



The connection between the Marist Missionary Sisters, the month of May, and healthcare is rooted in both the Catholic tradition of Marian devotion and the congregation's long-standing history of medical service.

### **The Spiritual Connection: May and Mary**

In the Catholic Church, **May is the month of Mary**, a time dedicated to honoring the Mother of God. For the Marist Missionary Sisters (Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary, or **SMSM**), this month holds profound spiritual significance:

- **A "Marist" Identity:** Their name itself is derived from Mary. The sisters aim to live out their mission "as Mary did"—with a spirit of humility, presence, and hospitality.
- **Renewal of Vows:** Many Marist communities use the month of May to renew their spiritual commitments, reflecting on Mary's "Yes" (the Fiat) as a model for their own missionary service.

### **The Mission of Healthcare**

The Marist Missionary Sisters have a distinct legacy in healthcare, particularly in remote and underserved regions:

- **Pioneering Medical Work:** Since their founding in the 19th century, the SMSM sisters have been heavily involved in medical missions. Historically, they were known for their tireless work in the South Pacific, including staffing hospitals for leprosy (notably on **Makogai Island in Fiji**) and providing maternal and pediatric care.
- **Holistic Healing:** Their approach to healthcare is often "holistic," treating not just physical ailments but also the social, emotional, and spiritual needs of the community.
- **Modern Presence:** Today, they continue this work through community health outreach, nutrition clinics, and palliative care in 24 countries.

This blend of clinical excellence and spiritual presence is a hallmark of the Marist charism, viewing medical care as a direct extension of the "healing ministry of Jesus."

Sincerely,

*James Tracy*

James Tracy,  
President/Administrator