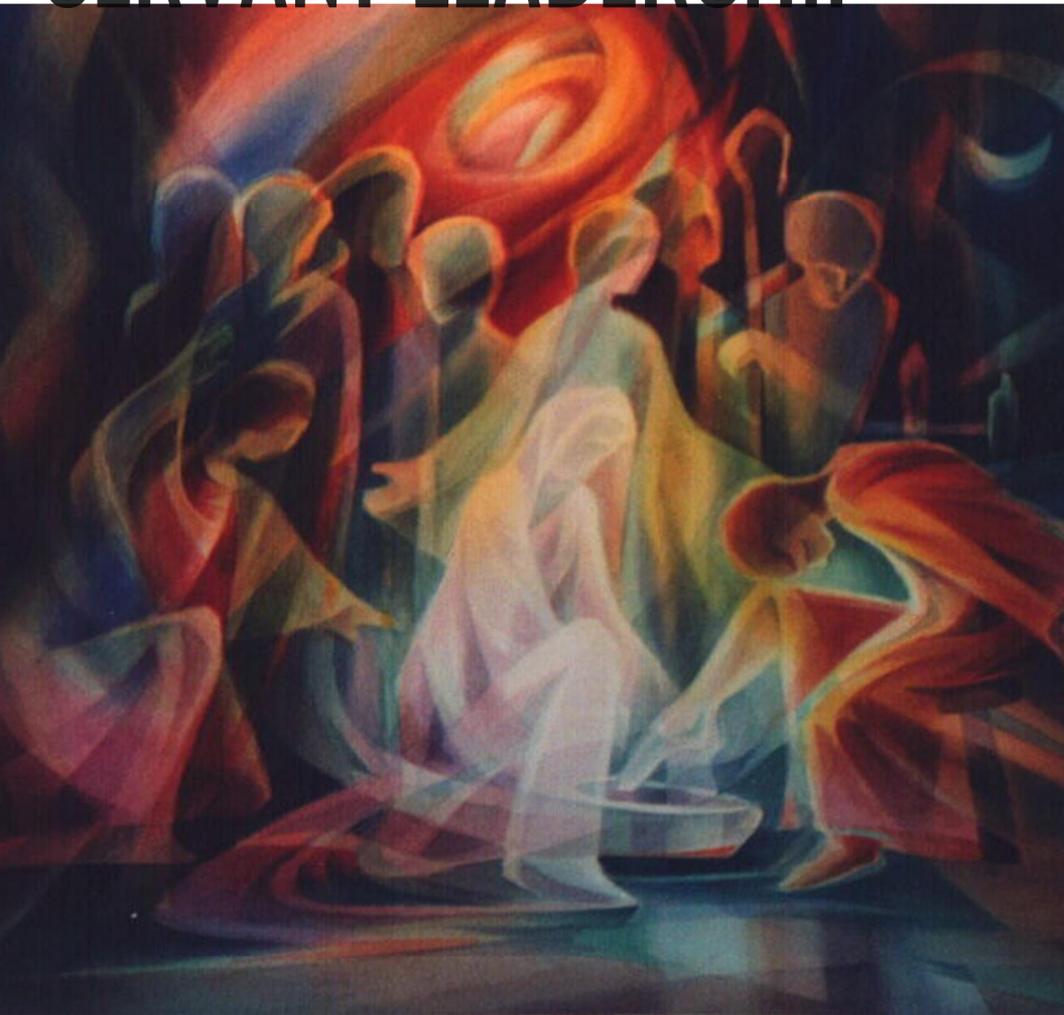


SCHOOL OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP



Learning to receive & respond to God's invitation to love & to serve like Jesus - becoming joyful missionary disciples.

LEARNING COMMUNITY GATHERING #1: Kerygma & Cura Personalis

Gathering Prayer*

We come before you, Holy Spirit,
conscious of our sinfulness,
but aware that we gather in your name.
Come to us, remain with us, and enlighten our hearts.

Thank you for this opportunity today
to say “yes” to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ,
or at least an openness to letting him encounter us,
as individuals and as a community.

Touch our hearts once more.
Help us receive God’s tender mercy
through our own human beauty and frailty,
through a deeper friendship with you,
so that we cannot help but speak of you, point to you,
and make you known.

