

December 16, 2018 – First Sunday of Advent

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED
NOW AND FOREVER!!!

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Five Dysfunctions of a Team.

As we enter into the third week of December, we continue our look at Mr. Lencioni's book *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* and how it can help us develop healthy relationships with others. I still believe that these reflections will also be helpful to non-St. Joseph parishioners who regularly read my writings because most, if not all of us, find ourselves on different teams and the advice Patrick Lencioni gives will be helpful in dealing with the other people on your team and in making your teams more productive.

DYSFUNCTION 3: LACK OF COMMITMENT

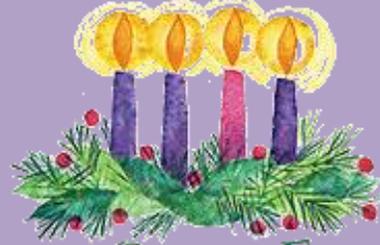
"In the context of team, commitment is a function of two things: clarity and buy-in," according to Mr. Lencioni. According to Patrick Lencioni the "greatest causes of the lack of commitment are the desire for consensus and the need for certainty." We can sometimes get too caught up as leaders in wanting to "sell" our idea that we forget to allow others to express their ideas. When we do this, we may not only miss out on a better idea, but also people find it hard to commit to the idea. The desire for certainty can also cause problems because people may want to "hedge their bets" and therefore don't go all in. We already know that this is against the Gospel where Jesus demands that we follow Him completely.

Most people do not achieve consensus according to Patrick Lencioni is not because everyone could not agree on something because most people know that not everyone will agree on everything all the time. He suggests consensus fails when people do not feel like they were heard. "Great teams ensure that everyone's ideas are genuinely considered which then creates a willingness to rally around whatever decision is ultimately made by the group," according to Patrick Lencioni.

In regards to the need for certainty, Patrick Lencioni writes: "Great teams pride themselves on being able to unite behind decisions and commit to clear courses of action even when there

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

A D V E N T



○ come · ○ come · Emmanuel

Sunday

Is the way that you spread the Gospel of Jesus joyful that inspires others to chance or is it more like a computer virus that tries to take over?

Monday

I will follow this plan of battle before I am captured by the forces of sadness, self-pity and failure -
If I feel depressed I will sing.
If I feel sad I will laugh.
If I feel ill I will double my labor.
If I feel fear I will plunge ahead.
If I feel inferior I will wear new clothes.
If I feel uncertain I will raise my voice.
If I feel incompetent I will remember past successes.
If I feel insignificant I will remember my goals."

Tuesday

"If you have something difficult to do, don't expect people to roll stones out of your way. It is not necessary to go off on a tour of great cathedrals in order to find the Deity. Look within. You have to sit still to do it. Reverence for life is where religion and philosophy can meet and where society must try to go. The misery I have seen gives me strength, and faith in others supports my confidence in the future." – Dr. Albert Schweitzer

is little assurance about whether the decision is correct. That's because they understand the old military axiom that a decision is better than no decision. They also realize that it is better to make a decision boldly and be wrong—and then change direction with equal boldness—than it is to waffle.”

Patrick Lencioni recommends a few different ideas of how to overcome the dysfunction of a lack of commitment. The first is good communication. He recommends that teams are very clear as to how they are going to communicate the decisions that they are making. This is important to avoid fake news and gossip.

The second thing he recommends is setting of deadlines. He makes it clear that ambiguity is the enemy of efficiency.

The third recommendation is that the team take a close look at setting up contingency plans and talking about worst-case scenario upfront. This way no one feels like a plan is being forced upon them without every aspect of the plan having been thought out. “This usually allows them to reduce their fears by helping them realize that the costs of an incorrect decision are survivable, and far less damaging than they had imagine.

Spiritually speaking, I am reminded that nothing can paralyze our relationship with God more than fear. This is why, I believe, that the words “Be not afraid” are the most common phrase in the Bible. When I feel paralyze because I am afraid of making a mistake, I think of Thomas Merton’s prayer:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself, and that I think I am following your will does not mean I am actually doing so.

But I believe the desire to please you does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire in all I am doing. I hope I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Wednesday

Remember God only invites – He never forces. He invited Mary to be a part of His plan. He invites you.

Thursday

"As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others." – Marianne Williamson

Friday

“‘I must do something’ will always solve more problems than ‘something must be done.’” - Anonymous

Saturday

"...[W]e are called to be witnesses of God’s love by the love we extend to others; precursors of his justice by our unfailing commitment to what is right and good; lamps reflecting the light of God’s Christ in our forgiveness, mercy and compassion; harvesters of souls through our humble and dedicated servanthood."



BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

December 16, 2018 Third Sunday of Advent Lectionary: 9 Gospel LK 3:10-18

Spiritual Reflection: *What did you go out to the desert to see? What are you looking for?* Jesus' question takes on particular urgency in the Advent of our lives: As we struggle to make ends meet, have the means become an end in themselves? Has the love and support of family and friends become just another asset? Are we satisfied merely with learning and achievement that we can list on our resumes or do we want to learn and become truly educated human beings? John's call to transform our lives in the things of God and Jesus' Gospel of humble compassion certainly resonate in our broken hearts and despairing spirits - but are we willing to take on the hard work of conversion and re-creation? May we rediscover in this holy season what we want are lives to be for and, with the Messiah's grace,

continue that work of re-creation in every season of our lives.

Spiritual Question:

1. Why do you commit your favorite sin?
2. How do you see yourself in relationship to God?
3. What do your actions reveal to others about your relationship with Jesus.
4. What do you want Jesus to do in your life today?
5. What prevents you from truly believing?



ADVENT PRO-LIFE PRAYER: O shepherd of Israel, hearken, O guide of the flock of Joseph! Rouse your power, and come to save us from the culture of death O Lord of hosts, restore our nation to a nation that respects life in all its stages.

if your face shine upon us, then we shall be safe. O Lord of hosts, how long will you allow your people to contribute to the culture of death? You have fed them with the bread of heaven and given them your divine love to drink in ample measure. Help us to stop fighting over earthly goods and help us stand up for life even if our enemies mock us. O Lord of hosts, restore us, if your face shine upon us, then we shall be safe and we shall once again life in a culture of life.



Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

ADVENT PRAYER FOR FALLEN AWAY CATHOLICS: A Root shall come forth from the stock of Jesse And a Flower shall rise out of his root! And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him — the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness. The people that walked in darkness shall see a great light, For a Child is born to us and a Son is given to us. To Him all power shall be given. His Name shall be: Wonderful One, Strong God, Eternal One, Prince of Peace. He shall sit on the throne of David, And He will found a new Covenant. May this Advent and Christmas Season be a time in which those who have fallen away from the faith may return. - Amen.

CATHOLIC PRAYER:

MEAL PRAYERS FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

BEFORE BREAKFAST

LEADER: The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia!

ALL: And dwelt among us, alleluia, alleluia!



This Week's Trivia

True or False

1. Wreathes at Christmas Time symbolize eternal life.
2. Candy Canes at Christmas Time symbolizes the shepherds that came to see the infant.
3. St. Francis of DeSales is attributed as creating the First manger scene.
4. There were only three wise men.

Last Week's Answer

True or False

1. Mark is the Shortest of the Four Gospel - True
2. Mark has no Christmas Narrative - True
3. Mark travelled with both Peter and Paul but at different times - True
4. Mark was one of the original 12 apostles - False



LEADER: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad,

ALL: Before the face of the Lord, for He comes.

LEADER: Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty. Through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

AFTER BREAKFAST

LEADER: Glory to God in the highest!

ALL: And on earth peace to men of good will, alleluia!

LEADER: The Lord has reigned,

ALL: And He is clothed with beauty.

LEADER: O Almighty God, the Savior of the world, who hast nourished us with heavenly food, we give Thee thanks For the gift of this bodily refreshment which we have received from Thy bountiful mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

BEFORE DINNER

LEADER: All the ends of the earth have seen, alleluia!

ALL: The Salvation of our God, alleluia!

LEADER: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

ALL: The Lord is God and He has shone upon us.

LEADER: Lord, have mercy on us.

ALL: Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

LEADER:

Our Father... as it is in heaven.

ALL: Give us this day...

Amen.

LEADER:

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty. Through Christ our Lord.

AFTER DINNER

LEADER: The goodness of God our Savior has appeared.

ALL: Not by the works of Justice which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us.

LEADER: A sanctified day has shone upon us, alleluia!

ALL: Come, you nations, and adore the Lord!

LEADER: Let us pray. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the new birth in the flesh of Thine only-begotten Son may set us free, whom the old bondage holds under the yoke of sin. Through Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

LEADER: We give Thee thanks, Almighty God, for these and all Thy gifts, which we have received from Thy bounty. Who lives and reigns world without end.

ALL: Amen.





Humor

