

November 15-16, 2012  
FADICA Retreat  
Yale University, New Haven, CT  
Ron Rolheiser OMI

### **Leading like Christ: The Wisdom of Servant Leadership**

**Ms. Alexia Kelley**, President FADICA: Good Morning all, we are going to open with a prayer by Father Joe Healey.

**Fr. Joseph Healey**: Good morning, I am going to use an inclusive African prayer that includes a reference to God as “Nursing Mother.” Please stand.

Let us pray. God our loving Father and Mother, we thank you for being present today as we gather presently today as the FADICA family. We ask your help in helping us to discern the meaning of our theme *Leading Like Christ: The Wisdom of Servant Leadership* and putting it into practice in our personal lives, in our ministry, and our leadership. We ask everything in the name of God the Father, Creator, and Source, God Mercy mother, God Jesus Christ, great healer and eldest brother, and the unsurpassed great spirit. Amen.

**Ms. Kelley**: Thank you so much Fr. Joe. As he said, the title of our retreat time with Fr. Rolheiser this morning is *Leading Like Christ: The Wisdom of Servant Leadership* and Fr. Ron is going to lead us through three sessions this morning: *Jesus as Servant Leader*, *Servant Leadership: Our Interior Struggles*, and *Servant Leadership and Philanthropy*. As I mentioned last night, I have just been inspired by conversations with many of you and am looking forward to making sure I speak with all of the members in the coming months. But that spirit of servant leadership comes through strongly in your work and in your leadership and in your philanthropies and your communities. I know we are going to learn a lot from Fr. Ron and from each other in dialogue as well.

So after our retreat time this morning we will have three sessions and then we are going to walk over to the chapel, St. Thomas More, for mass with Fr. Bob Beloin. It is an easy walk over together just a little bit before noon and have lunch together, and just following lunch we are going to engage, for those that can stay, and we are going to have a listening session and dialogue just about your priorities and aspirations for FADICA going forward.

I am honored and blessed to introduce Fr. Ron Rolheiser who just completed the pilgrimage walk of St. James the Apostle, ending in Santiago de Campestelo or The Camino of Santiago. I learned last Sunday that I had a friend, Karen Clifton—who does great work in Catholic ministries—did the same walk and met Fr. Rolheiser. So I know we are going to be particularly blessed because Fr. Ron just got off that amazing walk in Spain.

Fr. Rolheiser is a Roman Catholic priest and a member of the missionary of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He has been there since 2005. He is a renowned author, speaker, columnist, and community builder, as well as a retreat leader. For much of his priesthood, he taught theology and philosophy at Newman Theological College at Edmonton, Alberta. He served his religious community from 1998 – 2004. Since 2005, he has been the president at the Oblate School of Theology. His books are popular throughout the English speaking world, and his weekly column is carried by more than 70 newspapers worldwide. His most recent book is *Our One Act of Fidelity: Waiting for Christ in the Eucharist*. He has written other well known books including, *The Holy Longing*, *Forgotten among the Lilies*, *The Wrestles Heart*, and *The Shattered Lantern*, which won The Catholic Book Award for Best Paperback in Spirituality. Thank you so much Fr. Ron and welcome.

**Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, OMI:** I want to thank Kerry Robinson and Alexia for inviting me to this, and to Fr. Beloin who is hosting me. And also, in the CV it should have said that my main quality is that I was Bob Beloin's classmate in LeVane.

Little story to begin with to take the pressure off of myself. I was once in a workshop with Tom Groome, and he started the workshop by telling the story of when he first moved to the United States from Ireland and was at Boston College. He ended up getting invited back to Ireland to a diocese to give a clergy reflection one day. His theme was Vatican II. Tom said that as he spoke through the day he realized he was not getting through at all. He said the room was just ice. He was speaking and nobody was warming to what he was saying. He went on to say that he limped through the day from 9:00 – 3:30, and as soon as he finished, within a minute, the room cleared, except for one old monsignor who could not move very fast. Tom cornered him and said, "So Monsignor, what die you think of today?" The monsignor says, "Thomas, nobody is blaming you. This is not your fault. We blame the man who invited you." So, I will tell you that Kerry Robinson invited me. If this goes badly, I get to fly back home to Texas. She has to stay here!

