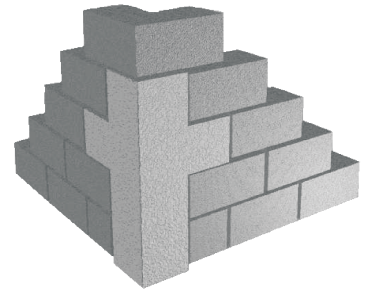




CORNERSTONES



A news magazine for lay leaders and lay professionals



The Emperor's New clothes	..2
The Authority Trap	..2
Strengths to work	..4
Parish HR Advantage	..5
Building an Organization	..6
World Elders Day	..8
William Shinde RIP	..9



This issue of Cornerstones is aimed at helping each of us adapt the story of The Emperor's New Clothes to our ministry in Church.

Our only request is that you do not point out the faults of others, but look closely at yourselves in the mirror.

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THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

All of us are familiar with the fairytale of The Emperor's New Clothes. To put it briefly, the Emperor is conned by two persons who convince him that they can produce the best material for his new outfit. They ask for a variety of yarn (*the origin of 'spinning a yarn'?*) and keep taking extensions of time to produce the Emperor's New Clothes. Finally, it is D-Day. The Emperor is dressed in his 'new clothes', while the conmen keep praising the texture of the 'new fabric'. None of the Emperor's courtiers dare to tell him that he is clad only in his underwear; they pretend to see the 'fabric', and the Emperor himself is hesitant to say he cannot see any fabric. The procession is taken to the street for the people to see the Emperor's New Clothes. All goes well until a little child says loudly for all to hear: "The Emperor has no clothes."

That was the turning point – the Emperor ran for cover amid the laughter of his people.

Your feedback will help us at OLCM avoid falling into the same trap of The Emperor's New Clothes. Please write to olcm.bom@gmail.com

THE AUTHORITY TRAP

Richard Valladares and Adrian Rosario (*two HR Consultants with several years of experience between them*) takes a long and hard look at parish ministry, as seen in the Archdiocese of Bombay, circa 2013.

Let us begin with the Human Resources angle. For several decades, we have been claiming that the 'person' is the most important. In reality, the situation is different. We shall skim through the four pillars of HR.

Recruitment & Selection of personnel

Most people who work in an organization understand that this is the most important function, sometimes with an allocation of 40% of the organization's budget. The corporate and Not-for-profit sector hire on the basis of 'best in class', experience and expertise.

However, the picture in Church setups is different.

Often, the key element in Church recruiting is the arbitrary appointment of persons on the following basis:

- a. known to the priest (or even his relative – 'nepotism')
- b. compassionate grounds ("her husband has no job"; "the family needs the money", etc)
- c. someone who approached the priest with a 'story'.

The third type is really the worst of the three listed above. It may include those who impress the priest by telling them how well they are doing, dropping a few famous names ("I know the

bishop!"), telling how the 'world' sees them as efficient, etc. Often, the priest is taken in (*see the connection to the Emperor's New clothes?*) and offers the person the job (and in recent times, consultancy offers) without doing any background checks or a semblance of a formal interview. The person then goes to the next parish/institution and promptly uses the reference of the previous parish priest.

This recruitment model also extends to our schools and institutions, where the staff (teaching and administrative) often have no understanding of the 'customer' (parents and students). They may share partial information or behave rudely with students and parents. The attitude is we 'own' the institution.

Long term efficiency is sacrificed for short-term goals. Are we hiring for roles or just to fill positions? This is helping us breed a culture of mediocrity and sycophancy in our institutions. We recently spoke to an entrepreneur of another faith who said he would have preferred Catholic staff till about 8 years ago, but not any more; he does not see any distinction.

Compensation & Benefits

This is a major bone of contention, and (according to us) one of the key reasons why very

few of our fulltime Church employees attend or participate in their own parish activities. They see themselves as being short-changed and undervalued. In spite of several statements and policy decisions on fair wages, family wages, etc, we often see that those who work conscientiously in Church institutions are sidelined when the change of guard happens. The new head (PP/Principal/etc) wants to bring his own people and perhaps at better payscales, ignoring their current competencies and future roles they could grow into.

