

Graduate Certificate in Catholic Education



Marist Pedagogy and Spirituality

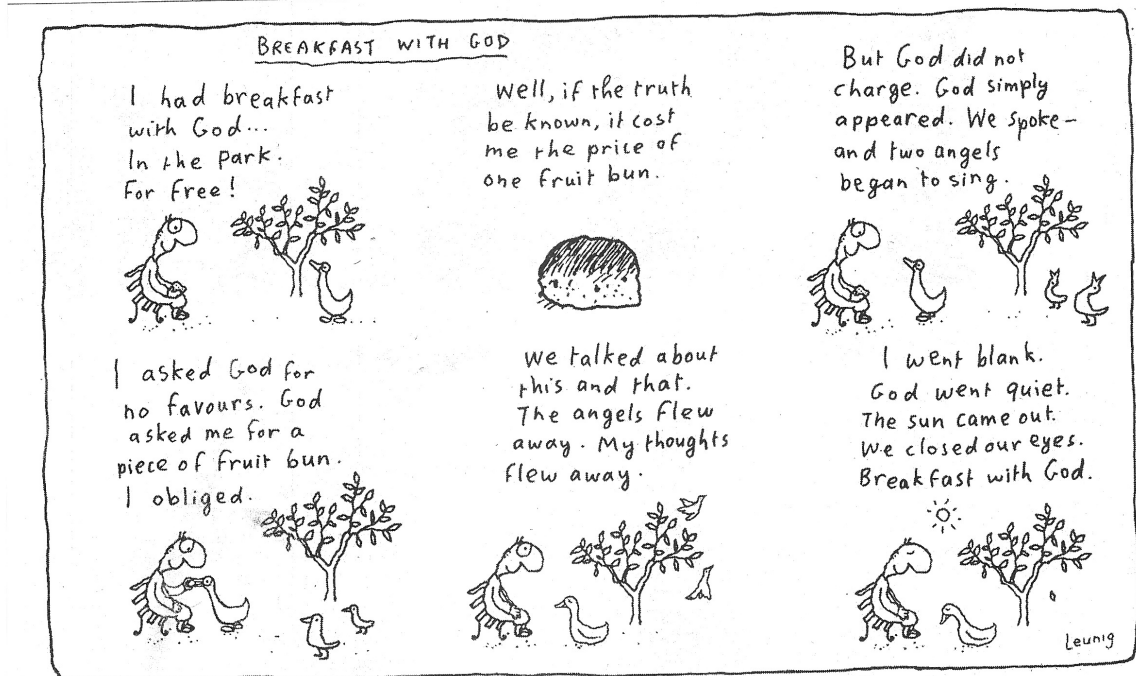
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Opening Reflection and Prayer¹



Prayer for Community

God of all, source and goal of all community,
whose will is that all your people enjoy fullness of life;
May we be builders of community, caring for your good earth here and
worldwide,
And as partners with one another, signs of your unconditional love.
May we delight in diversity and choose solidarity,
for you are in community with us, our God, for ever and ever,
Amen

¹ (Leunig, 2014, p. 48)

Session Outline

- Goals:
1. To describe the pedagogy I use
 2. To name what influences my pedagogy
 3. To identify the relevance of Marist spirituality

Part 1 Defining Terms

- 4.00 pm Introduce Topic
4.05 pm Discuss symbols of pedagogy
4.10 pm Feedback
4.15 pm Input on terms: pedagogy, spirituality, apostolic spirituality
4.25 pm Journal about how I would describe my pedagogy - Worksheet 1

Part 2 Influences on Pedagogy

- 4.30 pm Input, from an historical perspective, the influence of on Culture and Spirituality on pedagogy
4.45 pm Reading Time
4.50 pm Journal about what influences my pedagogy in 2014 - Worksheet 2
5.00 pm Break

Part 3 Marist Pedagogy Today

- 5.10 pm Input on Marist pedagogy
Role of Contemporary Pedagogy, Marcellin Champagnat, Characteristics, Community
5.30 pm Journal about the elements of Marist Spirituality that influence my pedagogy - Worksheet 3
5.40 pm Discuss the Marist elements that emerge from my pedagogy
6.00 pm Conclude

Part 1 Defining Terms

Introduction

I would like to approach this topic of Marist Pedagogy and Spirituality by focusing on pedagogy and seeing how Marist spirituality influences pedagogy.

