

Section Director Training Course Part 1: The Mission of the Section Director



Gospel Reflection: John2: 1-12

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." (And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it.

And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him. After this, he and his mother, (his) brothers, and his disciples went down to Capernaum and stayed there only a few days.

Reflection: Mary, make us servant leaders like you.

In Mary we see true servant leadership:

- She is present. Mary is fully involved in the moment and gives those she is with her full attention. Mary is joyful, kind and positive. She is at the wedding, celebrating, ensuring everyone has what they need to have fun.
- Prayerful. “They have no wine.” Praying for those around her with boldness and trust, listening to the response of God, reflecting on it in her heart and following his will. Launching the servants as apostles “Do whatever he tells you to.” Working with a “team” to accomplish the goals of charity instead of doing everything herself. Forming formators who will give witness to Christ’s work through them.
- She stays in the company of Jesus and his apostles. Mother of the Church and our mother, mother of Christ. We are part of the communion of saints as well, leading RC within the Church.
- Mary has a deep attention to charity. Anticipating the needs of those around her, quietly assisting them. Building up those around her.

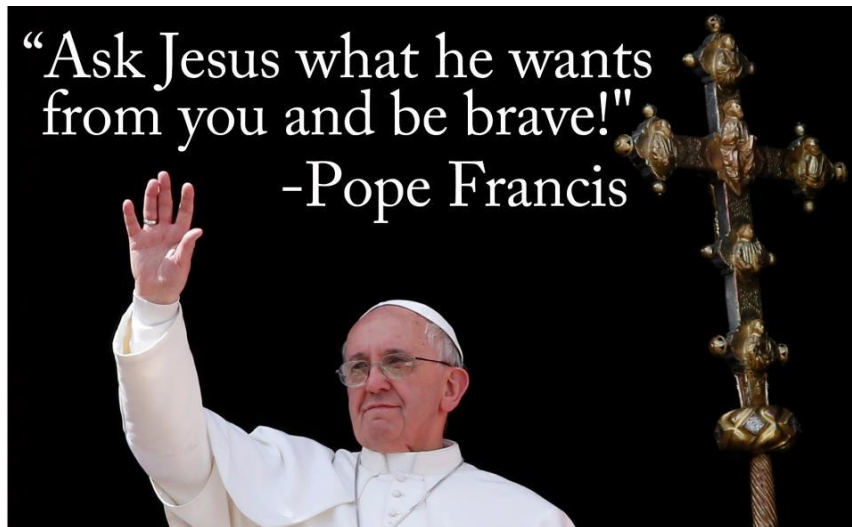
Mary- our mother and our model- a leader- She leads us along the path of faith, not in a theoretical way, but by making us see that life is a gift and a mystery of love. She leads us to hope, so that the true joy of following God’s Will may always overcome our moments of difficulty. She leads us to charity, because we see in her a mirror of the goodness and love of Christ

Mary is a servant leader. She leads in the imitation of her son, whose leadership was from the throne of the Cross. The gospel shows us many styles of leadership, from Herod, to Pontius Pilot, to Caiphaz, to Christ. It also shows us the leadership mistakes we can fall into even as followers of Christ:

And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant that we may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" (Mark 10:36-38)

Section directors accept the call to follow Christ by living as servant and sacrifice, just as Mary did.

The Holy Father is another model of Catholic servant leadership. He holds the title of “Servant of the Servants of God”.



Excerpts from Joy of the Gospel:

Of course, all of us are called to mature in our work as evangelizers. We want to have better training, a deepening love and a clearer witness to the Gospel. In this sense, we ought to let others be constantly evangelizing us. But this does not mean that we should postpone the evangelizing mission; rather, each of us should find ways to communicate Jesus wherever we are.

What has helped you to live and given you hope is what you also need to communicate to others. (PP. 97-98)