There are some key considerations here:

- We cannot expect to get the type of efficient work we require, if we continue to pay less than the market rate. It is no use expecting a person to give of his skills and service in charity.
- Those who agree to work on the low payscales are on the lookout for something better or are forced to take up the job, because of circumstances and misplaced loyalty. Take the parish clerk who works at Rs 3000/- per month, only because her child is in the parish school, and so she sticks on. Or the Jharkhand tribal who sees this as his only chance to get a life for himself and his family.



In these situations then, we are no better than those who “suck the blood of the poor”. *Rerum Novarum* and *Centesimus Annus*, and more recently, *Caritas in Veritate* demand a response that is just. Are we listening? Are we willing to act?

Performance Management

What gets measured gets done. People perform when they know that their work will be recognised – either monetarily or in terms of a promotion, etc. Moreover, the very act of appraisal brings people to do more than they ordinarily would.

In Church institutions, there are either no appraisals (therefore no incentive to do more or better) or they are person-based (“if the PP likes me, I get an increment”) or worse, they are an eyewash i.e. the decision is not based on worthwhile criteria.

The One Minute Manager (Blanchard & Johnson) emphasized the need for clear job descriptions, even as we set about putting our house in order. The criteria for a cook or tableboy will definitely be different from the CCO in-charge, and the management of their performance will change accordingly. We need to establish a transparent system of performance management, if we want to make things improve in terms of delivery of results.

Training and Development

The need for training people to do their work effectively has often been last on the list of priorities. We need to make this our top priority, if we want to get Value for Money.

The 1/8th principle – propounded by Jeffrey Pfeffer of Harvard – explains that only 1 out of

every 8 managers actually carry out long-term activities designed to bring out the best in people. We need to start working on a second line – as most of our leaders are nearing or past retirement – if we want to ensure that the ministry we carry out continues for a long time.

Team work

We need to work on developing teams that collaborate within and beyond. Team ministry is the modern day mantra, that becomes a need if we consider that we are all working for the same goal – bringing Jesus to the world.

This is easier said than done. The ‘I’ complex and the competitive spirit, coupled with good old politics and game playing, ensure that very few Catholics have time to get into the higher levels

of politics and civic life. We are too busy playing the ‘crab’ that pulls the others down, if they get too high and mighty!

Three questions that arise:

Why is this situation existing today?

What can be done to rectify the situation?

Who should rectify it?

Why is this situation existing today?

It is probably easiest to say that the situation is the fault of “the predecessor”. In fact, it is interesting to hear how the predecessor is blamed for everything from faulty wiring and waterproofing to the choirs, to the recipes of the cook. This is true for PPs, assistants, Principals, heads of associations/cells, etc.

The good old ‘divide and rule’ policy is used to do exactly that. And so we have many broken spirits, hurting hearts, disgusted and frustrated persons within the Church.

What can be done to rectify the situation?

We need to consider developing a cadre of committed pastoral workers – laypeople who are

trained in managing parishes and institutions. In the dioceses of Germany, and especially Limburg (a first-hand experience), these pastoral workers are the mainstay of the diocese. They have moved beyond a situation in which the priest is the ‘giver’ to one in which all are ‘sharers in ministry’. We need to start moving in this direction, without waiting for the final push...

It is time to realize and reiterate that ‘a lot can get done, if you don’t care who gets the credit’.

Who should rectify it?

The easiest answer is ‘each of us’. And yet, deep down, we know this is not the only answer. God is our only source of help, who can help us break out of the Authority Trap. The second method is to build circles of mentoring in which the mentors help move the group forward, while scouting for new leaders.

Programmes on Facilitation skills, the Six Thinking Hats model, Listening with empathy will go a long way in revamping the system.



