

Principles of Christian Leadership

Sponsored by
Academy Leadership
July 23, 2002

Agenda

Tuesday

2:30 - 4:00

The Role of a Parish Leader

Thursday

11:00 - 12:30

Communicating more effectively while dealing with challenging personalities

Premise One:

- Leaders are made, not born.
 - While some people are endowed with more natural abilities than others, it is entirely possible to develop individual and parish leadership skills and improve significantly on the journey to Orthodox Christian Leadership.

Put another way...

- Anyone can learn to lead.
 - Simple behavioral changes like managing your calendar & time, communicating more effectively, listening more closely, always setting the “right” example, and being consistent, can positively impact all those you lead, mentor, coach, and love.

Premise Two:

- Leadership is important.
 - Just as in the secular world, leadership is important in a parish.

Can you tell us why?

Premise Three:

- Every Parish should have a Parish Leadership Framework

The Role of a Parish Leader

Today's Performance Objectives

- Understand a working definition of “Orthodox Christian Leadership” .
- Introduce *Oriented Leadership*
- Compare and contrast “Leader” examples.
- Create a Parish Leadership Framework, and understand leadership as a journey.

Leadership According to *Oriented Leadership*

(Michael T. McKibben and Benjamin D. Williams)

“Christian Leadership in action is perceiving and articulating the vision of the Kingdom of God and effectively defining and communicating its incarnation, following Christ’s example of service.”

Oriented Leadership

- The Trinitarian Model
- Hierarchical Conciliarity
- Unity as a Communion of Love
- Kingdom-Centered “We must walk on earth and live in the Kingdom”
- Informed by Vision
- Personhood, stewardship, servant leadership

The Trinitarian Model

- As Orthodox Christians, we cannot explain the world and mankind without reference to the Holy Trinity.
- “...the Father is the house, the Son is the door, the Holy Spirit is the key.”
 - St. Simeon
- Every divine action begins with the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit.

Hierarchical Conciliarity

- “In Orthodox theology, one cannot speak of hierarchy without also speaking of conciliarity.”
- Hierarchy is the structure of decision- making, while conciliarity is the dynamic of communication. (collective decision-making)
- “Human organizations need the mutual accountability inherent in hierarchical conciliarity.”

Unity as a Communion of Love

- The Holy Trinity is characterized by peace and joy because it is a communion of love.
- “Leadership ... must include peace, joy, and love.”

Kingdom-Centered Leadership

- “...the Kingdom has come in Jesus Christ; it comes now and is present in the Church; and it shall come at the end when Christ will fill all things with Himself.” - Fr. Schmemmann
- “Christian leaders have the responsibility of leading the members of Christ’s Body toward and into that Kingdom...nowhere else.”
- “Leadership holds special sacramental significance because it includes the opportunity and responsibility to serve and to be the channel for communion, love, and grace.”

Informed by Vision

- In the Orthodox Church vision has its source in the Kingdom, and is defined by the Body of Christ with the help of its leaders.
- Any group of people trying to accomplish any task will succeed to the extent that they have a shared vision.
- Vision needs to be incarnated from the eternal and divine at the local and human level, without losing a single attribute of either.

Personhood

- **Personhood:**
 - Individualism is the complete opposite of divine personhood, which is characterized by love, unity, and communion.
 - “Empty your mind of any thoughts that you are deserving of great things, or that any person is beneath you.” --St. Basil
 - “Become what you are, find Him who is already yours, listen to Him who never ceases speaking to you, and own Him who already owns you” - St. Gregory of Sinai

Stewardship, and Servant Leadership

- **Called to be Stewards:**
 - **Acceptance** (that everything is a gift from God)
 - **Freedom** (to choose not to sin)
 - **Life in the Spirit** (which is characterized by behavior that uses and nurtures time, talents, and treasures entrusted to us by God)
- **Servant Leaders:** “what Christ taught us to be.”

The Gospel According to St. Mark (10: 42-45)

... But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, " You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His Life a ransom for many."

Orthodox Christian Leadership is...

(Michael T. McKibben and Benjamin D. Williams)

- “ ... a God-given responsibility. It is a part of our stewardship responsibility. And it is a gift given to each person.”
- “ ...servanthood, as revealed by Christ, restoring and affirming Trinitarian personhood”
- “ ...concerned with God and His Kingdom and His People.”
- “ ...enabling persons to become all they were created to be in the image and likeness of God.”
- “ ...the responsibility of all and the charge of some.”

Now that we have explored a definition of Orthodox Christian leadership, let's look at:

Other Examples

This “Leadership Thing”

“We didn’t learn about leadership in university or business school. Instead, we learned how to manage - to plan, organize, direct, and control.

Directing and controlling is about things – things like capital, resources, and systems.

Leadership is about people and requires a different set of skills – influencing, explaining, listening, and developing, among others.

Effective leaders know that people are an asset we can enhance and develop, rather than a liability to be controlled and diminished.” (George Bush)

Leadership According to John Gardner

“Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual or leadership team induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers.”

No Easy Victories

Leadership According To Warren Bennis

(Distinguished Professor of Organizational Behavior at USC)

“Leaders have a significant role in creating the state of mind that is the society. They can serve as symbols of the moral unity of the society. They can express the values that hold the society together. More important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and unite them in pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts.”

Leadership:

(Academy Leadership's Definition)

The process of influencing people -- by providing...

- purpose
- direction
- motivation

while *operating* to accomplish the mission and *improving* the organization.

Tasks

1. Define leadership and establish the foundation for understanding Orthodox Christian leadership.
2. Describe the most effective leader you know.
3. Describe the least effective leader you know.
4. Develop a Parish Leadership Framework.

Exercise 1: How Would You
Describe Your Most Effective and
Least Effective Leader?