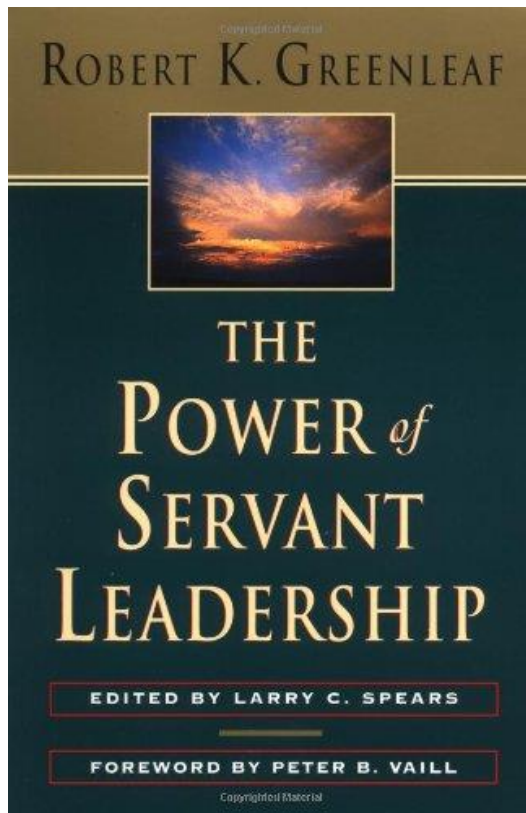
An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people’s daily lives; it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary, and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others. Evangelizers thus take on the “smell of the sheep” and the sheep are willing to hear their voice. An evangelizing community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. Faithful to the Lord’s gift, it also bears fruit. An evangelizing community is always concerned with fruit, because the Lord wants her to be fruitful. (P. 22)

It would be wrong to see it as a heroic individual undertaking. God takes the initiative; “he has loved us first” (1 John 4:19) and he alone “gives the growth” (1 Cor 3:7). This conviction enables us to maintain a spirit of joy in the midst of a task so demanding and challenging that it engages our entire life. (PP. 11-12)

[I wish to] encourage and guide the whole Church in a new phase of evangelization, one marked by enthusiasm and vitality [and] a definite style of evangelization which I ask you to adopt in every activity which you undertake. In this way, we can take up, amid our daily efforts, the biblical exhortation: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say: Rejoice” (Phil 4:4). (P. 17)

Robert Greenleaf was the pioneer of the idea of Servant leadership in modern organizations.

He defines the servant leader as follows:



“The Servant Leader is Servant first... it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, first.

That person is sharply different from someone who wants to lead first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...

The leader first and the servant first are two extreme types...the difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other’s needs are being served.”

The best test of this, and most difficult to administer is:

- Do those served grow as persons?
- Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”

10 Characteristics of the Servant Leader

Larry Spears, who worked with Greenleaf and edited his work relates:

After some years of carefully considering Greenleaf's original writings, I have identified a set of ten characteristics of the servant leader that I view as being of critical importance—central to the development of servant-leaders. My own work currently involves a deepening understanding of the following characteristics and how they contribute to the meaningful practice of servant leadership. These ten characteristics include:

Listening

Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills.

Although these are also important skills for the servant leader, they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. The servant leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps to clarify that will. He or she listens receptively to what is being said and unsaid. Listening also encompasses hearing one's own inner voice. Listening, coupled with periods of reflection, is essential to the growth and well-being of the servant leader.

Empathy

The servant leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of co-workers and colleagues and does not reject them as people, even when one may be forced to refuse to accept certain behaviors or performance. The most successful servant leaders are those who have become skilled empathetic listeners.

Healing

The healing of relationships is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant leadership is the potential for healing one's self and one's relationship to others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to help make whole those with whom they come in contact. In his essay, *The Servant as Leader*, Greenleaf (1977/2002) writes, "There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share" (p. 50).

Awareness

General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Awareness helps one in understanding issues involving ethics, power, and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. It's wisdom. As Greenleaf (1977/2002) observed: "Awareness is not a giver of solace—it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace in what is around them. They have their own inner serenity" (p. 41).

Persuasion

Another characteristic of servant leaders is reliance on persuasion, rather than on one's positional authority, in making decisions within an organization. The servant leader seeks to convince others, rather than coerce compliance. This particular element offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant leadership. The servant leader is effective at building consensus within groups. This is what Pope Francis was talking about when he said that he doesn't 'prosthelitize, he evangelizes'. It's being a respectful living witness to truth instead of a hammer hanging over someone's head.

Conceptualization

Servant leaders pray. Listening for God's plans which are always larger than our own. We tend to put him in a box according what we see as our own possibilities strengths and weaknesses. Instead, servant leaders put their boxes aside and seek to nurture their abilities to dream great dreams.

The ability to look at a problem or a need from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many leaders, this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. The traditional leader is consumed by the need to achieve short-term operational goals, the burning needs and urgent deadlines. The leader who wishes to also be a servant leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking. Servant leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day operational approach.