PUT STRENGTHS TO WORK

Measuring each member’s impact on his fellow members can prove equally challenging. The relationship between each leader and his members, and between each member and his peers, is so multifaceted that you can hardly blame the organizations that attempt to legislate this relationship with predetermined competencies. To reiterate what we said before, though, we suggest that a more effective approach is to measure the outcomes of a productive culture and then hold each manager accountable for creating these outcomes, using the style that fits her best. The following twelve questions define the outcomes of a productive culture. We recommend asking each association/cell members these twelve questions, using a 5-point scale (5 for “strongly agree,” 1 for “strongly disagree”).

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work properly?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for good work?
5. Does my supervisor or someone at work seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission of my organisation make me feel like my work is important?
9. Are my coworkers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?

THE PARISH HR ADVANTAGE

Ernest Fernandes, *Ex-President, The Bombay Management Association proposes new ways of harnessing the power of people in the parish.*

HR Stands for Human Resources or the people in an organization. How were people treated in the Machine Age which has now been replaced by the Information Age? In the Machine Age, they were looked upon as costs which had to be kept as low as possible. In the Information Age, they are looked upon as resources to be developed. In the Machine Age, their job was to do what they were ordered to do without asking any questions. If there was any one creator of the machine age rule book, it was Frederick Taylor (1856 – 1917) who should take the credit. However there were lone voices, notably Mary Parker Follet (1868 – 1933) and Elton Mayo (1880 – 1949) who argued that management in a democratic society needed to involve individuals and groups, without which there could be strikes and even sabotage.

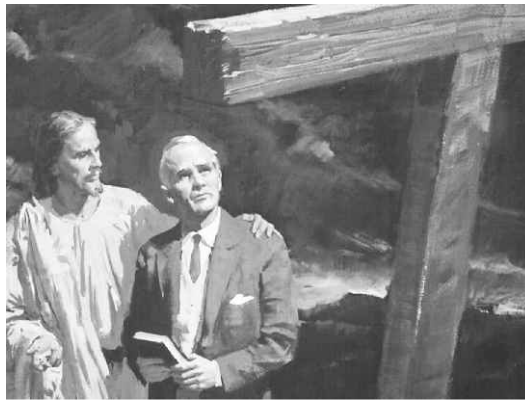
Some may argue that calling people “human resources” is not at all appropriate. If people are simply to be resources like finance and computing, they may as well return to the tenets of Frederick Taylor. However, the fact that companies now have HR Directors as well as HR Departments is a big step forward, no matter what the terminology. Interestingly, the same idea was emphasized by Pope Francis recently when he said, “We don’t want this globalised economic system which does us so much harm. Men and women have to be at the centre as God wants, not money.”

Managing a parish in a changing environment poses several challenges to the Parish Priest, his Assistants and the heads of various parish Associations. Church services have to be organized, groups such as Parish Councils, Small Christian Communities and several others, have

to function effectively. Church property has to be maintained, budgets have to be prepared, homes have to be visited, and the list goes on. While the mission of the parish is different from business, the proposition that there are areas of commonality in which HR concepts and practices can be usefully applied seems to have some validity. Peter Drucker, one of the world’s greatest management thinkers, in his later years spent more time working for hospitals and churches, than with companies.

In order to satisfy customers, it is a common business practice to conduct marketing research to find out about the habits and preferences of customers. Based on this information, companies introduce new products or services or eliminate or modify their existing offerings. Similarly, parishes conduct surveys to obtain information on the profile of their parishioners – the number of families, children, teenagers, college students, young working adults, young married couples, senior citizens, widows. Apart from demographic information, other information such as occupation, expectations, etc. could be very useful. Particular attention should be paid to the needs of the weaker sections and those in need of special care.

What can the parish offer each of the above groups? Can any of the above groups contribute to the life of the parish? How effectively are the existing parish groups and associations meeting the needs and expectations of each of the above segments? Do any new services have to be offered? Examples would be line dancing, fitness classes, Marathi classes, Right To Information centres, etc.



If the parish has to get the benefit of the HR advantage, regular training programmes for the development of group heads is a must. The programmes can be classified into three categories.

