

ELPIS

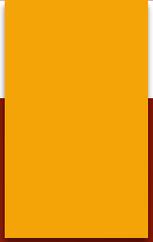
CREATING LEADERS IN THE FAITH



with grant
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OurSundayVisitor





Part 1

Made for the Other

The Power of Influence

- ▶ “The power to change or affect someone or something; the power to cause changes without directly forcing them to happen” (Merriam-Webster)
- ▶ The importance of influence:
 - ▶ What is leadership about?
 - ▶ Why does it matter?
 - ▶ How do leaders lead?
- ▶ **MISSION:** Every leader needs a goal and a vision to achieve that goal. This is influenced by the example of other leaders and examples and various leadership styles.

Activity: Leadership Circle

LeBron James "Together"

Discussion Questions

1. What group is LeBron James trying to lead? What is his mission for this group?
2. What is their vision? How will they accomplish their mission?
3. How does James lead?
4. How is James' influence seen in this video?

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 1 " 'Together' Video Discussion"



Different Styles of Leadership

- ▶ Each member of the Church has his or her own vision or leadership style, and every type of leader is equally important.
- ▶ We are called to lead others through Christ, and everything we do should point people toward him.
- ▶ TYPES OF LEADERSHIP:
 - ▶ Teaching – Show Christ to others by the way they teach as well as the content they teach
 - ▶ Preaching – Personal knowledge helps the audience to experience Christ and relate Biblical stories to their own lives
 - ▶ Worship, Ritual, and Music – Connect others to Jesus through prayer and music, such as praise and worship, adoration, and other forms of communal or devotional prayer
 - ▶ Pastoral Care - Support one another emotionally and spiritually and help others to see Christ's love and mercy
 - ▶ Service, Charity, and Justice – Imitate Christ by actively going out and helping those in need. Christ is visible to both those being helped and those providing the service
 - ▶ Organizing and Leadership – Focuses on details and brings all parts of a mission, task, or organization together toward completion

Leadership Styles: Scripture Connection

- ▶ 1 Corinthians 12:12,15-20
- ▶ God made us all unique for a reason, but we are all brought closer to each other as Christians because we are all united together under Christ.
- ▶ We each use our individual qualities, talents and modes of leadership to lead others to Christ.
- ▶ We become the Body of Christ - unique and diverse, but functioning as one toward a common mission.

Activity: Leadership Quiz

Servant Leadership

- ▶ We have been commissioned by God to be leaders in faith through service to the people around us. We are not above others, but equal to them since we are all brothers and sisters of Christ.
- ▶ Christ established a legacy of servant leadership through his words and actions. This leadership is based on love and compassion.
- ▶ We are all called to help others experience Christ. We must work with and among the people. Servant leadership realizes this mission of the Church.
- ▶ Mother Teresa is a great example of a servant leader.

Setting the Example

- ▶ Be loving and caring toward everyone around us.
 - ▶ Be sensitive to the wants and needs of others.
 - ▶ Be humble and put others first.
 - ▶ Respect the dignity of every human person.
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- ▶ Servant leadership can be very rewarding. Through acts of service, we begin to recognize the face of God in each and every person we serve. Recognizing God's presence in every single person helps us to grow closer to those we serve and also to God.

Josh Yandt

- ▶ In 2011, after his father passed away, Josh Yandt decided he needed to make some changes in his life. He decided he would finally make a stand against school bullies who had given him trouble all his life, built in a way nobody expected: He started opening the door for them.
- ▶ “The first few weeks when I started doing it they were kind of shocked,” he explains in a video. “Not many people hold doors, right? But after that, people started to open up to me. Opening a door is more than a physical act, it’s about putting yourself out there, getting to know people, making them feel comfortable, making them feel welcome. Opening doors gives people hope that people care.”
- ▶ Yandt’s actions were so contrary to what his bullies expected that they began to leave him alone, and more than that, they began to respect him. Yandt went from a bullied, shy boy to being known by everyone in school, even if the only interaction some students had with him was to say, “Thanks Josh,” as they walked through the door.
- ▶ By his senior year, Yandt was so well-known that he was voted prom king. His fellow students presented him with a full-size door, covered in messages and signatures, as a sign of their gratitude.
- ▶ Yandt could have fought his bullies or become a bully himself, but instead, he decided to turn the tables on his bullies and show them love instead. Yandt did not make a scene, he did not ask for attention, he did not say a word. He simply opened a door.