What is pedagogy?

Pedagogy is defined in the *Oxford Dictionary of Education* as the art or science of teaching². The word pedagogue originates from the Greek and then the Latin 'paedagogus', which means 'a slave who took children to and from school and generally supervised them'.³ The term has come to be associated with dogmatism, and narrow mindedness.⁴

Today pedagogy is seen as 'a complex blend of theoretical understanding, practical skills and competencies' making 'a difference to the intellectual and social development of students'.⁵

What is Marist Spirituality?

The word spirituality is used in many ways today, not necessarily in a Christian sense. For the purposes of our context, however, I see it as 'life in the Spirit' where 'Spirit' refers to the Holy Spirit. For Neufeld, spirituality means 'the personal relationship of a human being with God'.⁶ If our spirituality is seen as being in and from God, it will obviously influence the way we approach our pedagogy.

There are many spiritualities in the Christian Churches. They include

1. Monastic spirituality which is lived in groups, such as that lived by the Benedictines and Cistercians. Community is important in this setting. The monastery has little involvement with the world.
2. Contemplative spirituality which focuses on the union between God and the person in prayer⁷. The Carmelites, Dominicans and Franciscans adopt such a spirituality. It can be seen as a 'contemplata aliis tradere' approach to life - contemplate first and then hand on the fruits of your contemplation.
3. Apostolic spirituality which views prayer as a means of serving one's neighbour well. It is the approach taken by the Jesuits, diocesan priests and lay people. It requires them to be prayerful people who are actively involved in the world. Actions for those adopting apostolic spirituality reflect their relationship with God.

² (Lawton & Gordon, 2002, p. 201)

³ (*Chambers Dictionary of Etymology*, 1988, p. 769)

⁴ (Lawton & Gordon, 2002, p. 23)

⁵ (O'Neill, 2008) in (*The Routledge International Encyclopedia of Education*, 2008, p. 429)

⁶ (Neufeld, 1995, p. 673)

⁷ (McDermott, 2014, p. 1)

Our Marist Constitutions define our Marist spirituality this way:

The spirituality bequeathed to us by Marcellin Champagnat is marial and apostolic. It flows from God's love for us, gains strength as we give ourselves to others, and leads us to the Father. In this way our apostolic life, our life of prayer, and our community life are blended into harmony⁸.

What is Marial Spirituality?

When we think about Mary, we think about a woman of faith, a woman who accepts to be the mother of God. She is a true servant of God in the spirit of Isaiah (42; 49; 50; 53). We see Mary's faith at Cana (Jn 2:5) and at Calvary (Jn 19:25-28a). Theologian Tina Beattie describes Marian Spirituality this way⁹:

Marian spirituality can only be understood as authentically Christian when it is an integral part of the life of faith, it invites the believer to deepen his or her relationship to Christ, to become incorporated into the community of the Church, and to seek a harmonious balance between the active and contemplative dimensions of a faith expressed in prayer and social action.

The Second Vatican Council shows Mary on a pilgrimage of faith consistent with the divine plan from the Annunciation to Pentecost¹⁰.

What is Apostolic Spirituality?

Spirituality is apostolic when it concentrates on being sent by God (*apostello*) in the service to others. This is seen by those adopting this form of spirituality as the substance of the Christian life¹¹.

