



## MARIANIST LAY COMMUNITY OF NORTH AMERICA

### Lay Marianist First Commitment Template

*This template offers suggestions for a commitment ceremony of one or more new Lay Marianists.*

#### **How to Use this Template**

- **Review, Add Roles, and Modify:** An individual or ceremony planning team should review this template to determine which sections to use, who will lead each one, and if anything else should be added or modified. This template may be used in the context of a mass or any other community context. This template does not include all possible ideas, and not all sections fit all ceremonies.
- **When During a Mass:** If this ceremony is in the context of a Eucharistic celebration (mass), talk with the presider to determine which parts to include. This ceremony typically occurs after the homily. In this context, there is usually no need for a Welcome, Opening Prayer, or Closing Prayer. A renewal of baptismal promises and/or sprinkling of holy water is typically at the discretion of the presider.
- **Format:** The commitment portion of this template flows as follows:
  - Each individual candidate is able to read a short statement of intent regarding the meaning of their commitment as a Lay Marianist.
  - This is immediately followed by an affirmation by their sponsor and a commitment read by the entire cohort.
  - Each candidate/sponsor pair then continues in like fashion until each has been able to read their prepared statement of intent and affirmation. Note: these should be prepared ahead of time... see Supporting Resources.
  - After each candidate/sponsor pair has stated their intention and affirmation, all candidates make their commitment together. Alternatively, if in the context of an MLC, all community members may renew their commitments at the same time as the candidates. Or, another alternative is that the new candidates may make their commitment and then the rest of the community renews their commitments using this or another text.
- **Supporting Resources:** Companion resources include a Sponsor Affirmation Template and Statement of Intent Template. The structure or individual components may be modified or swapped out as seen fit by the ceremony organizers.

**Welcome – [Name of person doing the welcome]**

*(Use this section if the ceremony is a “stand alone” event and not embedded in another context)*

- Welcome everyone present
- Introduce individuals making their commitment
- Brief remarks on the candidates, their process, their relationship with the community, or other relevant topics
- Introduce next section

**Opening Prayer – [Name of person doing opening prayer]**

*(Use this section if the ceremony is a “stand alone” event or as a transition into the commitment portion of a retreat, etc. Change out this prayer for another if desired.)*

Loving and Faithful God,  
we gather in your presence as a family of faith,  
called by your Spirit to walk the path of Mary:  
Your mother, humble servant and faithful disciple,  
Our mother, model, and teacher.

You have invited each of us to share in your mission of bringing Christ to the world and to build communities that reflect your love.

Today, we celebrate this moment of consecration, as these candidates gathered with us today say "Yes" to your call and commit themselves to living as Lay Marianists.

Bless them with Mary’s courage and trust - that they may embrace the challenges of their journey with hearts full of hope.

Bless them with Mary’s attentiveness - that they may discern your presence in the ordinary moments of life.

Bless them with Mary’s joyful faith - that they may proclaim your greatness in word and deed.

As they commit themselves to animating life-giving communities, fill their hearts with the fire of your Spirit, that they may radiate your love to all they encounter.

You have also called forth a number among us as sponsors and witnesses of this act of consecration.

May we continue to uphold the newest members of our family with our prayers, encourage them with our words, and journey with them in the spirit of community. Amen.

**Remarks on Commitment – [Name of person leading commitments]**

*(Typically helpful even in the context of a mass. The person giving these remarks usually continues to lead the commitment process itself)*

- Some remarks about this special occasion are usually in order. These remarks should be planned ahead of time crafted for the particular individual(s) making their first commitments and appropriate to the context of the ceremony.
- Any number of topics may be appropriate. Some suggestions include:

- Special remarks on the candidate(s), their embodiment of the Marianist charism, their relationship with you or the community, and/or some highlights of their formation process. This is almost always a good idea, whether or not other elements are woven in as well.
- Reflections on the meaning of vocation and/or committing oneself to the Marianist charism and mission. This may include personal anecdotes or wisdom of your own, or that you have received during your Marianist journey, that you would like to hand down.
- Reflections based on the context of this ceremony (mass, retreat, stand-alone ceremony, etc) such as any scripture used, the retreat theme, and so forth
- Reflections based on the distinctive mission, culture, or spirit of your MLC