Activity – *Murmel, Murmel, Murmel* by Robert Munsch

► Discussion Questions:

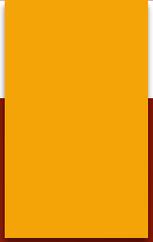
1. How is this story joyful? Who found joy? Who did not?
2. Identify a leader who helped you find joy in life. What did he or she do?
3. Identify a particular item that helps you remember that encounter.
4. A large part of servant leadership is finding joy in serving. How does the story model this aspect of servant leadership?





Discussion

WHO INSPIRES YOU?



Part 2

Personal Faith to Lead

Developing Personal Faith

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 2 "Titles"

- ▶ Christian leaders do not need to hold such titles as priest, campus minister, or director of religious education. There are many leaders who do not possess a title but are still very influential. Christian leadership should be less about having special titles and more focused on spreading the faith.

A “Good Infection”

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 3 A "Good Infection"

- ▶ C.S. Lewis is well known for incorporating his faith into his works and bringing many people to Christ as a result.
- ▶ Lewis describes faith as a “good infection” because it spreads through contact with other people. When one person receives this faith, they pass it on to another person, and that new person also passes it on to more people. Unlike a disease, which can be looked at as negative and unwanted, faith is good and should be spread around.
- ▶ In order to spread the faith, we need to fully live the faith with joy and love. When others can visibly see Christianity in others, they become more open to encountering faith. This is how we are to lead others. We are called to lead by example and by living our own faith-filled lives.

Personal Faith is like a mustard seed

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 4 "Mustard Seed"

- ▶ A strong faith-filled life does not come automatically. In the Gospels, Jesus compares our faith to a mustard seed. This seed starts out extremely small, but as it is cared for, the seed starts to grow. We need to work on growing and cultivating our faith so it can slowly become stronger and play a bigger role in our own lives.
- ▶ As we grow in faith, we begin to realize how important faith truly is and we thirst for more. Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. Just like grapes cannot survive on a branch if not receiving nourishment from the vine, we cannot truly live and thrive unless we are connected to Jesus Christ.

Activity

Personal Meditation

1. What role does faith currently play in my life? Do I use my faith in everyday situations or do I cast it aside and forget about it?
2. How is my faith like a mustard seed? Has it grown or should I take more to cultivate my faith?
3. What do I do to help my faith life thrive? Are there more things I could do to help cultivate my faith (reading the Bible, praying a daily rosary, going to daily Mass, etc.)?
4. Is my faith visible to others? Do I bring others to Christ through my visible witness? Can my faith be considered a “good infection”?

Living a Faith-Filled Life

Living a Faith-Filled Life

- ▶ Living a faith-filled life is something we should strive to do every day, although this can be a difficult and slow process to carry out. In order to live a life of faith, we need to truly care about our faith and the role that it plays in our lives. If we do not care, our faith is essentially dead and it becomes impossible to live a faithful life.

Growing in Faith

- ▶ Faith is a relationship with God. Growing this relationship will help in growing personal faith.
- ▶ Small steps help to begin the process of strengthening this relationship. These steps can include praying each day, reading the Bible, or going to Mass. These help to build our faith and sustain us during the difficult moments of our lives.

Stages of Faith

Understanding the stages of faith affect how we interact with and help those around us.

- 1) Indifference – Those who are indifferent do not care about God, if He exists, or finding the Truth. They do not understand how faith affects them.
- 2) Disbelief - Those in this stage recognize it is important to find the truth and begin to search for it. They realize is impossible to not care forever and that eventually they will have to choose. They care about their faith (or their nonfaith) but they have not yet found the truth found in Catholicism. It is our job as leaders to help direct them to the Catholic Church.
- 3) Belief – There are two ways that this can occur. First, the truth is revealed through the writings and teachings of the saints and theologians, where the unbelievers find and understand what they did not already know. Another way is through the improvement of their personal relationship with God. In some way, that relationship was broken and they needed to mend it before accepting God into their lives.

