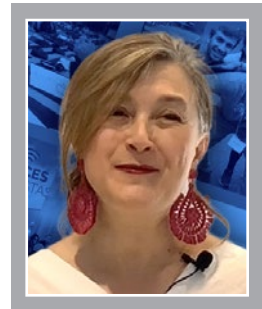

To Educate and Accompany, put your apron on!

“Leadership is not the same as management. Managers do things right; leaders do the right; leaders do the right thing.
“Effective leaders are not afraid to make mistakes.
And when they make them, they learn”.

Loli Santos
Laywoman, Principal, and Educator
Spain - Compostela



I am married to a Marist teacher, and I have two children, one who is already working as a computer engineer and my second offspring as nurse. I have been dedicated to the Marist Champagnat School in Salamanca for 37 years and education is my passion.

I have done different **leadership services**:

- I am a teacher of young children, (infants), involved in special education and as a speech therapist for many years. I have exercised my leadership as a child (infant) tutor, accompanying children and parents in their first stirrings to education.
- From the academic year 2009-2010 until the academic year 2016-2017 I worked as Head of Studies in Infant and Primary. Seven years watching the pupils grow up.
- From the academic year 2017-2018, until the academic year 2022-2023, for six years I have been the General Director of the Marist Champagnat School in Salamanca, with students from 0 to 18 years of age, accompanying them in their personal and spiritual growth.

During these 13 years **my mission** has been to educate our children and young people in an integral way in academic excellence and family spirit, (Always) seeking to form people of integrity, of responsibility and committed to society.

My main role is to help others to grow and develop in all dimensions of life, as fundamental aspects of my service:

- Presence in all its dimensions: people, tasks, projects, always being there, for the good and for the needs.
- Simplicity in the way I deal with people.

- Listening, understanding, not judging.
- Promote integral training.
- To promote innovation, to be creative.

From **my experience** I have the following observations and convictions:

- **It is important to accompany people well**, this is the main task I have had that has allowed me to:
 - establish and strengthen relationships based on trust and mutual respect,
 - grow and develop personally and professionally,
 - give constructive feedback,
 - create a positive and stimulating work environment,
 - be present in someone's difficult moments and provide emotional support when needed.
- **I like to draw inspiration from ideas that are my compass as a servant leader.** My inspiration is St. Marcellin Champagnat:
 - *Humility*: which for me means acknowledging that I don't have all the answers, being willing to learn from others. Valuing the contributions of my team members and always showing gratitude for their work.
 - *Simplicity*: Which (drives) moves me to be transparent and honest in communication. Focusing on the essentials, without show, (pomp and circumstance) being approachable and facilitating tasks.
 - *Spirit of work*: Which leads me to seek and foster collaborative environments where everyone's ideas and contributions are valued. Recognizing, appreciating and celebrating the achievements of my team, delegating responsibility and authority to my team members, allowing them to make decisions. I have seen how this creates a positive environment and fosters motivation and commitment.

There is one key thought that constantly comes to mind: In addition to “to educate you must love” as St. Marcellin Champagnat said, add “to educate, put on your apron.”

Therefore, I would like to share some experiences of how I have lived it being a servant leader who accompanies.





1st Experience

Every morning, when I arrive at school, I go down to the playground with a smile on my face to help the youngest pupils, the infants and primary pupils. There, I meet teachers, pupils, parents and grandparents – it’s my favorite moment of school life! A hello, a good morning, a look, a smile, a pause with those who need it most, a doubt cleared up, a forgotten snack, a cry of separation, ... just like that, close to each person’s needs. These are moments of BEING and ACCOMPANYING.

2nd Experience

At Maristas Compostela we work in child protection with the CONTIGO project, and on some occasions, we have accompanied children and families in difficult moments. It worked best when we (always) knew what to do and we felt the Spirit (always) would guide us to find the word, the gesture, the appropriate words to overcome their pain and to BE and ACCOMPANY.

Finally, **I would like to recommend two ways of living servant leadership:**

- (Always) do it as a team. As a team one has a better chance of succeeding.
- Be passionate about what you do, however small it may be.



The opinions expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Marist Institute.

If you would like to share your ideas, reflections, or experiences about servant and prophetic leadership with the Commission as a result of these reflections, write to fms.cimm@fms.it