More specifically, Schemel and Roemer define Apostolic Spirituality as a 'spirituality of choice at the level of faith'.¹² In other words how does our faith influence the decisions we make? How do we choose what we do? What is the quality of our decision-making? The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius suggest apostolic spirituality requires us to get rid of any 'disordered affections and attachments'.¹³

⁸ (*Constitutions and Statutes*, 2011, p. 20)

⁹ Quoted in (O'Donnell, 2014, p. 1)

¹⁰ (Abbott, 1966, p. 89 N.58)

¹¹ (McDermott, 2014, p. 1)

¹² (Schemel & Roemer, 2014, p. 8)

¹³ (Schemel & Roemer, 2014, p. 9)

Worksheet 1

How do I describe my Pedagogy?

Part 2 Influences on Pedagogy

Throughout history, pedagogy has been influenced by cultures and spiritualities in very different ways.

The Greeks (9th Century BC – 3rd Century BC)

The influence of the Greeks has continued for over 2000 years. They began asking the question 'why', rather than merely repeating traditional knowledge. Plato's Academy is the first reported institution of higher education. It became a lively centre for metaphysical and ethical teaching. Aristotle understood education to be a part of politics. No society was more important to him than the city-state. He saw education as formation of character, as 'a pursuit of the common good of the whole, and the preparation of the individual for the right use of leisure.'¹⁴

The Romans (1st Century BC – 4th Century AD)

The Romans took over many ideas on education from the Greeks. One famous Roman, for example, Cato (234-148 BC), apart from writing a book on farming, claims he personally taught his son to read, write, fence and swim¹⁵.

While, in the first century, Christians had been waiting for the second coming of the Messiah, by the second century they began to realise the end of the world was not near. During the early part of this century they decided to insist on some form of formal instruction as a preliminary to becoming a member of the Church. Gradually popular instruction in Christian principles was introduced for Jewish and pagan converts, known as 'catechumens'. These 'catechumenal' schools concentrated mainly on the salvation of one's soul.

Christianity became organised into a disciplined Church and began to spread across the Roman Empire.¹⁶

The instruction was carried on in the portico or other special portion of the church; and consisted in moral and religious teachings, reading and memorizing the Scriptures, together with some training in early psalmody. The course usually lasted three years, and while some distinction was made between the general division of catechumens and those almost ready for baptism, there is little ground for supposing that the schools were divided into actual classes. The meetings in the church were held several times a week, or even every day.¹⁷

¹⁴ Quoted in (Hoerber, 1989, p. 182)

¹⁵ (Lawton & Gordon, 2002)

¹⁶ (Kenny, 2003), p.94.

¹⁷ Quoted in (Graves, 1926), p.4.

Medieval Europe and Islam (5th - 13th Centuries)

In 431, Emperor Theodosius II convened the Council of Ephesus. The Council affirmed Mary as *Theotokos* or 'God bearer' or 'Mother of God'. The awaiting crowd of believers rejoiced when they heard this news. *Theotokos*¹⁸ was not a new word for them. It had been featuring in their prayer for well over a hundred years. An important prayer that focuses on Mary, the Mother of God is the *Sub Tuum Praesidium*. Its discovery on a papyrus in 1917 reveals a prayer to Mary dating back to the second half of the third century, making it the oldest known prayer to Mary in the Christian Church.¹⁹ The English text is:

We fly to your patronage,
O holy Mother of God.
Despise not our prayers in our necessities,
but deliver us from all dangers,
O glorious and blessed Virgin.

The prayer speaks of Mary's role as Mother of God and protector of God's children in fulfilment of the words of Jesus on the cross to St John 'Behold your Mother'.²⁰ Marcellin Champagnat would later take up this theme in describing Mary as 'Our Good Mother'. Marcellin was always mindful of Jesus' words 'She is blessed not so much because she is my mother, but because she heard the word of God and kept it'.²¹ Today this hymn is often sung in Latin and St John the beloved disciple is regarded as the first Marist, due to these words spoken by Jesus on the cross 'Here is your Mother'²².

Christian schools began in the monasteries in the fifth century. While these monastic schools were mainly for adults, they also took children and adolescents, teaching them to read, write and memorise the Psalms. Courses could often last eight to ten years²³. Some children also attended Episcopal or Parish schools.