Leaders in Faith

- ▶ As leaders in faith, we are believers who have come to know and accept God. However, this does not mean our own faith is perfect. It is important to remember we also need to work on continually strengthening and improving our own faith so we can also help others grow in their faith. When we have a strong relationship with God, it becomes easier to share that relationship with those around us.

Saints as an Example of Faith

- ▶ Growing and developing personal faith is not always an easy task. In many cases, the development of faith is a rocky battle with many highs and lows. It can be easy to despair and give up because the journey seems difficult, but there are many, many people who have already fought this battle and have experienced the highs and lows. They know what the journey is like and their stories exist today to inspire us to continue on and keep fighting. These people are known as saints.

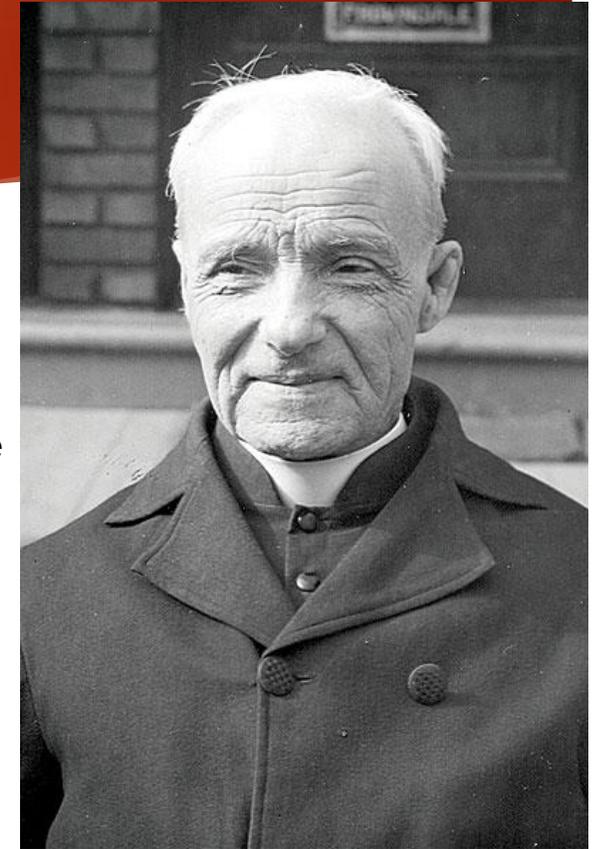
Examples of Faith

“Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future.” – Oscar Wilde

- ▶ The saints are great examples and sources of inspiration for us because they understand what it is like to struggle.
- ▶ Besides the Immaculate Mary, there is not a saint on Earth who has not experienced temptation and who has not sinned.
- ▶ They experienced the highs and lows of life and they still overcame it all and became successful leaders. Because every saint has overcome different obstacles, every person can find a story to inspire and motivate them.

St. André Bessette

- ▶ Born Alfred Bessette in Quebec in 1845, he was orphaned by the time he was 12. With little to no formal education, he became a Holy Cross brother. Because of his sickly nature, he was assigned as the doorkeeper at Notre Dame College in Montreal, a post he held for nearly 40 years. It was in this role as a porter that St. André was able to minister to the sick.
- ▶ As he became known as the “Miracle Man of Montreal,” St. André was later assigned full-time as the caretaker of the church that he built to honor St. Joseph.
- ▶ St. André died in Montreal on Jan. 6, 1937. It is estimated more than a million people made the pilgrimage to the Oratory to say their good-byes to their beloved Brother André. He was beatified on May 23, 1982, and canonized in October 2010, becoming the Congregation of Holy Cross’ first saint.

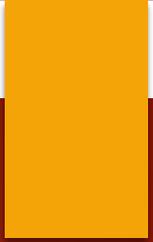


St. Peter

- ▶ At the time he was called by Christ, Simon Peter was a simple fisherman. He gave up his life to follow Jesus and become a "fisher of men." During his time with Christ, Peter was not the brightest man and made his fair share of mistakes. There are several times in the Gospels when Peter made mistakes and was scolded or rebuked by Christ. An example of this is during the Last Supper when Peter announced he would never deny Jesus. Christ corrected him and predicted He would be denied three times before the cock crowed. Although Peter had his fair share of imperfections, God still had a plan for him and called him to be the first pope of the Church.
- ▶ After being commissioned by Christ, Peter went out into the world and preached the Gospel to many different people and became the leader of all the Apostles. Because he was called by Christ to this great position does not mean that Peter became perfect. Like everyone else, he made mistakes and was even rebuked by Paul in one of his letters. But, because Peter relied on God and followed His will, he could overcome mistakes and grow, becoming a great leader.