The first category is titled 'Focus on the person'. The topics include:

1. A leader and his functions
2. Time Management
3. Personal effectiveness
4. Theories of Work Motivation

The second category is titled 'Group and Intergroup Processes'. The topics include:

1. Creativity and Creative Thinking
2. Interpersonal Communication and Feedback
3. Organisational Communication
4. Making Meetings Productive

The third category is titled 'Intervention Processes'. The topics include:

1. Negotiation Skills
2. Managing Conflicts
3. Problem solving Techniques
4. Managing Change.

It is important that the programmes are conducted by enthusiastic trainers who can engage the participants in a lively manner with a lot of practical examples.

In conclusion, it could be said that there is no conflict between a parish which seeks to meet the spiritual needs of the parishioners and at the same time is HR or people-centred. The parish priest may have to spend more time on people-related issues and delegate some of his administrative work to other members of his team. This would be in keeping with the idea of Pope Francis that a priest must "smell of his sheep".



MANAGEMENT: BUILDING AN ORGANIZATION

Ronald D'Souza, *Director, Freemont Ventures Private Limited is keen on applying the principles of management to parish ministry.*

Jeff Bezos is one of the most successful entrepreneurs having built Amazon, the world's largest online retailer from a start-up. He recommends that his teams read these three books:

- The Effective Executive : Peter Drucker
- The Innovators Dilemma : Clayton Christensen
- The Goal, A process of ongoing improvement: Eliyahu Goldratt

Of the three, Peter Drucker is perhaps the most well known, as he is considered one of the principal founders of modern management theory, helping create and broadly popularize ideas that seem commonplace now, like the fact that organizations should be decentralized, rather than run via command and control, and "management by objectives," where both leaders

and employees work towards a set of goals they understand and agree on.

We quite often confuse management with leadership. Not all managers are leaders and vice versa. Leaders are expected to set the vision, mission and values of an organization and managers are expected to translate them down the line to the lowest level. Managers also develop leadership skills over a period of time, and are usually groomed to take on larger responsibilities. Organizations are built to deliver goals, irrespective of whether they are a business, non-profit, government or spiritual group. All organizations have the same issues of bureaucracy, politics, lack of alignment etc. Management plays a key role in helping organizations reach their goals.

Management operates through functions like planning, organizing, staffing, leading/directing, controlling/monitoring and motivation. So what does management actually do?

1. Goal setting: Every organization sets goals for itself in terms of both qualitative and quantitative numbers (reach revenues, employee satisfaction, growth etc.), but what does this mean to the person on the shop floor or the sales person at the counter? Managers take the larger goals and simplify them for every level of management. They also ensure that employees get the required inputs to reach these goals and provide them timely feedback.
2. Process management: Without processes, organizations will fail as they grow larger, and it is the management's responsibility to create these processes which can be understood, replicated and optimized. Processes create bureaucracy, but also enable organizations to deliver a certain measurable output. For example, when you are at an SBI teller counter, it clearly says the wait time should not exceed 15 minutes. This is because the bank has optimized its processes to ensure the wait period is defined. As a customer, your expectations on waiting time are managed and ensure that you are in the right frame of mind when you speak to the teller
3. Monitoring: A key role of management is to monitor the progress of different groups and processes. There's a supervisory element in managing individual contributors where tasks are assigned (e.g. no of calls a call center operator receives or makes) and a process element, where the supervisors are concerned. Monitoring helps identify areas of strength and improvement. Some individuals do not like this aspect of organizations, but they are increasingly fewer in number
4. Sourcing: Every output requires a certain

number of inputs such as manpower, material, technology etc. It's a manager's responsibility to ensure that these inputs are sourced in a timely and cost efficient manner. Managers make decisions which impact both the output as well as the cost of that output and are critical to the overall growth of the company

5. Motivation: Organizations can have all the capital, infrastructure etc. but they are essentially worthless without humans using these effectively. However, all human beings need motivation to achieve goals in the larger interest of the company. Managers need to set goals, provide feedback, train and develop their teams as well as ensure they are constantly monitored to deliver goals. All this is not possible without a team which is motivated, and increasingly, this has become a critical part of a manager's job. There are several motivation theories, which were initially developed from a management perspective, but are now seen as being more reflective of life in general.

