



# **MARIANIST LAY COMMUNITIES** **INTERNATIONAL STATUTES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Marianist Lay Communities have their origin in the Congregation of the Immaculate Mary, founded by William Joseph Chaminade in Bordeaux, France, on December 8, 1800.

This group of lay is the starting point of a missionary venture emerging as an answer to what Chaminade believes to be a divine inspiration to Christianize the society in which he lives.

The role of Mary in the history of salvation encourages him to offer a lay response, in the midst of the world, showing the message of the Gospel lived out in communities of faith. This is carried out in a way accessible to everyone, attracting others in the same environment by contagion, as the yeast inside the dough.

Together with Adele de Batz de Tranquellon, he will later found two religious orders, one male and one female, basically in order to animate and sustain the Congregation. All these foundations, sharing the same spirit, will give rise to the Marianist Family, a structure made up of lay, religious -male and female- and priests, all sharing the same mission, in union without confusion.

Since February 1993, the lay branch of this Family is organized in Marianist Lay Communities at world level, although in some countries they may have different names.

The following statutes present the minimum norms on which the Marianist Lay Communities are based.

## **NATURE**

- 1.- The Marianist Lay Communities (MLC) constitute an International Private Association of the (lay) faithful.
- 2.- The site of the association is Castello St. 56, 28001 Madrid, Spain.
- 3.- The MLC are Christian communities at the service of the Church's mission in the world. We are part of the Marianist Family and our inspiration is the charism of our founders William Joseph Chaminade and Adele Batz de Trenquellon.  
The MLC members, as baptised, are called to grow in the likeness of Christ, son of God,



born to Mary for the salvation of all people.

In answer to our Marianist vocation, we want to live the call to make Christ present in the world, moved by the Spirit, in alliance with Mary.

To belong to the MLC is a life option for us.

### **AIMS**

4.- We who belong to the MLC have received a call from the Lord to live and share the Marianist charism. As a consequence we commit ourselves to:

4.1.- Be men and women strong in the faith. This faith of the heart, moved by love, helps us persevere in hope.

4.2.- Welcome Mary as mother, model and educator, who freely accepted the presence of the Spirit in her life and who, in the obscurity of the faith, engendered and gave birth to God-with-us, and offered him to the world. She invites us to "do as he tells us" in order to respond to the needs of humanity.

4.3.- Live our faith in communities, after the example of the first Christians.

4.4.- Be missionaries, committed to announcing the Gospel. As a consequence, and faithful to our lay condition:

- we are alert to the signs of the times;
- we care in solidarity for the women and the men in our world;
- we aspire to transmit our faith by means of multiplying Christians and forming community animators;
- we work for the extension of the Reign of God in the world, keeping in mind the different cultural situations in each country; we work in building a more just and peaceful world, with a preferential option for those who are poorest.

### **ORGANIZATION**

5.- The MLC members are organized in small communities, at a local level. These in their turn are grouped in national, regional and world levels. Each group has the autonomy corresponding to its level. In each community and in each level there is a lay person or team leader and a Marianist advisor, either lay or religious.

6.- The national groups are grouped in Regions. The General Assembly is responsible for



constituting those Regions and makes them up according to natural affinities. Each one of those Regions has a Regional Responsible.

- 7.- It is the responsibility of the Assembly and of the International Team to co-ordinate the Association.
- 8.- The General Assembly is made up of the members of the International Team and all the responsables of the national groups accompanied by as many delegates of the national groups as determined by the previous General Assembly.  
The religious advisors, or their representatives, participate in the Assembly as observers, as well as other invited people, as determined by the International Team.  
The General Assembly meets every four years, (in ordinary session), at the summons of the International Team.
- 9.- The International Team will summon an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly if it is asked by at least one half plus one of the responsables of the Association's groups, or if the absolute majority of the members of the International Team estimates that there are extraordinary circumstances that justify it.
- 10.- The functions of the General Assembly are:
  - a/ To encourage and foster mutual knowledge, meetings and dialogue among the Marianist lay of the world.
  - b/ To facilitate and promote information and inter-relationship in matters of the life and activities of each of the national groups.
  - c/ To promote unity in living the Marianist charism, respectful of the particular differences and richness of each of the national groups, studying and reflecting upon the diverse aspects of the life and mission of the lay Marianist.
  - d/ To evaluate the situation of the Association at a general level and the management of the International Team.
  - e/ To appoint the members of the International Team, set the outlines of their action and evaluate their management.
  - f/ To design the Regions, eliminating or creating new ones.
  - g/ To modify the Association Statutes, submitting them to the pertinent authority for approval.
- 11.- General Assembly agreements:
  - a/ To ratify the agreements of the General Assembly half plus one of the present votes will be required in the first two votings and simple majority in the third one.
  - b/ To modify the Statutes, the General Assembly should agree in just one voting, having two thirds of the present votes.
  - c/ To appoint the President, the General Assembly will decide in the first voting whenever any of the candidates acquires two thirds of the present votes. If a



second voting is necessary, it will be held among the three candidates who receive the most votes, and the elected candidate should acquire two thirds of the present votes. If a third voting is necessary, the one who acquires more votes should be elected.

12.- The General Assembly appoints the International Team for a four-year term. It is made up of a President, the Regional Responsibles and an observer Marianist religious advisor, either male or female.

None of its members will serve for more than two complete consecutive periods.

13.- The functions of the International Team are the following:

- a/ Represent the Association before the ecclesiastical and civil authorities through the President or a delegate appointed by the International Team.
- b/ Carry out the agreements reached in the Assembly.
- c/ Facilitate the communication and dialogue between the lay Marianists in the world and the members of the other branches of the Marianist Family.
- d/ Actively participate in the World Council of the Marianist Family, taking on and working for the missionary goals proposed by the Council.
- e/ Ensure the presence and the participation of the Association in international affairs and in the world Christian lay organizations.
- f/ Establish the financial system of the Association, determining the economic contribution and administering the Association's goods, taking into account the canonical norms regarding the ecclesiastic goods.
- g/ Call and organize the General Assembly.
- h/ Fill provisionally, if it is necessary, vacancies left in the International Team until the following Assembly is held.
- i/ Interpret the Association Statutes, a task held ultimately by the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

14.- The functions of the President are the following:

- a/ Represent the Association.
- b/ Preside at the General Assemblies and the International Team meetings.
- c/ Animate the entirety of Marianist Lay Communities.
- d/ Maintain relationships with the international Marianist Family.
- e/ Animate the International Team.
- f/ Organize the International Team meetings.

## **FINANCE**

15.- The MLC organization and working expenses are provided by contributions of the



members. At the general level, expenses are covered by the contributions of the national groups. The International Team will report the accounts of the Association economic situation, and of the management during the last four years, in each General Assembly.

### **DISSOLUTION**

- 16.- The Marianist Lay Communities could be dissolved by agreement of the General Assembly, in one voting, with two thirds of the present votes.
- 17.- In case of dissolution of the Marianist Lay Communities, the International Team will give its goods to the Marianist Family institutions, taking into account what the General Assembly decides.

### **FINAL RULE**

The universal laws of the Church will govern whatever is not explicitly present in these statutes.



*Approved by Pontifical Council on the Laity: March 25, 2000. Ratified by MLC General Assembly: August 8, 2001.*