Foresight

Prudence. The application of right reason to action. Closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define, but easier to identify. One knows foresight when one experiences it. Foresight is a characteristic that

enables the servant leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future. It is also deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. A gift to pray for.

Stewardship

“Holding something in trust for another”. Servant leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion, rather than control. A charism is something we hold as a steward. Our gifts are given to us as stewards for others. How often have we had an experience, good or bad, that later has been of great value in helping someone else? Or we have been given something concrete or a virtue that we see later was meant to be at the service of another, that the true value of anything we have is in how we can give it away to help others?

Commitment to the Growth of People

Servant leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual. The servant leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything in his or her power to nurture the personal and apostolic of everyone they work with. In practice, this can include (but is not limited to) concrete actions such as making time available for personal and professional development and to simply sit and listen to people, taking a personal interest in the ideas and suggestions from everyone, encouraging team involvement in decision-making. In Regnum Christi we hold the principle of personal attention as a hallmark of helping others grow.

Building Community

There is a dramatic decrease in the sense of true community in our society. We are made for communion and it is something we have to proactively work for in our fragmented world. This awareness causes the servant leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those in the institution. In Regnum Christi we speak of a spiritual family. Members of a family are not coworkers or collaborators- they exist to love and support and encourage the others, to help each other become who each is called to be and live the mission they are each given.¹



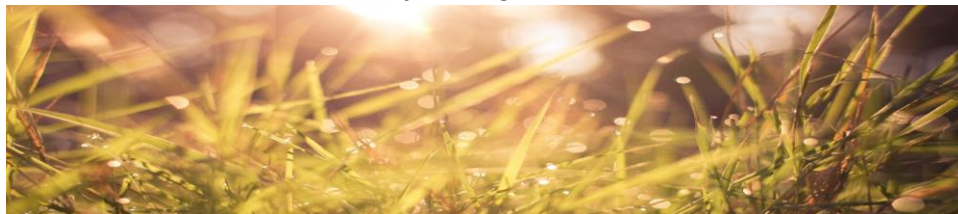
The Mission of the Regnum Christi Section Director as Servant Leader

A Regnum Christi Section Director is called to be a spiritual father or mother, to lead through service and love, to help others become fully who they are called to be through their vocation to Regnum Christi, not motivating people to ‘work harder,’ but to ‘reach higher’. Section directors cooperate with the action of Grace, letting God be the protagonist and following his plan.

“Section directors should be persons of prayer, faithful to the Statutes, enthusiasts for the Kingdom of Christ, well-acquainted with the apostolic methods and experienced in applying them, humble, dependent, prudent, responsible, hard-working, detached from themselves, and ready to sacrifice themselves and all their energy to expand the Kingdom of Christ”. In addition, it is particularly helpful for their mission if they have a healthy spirit of fun, joy, patience, an enthusiastic preaching style, and the capacity to draw closer to people in the more relaxed moments of team life.

The fundamental virtues of a section director are passionate love for Christ and zeal for souls. Thus, every section director is called to grow every day in his relationship of love for Christ; he must enliven his zeal to attract many souls to Christ, and infuse them with the same passionate love for the Church and for mankind, his brothers and sisters. “

2004 Statutes and Rules of the Regnum Christi Movement, n. 863



Characteristics of Servant Leadership in the RC Section Director

▶ **A deep life of prayer and service**

The Way of the Heart by Henri Nouwen is a great resource for those in ministry who struggle to deepen their own spiritual lives and intimacy with Christ, while giving of themselves in apostolate

▶ **Forming and launching formators**

Do, help do, let do. A leader is rising tide that lifts all ships. RC Section directors form, accompany and support members in developing their spiritual lives and living their apostolic calling.

▶ **Bringing out the good in others and in the Movement**

Leadership formation, mystique of Charity

▶ **Being an encourager and motivator**

A Pillar, a spiritual mother

▶ **Listening vertically and horizontally**

Discernment and community

▶ **Collaborating in formation with legionaries and consecrated**

Communication and sharing gifts proper to each branch



Practical Application

Take some time to reflect on the 10 attributes of servant leadership. In the worksheet. Answer the following questions:

1. How do you see the characteristics of servant leadership within the Charism of Regnum Christi?
2. Who in your life has led you or has been an example of this for you in each way?
3. How are you personally called to live each attribute as a section director?
4. What are the top 3 areas you are going to focus on and with whom?

ⁱ Larry Spears, Character and Servant Leadership: Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders, *Concepts and Connections*, Volume 8, Issue 3, 2000