Another little story about introductions: When Lyndon Johnson was president, he was once introduced with very flattering and complimentary terms. So when Johnson took the microphone and said, "That was a wonderful introduction. I'm only sorry that two people couldn't be here today to hear this: my mother and my father. Because my father would have liked it and my mother would have believed it.

I want to begin by giving you a deeper thank you. I want to thank you for the work that you all do through your foundations and philanthropy. When I was ordained a priest, like many priests of my generation at that time, we all took a vow we would never ever talk about money in church. I also took that private vow that I would never preach about money or ask for money. The gospel is pure. It should never be associated with money. But you slowly learn—not just because you get in positions where philanthropy and what it does becomes important—but also biblically you learn that is not a good divorce or distinction.

Philanthropy is a spirituality. It is something that is profound. What you do in philanthropy is true ministry. Sometimes we format it practically when we say you can't do anything without money, which

is true. There is an important biblical foundation when it comes to philanthropy. I thank you for doing this very important ministry. I have to confess that as a president of a university, I lean on philanthropists a lot. My private vow is long gone.

### **Jesus as Servant Leader**

Secondly, I want to do three things with you today. They are on this sheet. (*attached*) But we don't have to really move strictly with this sheet. I would like this day to be interactive, so I will throw out some points and I hope you will interact so we can have a full conversation. With each point, I will ask you to weigh in so we can interact. Then we will have time for questions with each point. We'll walk to where you want to go with it.

One of the best workshops I was ever at in Edmonton some years ago—and some of you may recognize his name even though he taught at Harvard and not at Yale—but James Gill, a Jesuit psychiatrist, a wonderful man and intellectual. He came to Edmonton to give a workshop on religious living. About 150 of us gathered in the auditorium. He comes in the morning. He puts down his briefcase beside him, but didn't open the briefcase. He said, "My hope is that I won't have to open the briefcase. I want to assure you that there are some prepared talks. But I don't know what you want to know. Ask me the questions you want to know." He never opened his briefcase. It was one of the best workshops I've ever been at.

So, I prepared this sheet to assure you that I have prepared something. But I want to take this material where you want to go. So the overall topic is *Leading Like Christ: The Wisdom of Servant Leadership*. So I will begin and we will walk with this wherever you want to walk with it.

### **The over-simplistic notion of Jesus as Servant Leader**

I think we have seen many icons of Jesus the humble shepherd bending over, or even the famous text that I will take you to of Jesus washing the disciple's feet. Jesus as this wonderful, humble, gentle, shepherd, but leading—and it's not that it's entirely wrong—but it misses so much. It's an over-simplistic pious version of what servant leadership is.

Secondly, to correct that, we really need to go into a biblical perspective. When you look at the gospels and when you look at Jesus and say: How was Jesus a servant leader? How is Jesus a leader—period? And how does it translate into servant leadership?

Thirdly is the importance of symbols. Where I want to take you this morning is a series of symbols of Jesus as servant leader that I hope can be canopies under which we can understand ourselves as philanthropists and just as men and women in the church, who are leaders in all kinds of ways: in your families, your parishes, and your communities, as uncles, aunts, and grandparents, and so on.

One example of symbol is Elizabeth Healey, when she was still a journalist, went to interview people at a worksite. They were building a church, and she went up to interview these people—she was doing a story on building this church—and asked the first man, “What do you do for a living?” He said, “I’m a brick layer” because that’s what he did. She asked the second man working right beside him, doing what he was doing and asked him, “What do you do for a living?” The second man says, “I am building a cathedral.”

Notice that they are doing the same work. One is trying to get to his lunch break and is taking a paycheck, which is very valid. The other person is doing a ministry by building a cathedral. I think it is important that we understand ourselves under rich symbols. It’s true for how we understand our lives and what is happening in our lives. Language has different levels of meanings.

Within one language there are many languages. You have a chronic back-ache; you go to see your doctor. The doctor examines you and says, “That is arthritis.” It’s a symbol: arthritis. But now you know what you have. As James Filman used to say, “A symptom suffers most when it doesn’t know where it belongs.” You know you have arthritis, but you are not satisfied with that. You go to a psychologist and the psychologist says, “You don’t just have arthritis. You are in a midlife crisis.” But you are still not satisfied. You see a good spiritual director and they say, “This is not just arthritis or a midlife crisis, this is your gethsemani. That is the cross you are asked to carry.” Notice that this is exactly the same pain. But each time it takes on different levels of meaning.