For individuals working in the social sector, there's usually a cause associated with their efforts such as eliminating disease, water pollution etc. However, if there are no goals and a strong team does not effectively manage these, it just remains a cause. Several grass root movements in India (against corruption, castes etc.) fail because they do not effectively manage resources and output, which are the hallmarks of an organization. If you are a manager or aspire to be one, ask yourself this question: Can I build an organization? If the answer is yes, then the even more important question is, will it survive when you leave? If the answer is no, then you have failed. Several companies die every year because their leaders fail to translate organizations to institutions, which live hundreds of years. The Church, Governments, Academic Institutions (Oxford, Cambridge etc.) are institutions that were built over hundreds of years, which have outlived their founders/ early managers. **So, are you building an institution that will last beyond your lifetime?**

REPORT

ARCHDIOCESAN CELEBRATION OF WORLD ELDERS' DAY

The day dedicated for the aged by the UN General Assembly to recognize the contribution of older persons and to examine issues that affect their lives is 1st October. Even though this celebration is called International Day of Older persons, it is truly an opportunity for people of every age to celebrate the gift of wisdom, and the contribution and value of our older members to the community and Society.

The Bombay Archdiocesan Senior Citizens' Association (BASCA) - formed on October 1, 2011 - celebrated its third World Elders' Day on October 2, 2013, with an assembly of the Executive Committees of the Parish Senior Citizens' Associations. The event began with the Holy Eucharist at 10 am in the Our Lady of Salvation Church, Dadar. Fr. Aniceto Pereira, Spiritual Director and the main Celebrant, in his homily, reminded the Seniors of God's love & protection through our God-given guardian angels. They too, like "guardian angels" could reach out to help the aged, home-bound and suffering senior citizens by forming "Neighborhood Senior Citizens Groups" (NSCG). Today we are mobile, he added, but tomorrow if we suffer ill health & pain, we must learn to offer our sufferings with a smile to save souls. The Seniors, led by Celine Sanfrancisco on the keyboards, sang the hymns together in angelic voices.

The second part of the celebration was the gathering in the hall with Live Screen Retro Music foot-tapping entertainment by Agnello Fernandes. Colin D'Souza, President of BASCA, welcomed the members and guests. Fr. Aniceto Pereira in his keynote address, spoke about the importance of computer literacy for Seniors and the formation of Senior Citizens Associations & NSCG in the parishes. Clara D'Souza presented a computer literacy program using PowerPoint, that was well appreciated. She also highlighted the existing "The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007". To provide for more effective provisions for the maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens guaranteed and recognized under the Constitution, a new policy known as the "National Policy for Senior Citizens 2011" based on several factors favourable to the welfare of Seniors will be promulgated in Maharashtra. Copies of the new Policy were distributed to the parish representatives.

Two hours of non-stop entertainment by the "Band of Priests" led by Fr. Alban D'Souza on lead and vocals, Fr. Melroy Fernandes on drums, and Fr. Navin Mendonca on bass guitar, rocked the show and got the GOLDIES to the floor to shake a leg and sing along, as if they were teenagers. Nearly 250 office-bearers attended the celebration from 76 parishes of the Archdiocese. Tired but rocking and happy, the show finally ended at 2 pm but not before the Secretary of BASCA, Rita Mascarenhas, expressed gratitude to all those who helped and supported the event financially.

Fr. Aniceto Pereira, and Mr. Melwyn Sequeira were two of the mentors who were felicitated. Finally, we enthusiastically shared a delicious buffet.

Francis Daniel Harris



WILLIAM SHINDE, R.I.P.

- A Tribute to an Unsung Hero of Sacred Heart Parish, Santa Cruz

A Rickshaw Driver with a Drive & Passion for the Lord & His Kingdom

I met William some time in the 1990s. A simple man who lived in the eastern part of our parish, he seemed quite keen in getting involved in Church activities. He was a third generation Nagar Christian. Possibly due to this reason, at that time he was mostly involved with the Marathi group in our parish, whenever there was a Marathi mass for this group - which was rather rare. I understand he was instrumental in organizing a priest to come and celebrate the Marathi mass at Sacred Heart Parish from time to time. When I invited Fr. Callistus Fernandes and his team to celebrate the Eucharist in the Indian tradition at Sacred Heart Parish, I approached William to get his Marathi group to come in for this Eucharistic Celebration. It was a grand success with his support. We had a very good response, and it warmed our hearts to see how he had the ability to gather people together so easily. That was the beginning our relationship over the past many years - our relationship growing ever deeper and my admiration for him ever higher.



