

Lay Marianist Formation Program

Summaries and Questions for Sponsors

Unit 2: Spirituality

The following summaries and discussion questions are to help you, as a sponsor, orient yourself to the conversations your aspirant has been having. It is intended as context and a conversation starter, not as a checklist or limit to your conversations. You are encouraged to use your own knowledge of your sponsored aspirant and follow the movement of the Spirit in your conversations.

This unit of Spirituality is meant to challenge participants to look at their spiritual journey and identify their own relationship with faith/ spirituality. Our formation program provides tangible ways to engage with Marianist spirituality while emphasizing that spirituality is important because we must grow in our interior lives in order to support our community and our own Marianist vocation. Participants will gain a proper understanding of Marian theology, specifically how we work through Mary to end in deeper relationship with Jesus. This unit will be broken into the concepts of intentional presence through the guidance of Fr. Quenten Hakenewerth, the Common Method of Prayer, and the Systems of Virtues' all of which are unique to Marianist spirituality.

Summary of Fr. Quenten Hakenewerth's Principles

- **The goal: to strengthen our interior lives in order to grow in intentional presence to others**
 1. **The quality of our presence is more important than our work**
 2. **The essential is the interior**
 3. **Radical change is gradual change, seldom sudden**
 4. **Collaboration between God and us**
 5. **Double action; balance of dying and new life**
 6. **A virtue is not complete until expressed in service**

Summary of the Common Method:

Common in the sense that everyone can do it; very practical and is a collection from a lot of different people, making it common. The unique feature of the Common Method is the emphasis Chaminade placed on preparation. The majority of the prayer is spent in the preparation (20 minutes) . Participants will practice the Common Method on their own, as well as 30 minutes in a class session.

The basic framework can be described in 5 steps:

1. Determination of a Subject
2. Preparation
3. Consideration of the Subject
4. Concluding Prayer
5. Examen and Resolution

[Click here to view the Common Method Worksheet used in class](#)

Summary of the System of Virtues:

- **To become more intentionally present to others, we must cultivate the 5 Silences**

Participants learn about the System of Virtues and gain understanding of the 5/2/1 Method. There are three orders of virtue in the Marianist system: Preparation Virtues, Purification Virtues, and the Consummation Virtues. The Preparation Virtues include the 5 Silences: Silence of Words, Silence of Signs, Silence of Passions, Silence of Mind, Silence of Imagination. Participants will spend a lot of time with the 5 Silences because they overlap with the Common Method of prayer mentioned above. If

participants struggle with the preparation spent in the Common Method of prayer, they may also struggle with the 5 Silences within the System of Virtues. The Purification Virtues is condensed into two groups: struggles against the obstacles of the interior world, and struggles against the obstacles of the exterior world. Lastly, and the most important step, is union with Jesus and Mary which is the final Consummation Virtue. An important note to understand is that the Common Method of Prayer and the System of Virtues mirror each other, especially in regards to preparation.

Common Method of Prayer	System of Virtues
Preparation	Preparation Virtues
Body of the Meditation	Purification Virtues
Concluding Prayer	Consummation Virtues

Discernment Starter Questions for Discussion:

- Discuss Hakenewerth’s principles; of the 6, which stood out to you the most? What do you think about the quality of your presence being more important than your work?
- What is your relationship with prayer?
- How was your experience with the Common Method of Prayer? Both on your own and class?
- Of the 5 Silences, which come easy to you and which are a challenge to your spirituality?