So it is important to understand ourselves as servant leaders and that we have the right kind of symbols for that. So let’s look at some biblical symbols.

### **Jesus as Servant Leader – Leadership as incarnating God’s Power**

**Fr. Rolheiser:** The first one and the most important is leadership as incarnating God’s power. See Jesus is really clear that he is not here on his own. Remember he says, “I do nothing—nothing of my own. I am doing the Father’s will.” It’s interesting we have a powerful text, which often we don’t get the sense of.

The centurion was a Roman officer. He comes up to Jesus and says, “My son is sick.” And Jesus says, “I will come and heal him.” He says, “You don’t have to come.” He says, “Just say it and it will happen, because I know how power works.” He said, “I’m in the Roman military. If you say to somebody move and he moves, or stay and he stays. I am powerful because I am under Cesar, and if they don’t deal with me they are going to have Cesar. I am powerful, not because I am powerful. I am in the powerful chain of the Roman military.” And he recognized this in Jesus. He says, “I recognize power. I know this power is not coming from yourself.” And that’s why Jesus says, “Among the Jews, I have not seen faith like yours. You recognize really who I am: that I am not me. The power comes from above.

But what kind of power? That is the first point I want to make. In the New Testament, in Greek, which is translated into English, the word power or authority. So your English Bibles will have the word *power* of the word *authority* and they kind of use them interchangeably. But the trouble is that translates three different Greek words for power, all of which mean something different. An example: Jesus had great authority, or He had great power, unlike the scribes or Pharisees who did not have any power at all.

They could not cast demons. Jesus could cast out demons because he spoke with power. It is very interesting the word they used. There are three Greek words for *power*. Two of them you will recognize in English. The first is the word energy (*energia*). In Greek, you see energy is a power. That is the power of the middle line power in the prime of health. He's going to bring you down. That is the power of muscle, sheer youth, and power. The power of energy. That is an important power, a beautiful power. Incarnates God's power.

### ***Exousia* – as opposed to *Energia* or *Dynamis***

Then you recognize the next word dynamic (dynamite, dynamis). The power of dynamism: to talk about for instance, a dynamic speaker. For instance, Mick Jagger on stage is dynamic. He lights up the stage.

It's interesting but whenever they talk about Jesus they don't use the word *energy* or *dynamic*. He may have been energetic. He may have been dynamic. But for the word for Jesus, they used a different word. They used the word *exousia*, which we have no English translation for. In fact, it is a powerfully paradoxical word *exousia*. We have no English translation for it. But probably the closest translation would be the word *vulnerability*. Notice, it is almost the exact opposite of the word power. So that vulnerability is ultimately the greatest power. See Jesus was powerful because he was vulnerable. I'll give that to you in an image.

The image of Christmas, for instance, is a new born and it is very powerful. Not because it can overpower anybody, but precisely in its powerlessness it has great power. So if you put a football player, Mick Jagger, and a newborn in this room, who has the most power? Well, ultimately the baby. Because the vulnerability, or the powerlessness, is the ultimate power. Notice how Jesus is born. They wanted a superstar. They prayed for centuries that a superstar would just come down here and just cleanse the world with lasers. You know the way they do in these great epic Bruce Willis or Schwarzenegger movies where they come in at the end and the hero shoots everybody. Gill Bailey comes in with a morally superior kind of violence and weeds out any other kind of violence. Notice the power of Jesus and the power of leadership. Jesus has power by under powering. That's what frustrates us even to this very day. The presence of God in this world is always thoroughly underwhelming. We always wonder how God is going to overwhelm us. God coming down to clean up the mess, laser on to all the bad people, but it does not work like that. God is always found lying in the straw, the helpless baby that has to be picked up and nurtured into adulthood. That is the deepest thing under Jesus' servant leadership. That leadership ultimately has to sometimes be powerful, but leadership is always part of the *exousia* and not necessarily the *energia*, the *dynamis*, and so on. That is the ultimate pitfall invariably for Christian leadership.

That invariable, when we get into power, which has its own place politically and socially—not to say political power is bad, but it is not the way church power works. It is not the way Christ power works. We're going to celebrate Christmas in about a month or so: the helpless baby lying in the straw, which ultimately in the end is the most power of all. Leadership is about *exousia*.

