



September 8

Nativity of the Blessed Mother

On behalf of the Leadership Council of the Marianist Lay Community of North America, it is my privilege to make an exciting announcement and to invite you to participate in a meaningful opportunity for personal reflection and interaction with other Lay Marianists on what it means to be a Lay Marianist.

The announcement is that MLCNA has launched a new website, www.mlcn.org giving Lay Marianists an online presence and a place to go to look for resources specifically for Lay Marianists.

Along with the website, we have unveiled a new logo as part of the rebrand of MLCNA, creating a new look and feel for those who identify as Lay Marianists or are members of Marianist Lay Communities.

These updates coincide with what the leadership council is calling a Year of Shared Discernment.

Lay Marianists come into the Marianist Family in many ways and we have varying formation experiences. As a result, a question often asked is what is a Lay Marianist or what does it mean to be a Lay Marianist? We are also scattered across the continent and beyond and have few common experiences or opportunities to interact with other Lay Marianists beside those we might be in community with.

Collectively we all belong to a larger faith community, a community of communities, an association of the faithful, the Marianist Lay Community of North America.

In place of a traditional strategic plan, or even a formation program, the leadership council wants to hear from you about your experiences as a Lay Marianist, whether you are on your own or are a member of an active Marianist Lay Community.

The signs of the times invite us to listen to our hearts and to one another. With changing demographics in the Church and in the Marianist Family we are called to reflect on our Marianist experience, our call to be Marianist in the world today, and to consider what being a Lay Marianist means for our future, the future of the Church and the future of the Marianist family.

We invite you to participate in this year of Shared Discernment and to share your thoughts and experiences with us and with each other. We especially hope you will take advantage of opportunities to meet new people through our scheduled virtual conversations.

Please don't be intimidated or overwhelmed by the modules, the resources, or the timeline. There is a lot of information for your consideration and several questions for your personal and communal reflection and conversations. And we encourage you and your community to take the modules at your own pace and to do what you need to do to make it a meaningful experience for yourself.

Registration is not required. We hope all Lay Marianists and Marianist Lay Communities will join in this period of discernment. But if you would register and let us know you and your community are participating we'd appreciate it. We can also keep you informed of upcoming conversations and opportunities.

I especially want to invite Lay Marianists who might not be part of an active community to participate and to be in touch with us as we seek to strengthen relationships within our broader community.

Something about the Marianist charism ignited a spark in all of us and drew us to the Marianist Family. We hope that this Year of Shared Discernment rekindles and strengthens your call to live the Marianist charism in your everyday life as well as help you feel like you are part of something bigger.

Please see the website, www.mlcna.org for the resources and frequently asked questions for the Year of Shared Discernment. You may write to discernment@mlc-na.org if you have additional thoughts or questions.

We look forward to your participation and we invite all Lay Marianists to hold each other in prayer during this time, which we hope will be a rewarding exploration of your vocation as a Lay Marianist.

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

United in Mission,

Matt Dunn
Chair, MLC-NA