



1816 - 2016

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Bi-centenary celebration  
of the Fourvière Pledge  
**23rd July**

Marist Family

## Welcome

**Refrain:** *We pledge our lives for the glory of God and the honour of Mary.*

Lighting of Fourvière commemorative candles

## Opening Prayer

**Leader:** O God, who in your providence continually send workers into your harvest, you inspired Jean-Claude Courveille, Marcellin Champagnat, Jean-Claude Colin, Étienne Déclas, Étienne Terraillon and their companions two hundred years ago to pledge themselves at the feet of Mary in the small chapel at Fourvière to found a new congregation with the spirit and name of Mary.

From the very beginning those first Marists conceived the Society of Mary as a many-branched tree open to all: men, women, religious and lay, living in the spirit of Mary the Mother of Mercy, who belong to Mary, who do her work and promote her way.

**All:** May we, their heirs, gathered here today as, members of the Marist family, called to be the Marian face of the Church, be moved by their example to embrace anew the work of Mary given to us for the building up of your Church in simplicity, humility and compassion and solidarity.

May we, like them, be ready to step out again, open to the promptings of the Spirit, and responsive to the needs of God's people, to spend ourselves and all we have, trusting in the help of Mary our good mother.

Confident that we can do all things in him who gives us strength, we make our prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Scripture Reading | Acts 2: 14, 17-18

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: ‘Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say ... This is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

The Word of the Lord | **Thanks be to God.**

**Refrain:** *We pledge our lives for the glory of God and the honour of Mary.*

**Leader:** The call of our Marist heritage in the spirit of Fourvière speaks to us today in this Year of Mercy. In proclaiming a Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis could have been addressing all Marists uniquely when he wrote:

### Reader

We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it.

Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.

Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us.

Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of brothers and sisters on the path of life.

Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness

*Misericordiae Vultus, 2*

**Leader** And Pope Francis insists -

## Reader

Yes, I believe that this is a time of mercy. The Church is showing her maternal side, her motherly face, to a humanity that is wounded. She does not wait for the wounded to knock on her doors, she looks for them on the streets, she gathers them in, she embraces them, she takes care of them, she makes them feel loved. And so, as I said, and I am ever more convinced of it, this is a kairos, our era is a kairos of mercy, a time of opportunity.

A.Tornielli, Pope Francis *The name of God is Mercy*, p. 4

## Leader Let us respond with **Psalm 136 – Forever Mercy**

Give thanks to God, who is good – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Whose love expands with the expanding universe – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Whose breath gives life to matter – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Who animates life with spirit – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Who plants a fierce unrest in our hearts – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Who bends the universe towards justice – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Who holds the whole world, and our hearts – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Give thanks to God, who is good – *whose mercy endures forever.*

Christine Robinson

## Refrain. *We pledge our lives to the glory of God and the honour of Mary.*

## Reflection

**Leader** Let us spend a moment now reflecting on our personal call. When Courveille presented the project of a Society of Mary, Colin told himself: “There is something that suits you! And I joined them.”

What drew you to this family, to the Marists? What was your dream? Why did you want to commit yourself to this “dream project”?

**Pause. Brief sharing with neighbour**

**Refrain.** *We pledge our lives to the glory of God and the honour of Mary.*

**Leader** The Marist vocation is indeed a call to be instruments of mercy wherever we may find ourselves. In the spirit of Fourvière we express our belief in our Marist call and our desire to make it a reality in our Church and our world today:

We believe in a Church with a Marian face.

**R.** *Which we are committed to build.*

We believe in a Church which reaches out unconditionally to all people.

**R.** *Whom we wish to accept with tenderness and mercy.*

We believe in a Church which smiles, shares, and wipes away tears.

**R.** *We welcome the stranger in our midst with the hand of friendship.*

We believe in a Church which pardons and forgives.

**R.** *We commit ourselves to conversion of heart and mind.*

We believe in a Church which acts justly in the spirit of Jesus.

**R.** *We commit ourselves to making this Church a reality.*

We believe that the Marist call is a life-long commitment.

