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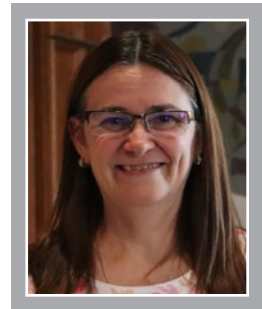
## Servant leadership and collaborative working: A powerful connection

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“I believe that there is no greater collaboration than when a group of strong, creative and independent people are committed to achieving the same goal, and even better if the energy of that group is focused on meeting the needs of others rather than their own”.

(Marist Voices, chap.15 - Br. Patrick McNamara)

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**M**y life as a Marist began as a student. Attracted by the charism and the Brothers who formed me, I began my journey as a Primary School teacher for many years in the Marist School of Alajuela.

I also worked as Academic Coordinator of the Secondary School and until 2022 as Director General of the Institution. In 2023, I have started my mission as Provincial Coordinator of the Laity. Throughout these years, I have served in the Province on Commissions of Laity, Education, Pastoral Team, Mission and Marist Life Councils. At the Institute level, I am part of the Bureau of the Laity.

Reflecting on this theme, I find myself before Marcellin Champagnat and the first Brothers, who practiced in community day to day collaborative work, and where they necessarily put their gifts at the service of others. As Marists, we have learned that this connection draws many together and creates a powerful blend capable of transforming lives, projects and Institutions.

The first Brothers who knew how to interpret their leader perfectly, taught us to be a presence, to listen attentively to our young and our peers; to also seek first and foremost, the well-being of the parents--to truly love others as one does in a family. They taught us that one can only achieve so much, but when a team pursues a common dream, they achieve wonderful things in each other's lives.

Patrick's article in the book "Marist Voices" led me to reflect on the wonderful connection that comes from servant leadership and collaborative work. He speaks of the treasure of gifts that each one brings in collaboration to the mission, as the Founder taught us. And I immediately see a reflection of myself in that thought.

In my years as Principal of Marist College, together with the Board of Directors, we met each

week to dream together of a better future and to set out on the road to realizing other dreams that had been dreamt before.

In collaboration with the helpful contribution of our gifts, we achieved many projects that benefited our beloved students. I experienced the importance of building together, as a team, the mission of the school—a dream that is shared and in which we commit ourselves as an educational community to make it a reality and to encourage everyone to join in: staff, parents and students.



In the mission in which I currently participate, we live out servant leadership from the Provincial Commission. We are ten persons who build a collaborative work team, and we are at the service of lay people who wish to follow formation processes and itineraries in a vocational key.

We are people who recognize that we have great qualities that come from God and that we place at the service of the laity of the Province to help them to grow as human beings in all the dimensions of their being.

With the aim of making the charism known in our Province, the collaborative work of the National Animation Teams has been greatly invigorated. They dream, create, organize and coordinate projects for the laypeople of each country—to become a way of life and service of the common good, as Brother Patrick points out to us in his article.

Like the practical Marcellin Champagnat who taught us to always serve as a way life who spent time listening attentively and actively to his teammates—everything he did spoke of service.

From this teaching, I consider it key for the transformation of lives and for the achievement of projects. The practice of this style of servant leadership means accompanying others to live out personal history in a vocational perspective. I remain attentive to the needs and realities of each person with whom I relate.

I invite you, Marists of Champagnat, to become aware of the great gifts that each one of you can place at the service of others and in this way, invigorate the teams in which we participate as we work collaboratively.

Contemplate, pay attention to the Lord's call to serve, to love. Like our Good Mother, go out in haste so that your life may be a gift to others.



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)