Less than one hundred years after Muhammad's death, the Christian writer John of Damascus (675 – 749) in his *Dialogue with a Saracen* described freedom of will and the divinity of Christ as the two principal points of departure between Islam and Christianity²⁴.

The Muslims conquered Jerusalem and built the Dome of the Rock recognising this to be the last place Muhammad touched before being taken up to heaven²⁵. Christianity virtually disappeared from North Africa. The Arab conquest of Spain started when a Moorish army led by Tariq bin Ziyad swept across the Straits of Gibraltar in 711. It took them just seven years to establish control of almost the entire country, as well as what is now Portugal. Islamic schools began in the 9th Century.

¹⁸ *Theotokos* is Greek for 'God-bearer'.

¹⁹ (Turner, 2003a), p.2.

²⁰ John 19:27.

²¹ Luke 11:27-28.

²² John 19:27.

²³ (Graves, 1926)p.56.

²⁴ (Lewis, 2006), p.20.

²⁵ (Lewis, 2006), p.13.

A particularly gifted Christian leader of this period was St. John Chrysostom²⁶, Archbishop of Constantinople, called the 'golden-tongued' father of Eastern Christianity. John, a renowned theologian, had a great love of teaching, saying:²⁷

What is a greater work than to direct the minds and form the character of the young? I hold with certainty that no painter, no sculptor, nor any other artist does such excellent work as the one who moulds the minds of youth.

At his palace in Aachen, Charlemagne began a Palace School headed by a monk who had been a pupil of the English monk, historian and theologian, Bede (c673 – 735). The school attracted the best teachers from all parts of the Empire. The books used were copies made by monks. Valuing the work of the monks in education, Charlemagne encouraged the building of Benedictine monasteries throughout the Empire²⁸. He decreed that each monastery and cathedral should establish a school. The schools catered for those aspiring to be monks, as well as boys seeking a career in public service. These cathedral schools along with the monastic schools formed what can be described as the secondary-school system of the early Middle Ages. It was not until the eleventh century that cathedral schools became a powerful force.

The method of education and research developed in this medieval period was called 'Scholasticism', in today's parlance 'Academic Philosophy'.²⁹ It can be divided into the 'early period' (1030 - 1200) and the 'period of the universities' (1200 - 1500).

The philosophical method of questioning, primarily developed by Thomas Aquinas at Paris in the 13th century, was the starting point for debate. Known as scholasticism, it allowed questioning to gain understanding of Christian dogma, while recognizing that faith transcends rational thought³⁰.

Emerging during this early period were cathedral schools or episcopal schools. These schools emerged from an eleventh century papal decree that the church should train its own administrators rather than engage lay people.³¹ They complemented the monastic schools. The cathedral schools began to flourish as towns and commerce grew and the rural location of most monasteries caused them to lose their domination. Education was largely for the training of priests. The monastic school aimed to form members of the monastic community. The cathedral school trained future priests for the bishop around whose chair – *cathedra* – the school formed. One hundred cathedrals were built across Europe between 1130 and 1520³².

²⁶ John was married with children (Jamison, 2006, p.66).

²⁷ Quoted in (Gleeson, 2004).

²⁸ (Koch, 1997)p.119.

²⁹ (Cowburn, 2005), p.18.

³⁰ (Jotischky & Hull, 2005), p.66.

³¹ (Hamilton, 1989)p.39.

³² (De Botton, 2004)

One significant twelfth century change saw education become urban, international and competitive.³³ Literacy had ceased to be a clerical monopoly and was sought-after widely as Lawrence explains:³⁴

Commercial activity on any scale demanded of its practitioners at least a degree of formal literacy; and by this period the ability to read and write the vernacular, and even Latin, was quite common in the larger Italian towns. Well-to-do merchants sent their sons to the city schools, while their daughters and wives attended classes and learned to read the Latin Psalter.³⁵

Humanism & Renaissance (14th Century – 15th Century)

