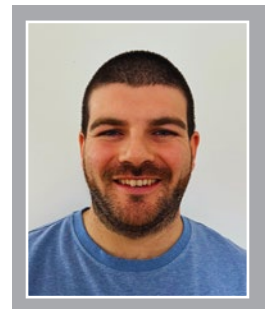

Servant leader in the style of...

“Our Marist charism prompts us to be attentive to the calls of our time, to the longings and preoccupations of people, especially the young”

(Water from the rock n.128, Other Marist Voices, chap.20 – Br. Luis Carlos Gutiérrez)

Jonathan Drouin,
Youth Ministry Coordinator
District Canada



It was during my secondary education that I met the Marist Brothers. At the time, I called myself an atheist, but that didn't stop me from associating with the Brothers and lay Marists. There was something about their way of doing things that attracted me enormously. For their part, the Marists never passed over me even though I didn't believe in God. They accepted me as I was. Despite our different beliefs, the Marists continued to invite me to take part in their activities and I said “yes”, without knowing why.

Over the years, I have been fortunate to be in contact with Marists who listened to me, who were present, open-minded and who had a sense of humor that allowed everyone to feel included in the Marist family. For several years, I walked with the Marists. I learned to know and love myself. I also learned to know God and all the love he has for every human being. This whole personal and spiritual journey led me to do a bachelor's degree in theology and to take a course in spiritual guidance with the Jesuits in order to work in youth ministry. During all these years, the Marists of Champagnat with whom I worked were at my service and they were leaders in this field. I was able to see and learn from them what servant leadership was all about. Today, it's my turn to be of service...

In the style of Marcellin...

Living in a part of Canada that is becoming increasingly de-Christianized, very few young people in Quebec know God. For some young people, they know nothing about God, and for others, they have a negative conception of God.

In such a context, I relate a lot to Marcellin's story when he began his mission in La Valla. However, living in another place and another time, I can't do exactly what Marcellin did, but Marcellin inspires me every day. I must, like him in his time, be creative, have the faith to make Jesus known and loved, and place this mission, which is not mine but hers, in Mary's hands. Like Marcellin, I try as best I can to create spaces where young people feel listened to, welcomed and where heart-to-heart encounters are possible.

In the style of Marie...

Like Mary at the Annunciation, being with young people means knowing how to say "yes". "Yes" to this budding relationship between the young person and me. "Yes" to this growing relationship between God and me, thanks to this young person. "Yes" to this love that is being born and built up as we get to know each other.

Being with young people means saying "yes" to life. In my everyday life, it's like Mary that I want to say "yes" to life. I want to be present like a mother, with tenderness, gentleness, and vulnerability. I want every young person to feel loved and part of the family.

In the way of Jesus...

Marist spirituality "leads us to find God in all things and in all the circumstances of life" (Water from the Rock, Marist General House, 2007, p. 47). This starts with the young people I work with. Whatever their beliefs, opinions, style of dress or lifestyle, I try to see God in them. I try to give them all the love they need, because they are God's children, just like me. And like Marcellin, "I can't see a child without telling him how much Jesus loves him". (Marcellin Champagnat)





In Quebec today, taking part in youth ministry means seeing God in every young person, whatever their beliefs, because every young person is a gift from God. Since young people are a gift, I must let myself be transformed and evangelized by them. Then, through my witness and my simple, humble, and modest presence, the Holy Spirit acts and works in my heart, but also in the hearts of these young people.

To conclude, my way of accomplishing my mission as a service leader is to follow in Marcellin's footsteps, to be in the image of Mary and to love and let myself be loved by Jesus. And this way of living and being is for the sole purpose of being at the service of the young people of our world.



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