In the course of our relationship, William got involved in the Confirmation programme of the Parish and started as animator for the Marathi-speaking students. Personally for me, this was a waste, as I had noticed he was quite articulate in English too. Since I had been through the CTC (Catechists' Training Course) of the Archdiocese, I kept coaxing him to do this course. There was much reluctance on his part, but finally he did the course, and came out in flying colours. This, naturally, boosted his confidence, and he was now well versed in the pedagogy for passing on the faith to the youngsters. So he began delivering lessons to the Confirmation students as part of the team.

My wife, Ligia, and I went on to start the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) English Centre at Santa Cruz which began flourishing with a well trained team of animators, which included William. So now he was involved in the RCIA Programme of the Archdiocese of Bombay. After some time, the need arose to start a RCIA Marathi Centre and I offered to be the catalyst for this project as I had the absolute confidence that William would not hesitate to offer his services. Thus, the RCIA Centre (Marathi) started in Santa Cruz, with William at the helm of it. As time went on, he played an important role in the Archdiocesan Services of the RCIA especially for the vernacular languages.

Having seen such an immense faith and zeal in William, the bond we shared made us share with each other many issues connected with our personal lives, our families, our service in the Church, etc. Whenever Ligia and I could discern any need of his or his family, we would try to locate a person who would be able to meet the need.

Having seen William's capacity to be involved at a higher level, I kept coaxing him to do the Institute for Ministry of Faith Enrichment (IMFE) Course - the highest laity training course at that time, in the Archdiocese of Bombay. Finally, he came for the interview (I was working at the Diocesan Catechetical Centre then). When he was filling up the registration form, he said, "Jaime, I am a not a graduate." (This was a pre-requisite for the course). I assured him I would be there to support him through the course, so he need not worry. I told him to fill in the studies he had done (presuming he must have done his SCC or HSC). He said "I have done only my VIIIth -that too I did not pass, because my father died that year, and

our family circumstances were such that I had to give up my studies and start working.” My admiration for this man grew even higher! He told me he had started working at the Sea Rock Hotel at Land’s End, Bandra. He was doing well for himself. But then, there was a strike at the hotel, and they all lost their jobs.. He could not get any other job with his academic qualifications, so he took up rickshaw driving. Whilst this was profitable initially, as the years went by, with more and more rickshaws on the road, life became difficult. Nevertheless, I got him to join the IMFE Course as I was part of the team at that time. I can say with confidence that many of his reflections on various topics of the course were more profound than of those candidates who had higher academic qualifications to start with!

His focus on his work for the Lord was unwavering, no matter how difficult his personal life or family life situation was. He was very serious about his Confirmation Class on Sunday morning and RCIA Class on Thursday evening. He carried with him, through the week, xerox copies of the lessons, in the pouch that every rickshaw driver hangs from the steering. Whenever he took a break or was parked waiting for a passenger, he would read the lesson plan and prepare for the forthcoming session! I must confess I did not have such zeal when I was involved in Confirmation and RCIA. He was a great inspiration and role model to me.

William had a number of challenges in his personal life and family life, in various forms - a growing up son, expenditure for his studies, reducing income from the rickshaw and increase in repair expenses of the rickshaw. He was also diagnosed with diabetes. Ligia and I tried to help him, either by ourselves or by putting him in touch with people who could. Eight years ago, he and his family had another challenge coming their way. William and Bharati had their second child, Pramada. She was a Downs’ Syndrome child. Surely, they went through a lot of turmoil during those first few months, until they accepted the reality of their lives. We were with them from the day Pramada was born at Bhabha Hospital, Bandra, but never once did I see William ever

show signs of anger or dejection. I only saw in him acceptance of God’s will in his life. As the years went by, I could only see in William a sense of pride in his Pramada and the great love and attachment she had for him.

