



Catholic Catch Up

A Guide for Teenagers new to Marist Schools

Introduction

Starting at Marist can feel unfamiliar, especially if you're not Catholic. This guide will help you understand the key elements of Catholic life, including liturgy, prayer, symbolism, and rituals, so you can feel more comfortable and connected to your school community.

Encountering Jesus: A Personal Journey

A Catholic school provides opportunities to encounter Jesus in everyday life. Through prayer, reflection, and acts of kindness, students can develop a deeper understanding of His teachings and presence.

Ways to Encounter Jesus:

- **Through Prayer and Reflection** – Taking moments of silence to listen and speak to God.
- **In Others** – Seeing Jesus in acts of kindness, compassion, and service.
- **Through Scripture** – Learning His message of love in the Bible and how to apply it to daily life.

Encounters with Jesus are personal and unique for everyone, and a Catholic school encourages an open heart and mind to experience His love.



Liturgy: The Heart of Worship

Liturgy is a structured way of worshipping God, often in the form of Mass. It includes prayers, Bible readings, hymns, and the Eucharist. While you may not be Catholic, you are welcome to observe and participate in ways that feel comfortable for you.

What to Expect:

- **The Sign of the Cross** – A hand gesture used to recognise God as Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- **Readings from the Bible** – Stories and teachings from scripture (God's Word)
- **Communion** – Catholics receive the Eucharist (body and blood of Jesus), while others may come forward for a blessing or remain seated.



Prayer: Speaking to God

Prayer is the essence of Catholic life and a relationship with God. We can express gratitude, ask for guidance, or reflect on daily experiences. Schools often begin and end the day with prayer, and there are many forms of prayer used in Catholic tradition.

Common Prayers You'll Hear:

- **Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)** – A universal Christian prayer.
- **Hail Mary** – A prayer asking Mary, the mother of Jesus, for help and guidance.
- **Grace Before Meals** – A short prayer of thanks before eating.

You're not required to pray, but respectful participation, such as standing or bowing your head, is appreciated.



Symbols: Signs of Faith

Catholic schools use symbols to express beliefs and values. Understanding these can help you feel more at home.

Common Symbols you'll see:

- **The Crucifix** – A cross with Jesus on it, symbolizing his sacrifice and love.
- **Candles** – Representing the presence of God.
- **Holy Water** – Used for blessings and as a reminder of Baptism (a Christian sacrament, where people are welcomed into the family of God).



Rituals: That Build Community

Rituals help bring people together and reinforce faith. You may experience:

- **School Masses** – Eucharistic celebrations held for the whole school and on Friday Morning before school.
- **Ash Wednesday** – A day of reflection, where ashes are placed on foreheads and the commencement of Lent.
- **Feast Days** – Special days honouring saints and important events, Champagnat Day and Feast of the Assumption.

Participation is encouraged: singing, saying prayers and listening, but if you're unsure about what to do, simply observing is okay.



Being in a Marist Catholic School

Marist schools follow the teachings and traditions of St. Marcellin Champagnat, who emphasized a spirit of family, love of work, and care for others. Marist values include:

- **Following in the way of Mary** - Following Mary's example of faith and service.
- **Family Spirit** – Creating a welcoming and supportive community.
- **Presence** – Building strong relationships based on trust and respect.
- **Simplicity** – Living with honesty and humility.
- **Love of work** – Encouraging effort and dedication.
- **Creative fidelity to Marcellin's charism** - spread the Good News of Jesus in the Marist way.

Being part of a Marist school means embracing these values and striving to support one another with kindness and integrity.