Discussion

- ▶ 1. Is there any saint that stands out to you that was an exemplary leader in some way?
- ▶ 2. What saint's story is the most inspirational to you? Why?
- ▶ 3. We all have the potential to be saints. In what ways is God calling us to be saintlier in our own lives?



Part 3

Made for Holiness

Following Our Calling

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 6 "Universal Call to Holiness"

- ▶ Everyone searches for purpose and meaning to life. As Catholic Christians, we have been called by God to fulfil a certain purpose. This is known as our vocation. It is important to discern our vocation and learn what we are called to do so we can become the most effective leaders possible.

We Are Called

- ▶ Ephesians 4:1-3
- ▶ We are called to carry out God's message with love and care for others and to bring light to a world of darkness, so everyone is able to learn and know of Jesus. This is our Christian mission, and it is not optional.
- ▶ *Lumen Gentium* (Vatican II) describes this mission as a call to holiness. It says, "The followers of Christ are called by God...in the baptism of faith they truly become sons of God and sharers in the divine nature. In this way they really are made holy. Then too, by God's gift, they must hold on to and complete in their lives this holiness they have received."

Tools for the Mission

The Sacraments provide us with the tools we need to carry out our mission.

- ▶ Baptism – We become a member of God’s family and receive the grace necessary to live a Christian life. This sanctifying grace cleanses us from original sin, while actual graces give us the strength to listen to the Holy Spirit and live virtuously.
- ▶ Confirmation - We become full adult members of the church and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit—Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, Wonder and Awe. Through these gifts, the Holy Spirit helps us live our lives as Catholic Christians and fulfill God’s role in us.

A Universal Vocation, A Mission of Love

- ▶ We are all called to act like Christ in every possible way while performing the many different jobs that work to fulfill our Christian mission. These jobs can include priests, lay people, teachers, missionaries, and completing other Christians acts.
- ▶ St. Therese of Lisieux described it best when she said, "My vocation is love." Since Christ's mission on Earth was rooted in love, we must also be rooted in that same unconditional love shown to us. This love should flow over into everything we do, into every aspect of our lives. When we learn to love completely and unconditionally, we become like Christ and become an example of Christ for others, which helps us fulfill our mission of bringing Christ to others.

Activity

- ▶ In what ways are you being called by God?
- ▶ How have you answered His call in your life?
- ▶ Are there ways you can listen better to God?
- ▶ What is one thing you resolve to do that will help you be a better listener to God's will?

Leadership through Prayer

- ▶ To find our vocations, we need to be in constant pursuit of God. We need to open ourselves up to Him and allow Him into our lives. The best way to connect with God and to be open with Him is through prayer. Prayer can best be looked at as a conversation between us and God. Through prayer, we do not change God's will, but He is able to change our hearts.

Happiness versus Joy

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 7 "Happiness versus Joy"

- ▶ There is a difference between being a happy person and being a joyful person.
- ▶ Happiness is a temporary emotion that comes from worldly things. While we may enjoy it at the time, happiness does not last and will eventually go away, leaving us searching for more.
- ▶ Joy is a different emotion. It comes from God and fills us completely. When we are joyful, our perspective changes and things that once seemed to be difficult or mundane are appreciated more because we now see the world through the eyes of God.
- ▶ This joy is what filled the saints and helped them become effective leaders for Christ.

Mary

“My spirit rejoices in
God my Savior!”

Luke 1:47

- ▶ A great example of a saint filled with joy is Mary. When the angel Gabriel appeared to her, she exclaimed “My spirit rejoices in God my savior!” and she continued on, glorifying the Lord and His goodness. Becoming the Mother of God is a daunting task, but Mary never showed fear or apprehension because she was so filled with joy that she knew God would help her through it.
- ▶ Mary's joy continues throughout the bible and can be seen through her good nature, her love for her Son, and her obedience to both God and Christ. Mary is never seen complaining as her Son travels around preaching. She even follows him to the foot of the Cross and stays there with Him, regardless of the pain and sorrow she is enduring.
- ▶ Mary is joyful, not because her life is perfect, but because she has faith in God and confidence in His plan, and this joy helps her throughout her life.

