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## Thinking and acting together to transform our social reality

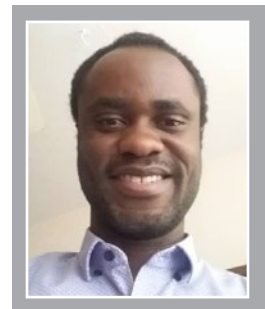
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“In our lived experience of creating the school together, I was able to witness to and promote our Marist Champagnat values especially to make Jesus Christ known and loved, and that to teach children, you must love them all equally”.

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

**Br. Junel Pierre**

Director of the Marist Centre in Jérémie  
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**T**he role of the Centre is to accompany, listen to, and encourage children, young people and the population in general in their most urgent needs by means of educational evangelisation. In this sense, our objective is to “Look further together as a Marist educational community with a view to seeking to celebrate life, growing in faith, encouraging community and family spirit, a sense of solidarity and respect along with the gift of service for the well-being of our Haitian society and for the future of our pupils and students throughout the world”. All this stems from the ideal of our Founder, because for Marcellin Champagnat the heart of the mission is “to make Jesus Christ known and loved”. For him, education was the means of enabling people to “**know and love Jesus Christ**”. For him, education is the means of enabling young people and children to have a personal experience of God and of helping them to become “**good Christians and virtuous citizens**”. In the context of the situation today, the challenges are enormous and they often overwhelm us. From this perspective, we need to take steps to reinvent and reimagine education. We use as a base our experiences, routines, personal relationships, methodologies, styles as well as our forms, beliefs, strategies and our organisation. This allows us to opt for an education that doesn’t just focus on the brain, but touches the heart and hands, encompassing the whole body from head to toe.

We live in a world of great upheaval and frequent crises. Here in our environment we are not spared these shadows of uncertainty, the difficult times or the turmoil, but in faith we dare to stay alive. We develop new mechanisms and strategies by opening ourselves up to listening to life through dialogue, accompanying the community and sharing our joys, sorrows, adventures, daily activities. Often this takes us out of our customary ways and our comfort zone. Today’s world demands a great deal of flexibility, sensitivity and clear-sightedness in order to better respond to the different demands of a fast-paced society.

In my opinion, servant-leadership is an attitude of listening, understanding and flexibility so that we can act and more effectively put others first, with love and compassion. I also believe it is a way of leading people towards Marcellin Champagnat's ideal of "making Jesus known and loved" in the context of our world today. The focus of leadership today is to make each person a priority, to share daily life with its ups and downs, to build together in diversity so that we can



respond to the challenges and needs of our common planet, now and in the future. Nowadays, the leadership that we are talking about has a communitarian meaning, that is to say, it invites us to work, think and act together. It also means collegiality and co-responsibility, with the aim of strengthening the witness of the mission of following the Risen Christ as a disciple of Marcellin - a mission where we are sent to announce the Good News of educational evangelisation.

It's an innovative theme that gives us the opportunity to take a step back personally, institutionally and globally, with the sole aim of serving the marginalised, the voiceless and the disadvantaged - all those on the margins of society - in the most appropriate, effective and caring way possible. We are living in a time of great turmoil, great change, upheaval, and personal, organisational and universal crisis. This vision of leadership, with its two connotations: Servant and Prophet, urges us to take action while reconnecting with ourselves, our environment and God, so that we can once again respond to the primary call of our vocation in the midst of the 21st century. I believe that this change, this transformation towards a vision reminding us to live in the present, to be incarnated in reality and the uncertainties of this world in distress, is very important.

In summary, servant- and prophetic- leadership invites us to a sense of community, fraternity and meaningful presence in the midst of a fractured world and a fragile society; as Marists of Champagnat, these are our small universal virtues and our part of the contribution towards globalised change.

We unite our voices to bear witness to, and propagate, this concept of Marist leadership of service and prophecy, centring our gaze on Jesus, our model of life.



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)