Welcome to the District Assembly

- Building a **Sustainable** and **Desirable** Province of West Africa
- **Theme: Let us "Rise Up and Build" (Nehemiah 2:18)**



Our New Future Begins TODAY! NOW!

- But the future belongs to the Risk Takers, not the Comfort Seekers **(Brian Tracy)**
- A dream that is dreamt together is the beginning of a new reality – let us risk tighter!

The Parable of the Eagle – Dr Kwagyir Aggrey 

Once upon a time an eaglet fell from the safety of its nest. A poultry farmer found it, brought it to his farm, and raised it among his many chickens. The eaglet grew up doing what the chickens do.

One day another farmer came to the poultry farm to see if what he had heard about an eagle acting like a chicken was true. He knew that an eagle was the king of the sky. He was, thus, surprised to see the eagle moving around the poultry farm, pecking on the ground, and acting much like a chicken. The farmer explained to his friend that this bird was no longer an eagle. It was now a chicken as it had been trained to be a chicken and so it believed that it was a chicken.

The other farmer knew there was something more to this bird than his actions showed, as it only 'pretended' to be a chicken. He said, it was born an eagle and had the heart of an eagle, and nothing could change that. So, he lifted the little eagle onto the fence surrounding the poultry farm and said, 'Eagle, you are an eagle, stretch forth your wings and fly'. The eagle moved slightly, only to look at the man; then he glanced down at its home among the chickens in the farm where he was comfortable. He jumped off the fence and continued doing what chickens do. The farmer was satisfied and said to his friend, 'I told you it was a chicken'.

The friend returned the next day and tried again to convince the farmer that the eagle was born for something greater. Again, he took the eagle to the roof of the farmhouse and spoke to it: 'look eagle, you are an eagle. You belong to the sky and not to the earth. So, stretch forth your wings and fly'. The little bird looked at the man and again down into the poultry farm. He jumped from the roof of the farmhouse and onto the ground and did what chickens do.

His friend trying to prove that the eagle was truly not a chicken, returned the next day and took the eagle and the farmer a distance away to the foot of a mountain. They could not see the farmhouse from this new environment. The man, once again, held the eagle on his arm and pointed high into the sky where the bright sun was beckoning above. He spoke to it and said: 'Eagle you are an eagle! You belong to the sky and not to the earth. So, stretch forth your wings and fly'. This time the eagle stared skyward into the bright sun, straightened its body

and stretched its stacked wings. The wings moved, slowly at first, then surely and powerfully. With the mighty screech of an eagle, he took off and flew into the sky! It never returned.

Moral:

- Your beliefs determine what you accomplish and what become tomorrow …
- What others say you are does not define who or what you really are ...
- When you are faced with a crisis or challenge, make efforts, and try to go beyond yourself? Do not resist! We should not spend energy reinforcing who we are. Rather we should soar high into our sky!

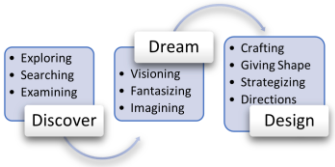
Oftentimes, when we are asked to do something outside our comfort zones, the immediate reaction is resistance, the Superior does not like me or discuss it in your clique groups, and castigate the Superior/Headmaster/Principal or call him names!

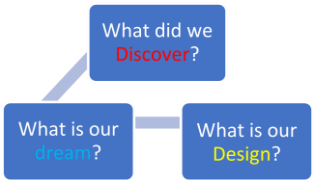
- What challenge did the eagle face in the farm?
- What was its response when encouraged to be an eagle?
- How did the eagle learn to fly?
    - ❖ What challenge did I face recently in the District, my community, apostolate? How did I react to it?
        - Now we are faced with the challenge of standing alone as a Province, to generate money by ourselves, to take full responsibility for our actions …! what is your reaction to this new reality? Will you remain a chicken?
        - Are you willing to make some sacrifices and contribute to the growth and sustainability of this new province?
        - Will you stop sitting on the fence and take active participation in the process of the growth of the province?
        - Will you spend your energy to the cause of this growth rather than sit down and look at failures or criticize the hardworking Brothers?
    - ❖ Like the seed (story of the sower) had to die to come alive and bear fruit, the eagle had to die to life in the farmhouse as a chicken in order to reach its full potential and fly as an eagle.
    - ❖ What things hold me back from “flying high” like the eagle? And to grow?
    - ❖ Where do I need to ‘die to self’ (transcend/go beyond myself) in order to come alive in this province?
    - ❖ In what ways have I kept Brothers in my farmhouse? …, defining them with my agenda rather than seeing them and encouraging them to soar to their potential?

Brothers, there comes a time when a new page is needed to be opened, a time when a fresh start is required; A time when tough decisions are to be taken. There comes a time when a challenge is necessary to help us shift paradigms and fly and not to think we are chickens.

We are verge of another new beginning - a time to part with old ways and to embrace new ones. This new beginning is a stage of collaboration, working together. The Gospel of Mark (2:22) reminds us that we should always place, new wine into new wineskins. We cannot put new wine into old wineskins, it will sour it. Our new beginning requires new strategies to become bridge builders; promoters of a CULTURE of ENCOUNTER; of Relationship; of working together … All these are encapsulated in our theme for this assembly: Let **us** "Rise Up and Build" our New Province.

