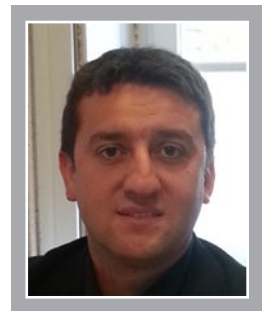# Leadership: charisma, fraternity and recognition

"The servant-leader is first and foremost a servant...
It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first.
Then a conscious choice leads one to aspire to lead."
(Marist Voices, cap.1 - Robert K. Greenleaf)

Julien Monghal
Delegate of Marist Mission
Province of L'Hermitage - France

I take part in the CMH (Conseil de Mission Hermitage) with the leaders from Catalonia, Greece, and Hungary.

I'm married and the father of 3 boys, Joseph (17), Antoine (13) and Émilien (10).

After graduating as a schoolteacher, I was called on to manage 2 schools under diocesan supervision in Clermont-Ferrand, then 2 Marist establishments: Ecole-Collège Notre-Dame des Victoires in St Pourçain sur Sioule (Allier) and Collège Les Maristes in Bourg-de-Péage (Drôme).

Since September 2019, the Brother Provincial has called me to the mission of guardianship delegate for the French network, which is made up of 13 establishments spread over 7 dioceses comprising 11,500 young people. They range in size and location from small, isolated schools of 90 children to a school complex of 2,800 pupils, in town or country, under the aegis of the French Ministry of Agriculture and the French Ministry of Education.

I've had the joy of being called upon to carry out 5 leadership missions in very different contexts. It is important to note that a servant-leader is sent out by an authority who trusts you and entrusts you with a community. This is the starting point for any commitment.

In each situation, I have put myself at the service of people with dissimilar needs, but common challenges.

The person embodies a leadership, a charisma of his or her own.

The intimate and professional dimensions of the person must be harmonized. In my opinion, this is the way to live in truth and be fully available to the community entrusted to us. Being

"straightforward" is a prerequisite for entering into relationships with educators and young people. It makes it easier to establish a climate of trust.

At this point, it seems important to define the concept of leading by example. Let's take the example of a school principal who arrives at 6:30 in the morning and leaves school at 9:00 in the evening. We could say that he's hard-working and serious. But is it possible to demand the same of others? I don't think so. The notion of leading by example cannot be aligned with the demands of one and the same person. Leading by example must enable each person to give the best of themselves and to stimulate them within parameters. Otherwise, the leader becomes a tyrant.

The challenge of fraternity

Fraternity is the foundation of their environment, the milieu in an educational community, which is a major challenge in the Marist project. Men and women who have not chosen each other, yet who share time together, form a community of work and values for the sake of a mission. It's not always easy to be a "family". The values of camaraderie and brotherhood form the basis of a "close-knit" team that is capable of lifting mountains in pursuit of a common goal, a course, a mission. This balance is fragile and requires the commitment and support of all to maintain it.

To achieve this, the leader must :
- Pay attention to all members of the community
- Unfailingly welcome everyone
- Remain open and observant
- Make team members feel secure
- Consult with others

- Make a decision when necessary
- Allow initiative with confidence and interdependency

Achieving these empathetic attitudes requires a discreet, reassuring presence. The creation of friendly spaces reinforces the sense of belonging to the community and maintains the vitality of the team, testifying to the importance that each member has for the community.

The recognized leader

Saint Marcellin rolled up his sleeves and dug into the rock to build Notre Dame de l'Hermitage alongside laborers and brothers.

In any given situation, some actions may remain unfinished and incomplete. The leader, while respecting the principles of relegating responsibilities, may have to carry out certain actions or missions that do not belong to anyone else. I would like to illustrate this situation with the defensive work of a volleyball team.

Example:
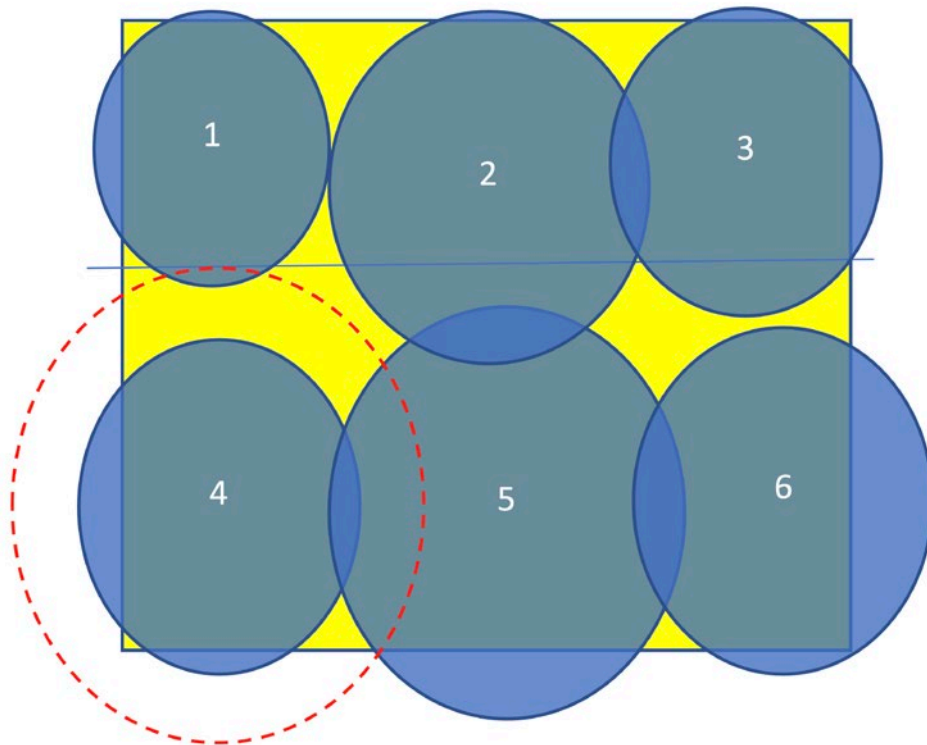
The 6 players cover the surface of the court they share. Each player defends a circular zone which may or may not overlap with that of a partner, and which corresponds to each player's abilities.

The remaining yellow spaces are the marking zones for the attack.

Who will cover these zones?

The leader (e.g., the 4) needs to step up and try to cover a little more ground to help the team. The aim is to show that we can succeed together.

If everyone goes a little beyond their function, out of solidarity and team spirit, the whole field is covered.

That's why, in many cases, school leaders find themselves washing dishes, serving meals in the canteen, tinkering in a classroom, or tidying up after a fair with volunteers in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

This, too, is what characterizes family spirit: a joyful, fraternal solidarity based on service.

In conclusion, the service leader shares with a community the joy of accomplishing a collective mission without expecting anything in return. He takes care of everyone with his discreet, caring presence. He knows when to intervene to protect the members of his "family", and when to step back to allow everyone to be recognized. He can pull a team in the direction of ... by going beyond his professional role and pushing it forward by encouraging initiative and daring. To serve is to offer everyone the opportunity to grow and develop as human beings. It is an exciting experience!