Finding God in Prayer

- ▶ The best way to become a joy-filled person is to connect with God and have a relationship with Him.
- ▶ Having a relationship with God is not much different than having a relationship with anyone else. If we do not communicate and ignore someone, the friendship falls apart. In the same way, if we ignore God, we not only lose Him but we lose our identity as Christians and forget what our mission is. To keep a strong, healthy friendship with God, we need to continually pray.
- ▶ Prayer connects us with God similar to how a cell phone or social media connect us with our friends.

Different forms of prayer

- ▶ Prayer can come across as forced and unnatural. Prayers such as the 'Our Father' and the Rosary are seen as restrictive and meaningless lines that are meant to be repeated over and over. In reality, prayer should be as natural as talking to your best friend. While there is nothing wrong with praying the 'Our Father' or Rosary, there are more forms of prayer than just that.
- ▶ Prayer is essential to the life of a Christian, but each person can pray in his or her own individual way. There is no wrong way to pray. In fact, we should all find our own way to pray that helps us best connect with God in our own, unique ways.

Discussion

- ▶ What activities in my life make me happy?
- ▶ When do I show or feel joy?
- ▶ What does prayer mean to me?
- ▶ What is my favorite way to pray?
- ▶ Are there any prayer experiences that particularly stick out to me?
- ▶ What is one way I can change or improve my relationship with God?

Types of Prayer

- ▶ Prayer takes many different forms. Many saints throughout history have found favorite, effective forms of prayer and have encouraged others to pray a certain way with them. These ways of prayer have come to be known as spiritualities and are usually named after the saint who encouraged the style.
- ▶ Not everyone connects with every form of prayer, and there is nothing wrong with that. The purpose of learning about the different types of prayer is to help find the ways we best connect with God to become a more effective Christian leader.

Thomistic Spirituality

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 8 "Thomistic Spirituality"

- ▶ Thomistic spirituality is often thought of as a scholastic prayer because it focuses on thought and meditation and orderly cause and effect. A person who practices this type of prayer would look at a theological truth and study it from different angles. The purpose of this is not focused on gaining intellect, but on finding truth and applying it to his or her life while deepening his or her faith. An example of Thomistic Spirituality is *Lectio Divina*. This form of divine reading involves a bible and meditative prayer. A passage of the bible is read, reflected upon, and prayed over in an effort to learn the message the passage contains and how it applies to the individual's life. A saint well-known for the Thomistic Spirituality is St. Thomas Aquinas, a Doctor of the Church, who is considered a great teacher of his time in the medieval era.

Augustinian Spirituality

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 9 "Augustinian Spirituality"

- ▶ This style of prayer focuses on establishing a deep connection with God through feelings and meditations. Those who practice this type of spirituality see themselves in a very personal relationship with God and find evidence of God's love in the world around them. Common forms of Augustinian prayer include Adoration and spiritual journaling. That personal connection to God helps followers grow in love and in faith. A famous saint who is known for living out this spirituality includes St. Augustine, who went from living a life of sin to become one of the most well-known saints in the Catholic Church. Another saint known for this spirituality is St. Margaret Mary of Alacoque, who inspired devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Franciscan Spirituality

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 10 "Franciscan Spirituality"

- ▶ This type of spirituality is inspired by St. Francis of Assisi, who encouraged his followers to go out and actively serve those around them. They preach what Jesus taught through their actions and by living a humble life serving others. These acts of love become a prayer themselves because the people performing these acts are doing so in imitation of Christ, and therefore are becoming closer to him and understanding His mission on Earth. Another example of Franciscan Spirituality is Mother Teresa, who worked on the streets of India tirelessly caring for the poor and outcasts in society. Through her work, she was able to see the face of Jesus in each person she served, helping her grow closer to God and become a leader of service, not only in India, but throughout the world.

Ignatian Spirituality

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 11 "Ignatian Spirituality"

- ▶ This is known as the “Path of Discipline,” because it focuses on order and self-denial, separating oneself from the material world and focusing on God, such as through fasting. Those who practice this spirituality insert themselves into different bible stories and imagine what their role would be in the story to better understand their relationship with Christ. They also tend to want silence during prayer as a way to better focus on God. St. Ignatius of Loyola is well known for this type of prayer. He created the *Examen*, which is a daily prayer consisting of different steps meant to guide someone in a meditation through his day in a structured and organized manner.

