



Welcome to Module 4A - Faith Leadership



Opening Prayer

Let us pause and call to mind
God's presence within and among us,
today and always.

Brief pause

God of mercy and infinite love,
we place ourselves before You.
Help us to be open to Your Word,
responsive to Your Spirit,
and alert to Your call.
May Your peace be with us.

We make this prayer through
Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Introduction



Faith leaders require compassion, conviction and courage. They articulate and support the mission and vision of the organisation and reflect knowledge, behaviours and attitudes which model the Gospel message.

They ensure that decisions are taken with an understanding of humanity and the human condition. We see examples of great courage, conviction and compassion in the faith leadership of Marcellin and in the continuing work of Marists around the world, to stand steadfastly with those who are the most neglected in society and to make Jesus Christ known and loved.

Our objectives for this module are to:

- develop an understanding of what the term 'faith leadership' means in the context of our Marist mission.
- explore 'faith leadership' in terms of culture, subsidiarity, co-responsibility, stewardship and synodality, dialogue and ethics.



Faith Leadership



Faith leadership connects broadly to the spirituality of the workplace which impacts on the culture and atmosphere. The example of the faith leader helps to motivate others and is critical to the formation of the culture of an organisation. Spiritual well-being is a critical element in workplace culture and the faith leader, in her or his capacity to influence, will make an essential contribution as to how the organisation's values, satisfaction and integrity are experienced.

Faith leadership incorporates many practical aspects. Richard Rohr, OFM, offers some insights here into what servant-hearted, nondual faith leaders know and practise. They:

- *are seers of alternatives.*
- *move forward by influencing events and*

inspiring.

- *people more than by ordering or demanding.*
- *learn to study, discern, and search together with others for solutions.*
- *know that wisdom is "the art of the possible." The key question is no longer "How can I problem solve now and get this off my plate?" It is "How can this situation achieve good for the largest number and for future generations?"*
- *keep prayerfully offering new data.*
- *continue finding and sharing new data and possibilities until they can work toward consensus from all sides.*
- *want to increase both freedom and ownership among the group.*

In short, good faith leaders must have a certain capacity for thinking beyond polarities and tapping into full, embodied knowing (prayer). They have a tolerance for ambiguity (faith), an ability to hold creative tensions (hope), and an ability to care (love) beyond their own personal advantage.

(Richard Rohr <https://cac.org/creative-leaders-2018-06-06/>)

(For further reading <https://www.erebb.org/inspiring-leadership/what-every-good-leader-knows-richard-rohr/>)

Activity

Is there someone who comes to mind for you who is a true inspiration and example of an authentic and contemplative leader? Why?

Or

Choose one of these points that stands out for you and discuss.

Or

Take 5 minutes to align your own attributes using the attributes outlined by Richard Rohr above. Where are your strengths? Where do you see potential for your own growth as a faith leader?

We will continue to explore aspects that impact on faith leadership under these headings:

- Culture
- Champagnat Marist Spirituality and Culture
- Subsidiarity
- Co-responsibility
- Stewardship
- Synodality,
- Reflection, Discernment and Ethical Thinking



Culture

Faith leaders pay attention to the culture of the organisation since it is a basic building block in the success and future of an organisation. In any faith organisation we would expect to see leaders who support a culture that is ethical, who are aware of the impact that their decisions have on those within the organisation and oversee processes and procedures that exhibit a high level of accountability and transparency.

The Institute of Company Directors reminds us that as leaders (and especially faith leaders) we need to be aware of the simple fiduciary responsibility to act in the best interests of the other and not in our own interests. This is certainly in keeping with an understanding that our motivation is first and foremost based on an alignment with Gospel values.

We would expect to see basic tenets of culture supported by faith leaders. Aspects of safety, vulnerability, and purpose are foundational in healthy and well-functioning culture.



These aspects allow members of the organisation to feel valued and appreciated, to have a sense of belonging and connection, to speak openly and honestly and to give their full energy and attention to their work. (Coyle, 2018)

Culture also impacts on the experience of an individual's personal dignity. The dignity of the human person - which Pope Francis states is the foundation principle of Catholic social teaching - attempts to apply Gospel values to the way people live and act in the world.

Activity - Watch the first 50 seconds of this video which speaks about the dignity of the human person.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXTHLQKHcNw&feature=emb_logo

From this principle of the dignity of the human person flow the ingredients for a healthy, safe, ethical, purposeful and transparent culture. The culture of an organisation or society relies strongly on relationships that are built. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis speaks of the importance of the web of relationships and its connection to an understanding of the Trinity. In this encyclical he states that the divine Persons are subsistent relations, and the world, created according to the divine model, is a web of relationships ... Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity. (LS, #240)

The image below is a famous one by the fifteenth century Russian painter, Rublev, called *The Holy Trinity*. It is a practical understanding of the Trinity as an experience of openness, belonging, hospitality, peace, mutuality and love. It is also, for Pope Francis, an exploration of relationship and interconnectedness and the importance of global solidarity.