**Gather all Candidates and Sponsors – [Name of person leading commitments]**

*(It is usually best to call forth all candidates and sponsors to stand or otherwise be situated in a place of prominence. Determine this ahead of time and inform all candidates and sponsors.)*

Example [modify depending on your process]: At this time, I will call the candidates forward with their sponsors one by one in order to make their initial statement of intent and affirmation. After this, all of them will make their commitment together.

**Statements of Intent & Affirmations – [Name of person leading commitments]**

Process: One by one, introduce each candidate and sponsor to read their statement of intent and affirmation. You may opt to introduce them both together (eg. “I now invite XXX and his/her sponsor YYY to step forward and declare his/her intention to become a Lay Marianist”) or the candidate first and then their sponsor (eg., “I now invite XXX to declare his/her intention to become a Lay Marianist.” Pause as they read their statement. “YYY, do you affirm XXX’s intentions?” Pause as sponsor reads their affirmation.

Candidate Statement of Intent: *Prepared ahead of time using the Statement of Intent Template or Mini-Retreat.*

Sponsor Affirmation:

*I, [your name], affirm that [sponsor's name] has discerned a commitment to the Marianist Lay Communities in good faith and is prepared to live the Marianist charism in alliance with Mary. [Personal Remarks]*

**Commitment – [Name of person leading commitments]**

*All Candidates Together – Leader: “We now invite [Name or All Candidates] to make their Marianist commitment”*

O loving God, we thank You for having called us to be members of the Marianist Lay Communities and for inviting us to be consecrated to You, through Mary, and in her spirit of faith and love.

We praise You, for You have always loved us, calling us through Baptism, strengthening us with Your own Holy Spirit, and calling us to a deeper faith-filled life through this commitment.

Your Spirit molds us into the likeness of Jesus, Your Son. May we learn each day to listen more closely and to follow the inspiration of Your Spirit.

Mary, we seek to imitate your faith. With a mother’s love you guide us in our growth in the likeness of Jesus. Help us to live as you taught your Son to live; teach us to love all people as Jesus does.

At this moment, we offer ourselves to you that we may become more like Jesus and be present in this world with the same disposition that He had. As you cooperate with God’s plan to bring Christ to the world, we desire to cooperate in your mission of bring Jesus to everyone and bringing everyone to Jesus.

We make this commitment to God through you and in your honor.

May the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit  
Be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

**Moment of Celebration & Closing Remarks before Prayer – [Name of person leading commitments]**  
*(Typically some applause or moment of celebration is in order. Invite everyone to return to their seats, if standing. If there are any announcements to be made, this is a good moment.)*

**Closing Prayer– [Name of person leading closing prayer]**  
*(This prayer or another may be used. Typically omitted in the context of a mass and the presider resumes the liturgy at this time.)*

Loving God,

As we bring this sacred celebration to a close, we thank you for the gifts you have given us through all members of our Marianist Family present and past. We especially thank you for the gifts of our founders: Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, Blessed Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, and Venerable Marie Thérèse de Lamourous.

Through the wisdom of Fr. Chaminade, you have shown us the power of faith and perseverance, inspiring us to build communities rooted in mission and united in Christ.

In the heart of Mother Adèle, you have taught us the strength of youthful zeal and the importance of responding generously to your call.

By the example of Marie Thérèse, you have revealed the beauty of compassionate service, reminding us to see the dignity and worth of every person.

May the example of our founders guide those who have committed themselves today to live as Lay Marianists. May their lives, like Chaminade, Adèle, and Marie Thérèse, reflect the light of Christ and bring hope to the world.

Bless us all as we go forth, renewed in our mission to build communities of faith, hope, and love, trusting in Mary's guidance, and inspired by her "Yes" to your will.

May the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit  
Be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary.  
Amen.