**Question:** What is the antimology of *exousia*? I know *homosia* and *ex* is out. Do you know the antimology on that?

**Fr. Rolheiser:** Tell you what, can you ask me something else? (*laughs*) Somebody else might know it. I don't, honestly.

That's like John Candy in one of his skits where he was playing this Arab guy and he comes into this hotel and he's got the hood on and gives this long horrific kind of Russian kind of Arab name, and the guys says, "Sir, can you spell that?" and he says, "I don't think so." I'm sorry I don't know the etymology of *exousia*. I will check it but I have never thought to check. Sorry.

**Question:** You make a powerful comment on the vulnerability of Christ as leader. But what about the Christ who threw the money changers out of the temple, and the other examples of having power in a more worldly sense in that?

**Fr. Rolheiser:** On your bullet points there, I have added one since I taped it out and the last one is going to be *Leadership as being strong enough to face dysfunction*. I'm going to get to that, but just particularly about the text about the money changers, because that is the one that is always chronically brought up. We're going to talk in a few minutes about *Jesus as incanting the non-violence of God*, and invariably when you say this always somebody is going to bring this up about the money changers. Well, what about them?

There are number of things about that text. That is a grossly misunderstood text. Most of the time what people pick up is that there is certain violence in the text. There is certain strength to the text that we have to take violence out of it. But let me give you the meaning of that text, fist of all by setting it up. The money changers had a perfect right to be there. If you ever go to a foreign country, and you get off the airplane, what you have to do is you have to take American Dollars to a money changer and get Euros or whatever the money is in the local country, otherwise you can not operate. They were the money-changers. So they were basically the bank tellers who changed currency. A temple in Jerusalem was very international. Jews came from all kinds of countries and places to do sacrifice, but they couldn't bring their animals and stuff along. So they would go to the money-changers and they would give their Greek drachma—or whatever it was—to get the Jewish currency, the shekels, and then they would buy the doves or the sheep and so on. So these people were doing a very necessary function.

Some of them might skim a little bit. But notice that Jesus never said 'you are all a bunch of cheaters.' He says, "You have no place here." Then he comes and he drives them out of the temple. He says "Out, my father's house is not a place for this." So he is not accusing them of cheating, or being criminals. He is just saying 'You have no place in the temple.' Now, why not? That is a very deep and far reaching text about religions and ecumenism in this sense. What Jesus is saying there is he is replacing himself as the currency. You will no longer have to change into any kind of currency to worship God.

I'll give you a simple example. Remember when he meets the Samaritan woman? And she says to him 'I'm a Samaritan and Samaritans say you have to worship on Mount Gerizim. Jews say you have to worship in Jerusalem. Where do you have to worship?' I suspect that if Jesus wanted to be cruel, he would have said, 'Have you been to any of those places lately?' But he wasn't cruel. Jesus said, "You could go to either of those places. The temple is in your heart. The place to worship is inside of you." No

place—Rome, Salt Lake City, Mecca—no place says you’ve got to come here. No religion can say “You’ve got to come here.” See, we are the money changers. If I tell somebody, “You have to be a Roman Catholic, or you can’t go to heaven,” I’m a money changer. I’m saying, you have to go through me. Jesus says, you don’t have to go through anybody to get to God. You have to go through Christ. Everybody else is a money changer.

Jesus throwing out the money changers is a deeply symbolic act. Notice, he doesn’t kill any of them. He doesn’t beat any of them. He just says “Get out.” It’s not such a great act of violence as is often portrayed in art or wherever. Jesus is just whipping people and so on. Basically it is a powerful symbolic and a very deep gesture and it is still very true for us. As a Roman Catholic priest it is very easy, if I’m not careful, to be a money changer. You got to go through me. If you want to get married in the church or whatever I set the rules, I do this. You’ve got to be very careful. These people have a very legitimate place. Jesus is warning. He’s saying to be very careful. He’s telling everybody else, like he told the Samaritan woman. Do I have to go to Mount Gerizim, or Jerusalem—he says you actually don’t have to go to either place. The temple is in your heart. You are looking at the Christ right now. You don’t have to go to any other place. That’s really the deep meaning of that text. Too often people pick up the connotation of violence in the text. Leadership, even when it comes out of *exousia*, still demands that dysfunction be addressed. And in fact, and I’ll say this sympathetic, that’s been one of the great weaknesses in Roman Catholic spirituality, not just of leadership, but in this sense that we have learned a lot in the last generation from AA and addiction groups, of what it means to enable and what it means to confront.

