



CENTRE FOR MISSIONARY LEADERSHIP

Expanding the Capacity of Community

Harnessing the Gifts of Individuals for Mission

Rev Dr Chris Ryan MGL

Inspire us to give
generously of
ourselves, so that
people may be drawn
into the mystery of
love, and experience
the fullness of life.



A Recent Experience



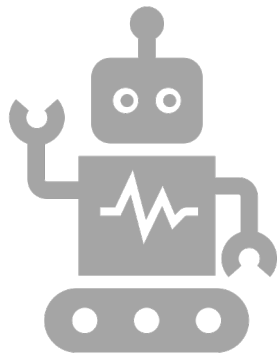
A Common Refrain ...



Is there a problem with the term “*volunteers*” when it comes to Church?

Yes ...

if by volunteers we think about
inter-changeable cogs in a machine ...



No ...

if we value the strengths, talents, and
charisms of individuals within our
community ...



Synodality

- The nature of the Church: Mystery, Communion, and Mission
- “The Church ... is mystery because the very life and love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the gift gratuitously offered to all those who are born of water and the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 3:5), and called to relive the very communion of God and to manifest it and communicate it in history (mission)” (Christifidelis Laici 8).



Synodality

Synodality is

the methodology of communion

undertaken for the sake of the Mission

(to draw all into the mystery of the Triune God)



Drawing upon the Gifts of God for the Mission

- Strengths – a natural aptitude for a behaviour, skill or disposition
- Talents – a strength cumulatively employed becomes a talent
- Charisms – a supernatural gift given by the Holy Spirit to build up the Church for the sake of the mission



The Holy Spirit's Gifts

- The first gift the Holy Spirit gives is the Holy Spirit – the divine deifying indwelling of God
- Sanctifying grace (make us holy): wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord (Confirmation)
- Through the other sacraments
- Charisms – to build up the Church



What are Charisms?

- 1 Cor 12:1-7
 - *Charisma* (Gk): a gift freely bestowed
 - *Pneumatika* (Gk): Spiritual gifts
 - "different kinds of service"
 - Different kinds of working"
 - Manifestations of the Spirit
- Heb 2:4 "distributions of the Spirit"



Different Biblical List of Gifts

- 1 Cor 12:8-10 – word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues (spiritual gifts or *pneumatika*)
- Rom 12:6-8 – prophecy, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy
- 1 Pet 4:8-11 – hospitality, preaching, service,
- Eph 4:8-11 – apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds (pastors), teachers (*doma* in Gk): office-charism



Charisms in the Catechism

[G]race also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work,

to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church....

There are furthermore special graces, also called charisms after the Greek term used by St. Paul and meaning "favor," "gratuitous gift," "benefit."

Whatever their character ... charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church.

They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church.

(CCC 2003)



Lumen Gentium 12

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, "allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills", He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank.

By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit".



Lumen Gentium 12 Continued

These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church.

Extraordinary gifts are not to be sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from their use; but judgment as to their genuineness and proper use belongs to those who are appointed leaders in the Church, to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good.



Discerning Charisms in the Life of the Faithful

- Charisms are given to the faithful at baptism-confirmation, and for a new personal mission
- Evidence of charisms in someone's life tend to emerge as one embraces the vocation to missionary discipleship
- Charism are a clue to discerning one's state of life vocation, but especially one's personal vocation
- Laypeople exercise their charisms in the world (lay vocation, and not just in the parish)
- A tool for discernment can be helpful – Called and Gifted Program (Siena Institute)



Discerning Charisms in the Life of the Parish

- Priests are ordained to teach, sanctify, and lead
- An important dimension of priestly leadership is the identification and coordination of charisms of the faithful
- Priests possess personal charisms, which assist them in their office, but other people with different charisms are required for the mission.



Charisms are for Mission

- Charisms build up the Body of Christ so that the Church may be the sacrament of salvation
- When people are exercising their charisms in concert with each other a “matrix of conversion” is created (Donald Gelpi SJ)
- The Lay Faithful’s first ‘location’ to use their charisms is in the world (not the parish).
- But this does not exclude their use in parish ministries either



We Need to Help People Identify their Charisms

- Start with where people are gifted rather than where the parish or ministry's need is
- Help people discover their charisms and gifts – Called and Gifted, Strengths Finder, VOPS – Predictable Success by Les Mckeown, Working Genius by Pat Lencioni
- Preach about spiritual gifts



Recruiting Volunteers

- The church is a volunteer organization
- Volunteer organizations are struggling
- Lot to learn from those organizations that are thriving
- Volunteers still get 'paid' – the satisfaction, meaning, to be found in serving



What is the No. 1 Reason People Volunteer?

- They were asked
- But people also want to serve when they come alive in their faith – they become “intentional disciples” (Sherry Weddell)
- Evangelisation does not have to precede ministry but it often does



Casting a Vision for Serving in Ministry

- Serving is an important part of discipleship
- It's actually an element of worship
- It's an expression of the Body of Christ – Everyone has a role
- It's a share in the mission – co-laboring with Jesus and cooperating with the Holy Spirit
- “Everyone is called to serve according to their gifts and their capacity”



Paid Staff and Volunteers

- Key role for staff is actually to help equip and form volunteers
- All staff
- But it's great to have a 'point person' – A coordinator of volunteers
 - Their primary responsibility is not to find volunteers
 - But to help everyone in the parish understand how to support and encourage volunteer development



The Ask

- **Match Needs of the Ministry with Gifts and Passions of Potential Volunteers**
 - asking needs to be normal and expected
 - emphasize the larger relationship, the importance of doing significant work together
 - Tell them its ok to say no
- **Volunteers Recruit Volunteers:**
 - many recruiters rather than one
 - happy volunteers love their ministry and tell others
 - prospective volunteers seeing your current volunteers in action is the best recruiting tool you have



Give People a First Look

- Sign up for a first look on a website
- Offer options
- Volunteer tour
- Position description!
- Talk and ask questions
- Follow up with email or phone call
- A test run
- An exit plan



Affirm Volunteers

- give the credit to the volunteers
- lots of affirmation, only a little constructive feedback
- personal encouragement



Resource, Celebrate, Support

1. Resource

- Training
- Books
- Meeting rooms
- Tools for the ministry

2. Celebrate

3. Support

- Check in regularly
- This is about relationship
- Be there when they need you



Create a Leadership Pipeline

- **In our discipleship pathway:**
 - Alpha – helper, host
 - Life Groups – different roles – incubator for ministry/leadership
- **For a ministry:**
 - Have an initial step
 - Then several other roles of increasing responsibility
 - Move from responsibility for a specific task to responsibility for the outcome



Questions



For more information: www.aretecentre.org

