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## Servant leadership with a heart for people

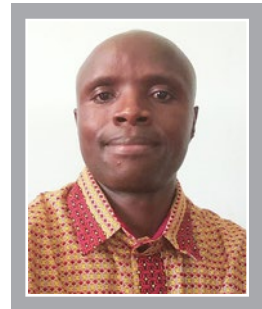
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“...today’s world requires a new kind of sensitivity of “seeing and feeling” the changes we are going through, and the ethical and spiritual dilemmas that crop up. This is done through being close to others in a triple movement of ‘listening attentively, understanding deeply and proposing wisely...”

(Marist Voices, cap. 20 - Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez)

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**B**ased on my 12 years of experience in education, we live in a volatile, uncertain, and complex society that needs servant leaders with a heart for people and passionate stewards. The keywords for my reflection are: care of self and others, passion in self-giving, and the natural desire to do good that is authentic ethical, and inspiring.

### **I. Mission and Servant Leadership in context**

Today than ever, we are challenged ‘to learn and unlearn’ to innovate, collaborate and nurture talents and skills to form character based on values. My day to day life experience, is ensuring learners in school are happy and reach their full potentials. The spirit to serve and the intuition to reach the children and young people, takes me to the root of our mission as an individual commitment.

As a leader in our Marist school, every day in the morning, we meet as educators to pray and reflect on the word of God before going to class to teach. Prayer unites us together to have one common mind and heart that our mission and vision is rooted in the Gospel. Having been trained in Marist International Center – Nairobi, my leadership skills to listen to teachers and significant others in my circle of influence, one of my role is to advise them on the use of available resources to promote learner’s individual’s wellbeing.

Through teaching, I meet the learners in their environments, and encourage them to discover who God wants them to be. To listen and give support helps us navigate together life’s challenges with patience empathy and optimism in school. These life experiences helps us create a Marist culture in our school and community to respond to the emergent issue in education in our coun-



try. Therefore, I invite the reader of this article to embrace prophetic servant leadership approach as the arch that draws people together, listen attentively, understand, and passionately work to nurture values for transcendence.

## II. Servant leadership with a heart for people

Inspired by the message of Brother Ernesto, caring for and generating new life (2022 pg. 13), servant leadership is a gift that is received, shared and given in mission. With knowledge of emergent realities the servant leader, actively listens and communicates new ideas to arouse enthusiasm and trust in his/her circle of influence. I live this dimension by interacting with learners, teachers and workers of our school environment and in the community in a language that is aimed improving the quality of our social life.

In the circle of leadership and its dynamics, I am perturbed by: *“Why and for what purpose do I lead? What kind of leader do I desire and how can I be? How can I make a real change in my circle of influence?”* With inspiration and hands on process, we work together to build, improve for the good of our school and of the community surrounding us. By listening empathically, networking to form communities of sharing, learning and caring for one another and apologizing when mistakes occur attitudes; we aim in our school to model our way of living and permeate our way of being Marist.

## III. Servant Leader as a Passionate Steward

Working with people require knowledge, skills, ethics and competencies and passion in order to collaborate and interact to achieve a common goal. And that is why in Marist mission, a servant



leader has values in managerial strategy in order to be effective in achieving the vision of the institution and perpetuate the culture of authenticity. As the head of the institution, I manage school assets, resources, systems, programs, operations, projects, focus of efforts and environment among others. I envision a Marist school in relation to protecting the minors and vulnerable adults by emphasizing the apostolic generosity, bravely, wisdom, compassion and integrity.

As a conclusion, Marist servant leaders, we are called to serve in various capacities with a prophetic dream and a social aspiration to respond as Marcellin did. Albeit, ethical care, and life-long learning are critical for quality service and happier life. Intertwined with passion in self-giving that seeks to inspire learners, teachers and the community and the driving values of the authenticity, empathy, integrity, assertiveness and discernment require continuous formation to generously do better to others. Therefore, in our volatile, uncertain and complex society today in professional, spiritual life, humanitarian or social life; we learn and re-learn in order to cultivate a passionate spirit and an ethical life that inspire, care for, and generate life in abundance.



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](mailto:fms.cimm@fms.it)