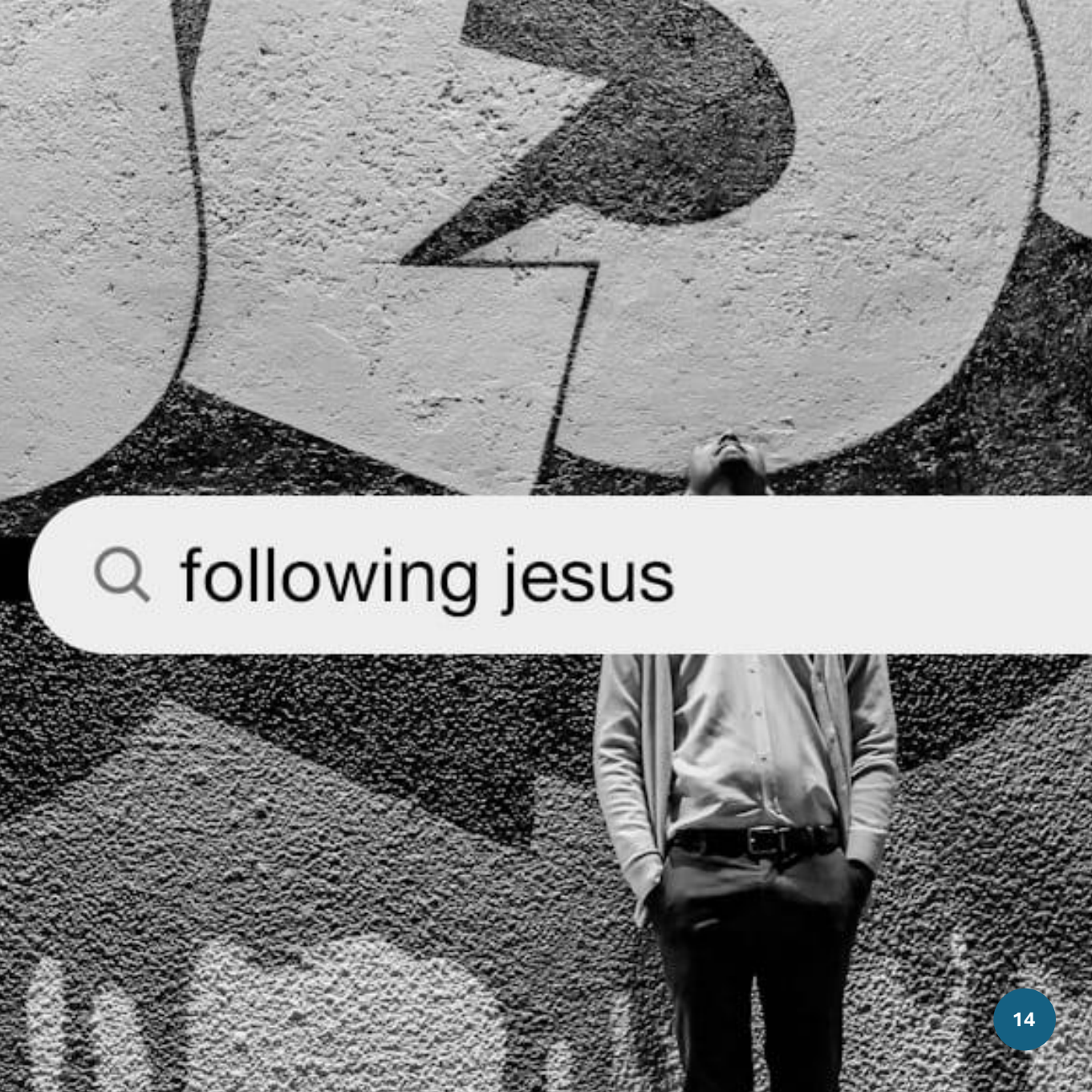


Why Jesus Matters

One of the most important messages in Christianity is called the kerygma. This is the basic story of Jesus and why He matters:

- **God loves you** – You are created in love and meant for a relationship with God.
- **Sin separates us from God** – When we turn away from love and goodness, we experience brokenness.
- **Jesus saves us** – Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus offers a way back to God.
- **Ongoing Transformation** – We are invited to be involved in this ongoing transformation of the world through Christ's love poured out for all.
- **We are invited to respond** – We can choose to follow Jesus, live with faith, and share His love with others.

Encountering Jesus is about recognizing His love for you and discovering how you can live in that love every day.



Q following jesus

The Journey to Becoming a Catholic

If you feel drawn to the Catholic faith and want to explore it further, there are steps you can take to learn more and possibly become a Catholic.

Steps to Consider:

- **Ask Questions** – Speak with your parents, teacher, or priest about your interest. You can find more information on the MyMarist portal pages.
- **Attend Mass Regularly** – Experience Catholic worship and community life including Friday Morning Mass at 8.05am.
- **Join a Faith Formation Program** – Marist and Parishes offer groups like Game Changers to develop your faith.
- **Pathways to Parish: Youth Sacramental Program** – A formal process for non-Catholics to learn and become part of the Church, facilitated by the Mission Team at school.
- **Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist** – If you choose to become Catholic, these sacraments are key steps in your faith journey.
Exploring faith is a personal journey, and you are encouraged to take your time and ask for guidance along the way.



Conclusion

A Catholic school welcomes students of all backgrounds and beliefs. By understanding its faith and traditions, you can better appreciate the community and values that shape your Marist experience. If you have any questions, teachers and classmates are always happy to help!

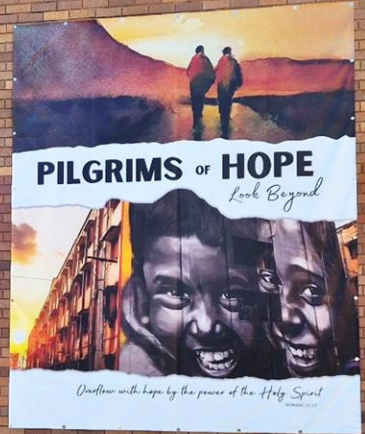
Contact

Please contact any member of the Mission Team who are located in the Mission Centre, next to the Canteen. You can also contact the Head of Mission and Identity for further information via email: nathanahearne@mcc.act.edu.au

Discover

Visit MyMarist portal for more information and to discover the beauty of the Catholic faith <https://my.maristc.act.edu.au>

Mission  Centre





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