Before today, we went through a **process of discernment**:



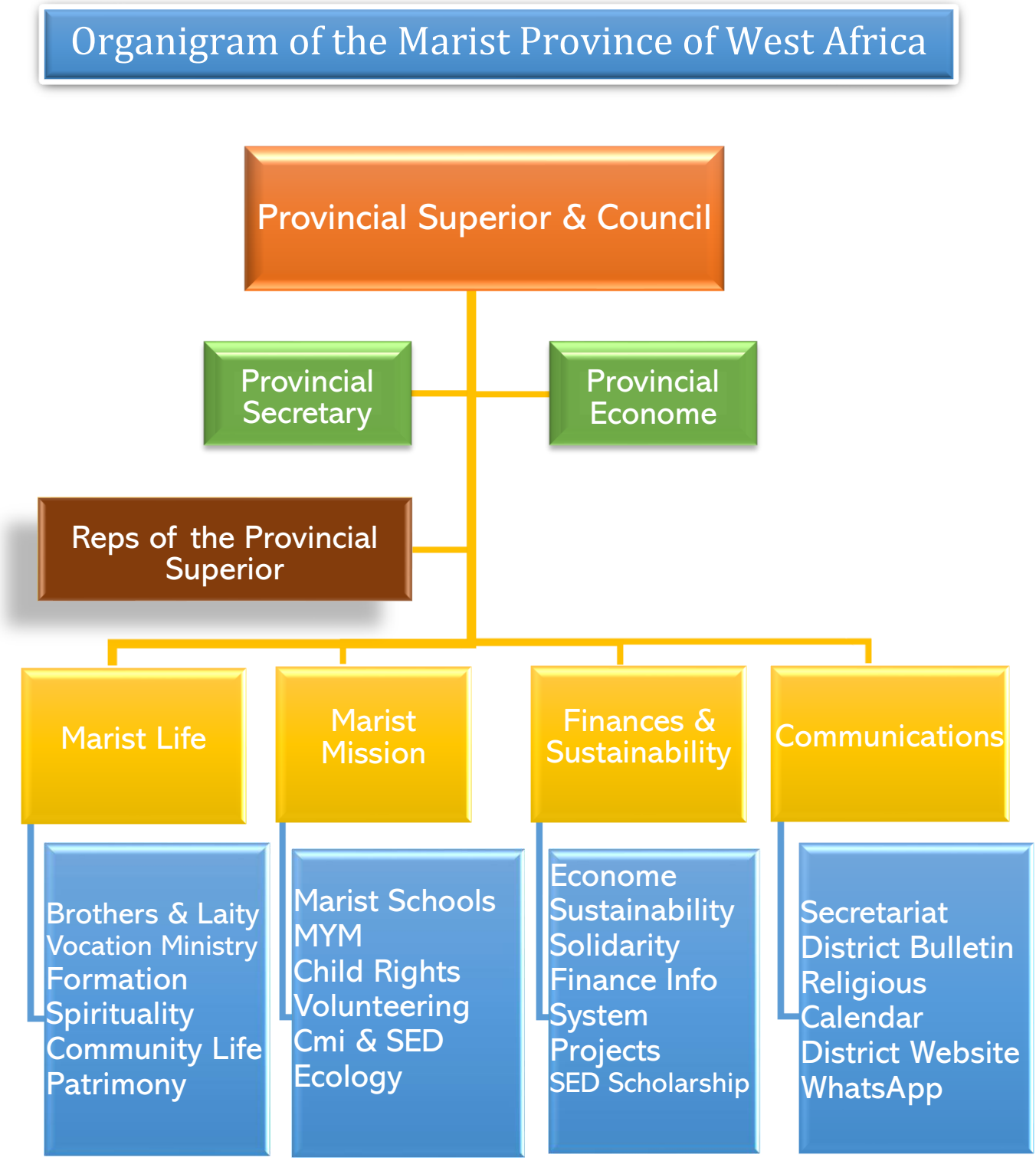




We went through a process of discovery, dreaming and designing together the future we want. We set up committees and teams to reflect and to put all the ideas together, sent it back to you for review. In it we identified critical issues, deficiencies, causes of instability, noted key ideas for our stability and growth, noted avenue or strategic directions for the new province. We also noted resources we need to be operational.

To surpass the limitations of our present realities, we need to change or re-arrange our current paradigms and attitudes. There needs to be new ways to look at **our reality** and of **doing the mission**. To achieve our outlined objectives, all our resources must be declared **a Common Heritage** for all the Brothers. Not only that but we also need a Systems Approach (of cooperation, teamwork, collaboration) to accomplish our objectives. Brothers, we have the **tools** to design this future. But to succeed we must **transcend** our **current paradigms to** be where we want to be!

- How do we sustain the Gains of the reflections to becoming a Province? How do you sustain the Province amidst COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis in Cameroon? Our limited financial resources, low fee collections, limited number of Marist owned schools, poor budgeting and/or execution of budgets, poor planning and evaluation of activities in our schools and communities, poor or no collaborative activities or strategies, etc.
- We have the potentials and the tools to soar like the eagle – we belong to the sky!
- Let us be bridge builders and promote a culture of encounter. We have a common mission to live in communion with each other. We are called to inspire each other and to encourage each other in building up the Province (Nehemiah 2:18).


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Provincial Secretary
Provincial Econome
Reps of the Provincial Superior
Marist Life
Marist Mission
Finances & Sustainability
Communications
Brothers & Laity
Vocation Ministry
Formation
Spirituality
Community Life
Patrimony
Marist Schools
MYM
Child Rights
Volunteering
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