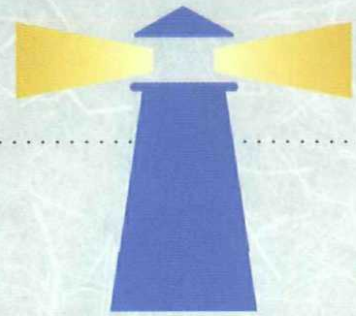


Prayer

S E R V I C E



LEADERSHIP AND VISION

CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER God of all, we thank you and we praise you for the power of your presence here in our midst,
ALL and for this opportunity to come together to celebrate our common work on behalf of Catholic health ministry.
LEADER We thank you also for the quality of leadership that is represented here among us, and for the many and diverse gifts that contribute toward the building of the kingdom. Pour out your spirit upon us. Confirm and strengthen our vision. Be the hope that sustains and strengthens us in these challenging times. For all these things, we pray. Amen.

READING

Leadership is not about function or bureaucracy, but about awakening and empowering human presence. A real leader is someone who awakens individuals to possibilities that they don't see at all. There is something mysterious in each individual that cannot be reduced to a role or function. In its deepest sense, the spirituality of leadership is really the ministry of service to possibility. Good leaders lead because they somehow inhabit the privilege and burden of vision and they are called to that kind of a frontier.

Behind the facade of your daily life—your role, your function, your image—there is something eternal going on. Real leadership helps people to recognize that there is something at the heart of human presence that can never be functionalized. It targets and focuses on the world of experience. Change takes place at the heart of things, where identity unfolds and where it reflects on and mirrors itself. Persons who are alive and in conversation with their own depths are always revising, changing, and moving the old thresholds of meaning within themselves. When we keep the frontiers of possibility open, this is where great change can happen. When a good leader awakens the depth of presence in another and encounters the sacredness and inner world of the other, leadership is truly transformational and healing.

Adapted from John O'Donohue's session at the 83rd Catholic Health Assembly, New Orleans, June 1998

RESPONSE

(alternate sides)

The spiritual leader shapes an achievable, clear, and compelling vision that conveys where the organization is going, where the employees are heading, and why they should be proud of the direction. Its core is the organization's mission.

Spirit of God, help us to keep our mission as the foundation of our work.

Vision, values, and determination add soul to the organization. Without them, organizations react but do not create; they forecast but do not imagine; they analyze but do not question; they act but do not strive.

Spirit of God, help us to become a community of leaders more deeply committed to those with whom and for whom we minister.

Leaders with vision love what they do and care passionately in sharing a vision. These soaring ideals and values are gifts that inspire—that set fire to the hearts of others in shaping and living the realities of a vision.

Spirit of God, make us leaders on fire with your love and committed to shaping a vision for the future of Catholic healthcare.

ALL Bless us now, in all things good and human. For now and what is yet to come, we pray in thanksgiving. Amen.

*Timothy Brown and Patricia Sullivan, "The Spiritual Leader Shapes a Vision,"
Setting Hearts on Fire: A Spirituality for Leaders, Alba House, Staten Island, NY, 1997, p. 73.*

This prayer focuses on aspects of good leadership for the next millennium. You may use this service at meetings or on any occasion when you wish to take a moment to reflect on the mission of Jesus. Feel free to adapt the service to suit your own needs.

—*Sr. Barbara McMullen, CDP, senior associate, Sponsor Services,
Catholic Health Association, St. Louis, e-mail: bmcsmull@chausa.org*



"Prayer Service," a regular department in Health Progress, may be copied without prior permission.