Responses from Leadership Traits Exercise

06/01/02 Connecticut Deanery Meeting

"Most Effective" Leaders:

*Motivate
show Courage
give Recognition
are Consistent
are Gentle and not demeaning
are Confident
Lead by Example
are Knowledgeable
are Concerned for others
are Patient Coaches
are Obedient to God
are Humble and have no ego
set Goals and follow-up
seek a "Quality of Faith"
are Organized*

*Communicate effectively
are good Teachers
Understand People and like them
have Clarity
make it "look easy"
have Core Values and Standards
are Trustworthy
live "Servanthood"
Inspire and Encourage
Open your view
have a Vision
are Accessible
take Ownership and
Responsibility
are good "Stewards"
are Honest and have Integrity*

Responses from Leadership Traits Exercise

06/01/02 Connecticut Deanery Meeting

"Least Effective" Leaders:

are inconsistent

are untruthful

are not compassionate

are selfish

lack humility

are disorganized

measure success in \$

are non-communicative

have own agenda

micro-manage

are never supportive

are anti-every new idea

are authoritarian

are arbitrary

are distrustful of others

"waffle" on issues

lack discernment

are demeaning

Leadership:

(Academy Leadership's Definition)

The process of influencing people -- by providing...

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while *operating* to accomplish the mission and *improving* the organization.

Providing Purpose

- Give people a reason for doing things that need to be done.
- Focus attention and effort on the task at hand.
- Ensure complete understanding of your *intent*.

Provide Direction

- Establish what right looks like; hold people accountable.
- Set goals - "*SMART*" goals.
- Plan - determine the *what, how, when*; identify tasks and sequence; develop the schedule.
- Make decisions and solve problems; explain your decisions and problem solving methodology.
- Supervise and evaluate.
- Teach, coach, and train.

Provide Motivation

- Understand individual differences.
- Serve as the role model.
- Build cohesive work teams.
- Reward and punish.
- Install a “generator” in people, not a “battery.”

Operating

Actions taken to influence others to achieve the short-term goal of accomplishing tasks and goals. This is normally accomplished by doing the tried and true tasks of planning, preparing, executing, and assessing.

Improving

Actions to learn from successes and failure. To become introspective and identify what needs to be sustained and improved in order to find better ways or or even better things to do. These actions are designed for the long-term, although they can be taken within the short-term to propel the Parish toward achieving its vision.

Examples of Leaders

- American Saints
 - St. Innocent
 - St. Herman
 - St. Alexis
 - St. Rafael
- Clergy
 - Bishops
 - Priests & Deacons
 - Monastics
- Lay Leaders
 - Music Directors
 - Council Members
 - Teachers
 - Altar Servers
 - Parishioners
- Secular Examples
 - Politics & Government
 - Armed Forces
 - Business
 - Law Enforcement
 - Health Service
 - Life Saving and Safety
 - Education
 - Judicial
 - Sports and Entertainment

Exploring Orthodox Christian Leadership

- What are the barriers to strengthening leadership in an Orthodox parish?

Exploring Orthodox Christian Leadership

- Is the role of Orthodox parish leader unique when compared to other Christian denominations and might this be relevant when converts assume parish leadership roles?
- What are the leadership roles for clergy and laity in an Orthodox Christian Parish?
- What actions can parishes take to increase the effectiveness of their leadership?

Developing a Parish Leadership Framework

Example: A Parenting Framework

- Demonstrate love daily in word and action.
- Treat my sons with the respect and dignity I expect from them.
- Teach how to determine right from wrong; stress the values of honesty, integrity and trust. Ensure understanding that trust is hard to regain once lost.
- Encourage independence and ensure they honor the interests of others.
- Teach them to “fish” rather than giving them a “fish.”

A Parish Leadership Framework

A collection of general principles that guide a Parish's actions. It provides a frame of reference for leader actions.

Benefits include...

- Clarity on your values and priorities, based on Orthodox foundations and your parish vision.
- Minimize second-guessing by parishioners
- Focus for Parish Council and Committees
- Foundation for trust, confidence, and love.

Exercise 2: Develop a Parish Leadership Framework

A Parish Challenge:

1. Define leadership for yourselves with the Orthodox foundation in mind.
2. Describe an effective Christian leader in terms of Be, Know, Do.
3. Prioritize characteristics and identify the top three to five.
4. Analyze selves - how closely do you match the characteristics of an effective leader?
5. Write all of the above as if you were explaining it to your 10 year old.
6. Set aside for a week and come back to it. Add/delete and modify and let it sit for another week. In the third week, finalize.

What to do with Your Leadership Framework?

- Publish it - share it with your parishioners, Diocese, and community.
- Discuss it - engage everyone in a dialogue.
- Live it! - Lead by example!

You Should Also Think About Your...

- Parish Purpose (Mission)- *why do we exist?*
- Parish Vision- *what will our Parish look like in 5 years?*
- Parish Plan - *what are we doing this year to ensure we achieve our vision?*
- Parish Values - *such as honesty, commitment, respect for others.*
- Parish Priorities - *what's important*
- Parish Operating Principles - *description of how you will carry out your responsibilities.*
- Parish Non-negotiables - *what you will demand and what you will not tolerate.*

In Summary...

- Leaders are made, not born.
- “Leadership, vision, management, goals” are not just non-spiritual business ideas.
- Leadership skills can be learned and developed by Servant Leaders.
- Lead yourself first, then lead others.
“become what you are...” (St. Gregory of Sinai)
- Build and convey a Parish Leadership Framework, for you and those you lead, mentor, coach, and love.

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Related References:

- ***Oriented Leadership***: Michael T. McKibben & Benjamin D. Williams
- ***Orthodox Christian Meetings***: Michael T. McKibben

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