

MEDIA RELEASE

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Hope in Action: Strengthening families through compassion and connection

This Champagnat Day, Marist180 celebrates the partnerships that help families thrive

This Friday, as communities across Australia celebrate Champagnat Day, Marist180 highlights the importance of partnerships, between families, communities, and government in preserving the sacred bond of family.

The celebration comes at a pivotal moment, following the NSW Government's landmark \$900 million investment in keeping families together. Marist180 welcomes this commitment as a vital step toward building a system that supports families early, respectfully, and in culturally safe ways.

"This investment signals a shared belief that families do best when we walk alongside them—not just in crisis, but in everyday life," said Peter Monaghan, CEO of Marist180.

"Family preservation is not about fixing people. It's about recognising their strengths and working together to build stability and hope."

Marist180 is one of several organisations funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) to deliver family preservation services. Through its Intensive Family Preservation program, Marist180 provides tailored, wraparound support to help families stay safely together and strengthen their relationships.

"Each year, we support hundreds of families across NSW through this program," Monaghan said. "We see firsthand the impact of early, respectful support, families staying together, children thriving, and communities growing stronger."

Program Manager Charlie Olerick says "Many families tell us they're so overwhelmed by the rising cost of living that future planning feels out of reach, they're focused on simply getting through each day. Our program supports parents and carers to break things down into manageable steps. Even small changes can be powerful and when taken together, they become greater than the sum of their parts."

Every day, families across Australia face challenges like housing insecurity, mental health pressures, and intergenerational trauma. These are complex issues that require coordinated, compassionate responses—not blame or isolation.

Marist180, grounded in the Marist tradition of accompaniment and compassion, has long championed this approach. We are especially encouraged by the increased funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, recognising their leadership in delivering culturally grounded, community-led care.

“Champagnat’s legacy reminds us that presence matters,” Monaghan added. “When we show up with humility and respect, we create space for healing. Preserving the bond between parent and child is not just good policy, it’s a shared responsibility. And it’s one we’re proud to carry forward.”

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Interview and case studies available

Footnote:

Champagnat Day honours the legacy of Saint Marcellin Champagnat, founder of the Marist Community whose mission is grounded in compassion, education, and walking alongside those most in need.