Activity

Thomistic
Spirituality

▶ Lectio Divina

Activity

Augustinian
Spirituality

▶ Personal Meditation

Activity

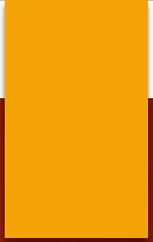
Franciscan
Spirituality

- ▶ “Bless these hands Lord, that work for your glory. Amen.”

Activity

Ignatian Spirituality

- ▶ Who am I in this story? What role do I play?
- ▶ Am I happy with that role? Why? What can I do to change?
- ▶ How does this describe my relationship with God?



Part 4

Made to Witness

Christ-like Leadership

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 12 "Characteristics of Jesus"

- ▶ Our mission as Christians is to bring others to Christ so they can know Him and have a personal relationship with Him. As a part of that mission, we need to be a reflection of Christ so when other people look at us, they do not see us, but Christ acting through us. As this reflection of Christ, we strive to act like Him in all ways possible and imitate His leadership style of loving completely and selflessly.

Reflections of Christ

- ▶ As a leader, Jesus was compassionate, methodical and patient. He led for the common good and was a servant leader. In order to be effective Christian leaders ourselves, we need to strive to adapt these qualities to our everyday lives.
- ▶ **Compassion** - His message is for all people, not just the best or the brightest. Christ would go out of His way to be with the sick, the sinners, and the outcasts of society, and He loved them just as much as He loved everyone else. In the same way, we are called to bring the message of Christ to everyone around us and show the same love and care Christ did.
- ▶ **Methodical** – Christ knew where He was supposed to be and why. He did everything with a purpose. Our leadership should not be accidental. We need to answer God's call to be leaders. We need to lead with purpose and reason, knowing what our mission is and acting upon it.

Reflections of Christ

- ▶ **Patience** – This is a difficult but integral part of leadership. There are several instances in the bible where Jesus is trying to explain something to his disciples and they just do not understand what He is saying, but Jesus never gets mad. In a situation where most people would become frustrated and give up, Christ shows patience. We need to do the same in our own ministry and show patience to those who frustrate us. Often, as leaders, we encounter people who resist or do not progress like they should. Instead of giving up on them, we are called to endure and continue to help them.
- ▶ **Common Good** - One of the most important parts of Christ's ministry was that He led for the common good. Jesus knew His mission on Earth was not about Himself. Rather, He was sent to bring people to conversion, helping them find His Father. In the same way, we need to be humble and know that we are leaders for God. Our mission is about God, not ourselves.
- ▶ **Servant Leadership** - Jesus is the ultimate example of Servant Leadership. He led by example and served others in every way possible. While we may not wash someone else's feet today, we are still called to go out of our way and serve as many people as possible.



Activity

- ▶ Personal vision statements

Witnesses of God

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 13 "Our Four Responsibilities"

- ▶ We do not choose God, God chose us. He shapes us in such a way that every aspect of our life has purpose. God does not make mistakes. He uses the different situations in our life to shape us and help us grow so we can know Him. The more we know God, the more we know His mission for us. As leaders, it is important to remember that God is a part of our leadership. He is with us on every step of our journey, and everything we do should be a reflection of God.
- ▶ The beginning of the Catechism of the Catholic Church states certain responsibilities that Catholics have: to know, to love, and to serve God. Making it to Heaven is our ultimate goal and fourth responsibility. It is achieved when the first three are completed. We were made by God to return to God when our mission on Earth is complete. Our job is to help others make it to Heaven. We do this by being witnesses of Christ's faith and bringing the light of Christ to others. We do so much more than just pointing the way to Heaven – we show them how to live a Godly life. At the same time we are helping others, there are others helping us. Together, we become united in the common goal of attaining eternal life in Heaven.