Take a look at Rublev's image of the Holy Trinity

Activity

As faith leaders, we work to create a culture of relationship and connectivity that is in the style of Pope Francis. How does Rublev's image of 'The Holy Trinity' speak to this?

Share your thoughts with someone beside you and then share with the whole group.

Or

How will your organisational thinking align with Pope Francis' thinking of interconnectivity, spirituality and global solidarity?



Champagnat Marist Spirituality and Culture

We recognise also that the relationship of Marcellin to Mary underpins the Marial spirituality of the Marist family. In *Water from the Rock* we read:

The relationship of Marcellin to Mary was deeply marked by an affective and total trust in her, as the “Good Mother,” because it was her work that he undertook. He wrote once: ‘Without Mary we are nothing and with Mary we have everything, because Mary always has her adorable Son within her arms or in her heart.’ This belief remained constant all through his life. Jesus and Mary were the treasure on which Marcellin had learned to place his own heart. This intimate relationship helped shape the Marial dimension of our spirituality. (WFTR, #25)



Mary is the embodiment of openness, commitment, relationship and love. Marcellin reminded his brothers throughout his life that it is not possible to educate or care for the young without having an honest and ethical relationship with them. This image depicts Mary with the infant Jesus and the profound relationship that exists between mother and child – an example of the honest, open, compassionate and ethical relationships upon which we are called to build our organisations.



Faith Leadership and Catholic Social Teaching

Caritas (the international aid and development organisation of the Catholic Church in New Zealand) outlines seven **core** principles of Catholic Social Teaching which **promote the dignity of each and every person**:

- Human dignity – Te tapu o te tangata
- Solidarity - Kotahitanga
- Subsidiarity - Mana whakahaere
- Preferential option for the poor and vulnerable - He whakaaro nui mō te hunga rawakore
- Participation - Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou
- Stewardship - Kaitiakitanga
- The Common Good - Hei painga mā te katoa.

These principles are responsive to particular social issues such as poverty and inequality, the right to work, and environmental degradation.



Subsidiarity - Mana whakahaere

At the heart of the principle of subsidiarity is vesting involvement and decision-making as close as possible to those impacted by the decision. (*The Light from the Southern Cross* LSC 5.2.1)

Pope Francis recently called for a decentralisation of Church governance and participative decision-making, community engagement and appointing boards and management inclusive of the full range of backgrounds and human talents and abilities. Hopefully this will support the processes which might increase the experience of subsidiarity in an organisation and beyond.



Reflection

How do these depictions of decision making compare to your discernment process?

How are the voices of your stakeholders and those whom you serve heard?

You may like to create your own image of Subsidiarity-Mana whakahaere



Co-responsibility

Gathered Around the Same Table, puts it this way: *We are evangelisers of the world, living in the midst of the world. Like salt in food, we show the depth that is hidden in daily life and, immersed in it, we give witness to the three dimensions of Christ's mission: to consecrate the world to God, to be **prophets of a different future** and to be at the **service** of others.*" (GAST, #37)

Co-responsibility demands a change in mindset especially concerning the role of lay people in the Church. They should not be regarded as "collaborators" of the clergy, but, rather, as people who are really "co-responsible" for the Church's being and acting." Benedict XVI.

Activity: Read these paragraphs below from Benedict XVI:

<https://www.catholic.org/news/international/europe/story.php?id=47390>

Co-responsibility requires a change in mentality, particularly with regard to the role of the laity in the Church, who should be considered not as "collaborators" with the clergy, but as persons truly "co-responsible" for the being and activity of the Church. He went on to invite us to cultivate authentic personal relationships with everyone, beginning with families, and to participate at all levels of social, cultural and political life, by always setting our sights on the common good.



Reflection

"In co-responsibility, there are no 'my problems' or 'your problems,' they're our problems."

What does this statement mean to you?



Stewardship - Kaitiakitanga

Responsible stewardship is about being accountable and recognising the need for change to sustain viability into the future. Stewardship is about taking the trustee role seriously. "The trustee role is to monitor closely the movement of the institution toward its goals and to act both as critic and advocate, defender and court of last resort." (Frick & Spears, 1996. p.160)

Stewardship, understood as accountability is what keeps us on track with our vision. Stewardship is multi-faceted and includes people, as much as it includes finance and capital.

