

## The Identity of Marianist Lay Communities –Talking Points

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### Who We Are

“Membership in Marianist Lay Communities is a commitment of the whole person.”

- Does your commitment as Marianist laity differ from other organizations in which you have been a member? If so, how?
- Why do Marianists call themselves a “Family”? How might this distinction influence the way Marianists function within their organization, the Church, and the world?
- Some people think the term “Family” can exclude those who have not had a positive family experience in their lives. What other term might be more inviting?

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### Our Charism

The Marianist charism calls us to be Jesus, son of Mary, and to join Mary in bringing Jesus to the world. “As members of Marianist Lay Communities we have responded to a call from God to live and share the Marianist charism.”

- What is your biggest challenge in living the charism? What has helped you make progress?
- What does “faith of the heart” mean to you? What are examples of Marianist activities that demonstrate faith of the heart to you?

### Our Life

“We seek to make this charism incarnate in our lives and to center our lives in Jesus who is the Good News of God for today’s world.”

- As Marianist laity, prayer is at the center of all we do. What forms of prayer have you found most effective in keeping Jesus and Mary’s mission alive in your thoughts and daily actions?
  - Inclusion is a valued aspect of our charism that challenges us to confront our prejudices and fears. How do you learn about other cultures and segments of the population different from your own?
  - Is there a difference between inclusivity and diversity? If so, how does striving to be inclusive and diverse challenge us as individuals and as community?
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### Opening Prayer

*In the dioceses of the United States of America, Our Lady of Guadalupe is celebrated on December 12. The following is the opening prayer of the memorial of Our Lady of Guadalupe.*

O Loving God of mercies,  
who places your people under the  
singular protection of the most holy  
Mother of Jesus,  
grant that all who invoke the Blessed  
Virgin of Guadalupe,  
may seek with ever more lively faith  
the progress of peoples in the ways of  
justice and of peace.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your  
Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the  
unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever. Amen  
(<http://campus.udayton.edu/mary/prayers/mpray01.html#gquad>)

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### Closing Prayer

Through your inspiration and  
guidance, our Founders developed  
communities of faith and hope that  
changed many lives. Continue to  
form us in your image, Dear Mother,  
so that our lives will reflect your  
Son. Then as individuals and  
communities we will bear timely and  
eternal fruit. In God’s Holy Name we  
commit our hearts, minds, and  
resources to your service. Form us  
Mary, Mother of Jesus, as one  
Marianist Family.

- The Marianist charism is manifested through *faith, mission, alliance with Mary, community, and inclusivity*. How do you demonstrate these qualities in your MLC? Which qualities need to be more fully developed? What actions in your life demonstrate the Marianist way of life?

## Our Organization

“On all organizational levels and through its individual members, Marianist Lay Communities seek to participate in the mission, activities, and decisions of the Church.”

- From our observations and experiences, how is the Marianist charism impacting the Church today?
- How might God be calling your community to utilize our Marianist gifts to help bring Christ into the world?
- How might God be calling you to live out the Marianist charism in your parish?

## Suggested Song

“Hymn to Mary,” from *Hymns* by Beth Nielsen Chapman, 2004 BNC Records.

Your thoughts . . .

## Acknowledgements

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