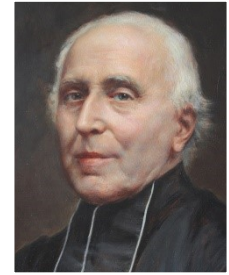


# Spreading the Fama for the Beatification Cause of Jean-Claude Colin

## Report for 2023

Ron Nissen SM



This report summarises my activity and that of an increasing number of Marists in spreading the fama of Jean-Claude Colin during 2023.

Features of the year include:

- growing interest by Marists worldwide
- connections with the Marist Brothers
- increased use of the Colin website and resource development
- the Colin calendar
- the Colin generalate project

### Expanding awareness

On various fronts more people are asking and answering the question *'Who is Jean-Claude Colin?'*

#### **Colin Cause Network**

Current membership is Stephen Ihejirika (Africa), Lauro Arcede (Asia), Ron Nissen, (Australia), Mario Béland (Canada), Alois Greiler (Europe), Ben McKenna (General Council), Joaquin Fernandez (Mexico), Ben D'Souza (NZ), Lutoviko Manu (Oceania), Leon Olszamowski (USA), Justin Taylor (consultant and advisor). At the time of this report a representative from South America is still to be advised following Arnaldo Da Silva's appointment to the mission in Turkey.

Cause updates, summaries of local initiatives, new resources, suggestions for anniversaries, etc. were shared in four bulletins and one Zoom session. Bulletins and Zoom notes are linked at the foot of the Colin website's Network page.

#### **Formation communities**

It is clear that formators are highlighting the person of Jean-Claude Colin in their Marist history and spirituality classes, evidenced by the students' interest and initiatives.

#### **Marist Laity**

Network members report growing interest in the person of Fr Colin and celebration of his life amongst the lay groups in their care. for example, in the naming of chapels, communities, etc. and requests for resources.

#### **Marist Brothers**

With Ben McKenna in Sep/Nov, I participated in the Marist Brothers' *Third Age* program at Manziana, Italy. Many Brothers expressed an appreciation of the presence of SMs, commenting on how little they had known of Fr Colin.

During the segment in France, I was asked to guide the group in a visit to La Neylière. We made copies available of Justin Taylor's biography of Fr Colin and the *Short Life* and presented copies to the Manziana library and to the Hermitage community at St Chamond.

At the Brothers' Symposium in December Alois Greiler presented a paper on *'Why beatify Colin?'*



## General Administration

Zoom and email contact with Ben McKenna continued to be of special value with practical ideas, encouragement and updates on the Cause process and periodic feedback from the General Council.



## Archives and websites

Whilst in Italy I visited the General Archives for talks with Carlo-Maria Schianchi, Cause Postulator and Archivist, discussing the archiving and future accessibility of resources developed since the reintroduction of the Cause. Proposals included inviting Units to

develop Colin pages on websites and social media platforms.

## Marist communities

During my time in Europe (*see also below 'Colin Generalate project'*) I enjoyed the hospitality and practical support of Marist communities in London, Paris, Rome, Turin, Toulon and Hulst. There was keen interest in the Cause including among older confreres.

## [www.jeanclaudecolin.org](http://www.jeanclaudecolin.org)

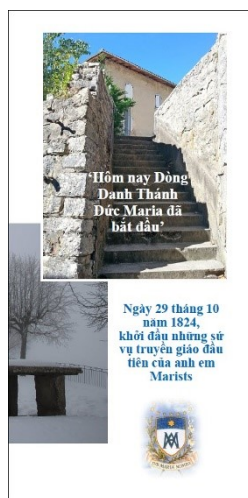
The Colin website continues its growth as a repository of resources promoting awareness of Jean-Claude Colin. Content from the site is often seen on social media postings by confreres, especially younger Marists, and on formation and vocation pages and in a range of languages.

More printable resources were added including, for example, a leaflet recalling the Oct 29, 1824 anniversary *'Today the Society of Mary has begun'*, available in seven languages including Vietnamese.

Technical in-services were provided by web consultant, Justin Lynch, in Brisbane, Qld, for platform upgrades of Joomla software and security enhancement.