Enliven in us the ability to heal wounds,
to wash the feet of others,
to take on the smell of the sheep,
to walk through the dark night with them,
so that we can fulfill our calling as a Church,
to be both a field hospital and a shepherdess,
a community of joyful missionary disciples.

We ask this of You who live and reign with the
Father and the Son, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

*Inspired by the Opening Prayer of Vatican II and excerpts from *The Joy of the Gospel*

“Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea,
but the encounter with an event, a person,
which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”
- Pope Benedict XVI

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant Leadership, or loving and serving as Jesus, is way of helping one another become a Church of joyful missionary disciples.

The GOAL of Servant Leadership is to help one another become our truest selves, to become the person (*Imago Dei*) God created us to be. It's about empowering each other to fulfill our callings in life.

The TASKS of Servant Leadership, by order of decreasing priority, involves:

1. Letting God influence (transform, lead, etc.) us to become truly, fully, and humbly ourselves;
2. Empowering others to exercise their baptismal gifts through service;
3. Organizing and planning events and programs (to empower others to serve and live out their callings in life).

The APPROACH of Servant Leadership takes the path of accompaniment through *Cura Personalis* and Empowering Growth.

ACCOMPANIMENT

Walking with others towards God

Accompaniment primarily means “being with” the people we are serving and journeying with them towards God. It involves discerning how the Spirit invites us to actively care for someone, walk with, and empower the person.

CURA PERSONALIS

Care for the Whole Person

Cura Personalis stems from the desire to see and care for a person as God sees and cares for that same person.

It begins with meeting the person for the very first time and continues with ongoing accompaniment, guided by the Holy Spirit.

Our Mission: Becoming A Church of Missionary Disciples

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. *Mt28:19*). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, **anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love**. Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples".

- Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospels*, ¶120

Kerygma

We have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement or kerygma, which needs to be the center of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal. The kerygma is trinitarian. The fire of the Spirit is given in the form of tongues and leads us to believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father's infinite mercy. On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: "Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you." This first proclamation is called "first" not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. It is first in a qualitative sense because it is the *principal* proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment. For this reason too, "the priest – like every other member of the Church – ought to grow in awareness that he himself is continually in need of being evangelized".

All Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the kerygma ...

- Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospels*, ¶164-165

Return to Galilee

(Adapted from Pope Francis & Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, OMI)

The Good News of the Resurrection began with the women who discovered the empty tomb and went away in astonishment after hearing the Risen Jesus say twice: “Tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me” (Mt 28:10).

Why Galilee? What’s Galilee? And how do we get there?

Galilee is *the place where they were first called, where everything began!* To return there, to return to the place where they were originally called. Jesus had walked along the shores of the lake as the fishermen were casting their nets. He had called them, and they left everything and followed him.

For each of us, too, there is a “Galilee” the origin of our journey with Jesus. “To go to Galilee” means something beautiful, it means rediscovering our baptism as a living fountainhead, drawing new energy from the sources of our faith and our Christian experience. To return to Galilee means above all to return to that blazing light with which God’s grace touched me at the start of the journey. From that flame I can light a fire for today and every day, and bring heat and light to my brothers and sisters. That flame ignites a humble joy, a joy which sorrow and distress cannot dismay, a good, gentle joy.

In the life of every Christian, after baptism there is also *a more existential “Galilee”*: the experience of a *personal encounter with Jesus* who called me to follow him and to share in his mission. In this sense, returning to Galilee means treasuring in my heart the living memory of that call, when Jesus passed my way, gazed at me with mercy and asked me to follow him. It means reviving the memory of that moment when his eyes met mine, the moment when he made me realize that he loved me.

Thus Galilee is not simply a geographical location. It is first of all a place in the heart where the dream of discipleship was born. Going back to Galilee, both to the geographical location and to that birth-place of grace in their hearts, enabled them to encounter their Lord

beyond any crucifixion. And just as promised, Jesus appears to them. He doesn't appear exactly as he was before, or as frequently as they would like him to, but he does appear as more than a ghost and a memory. The Christ that appears to them after the resurrection is in a different modality, but he's physical enough to eat fish in their presence, real enough to be touched as a human being, and powerful enough to change their lives forever. To experience the transforming grace of the resurrection involves going back to Galilee, to return to the dream, hope, and discipleship that had once inflamed us but has now been lost through disappointment or disillusionment.