**R.** *We commit ourselves in all the circumstances of our life to living in fidelity to the spirit of Fourvière. Amen.*

## Intercessions

**Leader** In this spirit let us make our prayers for ourselves and our world:

We pray for all Marists gathered throughout the world

**R.** *We pledge our lives to the glory of God and the honour of Mary.*

We pray that the spirit of mercy and peace may live in all Marist hearts.

**R.** *We pledge ...*

We pray for courage and fidelity to our vocation.

**R.** *We pledge ...*

We pray for the needs of our world especially for peace where there is conflict and violence.

**R.** *We pledge ...*

We pray for the people of our country that justice and honesty may reign among us.

**R.** *We pledge ...*

**Leader** As Marists we look to the future with hope

### Reader

Let us hold on to what the first Marists bequeathed to us that is precious: the beginning. Their inheritance, their promise, their determination to make their own the plan of God and their trust in God: all this keeps us. The beginning! To truly honour our origins means to dare after them to start the Society of Mary. Knowing where we come from, we can better orient ourselves and decide where we want to go. The first Marists have not traced us the path ahead: they invite us to invent, to continue the story they started.

Adapted from *Ascent to Fourvière*, p 37. F. Drouilly

**Leader** We need to begin. There is freshness in beginning. We never finish beginning, as we never finish loving. Somehow the promise of Fourvière is before us, not behind. We need to make the promise with our own words. It is up to us to discover the truth, the fruitfulness it holds for us today.

Ibid

**All** Amen.

## Come fill the water jars

In Cana in Galilee there was a wedding feast  
Jesus and Mary were there  
Mary observed that the people had no wine  
Such is her way, now is the time

**Come fill the water jars**  
**Fill them to the brim**  
**He knows what you can do**  
**Leave the rest to him**  
**Come fill the water jars**  
**There's work to be done**  
**He knows what you can do**  
**Leave the rest to my Son**

In cities and villages from East and to the West  
People are searching for love  
To be like Mary with eyes open wide  
Such is her way, she is our guide

### **Come fill the water jars ...**

There's many a time and place that we may feel unsure  
With little chance of success  
To join in with Mary's humble simple yes  
Echoes again her faithfulness  
And when the day is through and all our work complete  
And Jesus is there at our side  
He'll come to take us home when we have passed  
For he has saved the best wine till last

## Final Prayer

Mary, dawn of the new times,  
we thank you because you have always done everything among us  
and you continue doing it down to today.

We place ourselves confidently in your hands  
and abandon ourselves to your tenderness.  
We also entrust to you each of the persons  
who, like us, feel privileged to bear your name.

We renew this day our consecration to you  
as well as our firm intention to contribute to building a Church  
which reflects your face.

You, source of our renewal, accompany our fidelity,  
as you accompanied those who preceded us.  
On this day of the Marist bicentenary,  
we feel your presence next to us  
and for that we give you thanks.

Amen.

Adapted from the prayer by Br Emili Turú FMS in *He Gave Us The Name Mary*

**Leader** We do not know what the future holds. Neither did they.  
We do not know what each one of us will become in the coming years.  
Neither did they.

What we do know, what we do believe, is that we must - like them -  
be configured by Mary; that we need to reach out to others in loving  
them, in loving Life. Our commitment together, in body and soul,  
will be the best way to honour the promise of Fourvière.

This is not about arriving, but rather about setting out!

(Françoise Drouilly SM)

All Amen.

In the words of W. H. Murray, who knew very well, from his own experience, what it means to face resistance in setting out on the road, particularly when the goal is the Himalayas! Committing oneself, he tells us, opens the doors to the impossible miracle.

*Until one is committed,  
there is hesitancy,  
the chance to draw back,  
always ineffectiveness.  
Concerning all acts of initiative and creation,  
there is one elementary truth,  
the ignorance of which kills  
countless ideas and splendid plans:  
the moment one definitely commits oneself,  
then Providence moves too.  
All sorts of things occur to help one  
that would otherwise never have occurred.  
I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets:  
Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it.*

Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now!

(The Scottish Himalayan Expedition)

Quoted by Br Emili Turú FMS in *He gave us the name Mary*

## Reflection Prompts

- What is important to you about this Fourvière event?
- In what ways does the Pledge coincide with your dreams?
- What has been your experience in fulfilling this dream?
- What are your deepest desires now as a Marist?



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