

^{lxxvi} *An autonomous collection of entities or foundation consists of goods or spiritual or material things. It is under the direction of one or several physical persons or a college, according to its law and statutes* (c. 115 § 3). *“By pious foundation, we understand in law: 1. Autonomous pious foundations, collections of things designated for ends covered by canon can. 114, § 2, i.e. erected as juridic persons by the competent ecclesiastical authority; 2. Non-autonomous pious foundations, i.e. where the temporal goods are given in such a way that it constitutes a public juridic person, with the responsibility of using the annual revenues for celebrating masses and fulfilling other ecclesiastical functions ...* (c. 1303 § 1).

^{lxxvii} Indeed we know of only one case of a Movement being approved of as a foundation. In the matter of this approval, the special intervention of Pope John Paul II was requested. He granted special powers to the Pontifical Council for the Laity. The group concerned was that of the Neocatechumens.

^{lxxviii} *To ensure that the interests of the Institute are well protected, it would seem appropriate for the Institute itself, Provinces, Districts as well as our works should have the status of juridic persons in civil law. Approval for this*

depends on the next level of authority (cf. 137.4.12). When they are established as juridic persons, no alienation or transaction should happen that compromises the patrimony of the Institute (c 1295 ; 638,3) (C 155.1).

^{lxxix} For example, the Work of Mary (Focolari Movement) is a private association of the faithful, universal, of pontifical right, with a juridic personality according to the norm of canons 298-311 and 321-329 of the Code of canon law (cf. article 1 of the General Statutes of the Work of Mary). According to these Statutes, the members of the Work must be Catholics who belong to one of sections, branches or movements that make it up. Other Christians, members of other religions or people of non-religious convictions, can be part of the Work of Mary as associates or collaborators (cf. articles 15-22). Members can be children, young people who have not found their vocation in life, single and married lay people, seminarians, deacons and priests, each one having rights and responsibilities according to the state of life and their degree of commitment. Members of Institutes of Consecrated Life, of Societies of Apostolic Life and Bishops can also be members but with spiritual links only to the Work of Mary. Each section, branch or movement has its own special rules (cf. des articles 13-14). The members of the two sections are the Focolari (men and women), animators of the Movement, who live in communities called *focolares* and they can be lay people or priests, with private vows, as well as married people who make commitments that are compatible with their married status (cf. article 12). The version of the Statutes cited here is that approved the Pontifical Council of the Laity on 15 March 2007. It is a book of 117 pages edited in Rome in 2007.

^{lxxx} *Some suggestions to the Administrative Units and the General Government :*

- *Initiate or continue to develop programs of formation for Brothers and Lay people. The main purpose of these programs is to deepen one's Marist identity in all its dimensions (anthropology, mission, spirituality, solidarity ...). These programs should be developed by Brothers and Lay people together. They should involve means such as courses of spirituality, retreats, seminars, workshops and recollections. They will attempt to promote what is specific and what is complementary in our vocations in the context of a Church of communion. Some AUs might establish such programs in common with other AUs or branches of the Marist family.*
- *Establish the structures that are needed for co-responsibility to be really effective between Brothers and Lay people in the planning, animation and management of works. This should be particularly the case when new apostolic projects are concerned.*
- *Promote experiences of sharing : mission, spirituality and life with lay people.*
- *Give a favourable welcome to the creation of communities where lay people are present, for the sake of responding to the needs of young people, especially the most abandoned (44.6-9).*
- *Over the coming years to set up a process and the appropriate structures (studies, meetings, networks, secretariat, international commission ...) to lead Brothers and lay people to greater precision in regard to our Marist identity : what is common, specific, complementary in our vocations and to clarify the different ways of being a lay Marist.*
- *Study the different ways of belonging to the Institute and, in dialogue with Provincials and their Councils, allow lay people to live (ad experimentum) various forms of Marist commitment. From these experiences, the General Council will clarify the types of juridic links that will enable the XXI General Chapter to reach a decision.*
- *Set up, where needed, some structures to help the AUS who have difficulties in developing formation programs for Brothers and Lay people (cf. 44.6). To this end, existing centres of spirituality could be opened to lay people.*
- *Propose lines of action and continue to create structures so that lay people can participate appropriately in government bodies of the Institute : commissions, assemblies, Chapters ...*
- *Use existing media possibilities or create new means to facilitate the exchange of significant examples of sharing between Brothers and Lay people that could encourage the creation of new groups (47.2-6).*

^{lxxxi} By way of example, here is the text of a promise taken from the book by G.F. POLI, *Osare la svolta*, Milano, 2000, p. 239-240. The book collects together some experiences of collaboration between consecrated religious and lay people from thirty religious families. The promise formula is cited in the model set of statutes at the end of the book :

I (name), guided by the Holy Spirit, give thanks for the goodness of our Heavenly Father,

who, in Jesus Christ, made me His child and member of the Church,

and called me to follow the examples of goodness that Marcellin Champagnat showed towards children and young people, especially the least favoured.

Wanting to respond to the gifts I have received,

having tested out and deepened the charism of Saint Marcellin, I promise :

- *To live as an authentic Christian in my family and work,*
- *To always be specially attentive to those in difficulties,*
- *To grow more and more in the spirit of the Founder,*

-
- *To collaborate, as far as I am able, with the Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary,*
 - *(when the promise is made as entry to an association) : to keep the Statutes of the association.*

May the Virgin Mary and Saint Marcellin obtain for me from our Heavenly Father the grace to remain faithful to this commitment. Amen.

^{lxxxii} A proposal in line with those made at the recent meeting on *Management at the service of mission and the future of this* (March 2009 in Guatemala), where more than 58 participants (out of 68 present) voted on proposals to change to the Constitutions and Statutes to reflect the reality of most of our works, where the directors and bursars are lay, and to allow Provinces who so desired to create bodies other than the Provincial Council, with lay people present, with delegated responsibility for the planning, animation and management of our works.