## Calendars

The Colin calendar for 2024, the eleventh annual issue, has the theme *'Who is Jean-Claude Colin to me?'* Illustrations and written responses were obtained from Marists, young and older, throughout the Society.



Mailing in early September anticipated my place in the Marist Brothers' *Third Age* program at Manziana, mid-Sep to mid-Nov. Over 1,000 copies were distributed in seven languages and in two sizes with the suggestion that they be distributed on or about the Nov 15 anniversary of Fr Colin.

Language-specific copies were available for each member of the Society through Unit centres and to formation communities, General Administration & staff, Australian Lay Marist groups and professed Marist Family members and others on request.

New custom regulations resulted in the European consignment being returned to Sydney! Another parcel was returned when confreres failed to visit their postal agency. (Extra postage costs will be included in the 2024 budget.)

In addition to weekly and principal liturgical dates and Marist anniversaries, the calendar now includes *Kalendarium* Mass intention reminders.

Despite express international postage the distribution cost per unit remains modest, while the purchase of an electric comb binding machine significantly reduced production times.



## Translations

The work of generous translators continues to be key in spreading the fama. In 2023 I called on the help of Ad Blommerde, François Chauvet, Arnaldo Da Silva, Renato Frappi, Alois Greiler, Justin Taylor and our Vietnamese aspirant, Joseph Vu.

With a Chinese confrere and an aspirant from Vietnam, I would hope to provide more resources in their languages. Meanwhile, the small leaflet, *Founder and Father*, is now available online in fifty languages.

## Colin Generalate project

Some years ago I embarked on a project to capture contemporary images of the works established by Fr Colin during the period of his generalate. In December I completed this task visiting\* the remaining places on my list: Digne, Brioude, St Chamond, La Favorite, Marcellange, Montluçon,

Moulins, Nevers and Valenciennes (\* and revisiting Montbel and La Seyne).

Thanks to the earlier research of Frs Jean Coste and Gaston Lessard and the more recent biographical work of Justin Taylor, we now have a fine record of the generalate of Jean-Claude Colin, important for the progress of the Cause.

It is worth recording Fr Coste's summary (*Lectures on the SM, p 202*)

During his term as general (1836-54) Fr Colin founded no less than twenty-seven houses in Europe.... among these were:

- Four houses of formation: La Capucinière (1834), La Favorite (1841), Bon-Encontre (1847), Montbel (1853)
- Twelve missionary houses: Puylata, also the mother house (1837), Marcellange (1842), Moulins (1845), Agen (1843), Paris (1843), Bon-Encontre (1847), London (1850), Toulon (1852), La Neylière (1852), Valenciennes (1852), Riom (1853).
- Six colleges: Valbenoite (1845), Langogne (1847), La Seyne (1849), Saint Chamond (1850), Brioude (1853), Montluçon (1853).
- Three major seminaries: Moulins (1847), Digne (1849), Nevers (1852).
- Two minor seminaries Digne (1853) and the college of Belley (1829 to 1845).
- A parish: Verdelaix (1838) by way of exception because of the pilgrimage connected with it.

To Fr Coste's list I would add the Marist residence and shrine of Rochefort du Gard (1846) and the retreat house of Chaintré (1855?).

We now have the makings of a complete pictorial life of Fr Colin, perhaps even a coffee table book.

In addition to the help and encouragement of Marist confreres during this project I received the hospitality and practical support of Sr Teri O'Brien SM during my visits to places around Lyon.

## Sesquicentenary

Nov 15, 2025, will be the 150th anniversary of the death of Jean-Claude Colin. My hope is to engage as many Marists as possible during 2024 to focus on Fr Founder, sharpening our awareness of his place in the Society's history and our appreciation of his spirituality and gifts.

## Finances and cost sharing

Expenses of Colin Cause work continue to be shared with local ministry budgets in Australia, including Internet & phone, hardware & software, stationery & consumables, networking and other administrative services, web consultation & professional in-services.

Colin calendar production and international mailing were once again amongst the main costs for the year, as well as interstate travel for web consultations and in-services.

A separate expenditure summary has been prepared for the General Bursar.

*Ron Nissen SM.*

Feb 02, 2024



*Grand seminaire of Nevers, today and in 1852*

