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## How does a true servant leader persuade?

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“The followers will fully support an initiative from their leader if that initiative expresses the care which the leader has for them.”

(Marist Voices, chap.7 - Br. Vincent de Paul)

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I am a Marist alumnus, a Marist educator, and a lay Marist.... My student years were a wonderful family experience. I am currently enjoying very much the Marist lay mission that has been entrusted to me.

When I had the opportunity to join Marist High School as a teacher, I enjoyed working with the children and teaming up with my former teachers. My nearly 20 years as a natural science teacher have flown by. I also became deeply involved in lay activities.

The Marist work in Honduras was linked to the province of Compostela, Spain. This year, we made the transition to the Province of América Central. It has been a transition that is bringing many changes, and I am convinced that they will be for the better.

At the beginning of 2023, I took on the challenge of executive director of the Project **Horizontes Al Futuro** (Horizons into the future), an integral formation center for children (boys only) in vulnerable situations. This center is in the outskirts of the city of Comayagua, Honduras. This mission is challenging, but at the same time it is uplifting because the work that is done is dedicated to the children who need it most. It is congruent with the dream of St. Marcellin Champagnat. Here we work with Montagne children.

I have come to Horizontes Al Futuro with the determination to do a good job and learn from others. It is a challenge to assume the leadership. I dedicate as much time as possible to the institution. I count on the advice of the teams before making decisions. I collaborate and communicate with everyone. It is a daunting task to succeed a Marist Brother who has dedicated almost

30 years of his life to the project. Brother Goyo has left a legacy of institutional relationships. To build on such an environment requires a lot of persuasive effort so that the institution continues to function with quality and allows the implementation of innovations.

My personal life experience has been motivated by a desire to excel, which has allowed me to face difficulties. This disposition gives me the freedom to encourage the boys of Horizontes Al Futuro. I am an example of self-improvement. I am proud of my achievements and grateful to those who helped me. I can affirm with certainty that when you want to do something, you can.

Now that it is my turn to exercise leadership, I do so based on the following convictions:

- It is essential that the leader have the ability to persuade his team to achieve excellent institutional performance. The leader convinces by example, honest treatment and care for everyone.
- The good leader does not impose himself, but rather helps others develop their potential for the benefit of the institution.
- In Christian values, the Marist leader must be a genuine example with an engaging testimony and a good worker for the Kingdom of God.
- The Marist leader works with integrity, honesty and always takes care of others, thus achieving their collaboration, commitment and loyalty for the benefit of the institution.
- The persuasive leader must have a broad vision and convey confidence. When the leader knows where he or she is going, followers cooperate and feel comfortable.
- The leader encourages teamwork. Memorable projects are built by team effort, not individual effort.
- Consistency in life is a good letter of introduction. When the leader strives to do things right,



people appreciate the effort and opportunities crystallize.

For global organizations, such as the Marist Institution, international networks and local leadership are good strategies, because from the local level we know the idiosyncrasies of the people, allowing empathy and better attention to their needs; on the international level we share experiences, collaborations, and funding.

There are many human needs in the world. A person with a desire to serve can pursue whatever he or she wants. However, working at the local level is very important. To strive for the bet-

terment of one's fellow citizens has great value. As a Honduran, I feel gratified working to help compatriot children of Horizontes Al Futuro and, consequently, Honduran families.

In conclusion, the Marist leader must persuade by example, in the style of St. Marcellin, focused on the love of God, the welfare of others and devotion to Mary. The good leader does not impose himself, but rather helps others develop their potential for the benefit of the institution.

I invite you to sanctify your work and evangelize from this starting point, being models of dedication, without self-interests, but rather with a vocational passion to serve. With these distinctive features we can be more persuasive, and better able to implement changes for the welfare of the institution and therefore of all.



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)