The great challenges William faced in his personal life were never allowed to come into his lay ministry work in the Church. He was a sign of equanimity, rooted in the trust of the Lord and grounded in His Word. However, that did not mean he did not face challenges in his lay ministry in the Church. His cultural background at times went against him, and he faced marginalisation or rejection – the petty cultural baggage we carry into our human interactions and even Church ministry work. But he was a thorough gentleman always and never spoke ill of another. No matter what negativity he experienced, he seemed to have an enormous ability to absorb it all.

On 20 August 2013, at my invitation, William came over to my residence and chatted with me the whole evening over many issues concerning his personal life, family life, and his lay ministry work in the Church. He shared how he found it jarring to his ears when catechists teach the anger and wrath of God to the youngsters in the Confirmation Class. For him, he preferred to help the youngsters understand and experience the Unconditional Love and the Mercy of God, Our Father. He told me that whenever he had any questions that he needed to answer to his audience group, his reference point was always the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) and the YouCat. What a joy it was that whole evening - sharing our joys, our sorrows, difficulties and challenges for the future. Neither of us had even an inkling how our lives would take a turn from the next day onwards.

On 21 August, I landed up in the ICCU of Holy Family Hospital, with a myocardial infarction and had to undergo angioplasty. Understand from Pranay (William’s son) that William told him, “We must go to see U. Jaime in the hospital as he has had a heart attack. In U. Jaime’s case, they have carried out an operation on him. Who will take care of us, if I have a heart attack?” I came out of

the ICCU on 23 August afternoon. Earlier that very morning, William had a cardiac arrest at home, and was declared dead on arrival at the Bhabha Hospital. The news was kept away from me for a day because of my state, but when I heard the news, the first prayer in my ‘damaged’ heart and on my lips was “*Lord, why him? . . . and not me? His family needed him much more . . .*” (and he was only 47!).

Some people said he did not take care of his health. But knowing William and all the challenges he faced, I believe that whilst struggling to put food on the table and taking care of the family’s challenges, taking care of one’s health problems (which is another source of huge expense) normally takes a back seat.

You just carry on . . .

Now, that I am on my way to recovery from my cardiac problem, William, I promise you I will continue to do whatever I can for your family – Bharati, Pranay and Pramada. I am sure there will be others who will come forward in this venture and probably do much more than I can. But more than anything else, I salute you for the great, humble, well grounded Christian that you have been. I have immense gratitude in my heart for the fact that you were my close friend, brother in the faith and in the lay ministry of the Church, and for all that you have taught me over the years. I thank you for your presence in my life and I am going to miss you immensely!

Deacon Jaime A. M. da Fonseca



BUILDING A STRENGTHS-BASED ORGANIZATION

In the last six months, have I talked with someone about my progress?

This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

If you have read *First, Break All the Rules*, you will know that these questions were selected from a list of hundreds precisely because, when worded in exactly this fashion (complete with qualifiers such as “every day,” and “in the last seven days,” and “best friend”), they predicted member turnover, productivity, profitability, and customer loyalty. Asked twice a year, they provide the most robust and the most relevant measure of a manager’s impact on his members. And yet they don’t force every manager to manage in the same way. Taking the first question, “Do I know what is expected of me at work?” as an example, an organization shouldn’t care that one manager sets expectations by having de-tailed, one-on-one conversations with

each member while another manager prefers using weekly team meetings to provide the focus, just as long as, at the end of six months, the members know what is expected of them. Again, the desired end is legislated, not the journey.

And what about the impact of each member on his peers? The questions presented above don’t cover this because they are designed to address manager-member relations, not member-member relations. So, instead, try using these four questions, also culled from our research into highly productive workplaces:

Does this person perform his/her work -

1. in a timely manner?
2. in an accurate fashion?
3. in a positive, helpful manner?
4. in a way that makes you feel your opinions count?

The OLCM Invites HR Professionals, Media Professionals,
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