Holiness versus "Whole"-iness

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 14 "Holiness versus 'Whole'-iness"

- ▶ As we lead each other to Heaven, it is our job to help each other attain not just holiness but also wholeiness.
- ▶ Holiness, or being holy, is when we are in a state of grace with God. Being holy does not matter unless we are whole. To be whole means we are so connected with God that nothing is going to break our relationship with God. Nothing can come between us and God. This is the "whole"-iness the saints have. They know God and are complete with God, and nothing that happens can separate them from Him.
- ▶ Our journey of faith is not a competition. We should not try to outperform each other or succeed when others fail. To go to Heaven, we need to be both holy and whole and help others achieve that, too. This is part of our mission as leaders. We need to do more than just lead others to Christ, we need to help them have a relationship with Him.

Being a Living Witness

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 15 "What Do You Have to Offer?"

- ▶ One way to help others have a relationship with Christ is to be a living witness of that relationship ourselves. To successfully do that, we need to let go of what holds us down and fully embrace Christ. The disciples were more effective fishers using both hands to catch fish rather than with one hand holding on to the boat. In the same way, we need to go out and serve others, to witness to Christ without reservations. Until we fully “let go and let God,” we cannot fully witness to the marvelous works of the Lord.

Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 16 "Safety Nets"

**Additional Material Video: DVD - Ch. 17
"Challenging and Joyful Moments – discussion"**

Discussion

- ▶ What is the most challenging moment you have experienced in the last year?
- ▶ When was the last time you experienced joy (happiness)?
- ▶ How can we use these moments in our lives to witness to Christ?

Technology and Leadership

- ▶ In today's modern world, we are constantly surrounded by technology, and it can be difficult, if not impossible, to go a day without encountering some form of technology. As with anything, there are both positives and negatives to technology. On a global scale, technology is uniting us closer than we have ever been before. At the same time, real-life connections are dwindling as everyone rushes to embrace the electronic world. As a result, the way leaders in faith evangelize is slowly changing.

Disconnect to Connect

- ▶ We are called to evangelize at all times. Technology, though, has become a distraction to the mission of evangelization. It pulls us away from other people and isolates us. The more we rely on technology and using our cell phones and social media to make connections, the further away we become from connecting with other.
- ▶ Successful leaders cannot lead if they are unable to connect with others. We need to disconnect from electronics and focus on interacting with others. This can be as simple as not using phones at the dinner table or turning off electronics at group events. Something as simple as this helps us connect with those around us and creates conversations and real relationships.

Technology and Faith

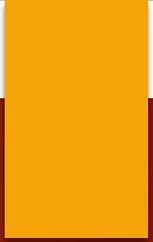
- ▶ There are not only negative aspects to technology. Through the Internet and other electronics, we are more connected than we have ever been before, opening up new means of evangelization. Mother Angelica recognized this potential when she created EWTN, a Catholic news medium that has brought the faith to many people through television and radio.
- ▶ We can use technology in positive ways. Simple things such as refusing to submit ourselves to the lower standards of the Internet and using social media in a mature, Christian way shows others how Christians are meant to act and conduct themselves. We become witnesses of Christ through our actions, no matter how simple.

Activity

▶ Mirror, Mirror

Discussion

1. What are the key values that motivate and inspire you when you make choices?
2. How do others influence us as servant leaders?
3. Can you think of someone in your life who has helped ground you?



Part 5

Made to Hope

Surrendering to God

- ▶ As Christians, we have been blessed by God in numerous ways. He has chosen us and trusts us to fulfill our mission as disciples. It is easy to lose sight of this when we get caught up in the world. To be successful leaders, we need to remember the many ways God has helped us in our lives and the way He continues to provide for us. Without surrendering ourselves to God, it would be impossible to successfully carry out our mission in life.

Never Give Up

- ▶ A lot of Christians seem to have the false idea that because they are faithful and following God's will, their life will be easy, but there may come some trial or hardship. When this happens, it is easy to think God has abandoned us, especially if we have the mindset that life should be easy. This simply is not true. Just like Christ had to suffer during His life on Earth, we too will experience many trials and temptations. It is important to remember that life may be hard, but God does not leave us and He is still with us all the time.