What is my Galilee? Where is my Galilee? Do I remember it? Have I forgotten it? Have I gone off on roads and paths which made me forget it? Lord, help me: tell me what my Galilee is; for you know that I want to return there to encounter you and to let myself be embraced by your mercy.

We need to go back there, to see Jesus risen, and to become witnesses of his resurrection. This is not to go back in time; it is not a kind of nostalgia. It is returning to our first love, in order to *receive the fire* Jesus has kindled in the world and to bring that fire to all people, to the very ends of the earth. It means tapping into our origin story and the foundational grace which grounds our faith.

Prompting Questions:

1. What does going back to Galilee mean for you personally, concretely, at this time in your life? How do you feel about that?
2. Recall a time when you felt God's presence, mercy, or love in a real, tangible, significant way. It does not matter how long ago, or what you've done spiritually since. Try to open yourself to that experience. What happens within when you get in touch with this grace?

First Encounter: Being Present, Connect, Pray

Initial Steps in Genuine Caring

Encounter

1. Take a deep breath & welcome the Spirit. Ask for the grace to be present.
2. **LISTEN attentively to how the person's name is said:** use any mnemonic devices such as repeating the name, alliteration, or association to help with memory retention. Make good eye contact or give a handshake.
3. Smile. It helps both of you to relax & communicates interest and care.
4. **Try to be present & attentive as best as you can.** Give the person your full attention, especially within the first 5 minutes. Show genuine interest. Treat the person as if she or he matters to you. Put away your phone and entrusting God your current worries and preoccupations.
5. Be open to being surprised. The word "encounter" denotes something unexpected. People are a mystery to be encountered, not a problem to be solved.

Connect

6. **Notice any connection** that arises between the two of you. Take note of interests, needs, and/or present concerns that are important to the person. Ask where he or she grew up; inquire about family, hobbies, and special interests. Connect by sharing something important to you.
7. Ask yourself: **"What is unique or special about this person? What is important to her or him?"** Try to affirm, encourage, and draw out this aspect of the person.
8. Notice any biases and prejudices (positive or negative) that arise within you. Be honest (with God and yourself) about any mixed motives to network, get something from the person, etc.

Pray

9. Be open to connecting with God throughout the encounter by being attentive and noticing.
10. Say goodbye deliberately. Show appreciation of the person & of the encounter.
11. Immediately after leaving the person, ask yourself: **"What's memorable about my encounter with this person?"** Make a mental note and remember to reconnect later.
12. **PRAY for the person.** Ask yourself: Does the person have any concerns or needs with which I might lift up to God? Do I notice any hopes or worries for the person that I can entrust or surrender to God? It may be helpful to offer a short prayer like, *"Lord Jesus, how do you invite me to see this person as you see him or her. Please help me."*

*“Love one another as I have loved you.
By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.”
– Jn 13:34-35*

PRAXIS

A. Reading & Noting

1. Read *The Joy of the Gospels*, ¶160-175 (on the “first kerygma” & “personal accompaniment”).
2. If possible, also read ¶1-25 (on the call to a renewing joy).
3. Observe how you were consoled, challenged, or puzzled as you engaged the readings.

B. Practicing & Noting

1. Practice meeting people 2 times/week (using the “First Encounter” suggestions on p. 6) and reflect on the experience using these questions:
 - What’s memorable about the encounter (the person’s uniqueness, desires, hopes, concerns, etc.)
 - How am I invited to be more attentive through the encounter?
2. Journal, using the following prompts, before coming to the next Learning Community gathering:
 - What did I learn about God, myself, and/or people I met in the past weeks (regardless of how often or how “successful” my practice was)?
 - As I practice meeting people, do I find myself trusting God (following the Spirit) or relying on myself (making things happen) more? How so?

*“We are called to witness a new way of living together
in fidelity to the Gospel ... by clinging to the love of God
... and entering a revolution of tenderness.”*

– Pope Francis