By 1400 modern schooling began to emerge with the stabilisation of an individualised pedagogy where an educational arrangement would be made between a private teacher and a group of individual students. Teachers took students at all levels of competence and organised their teaching largely on an individual basis.³⁶

Such individualization fed back, in turn, upon the general organization of schooling. First, there was no presumption that every student was 'learning' the same passage. Secondly, there was no pedagogical necessity that all students should remain in the teacher's presence throughout the hours of teaching – they could just as easily study (cf memorize) their lessons elsewhere. And thirdly, there was no expectation that students would stay at school after their specific educational goals had been reached.³⁷

Consequently medieval schooling could handle a large number of students because of the fluid organisational structure. St John the Baptist de la Salle built on this development in the seventeenth century.

By this time, convents were providing education for girls. According to historian Sylvia Evangelisti³⁸ the

spiritual teachings imparted to novices and girl boarders not only placed great emphasis on morality but also taught them very basic reading and writing, as well as more practical and domestic skills. This education would eventually turn them into either good nuns, or good wives and mothers.

Consequently these convents became very popular with families. In addition, their daughters could be educated in a safe environment.

³³ (McInerney, 2004)p.9.

³⁴ Clerical in English has a double meaning 'related to the clergy' and 'pertaining to a clergy or scribe' – a relic of the Middle Ages when ministers of religion held a near-monopoly of education (Sacks, 2003, p.135).

³⁵ (Lawrence, 1995)p.9.

³⁶ See Hamilton, 1989, p.37

³⁷ Quoted in Hamilton, 1989, pp.37-38

³⁸ (Evangelisti, 2007), p.4.

Reformation & Counter Reformation (16th – 17th Century)

During the sixteenth century, as European colonial powers began taking over the world, the proposers of national schooling came into their own. Under the influence of the Renaissance and the Reformation the traditional secondary school came into being. It aimed to form scholars versed in the ancient languages and literatures.³⁹

The first news pamphlets emerged in the early sixteenth century. Hegel wryly noted that newspapers had become, for the modern person, the substitute for morning prayers. More than any other invention, the printing press paved the way from the medieval to the modern age.⁴⁰

The Jesuits' *Ratio Studiorum*⁴¹ or 'Plan of Studies' was first published in 1599 after several decades of experimentation, discussion and preliminary drafts. This text became the main source of the educational doctrines of the Society and was used universally in Jesuit Colleges until the time of the Suppression of the Jesuits in 1773. The Suppression was instigated in the whole of the Church by Franciscan Pope Clement XIV⁴². The *Ratio* certainly reflected Ignatius' emphasis on education.

The *Ratio* originated from the system being used at the University of Paris⁴³ where Ignatius of Loyola studied. Ignatius reflected on the system, modified it and established rules, methods and principles that would enable Jesuits to achieve their educational aims. It is said of the charismatic founder, Ignatius:

When he spoke, it was not what he said, it was the suppressed heat of personal feeling, personal conviction which enkindled men. This has ever been the secret of great teachers, were they only school-masters; it is the communication of themselves that avails.⁴⁴

The Enlightenment and Romanticism (18th Century)

Early signs of the Enlightenment emerged before the 18th-century. When it finally emerged it had five major features⁴⁵:

Belief in the power of scientific reasoning; faith in progress; human rights; freedom of thought and enquiry; and finally, the desire to promote education as a means of furthering the 'Enlightenment project'.

³⁹ See Boyd, 1954, p.410.

⁴⁰ See Sacks, 2003, p.128.

⁴¹ The full name being *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Jesu*

⁴² The Jesuits were suppressed in Portugal in 1759.

⁴³ The University of Paris originated from a Cathedral School.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Rusk, 1965, p.88

⁴⁵ (Lawton & Gordon, 2002, p. 89)

Important during this period was Jean Jacques Rousseau and particularly his book *Emile*. He believed that 'children are born naturally good, but become infected by the evils of society unless measures are taken to keep the child away from them'.⁴⁶

Frenchman Br Gabriel Michel, a 20th century Marist scholar, insists that Marcellin Champagnat would have known of the writings of Rousseau and they would have been in his mind as he developed his own educational thinking. Marcellin relied heavily on the text written by John the Baptist de la Salle titled *Conduite des Ecoles chrétiennes* for developing his own approach to Marist education.