Marcellin's Marist Apostolic Spirituality is a living and dynamic experience of God, contemplative and action oriented at the same time. (WFTR, # 10)

Stewardship is described as a fundamental tenet of the Church's spirituality as it is based on mutual respect. It is critical to an understanding of fiduciary relationships and is thus an inherent part of good civil governance. Because of its spiritual import, it is also essential to church governance. Pope Francis' second encyclical in 2015, *Laudato si*, emphasised the dignity of each person, and noted the uneven impact of climate change and environmental degradation on the poor and vulnerable in a world where interrelated economic, technological and environmental forces impact our common homes. (LSC, 5.2.2)

This is a consideration for us as faith leaders and also as disciples of Jesus since the policies and procedures that we have in place will guide us - not just for the good of our organisation – but for the environment, cultures and the world around us.

This is about the dignity of every person, independent of ethnicity, creed, gender, sexuality, age or ability. Poverty, hunger, oppression and injustice make it impossible to live a life commensurate with this dignity. People should never be treated as commodities nor as mere recipients of aid.



Activity

Is there a place for both of these images? Discuss.



Synodality

Synodality involves the active participation of all members of the Church in its processes of discernment, consultation and co-operation at every level of decision-making and mission. (LSC, 5.2.3). Individuals and groups within the Church operate in communion by being in dialogue with one another. (LSC, 5.2.4)

Reflection and Discernment

Effective discernment requires the disposition and time for decision-makers to carefully weigh up all elements of their decisions and enable the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Right structures and processes enable discernment. Taking the time to think through reporting and accountability relationships gives a clarity to decision-making. (LSC, 5.2.5)

We will be working with this process of discernment at a deeper level in our next module.

Ethical thinking



Ethical thinking is concerned with the basic concepts and fundamental principles of decent human conduct. It includes the study of universal values such as the essential equality of all men and women, human or natural rights, obedience to the law of the land, concern for health and safety and, increasingly also for the natural environment.

When we speak of ethical thinking – we are taking in the moral concepts of right and wrong, and morality does not exist in a vacuum. All leaders and Marist faith leaders especially, as well as their professional advisers, need to identify and examine what they regard as the basic moral underpinning of their system of values. They must then apply those tenets in the decision-making process.

Of course, it is not just in public companies that ethical thinking is critical, we expect this behaviour within the organisational culture of our Marist Ministries. Education and dialogue are key elements which will influence the ethical thinking of an organisation. We keep in all our dialogue and discernment the critical nature of the aspects of inclusiveness and participation, communion and relationships.



Prayer

A Blessing for Leaders - John O'Donohue

*May you have the grace and wisdom to act kindly,
learning to distinguish between what is personal and what is not.*

*May you be hospitable to criticism.
May you never put yourself at the centre of things.
May you act not from arrogance but out of service.*

May you work on yourself, building up and refining the ways of your mind.

May those who work for you know you see and respect them.

May you learn to cultivate the art of presence in order to engage with those who meet you.

When someone fails or disappoints you, may the graciousness with which you engage be their stairway to renewal and refinement.

May you treasure the gifts of the mind through reading and creative thinking so that you continue as a servant of the frontier

where the new will draw its enrichment from the old, and you never become functionary.

May you know the wisdom of deep listening, the healing of wholesome words, the encouragement of the appreciative gaze, the decorum of held dignity, the springtime edge of the bleak question.

May you have a mind that loves frontiers

so that you can evoke the bright fields that lie beyond the view of the regular eye.

May you have good friends to mirror your blind spots.

May leadership be for you a true adventure of growth. Amen!



References

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https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/messages/pont-essages/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20120810_fiac.html

CARITAS

<https://caritas.org.nz/our-mission>

<https://caritas.org.nz/catholic-social-teaching>

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Frick, M. D & Spears, L. C. (Eds.) (1996). *On becoming a servant-leader: The private writings of Robert K. Greenleaf*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. ISBN 0787902306

LAUDATO SI'

https://www.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf

GATHERED AROUND THE SAME TABLE (Marist laity document)

<https://champagnat.org/en/to-be-marist/laity/documents-and-resources/gathered-around-the-same-table/>

THE LIGHT FROM THE SOUTHERN CROSS

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5acea6725417fc059ddcc33f/t/5f3f79e41aac2871be0fba5c/1597995610389/The+Light+from+the+Southern+Cross+FINAL+%2815+August+2020%29.pdf>

WATER FROM THE ROCK

https://www.champagnat.org/shared/documenti_maristi/AcquaRoccia_EN.pdf