

## **PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF THE OCEANIA MARIST PROVINCE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This code of professional conduct establishes the commitment of the Province to foster a culture of safety and care for all persons. It is founded in the conviction that the rights and dignity of all persons, especially children and the vulnerable, need to be promoted and protected.

It is the intention of the Oceania Marist Province that this professional code of conduct to be followed by all its members, including Marists from other Provinces working in Oceania, and all associates of the Marists.

The professional code of conduct presents guidelines for behavior that reflect Christian values and standard ethical principles. As Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before all, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt 5: 16).

This *Code of Professional Conduct* aims to provide concrete guidelines which achieve several all-embracing objectives:

- i. Promote authentic witness to Jesus Christ.
- ii. Protect, nurture, and promote the rights and dignity of all persons, especially children and the vulnerable.
- iii. Provide practical guidance to enable a Marist to serve effectively and safely,
- iv. Promote personal well-being and professional competence, and
- v. Build positive relationships founded upon trust and integrity.

This *Code of Professional Conduct* applies to all members of the Oceania Marist Province.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 1) To bear witness to the mission of the Church through conduct.
- 2) To aspire to the highest ethical standards and personal integrity.
- 3) To build relationships founded on love, respect, and compassion for all.
- 4) To maintain professional competence and meeting recognized professional standards.
- 5) To uphold pastoral ministry is an exercise of service and not the use of power. **As a member and associate of the Oceania Marist Province I will:**

## **ETHICAL STANDARDS**

### **1. PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL INTERACTION**

- 1.1. maintain appropriate boundaries in professional relationships, and not use the power inherent in my position to exercise unreasonable or inappropriate authority over others.
- 1.2. provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.
- 1.3. not engage in physical, psychological, or sexual harassment of any person, and must not tolerate such harassment by others serving the Church.
- 1.4. not exploit another person for any purpose.
- 1.5. not view pornographic materials on, or taking pornographic materials onto, the property of a Parish, a School, or Marist community.
- 1.6. not acquire, possess, or distribute any pornographic images.
- 1.7. dress professionally and appropriately.
- 1.8. encourage personal well-being and professional development.
- 1.9. conduct oneself in public communication in a manner consistent with the Catholic teaching as set forth in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (cf- no. 2493 – 2499).<sup>1</sup>
- 1.10. exercise discretion and confidentiality in handling sensitive information.

### **2. CONDUCT WITH MINORS**

- 2.1. adhere to the “Safeguarding behaviors” as set out in the Province’s policy on Protection of Children and the vulnerable.

### **3. CONDUCT WITH YOUTH**

- 3.1. use a team approach to manage youth activities.
- 3.2. avoid physical contact with youth, which can be misconstrued,

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<sup>1</sup> 2493 Within modern society the communications media play a major role in information, cultural promotion, and formation. This role is increasing, as a result of technological progress, the extent and diversity of the news transmitted, and the influence exercised on public opinion.

<sup>2</sup> 2494 The information provided by the media is at the service of the common good. Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, justice, and solidarity:

The proper exercise of this right demands that the content of the communication be true and - within the limits set by justice and charity - complete. Further, it should be communicated honestly and properly. This means that in the gathering and in the publication of news, the moral law and the legitimate rights and dignity of man should be upheld.

3.3. not allow individual young people to stay overnight in the Marist's private accommodations or residence.

#### **4. CONDUCT RELATED TO COUNSELING**

- 4.1. take great care to respect the rights and advance the welfare of all involved.
- 4.2. provide counselling only within the scope of my expertise, training, or certification.
- 4.3. be responsible for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in counselling relationships.
- 4.4. hold sessions in appropriate settings and at appropriate times.

#### **5. STEWARDSHIP**

- 5.1. exercise responsible stewardship of all financial and material resources.
- 5.2. provide a clear and accurate accounting of all funds and material resources for which I am responsible and must ensure that adequate systems and safeguards are in place and followed.
- 5.3. not misappropriate Church funds or materials for personal uses or purposes.

#### **6. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 6.1. avoid situations that present conflicts of interest.
- 6.2. Acting with unfair bias or partiality toward anyone with whom a Marist has an existing professional or personal relationship.
- 6.3. not violate the confidence of another person for personal gain or accepting any gift of excessive material value.
- 6.4. exercise discretion when considering assumption of obligations or financial responsibility for a person associated with a parish or Catholic school.
- 6.5. refrain from all things that are unbecoming of my state as a clergy (canons 285-286 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law.)<sup>i</sup>
- 6.6. not receive dual compensation for work within the scope of their appointment.
- 6.7. must disclose conflicts of interest to all affected parties.

#### **7. REPORTING ETHICAL OR PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT**

- 7.1. notify the Director of Professional Standard or contact person if there is an indication of illegal actions by another Marist or an associate.
- 7.2. seek clarification on matters or situations which may violate spiritual, moral or ethical principles.
- 7.3. report directly to Provincial or Director of Professional Standard when another Marist has violated the *Code of Professional Conduct*.

#### **8. SEXUAL CONDUCT**

- 8.1. commit to a celibate lifestyle and strive always to be an example of celibate chastity in all relationships<sup>ii</sup>.

## **9. CARE FOR OURSELVES**

- 9.1. strive to keep physically and emotionally healthy by getting proper nutrition and adequate sleep, by taking exercise, days off and vacations.
- 9.2. guard against the misuse of alcohol, kava, and other substances.
- 9.3. strive to manage my time according to the priorities of my ministry and other obligations.
- 9.4. keep spiritually healthy by following a regular discipline of reflective reading, private and public prayer, spiritual direction, and other ascetical practices that enhance awareness of and responsiveness to God.

## **10. THEOLOGICAL COMPETENCE.**

- 10.1. give time to developing my theological knowledge and pastoral skills through private study, participating in professional programs, and taking sabbaticals.
- 10.2. develop a competence in providing theological reflection that distinguishes me from other helping professional.

## **11. USE OF POWER**

- 11.1. exercise ministerial power by virtue of my vocation (priesthood /religious) and by virtue of my assignments (pastor, teacher, etc.).
- 11.2. must not minimize or ignore the unique power that I have over those seeking pastoral service, but I am to use that power in ways that demonstrate respect for the dignity of persons by empowering them to come into their own freedom and so to participate more fully in the mission of the church.
- 11.3. must be sufficiently self-disciplined to maintain clear boundaries in my pastoral relationships.
- 11.4. must avoid, to the extent possible, those dual relationships (e.g., with employees, students, friends, business relationships) which could impair my professional judgment, create conflicts of interest, or lead to exploiting the relationship for my own gain.

## **Breaches of the Code**

Any breach of this Code involving a criminal offence may lead to a report being made to the relevant authorities. Any breaches relating to the harm or risk of harm, of a child or young person will be dealt with under the Child Protection Policy of the Province. Any other breach will be carefully considered by the Provincial who will respond with concern for justice and the well-being of all involved.

*I have read this Code of Professional Conduct; I understand what is being asked of me and agree to adhere to this Code in both my personal and professional behaviour.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*After signing send a copy to the Provincial.*

## **AUTHORISATION**

This document is validated for use for the Oceania Marist Province by the 2023 Provincial Chapter  
Date: 17 January 2023

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<sup>i</sup> Canon 285 – 286 prohibits members of the Catholic clergy from doing things that are “unbecoming” or “foreign” to the clerical state e.g., taking public office or running a business or trade for own gain or management of goods belonging to lay persons or public office.

<sup>ii</sup> Allegation of sexual misconduct is dealt with seriously in the Child Protection Policy of the Province.