Give God Everything

- ▶ Christ gave us his whole life when He died for us on the cross. He gave up everything so we can be truly happy. In the same way, we need to give everything we are and everything we have for God.
- ▶ Every morning when we wake up, we should offer that day up to God so He can use us and speak through us. When life is great and everything seems to be going according to plan, it can be easy to offer it up. It becomes more difficult to stay focused on God when we are frustrated and upset, feeling empty and alone, and when our plans are not going as we want them to. When we offer these difficult moments up to God, we acknowledge that we are not strong enough to live without Him and we need Him to help us in our lives, especially in our moments of need.
- ▶ It is important to remember that everything we have comes from God. He has blessed us in so many ways that it is sometimes easy to forget this. When we lose sight of these blessings, it becomes easier to lose sight of God. This is one reason why it is important to give everything up to God. When we are dependent on God, because we gave Him everything, we remember that everything we have is because of Him.

Tack Activity



The Power of Love

- ▶ It is easy as leaders to focus on ourselves and forget about the ministry we are called to do. We are called to be humble leaders and place the emphasis on those we serve—not us. To do this, we need to remember that love is key. If we do not love, then it is almost impossible to be a successful leader in faith.

Jesus - The Ultimate Example

- ▶ Throughout his lifetime, Jesus showed us countless examples of His caring love for others, even up to the point of His death. These simple acts of love are not just recorded in the bible because they are good stories. They are included because they are moving and inspirational, motivating us to conversion and inviting us to be leaders. This happens because love is powerful. Christ's love was shown through His servant leadership, where He cared for everyone, even the poor, the sick, and the outcasts. As a leader, Christ not only served many people, but He touched the lives of many, both past and present. This love does not just touch one person and stop. It grows and multiplies, being passed on from person to person.

Called to Love

- ▶ Leaders can often get caught up in the end result of their mission. We want to see how effective our leadership was, how many people we changed and the product of our work. We want to be able to measure the difference we made, but this difference is not always quantifiable, and the effectiveness of our work should not be our primary focus.
- ▶ Our focus should be on love. We are called to love Christ, to love others, and to love ourselves. This love should be our emphasis, not the number of people who heard us or the work we did. Eventually these things will not be remembered. What is remembered is the love we showed others and the relationships that came from that love.

Called to Love

- ▶ God calls each and every one of us because He loves us. In return, we should give that love back to Him through our leadership and ministry to others. The best way to do that is to be a servant leader, leading through love. When we act out of love, we are offering our work up to God in praise and thanksgiving. When we center our mission and our service around loving others, we acknowledge that what we are doing is not for us but for Someone greater than us.
- ▶ When we stay focused on love, we stay focused on the true purpose of God's mission for us. As soon as we shift our focus to the quantifiable things, when we become more interested in our image, and when we care more about our wants and needs, we lose sight of God and our true calling. To be effective leaders in faith, we need to love with the same love Christ showed us.



Activity

- ▶ Spread the Love

People of Hope

- ▶ *“If God is for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:31*
- ▶ As we read in the Book of Job, life may give us great challenges, but God is always with us and providing hope. Our mission from God is far from easy. Because of our faith in God, however, we know that fulfilling this mission is completely worth it. Why? Because we are a people of hope who hope in Christ. This hope tells us that if we remain faithful to Christ, if we listening to His teachings, and carry out His mission we will eventually gain eternal life with Him. This hope is what drives us to trust in God, even when things are not easy.

Jesus Loves You

- ▶ When Christ died on the cross, He died for everybody. He died for the people He knew and walked amongst, for the people who have already lived and died, and for the people who have yet to live. Most importantly, He died for YOU. Jesus died because He loves you and He desires to live with you forever in paradise. He has an important role for you, a job only you can fulfill.
- ▶ Though we are called to carry out our mission as Christians, this does not mean life will be perfect. Everyone encounters different difficulties and roadblocks that sometimes seem impossible to overcome. This can be seen through the different stories of the saints who all struggled with something. But the saints knew God was with them and supported them on every step of the journey. Just like God stuck with the saints through everything, He sticks with us too. When things get difficult, remember how much God loves you. With God on your side, all things are possible.

ELPIS: To Hope

DVD – Ch. 18 Brooke Taylor – "Be Who You're Called to Be"

Ch. 19 Donald Wallenfang, PhD – "Lead with Love"

Ch. 20 Fr. Nathan Cromly, CSJ – "Discovering Peace"

Discussion

- ▶ What does hope mean to you?
- ▶ How would a lack of hope negatively affect leadership?
- ▶ What people or things inspire us to keep going when we are struggling?
- ▶ How can we help other people be hopeful?