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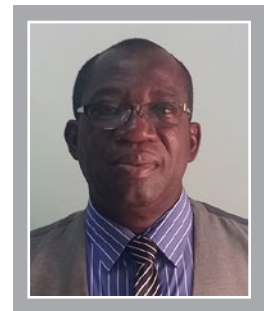
# Nurturing the Flame: Servant Leadership in Mission Development

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“The leadership that assumes the evangelical principle of simplicity is capable of dialogue, really putting itself in the place of the other person; only those who make the Word the motive force of their existence can manage to offer ways, both new and old, just like those of Jesus”

(Marist Voices, chap.12 - Br. Hipólito Pérez)

Br. Germain Bery Beda  
School leader  
Province of West Africa, Ivory Coast



In my role as a Marist leader responsible for fostering the mission within our school community, I have come to recognize that servant leadership extends beyond just a mere leadership style. Rather, it represents a deep embodiment of the values and principles that characterize the Marist Brothers' charism. In accordance with the principles espoused by Saint Marcellin Champagnat, the concept of servant leadership in a Marist educational institution transcends conventional administrative responsibilities. The aforementioned involves a dedication to cultivating the educational objectives of the institution, cultivating an environment that flourishes through empathy, modesty, and a steadfast commitment to the comprehensive development of every person. Within this context, the formulation of the educational institution's goal has a profound significance, representing a sacred undertaking that underscores the leader's unwavering commitment to altruism and the preservation of the Marist heritage.

## Importance of Mission Development for a Marist Leader

The role of a Marist leader in developing the mission within our school community is a responsibility that I hold with deep reverence. This aspect isn't just essential to me; it's central to our mission as servant leaders. As stewards of the Marist legacy, it is our responsibility to foster an atmosphere in which each student feels valued, supported, and empowered to flourish.

A concept that I find particularly motivating is the notion of “mission as a journey.” Similar to the initial endeavours of the early Marist Brothers, who had a mission to provide instruction



and mentorship to children and youths, I perceive myself as a mentor, accompanying our students throughout their educational and personal journeys. This viewpoint enhances my dedication to establishing an environment that is inclusive and supportive, facilitating growth across multiple dimensions.

Reflecting on this endeavor, I'm reminded of the interplay between innovation and tradition. As a servant leader, it's vital to balance the timeless values that define us with innovative approaches that address the evolving needs of our students. This necessitates a careful balance of humility in order to honour our accomplishments and courage in order to adapt to the changing educational world.

In my personal experience, introspection has proven to be an effective tool for the formulation and development of missions. It is of utmost importance to inquire whether our behaviors are in accordance with our values. Are we cultivating an environment characterized by inclusivity and compassion? Are chances being provided to ensure the academic and moral development of every student? These reflections serve as a valuable tool in the process of refining our strategy and establishing a trajectory for long-term growth.

As a Marist leader, promoting the advancement of the mission is not only a task, but rather a continuous commitment to the improvement of our students, our community, and the global society. It is a reflection of our dedication to servant leadership – a leadership which prioritizes the well-being of others and aims to influence not just the intellectual development of students but also their hearts.



### **Key Reflections**

Contemplating the path of servant leadership in mission development prompts a few key reflections:

- **Holistic Growth: Ensuring Holistic Growth:** How can one ascertain that the endeavours in mission development encompass a holistic growth of the physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects of all individuals within the school community?
- **Living Legacy:** Am I effectively fostering the mission with equivalent dedication and passion as our esteemed founder? What strategies may be employed to ensure the manifestation of his legacy as an active and tangible presence within our educational institution at present?
- **Service Beyond the Walls:** How can the impact of our mission development be expanded beyond the confines of our educational institution, effectively engaging with the wider community and fostering positive transformations in the lives of the individuals we serve?

### **Living the Aspect of Servant Leadership: Embracing the Tenets of Servant Leadership:**

In order to effectively embody this facet of servant leadership, I suggest three fundamental strategies:

- **Leading via Service:** It is my conviction that true leadership does not revolve around the exercise of authority, but rather centers on the act of serving others. I actively participate in meaningful interactions with students, teachers, and other staff members, with the aim of comprehending their viewpoints, needs, and apprehensions. Through diligent and focused listening, coupled with thoughtful and constructive responses, I cultivate a conducive atmosphere characterised by mutual respect and collaborative engagement.



- Cultivate a Caring Culture: The concept of family spirit, in which every individual is cared for and supported, is central to Marist values. I intend to establish a society in which benevolence, empathy, and compassion permeate daily interactions. It also entails celebrating accomplishments, offering guidance during difficulties, and creating safe environments for dialogue.
- Empower and Inspire: I see it as my responsibility to empower students to take charge of their own learning and lives. I encourage them to explore their passions, develop critical thinking skills, and embrace a sense of personal responsibility through mentoring. By doing so, I hope to inspire them to become active contributors to society.

In conclusion, the development of our school's mission through the exercise of servant leadership is the essence of our role as Marist leaders. It demands an unwavering dedication to embodying our values, a willingness to learn from our community's experiences, and a skillful balance between tradition and innovation. This journey, despite being challenging, is immensely rewarding because it forges a path to educational excellence that is firmly rooted in compassion and service.



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)