
They evangelize us without words

“Servant leaders focus on people and go out
of their way to support their people.”

(Marist voices, chap 8 – Br. Norbert Mwila)

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I joined the Marist Brothers in 1985, made my first religious profession in 1988, and in 1994 I committed myself for life to Marist consecrated life with my final profession.

At present I am working as a Director of the “Truly Good Home” which is a residential home for people who have to live with severe handicaps. This facility is located in the outskirts of the city of Chungju, in the central region of Korea. From 2002 to 2014 I had already worked here as secretary general and also as director but in the year of 2014 I had to assume the responsibility of Brother Coordinator for the Korea/Japan Sector of our Marist Province. In April of 2022, after practically 9 years as Sector leader I was briefly assigned to the Seoul Marist Education Center until February of this year in which I was given again the responsibility of this Residence for the handicapped in Chungju.

In this “Truly Good Home” we have 30 male residents. The youngest is 27 years old and the oldest 48. Only 6 of them have a family to relate with, while the other 24 men do not have a family that care for them. All of them, because of their physical condition, need continuous help to carry out the activities of everyday life like eating, dressing, taking a bath or going to the toilet. Three of them are able to say some words but even with them communication is a challenge and very limited. They have to rely completely on others for even the simplest activity. Surrendering yourself completely to other, is not an easy position to be in.

In the Gospel we find Jesus saying: “When you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind”. (Lk 14, 13) He always emphasized that these people were the first to be chosen. In other occasion, referring to the last judgment He said: “whatever you did for one of these



least brothers of mine, you did it for me”. (Mt 25, 40), to make clear which would be the criteria by which we will be judged. Jesus tells us repeatedly that helping those that the world considers insignificant is an important task.

The great majority of the people who live in our residence, when they are sick and we take them to the hospital they cannot really understand why they are going there, they do not seem to know what they want to eat or where they want to go, or express themselves when they feel uncomfortable or ill.

Jesus, during his prayer to the Father in Gethsemane (“... yet, not as I will, but as You will.” Mt 26, 39) showed us what it is to empty oneself and relying on the will of the Father. Our severely handicapped friends must entrust themselves completely to the care of others for all things in life. Their complete reliance on us touches the hearts of volunteers and sponsors who come here. We all comment that it is impossible not to look back at ourselves and feel grateful. Our brothers with disabilities who live under our care evangelize us and those who come to visit us. They evangelize us without words.





Jesus, on the day before the Passover when he was dining with his disciples “he rose and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.” (Jn. 13, 4-5). Jesus, being a Teacher, washed his disciples’ feet. With this gesture, He gave us a clear example of what kind of attitude, a leader should have.

Here, once a day, I go up to visit our brothers with disabilities who live on the second floor, greet each one of them, and pray in my heart asking the Lord to bless them and bestow on each one the graces they most need for that day. I firmly believe that the leader of any group should be, first of all, a person who prays for all the people under his/her leadership to be both, physically and spiritually sound. Fr. Marcellin always asked the Brothers to pray for the children under their care, before engaging in their teaching activity with them.

Leaders provide a vision, solve pressing and emerging problems, and commit themselves to the growth of their organization. However, our very first duty and responsibility is to value and dignity of every person, created in the image of God to be blessed by Him and filled with His grace. And this should not be done only for the people in our organization but for all the people around us and even for the whole world. I we should do this every single day.

“I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for the ones you have given me. because they are yours” (Jn 17, 9).



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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

