Theological Reflection and Spirituality in the Life of the Organization

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“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

Socrates
Spirituality
Definitions of Spirituality

“Spirituality is how a person finds meaning and purpose in his or her life in a way that is reflected in behaviors.” — Rev. Gerald T. Broccolo

“Spirituality is an aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to the moment, to self, to others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred.”

Association of American Medical Colleges; Nelson-Becker; referenced in Puchalski, et. al., Journal of Palliative Medicine
Dimensions of Spirituality

• Spirituality is actually a very recent term – no such thing in Jesus’ time

• Often understood in context of religion, but can be understood separately
Individual and Organizational Transformation

Emergence of workplace spirituality
Emerging Spiritualities in the Ministry

- Spirituality of caregiving
- Meaning and purpose in work
- Spirituality/theology of ministry
- Sense of calling and purpose
Why We Need Spirituality in Our Environment

There are many areas where we can see our spirituality in organizational life.

Integrating spirituality into our environment has many benefits for patients and associates.

Better integrating spirituality supports our mission to have spiritually centered, holistic care, but also helps us live out our mission in our ministry.
Naming Spirituality in Our Environment

There are many areas where we can see our spirituality in organizational life, including:

• How we share who we are and welcome new co-workers into the organization
• How we live out our mission and values
• Programs, awards,
• How we make decisions
• How we celebrate our founders/foundresses and continue telling our founding stories
• Supports formative efforts across the ministry
Theological Reflection
Theological Reflection

• Term is used to define a process in which an individual or a group reflects on their personal or collective experience(s) in light of their faith

• Is an essential element of faith formation, helping to integrate faith and life

• Can help us to engage experience of ministry, dialogue with our faith tradition, and support issues of discernment

Rev. Dr. Richard Dickey
Theological Reflection
Three key elements

Experience -> Reflection -> Response
## Sources for Theological Reflection

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Organizational Moments When You Might Use Theological Reflection

- Leadership meetings
- Staff meetings
- Formation events
- Service opportunities
- Discernment processes
- Commissioning services
- Board meetings
Some Examples

• Spiritual moments exercise
• Commissioning service
• Poems
• Reflecting on Catholic Social Teaching and measuring organizational policies against the document
• Timely events in community or news
Formation/formative events

Spirituality

Theological reflection
How mission leaders encourage and support a theologically reflective culture
Being grounded ...
Spirit Linking Leadership

“The deliberate and untiring act of working through resistance to organizational transformation by building a circle of friends, fostering networks of human compassion and interweaving teams of relationships through which new ideas are born and new ways of responding to the mission take form and find expression.”

Sr. Donna Markham, OP, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Catholic Charities USA
Spiritual Leadership

“Spiritual leadership is a form of leadership that results from integrity, living every aspect of leadership based on core motivating values. Spiritual leadership is not something that you add on to an already existing leadership style, rather it permeates everything that one does, whether at home, in social life, or at work. The best leaders are the ones who are grounded in motivating values and have “faith,” and they live differently as a result of it ...

When one lives spiritual leadership, that person does not only become more spiritual; rather he or she becomes integrally human. This splendid task of becoming who we are capable of being means journeying into the depths of oneself, stretching out to make one’s own those values that in a special experience become the motivation of life. The term “spiritual leadership” refers to a leadership that is the result of living with integrity those values that are the basis of one’s life and making all decisions in light of those values.”

Leonard Doohan
Our Role in Helping to Cultivate the Culture Which Supports Spirituality

CHA Competencies for Mission Leaders

- Personal qualifications
- Leadership
- Theology
- Spirituality
- Ethics
- Organizational management
Reflection on Mission Leadership and Creating the Necessary Culture

“Humans choose good work. At its simplest, good work is work that makes sense, and that grants meaning to the one who is doing it and to those affected by it. The stakes in good work are necessarily high. Our competence may be at stake in ordinary, unthinking work, but in good work that is a heartfelt expression of ourselves, we necessarily put our very identities to hazard. Perhaps it is because we know, in the end, we are our gift to others and to the world.”

David Whyte
Additional Resources

Doohan, Leonard. 

O’Connell Killen, Patricia and de Beer, John. 