The long-term effects on the Enlightenment are significant. It promoted a more humanitarian treatment of the young. It destroyed forever the idea that education was about memorising sacred texts. This age of reason had arrived and was focused on developing and exercising the powers of the mind.

The Modern World (19th Century -)

The French Revolution caused great turmoil in France and beyond. It suppressed Religious Congregations and therefore their schools in 1790. The 1801 Concordat signed by Napoleon and Pope Pius VII allowed the practice of religion once more in France. The De La Salle Brothers returned to teaching in 1803⁴⁷ and the Marist Brothers were established in 1817.

The 1830 Rule developed by Marcellin Champagnat for his Brothers is quite specific about how they should teach. For example, Rule 13 States⁴⁸:

At 9.15 they will begin Catechism, which should be preceded by a hymn of two or three versus.

They will be very careful to make the children learn the letter of the Catechism, and they will not give long explanations; that belongs to the Parish Priests.

The Brothers will be careful to prepare well the chapter they are going to teach.

While some Catholics may struggle with today's secular world, Canadian Catholic philosopher and author of *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor explains 'I am comfortable now in a world where people are seeking, ... We could not reconstruct the old unanimous society if we wanted to, but this too is a world where the Gospel can flourish'.

⁴⁶ (Lawton & Gordon, 2002, p. 94)

⁴⁷ (Donovan, 2001, p. 5)

⁴⁸ (*Rules of the Brothers of Mary*, 1830, p. 4)

Worksheet 2

What influences my pedagogy in 2014?

1 From a cultural perspective

2 From a Christian perspective

Part 3 Marist Pedagogy Today

Influence of Culture

Contemporary Pedagogy

Pedagogy today is defined as a complex blend of theoretical understanding, practical skills and competencies⁴⁹. Some pedagogical models are based on the structure of knowledge and how this knowledge is conveyed within the various disciplines.

An alternative perspective is taken by Edgar Stones who prefers to see pedagogy as developing an understanding of how human beings learn and how this learning varies across the subject disciplines. This can lead to certain pedagogical principles. Pedagogy has been critiqued by some to be more teacher focused than learner centred. Stones observes that now ⁵⁰

[t]heories of learning such as experiential and constructivist approaches have influenced the development of child-centred pedagogies in which the role of the teacher is to structure experiences through which the learner will be able to construct knowledge.

This enables teachers to take into account the role of multiple intelligences, emotional intelligence and personality dynamics.

As we have seen, good pedagogy requires a teacher to understand the culture of the day and to take this into account when teaching students. The environment of a classroom is regulated by what is happening outside the classroom. While the following is an extreme example, in New South Wales and Victoria this year 40 per cent of police work involves attending family violence matters⁵¹. This means these students are coming to school with agenda that cannot be controlled by the teacher alone.

Good pedagogy involves being able to explain things clearly so they are understood by the listener. This may involve a systematic approach. The teacher needs to be clearheaded and well-prepared.

Pedagogies today require great flexibility. Often what is being learnt by the students is not controlled by the teacher. With the emergence of greater access to information technology, particularly social media, many more resources are available to the classroom context. In some cases, the teacher may become a facilitator, certainly not the only person 'handing over knowledge' as has been the case in previous centuries. Some popular sites today include: <https://www.edmodo.com/> <http://goo.gl/zHjnDD>
<https://www.myediary.com.au/> and <http://padlet.com/>

⁴⁹ (*The Routledge International Encyclopedia of Education*, 2008, p. 429)

⁵⁰ (*The Routledge International Encyclopedia of Education*, 2008, p. 430)

⁵¹ (McKenzie-Murray, 2014, p. 3)

Influence of Marist Spirituality

Marcellin Champagnat's Spirituality

For staff working in Marist schools, Marist spirituality will be a key factor that influences their pedagogy. Marcellin Champagnat lived his spirituality to the full. In recent research Marist historian Br Andre Lanfrey has seen an evolution to Marcellin's spirituality across his whole life.

