EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUBMITTED TO:	Marianist Family – All three branches
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Event: Marianist Congress 2026
Date: April 17–19, 2026
Location: Our Lady- Fatima Retreat Center, Indianapolis, USA

Introduction

From April 17–19, 2026, fifty-six delegates representing the Brothers, Sisters, and Laity of the Marianist Family Council of North America (MFCNA) gathered for a facilitated planning congress supported by Credence & Co. (Credence). Building on a listening process that engaged 139 participants through surveys and interviews, the congress provided an opportunity for prayer, reflection, dialogue, discernment, and strategic planning focused on the future direction of the Marianist Family in North America.

The Marianist Family is in a time of significant transition with many potential opportunities on the horizon. During the congress delegates explored key questions related to mission, leadership structure, governance, sustainability, communication, collaboration, and future growth. Throughout the discussions, participants expressed a deep commitment to Marianist spirituality and a strong sense of urgency to move from reflection, discernment and conversation toward the implementation of ideas and coordinated action. Themes of renewal, hope, shared mission, collaboration, inclusion, and accountability emerged consistently across the sessions.

Key Themes and Outcomes

Mission and Identity

A central focus of the congress involved clarifying the Marianist Family's shared mission and identity. Delegates strongly supported the development of a concise, memorable, and spiritually grounded mission statement that clearly communicates who the Marianist Family is, what it seeks to accomplish, and how it contributes to the world.

Participants emphasized that any mission statement should reflect several core elements including Marianist spirituality, faith formation and discipleship, intentional communities of faith and prayer, justice and inclusion, collaboration across branches, and an outward-facing commitment to accompaniment and service. Delegates favored language that is invitational, action-oriented, and accessible to people both within and beyond existing Marianist communities.

Among the draft statements reviewed, delegates expressed the strongest support for the following mission statement as a draft for further revision: *"Marianist Family in North America: With Mary, we manifest Christ to the world, forming persons in communities of faith and prayer to build a more just, equitable and inclusive society."* Participants also recommended refinements that strengthen the language of discipleship, hospitality, justice, and action while ensuring that the statement remains concise and broadly relevant.

Strategic Priorities

Building on themes identified through the listening process, delegates reviewed and refined ten strategic areas before prioritizing the issues they believe will have the greatest impact on the future vitality of the Marianist Family. Five priorities emerged as the most significant areas for collective attention and action.

Leadership and Authority emerged as the highest priority. Delegates identified governance clarity as an urgent need and expressed a desire for a more clearly defined leadership structure, decision-making framework, and accountability process. Participants emphasized the importance of establishing formal governance practices, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and strengthening engagement across all branches.

Funding and Sustainability ranked as the second highest priority. Delegates recognized that sustaining the Marianist mission requires stronger financial stewardship, coordinated fundraising efforts, long-term advancement planning, and increased development expertise. Participants emphasized the need to build sustainable structures that support future ministry and growth.

Collaboration emerged as a significant opportunity for renewal. Delegates expressed a strong desire to strengthen relationships and shared efforts across branches, ministries, institutions, and regions. Delegates envisioned greater coordination in planning, leadership, formation, and mission initiatives while preserving the unique contributions of each branch. Many also emphasized the importance of engaging Marianist schools, universities, retreat centers, and ministries more intentionally in the broader work of the Marianist Family.

Communication and Visibility reflected delegates' recognition that communication was both a challenge and an opportunity, calling for coordinated communication systems, centralized resource sharing, multilingual communication strategies, stronger social media engagement, and more intentional storytelling. Participants emphasized that greater visibility would strengthen both internal connections and external awareness of the Marianist mission.

Attracting New People completed the top five priorities. Delegates reflected that the future vitality of the Marianist Family depends on welcoming and engaging new generations. Participants highlighted the need for intentional invitation, stronger digital engagement,

meaningful and clear pathways into becoming a Marianist, and more effective storytelling that communicates the value and relevance of the Marianist charism.

Looking Forward

The congress affirmed the importance of Marianist spirituality and demonstrated a shared commitment to building a more collaborative, visible, sustainable, and mission-driven future. Delegates recognized that meaningful renewal will require clear leadership, effective governance, stronger communication, intentional collaboration, and disciplined implementation.

The discussions provided a strong foundation for the next phase of discernment and action. By focusing on mission clarity, governance, sustainability, collaboration, outreach, and communication, the Marianist Family in North America will be well positioned to strengthen its shared mission, deepen relationships across branches, and respond faithfully to the opportunities and challenges of the future.