Period	Spirituality	Event
1810 - 1812	Conversion	Marian Group at the Seminary
1815 – 1816	Spiritual Maturing. His spirituality is profoundly Marian and apostolic	Apostolic Project – Founding the Brothers
1815 – 1816		Commitment to a project of Society of Mary, partially contradictory with the previous project
1825 -	Passes through the dark night of failure which led him to the mystique of abandonment to God as expressed in the <i>Nisi Dominus</i>	Illness, conflict with Courveille, defection of Courveille and Terrailon
1838	Realises his end is near	
1840	Centre of his spirituality is located in the contemplation of the intimate union between Jesus and Mary, the ground of his project	Realises he has led and unified his double task - founding the Brothers and contributing to the founding of the Society of Mary

In summary, Lanfrey suggests Marcellin's spiritual theology was more founded on Christology and the Incarnation than on a well-defined theocentrism.⁵²

Characteristics of Marist pedagogy

The *In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat*⁵³ text published in 1998 outlines the following five characteristics of Marist education: Presence, Simplicity, Family Spirit, Love of Work and In the Way of Mary.

These characteristics have been well discussed by Marists in recent years. They have become important benchmarks for Marist pedagogy. Concepts like loving each student

⁵² (Lanfrey, 2003, p. 32)

⁵³ (*In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat A Vision for Marist Education Today*, 1998, p. 43)

equally⁵⁴, respecting individual differences, personalised learning, giving extra support to the marginalised have all become part of everyday practice in Marist Schools.

Today shared learning environments are more common in Australian schools. Teaching and learning are each being adopted by teachers and students alike.

Special to Marist pedagogy today is the reality that faith in the way of Mary, can provide inspiration for teaching and learning. This is a distinguishing feature of the Marist School. It makes it more than just a good school with good values inspiring the teaching and learning process. Here faith lived in a Marial way is the distinguishing mark of a Marist school.

Marist Community

Marist Pedagogy emerges from a communal approach to learning. While an individual teacher may guide a student, the teacher does so in the context of the Marist community to which he or she belongs. The teacher can discuss approaches to teaching and learning with colleagues.

Relationships, therefore are central to Marist pedagogy. The family spirit evident in all Marist schools helps to nurture these relationships with all those involved in the educational process both at home and school. These relationships are even more valuable to the Marist Project when they are flavoured by faith. Fr Tony Ireland observes the role mothers play in the learning process: Mothers 'don't have to teach or show us everything, they just have to show us how to discover and learn for ourselves as we mature'.

Darren McGregor participated in this year's Pilgrimage to Champagnat Country. Here is an excerpt from his recent letter to the Marist College Staff in Bendigo.

Today in our classes Br Michael Green led us through an exploration of the early brothers who lived and worked with Marcellin. Michael's key theme was that this new movement, this Marist Spirituality, was co-founded by these pioneering brothers rather than by Marcellin himself. As Michael introduced us to the early brothers he spoke of the unique gifts and skills each brought to the new venture. He spoke of how each was different and he stressed the importance of this. Each contributed significantly to the formation of the Marist beginnings.⁵⁵

Daren's words are echoed in Water from the Rock, our seminal text on Marist Spirituality: 'In Christ we find that a common mission unites us in community and, in turn, community impels us to mission'.⁵⁶ WFR 95

Summary

Marist pedagogy is contemporary pedagogy shaped by Marist spirituality. Key to this shaping are prayer, shared decision making and community.

⁵⁴ 'To educate children well, one must love them and love them all equally'.(Furet, 1989, p. 538)

⁵⁵ (McGregor, 2014)

⁵⁶ (Estaún, 2007, p. 57 N95)

Worksheet 3

Identify the elements of Marist spirituality that influence my pedagogy?

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