We used to say somebody is in a bad marriage. When you married this person you have to love them, stay with him, he’s an alcoholic, he beats you, but you have to put up with that. Today we say no, that is wrong because you are not taking away the sin. You know when we say, “Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” that is very different than saying you enable the sin of the world. When we put up with dysfunction, then we are enabling the sin rather than taking it away. Leadership at a certain point has to address dysfunction.

**Fr. Rolheiser:** Excellent question. Thanks for that.

**Question:** I don’t know if you are going to get to it later. You started by saying that the picture we have of Christ is of a servant leader, very humble, washing his feet, is perhaps not the right one. But then you say the power that is described in scripture talks about the vulnerability. So, is Jesus on the sermon of the mount, drawing hundreds of people because he is a meek vulnerable person who people are attracted to his vulnerability? I don’t think of him as Mick Jagger on the mount, but I have to believe that in the day in age there had to be a charisma about him that drew people and how does that come from this form of power? I can see examples of Ghandi who are the opposite. He’s not the Mick Jagger. I’m struggling with that sort of spectrum there.

**Fr. Rolheiser:** You’ve brought up a good point. You through out someone like Gandhi. Let’s throw out a couple of pictures. Say for instance, the person who would incarnate that pretty well like Mother Teresa. She was a powerful woman. Don’t be eluded by the word humble. These people are steam rollers. If you

got in Mother Teresa's way, she would bulldoze over you. Yet, notice, she never used earthly powers. She was this meek humble, small, fragile woman. But it also brought a powerful energy into the room. Let me give you an example of how power can work.

Imagine there is somebody who is really coarse in their language. They are not careful with what they say, and at a certain point some strong person takes them aside and says, 'I don't want someone like that speaking out here, otherwise I will take you outside and beat you up. But notice, people watch their language around a baby. The baby can't even hear. They can't understand it. The baby has a different kind of power. It does not have to threaten and say, 'You say that again and I'm going to break your leg.' They watched their language around Mother Teresa. They watched their language around Ghandi. That's what you want to picture when you say Jesus speaks with great power. Some of the Pharisees probably spoke like Mick Jagger, and we're very dynamic and so on, but they could not cast out any demons. Nobody started watching their language around them. Nobody watches their language around them. Nobody watches their language around Mick Jagger, but they do around the baby. In a way it is abstract, in a way it is not abstract at all.

Like when you said, 'there must be some sort of human charisma there to be drawn on.' It was interesting thing. I was only twice in a room with Mother Theresa. Never spoke to her, but I was in a room with her and a lot of other people. But there was something about her, this fragile little woman that lit up the room like about a 500 light bulb. There was just this energy that exuded and yet it was not the energy of a rock concert. It wasn't the energy of the athletics, or Tom Brady carrying the Super Bowl trophy, which has its own beauty. Yet she brought electricity into the room and people are drawn to a person like that. It's a different kind of magnetism from the magnetism of a rock star, or the magnetism of Tom Brady carrying the Super Bowl trophy. It's hard to explain, but you get it when you look at images of people like Mother Theresa. Or you could name others like Jean Vanier. If you've ever been in a room with Jean Vanier; there is a gentleness that is just a power. People watch their language about the baby that can't even understand the language.

**Question:** I don't know if anyone remembers that princess Diana had just been killed when Mother Theresa died. I always found it so odd that we had all this fan fair and 24/7 television replay, not to disparage princess Diana, but it was really so sensational. Then shortly there after Mother Theresa dies and everyone's just kind of 'oh...yeah.' It was just a reminder to me of what's really important.

**Fr. Rolheiser:** Let me just comment on that. I remember it was in 1997 and I remember them very well and I remember how closely those two events were to each other. In a certain sense they linked together in their psyche. It was interesting analyzing princess Diana's death, because in the surface, she didn't seem to have done a lot. And yet only John Paul's death and funeral eclipsed hers. Up until then, that was probably the most major single drawing together world event that we had. Why did she draw that much attention? It's interesting. Remember her brother's eulogy at her funeral, which was a piece of immense tepidity and brilliance, both at the same time. Those two can go together (laughs). Remember he starts off this way. 'You know there is going to be this quick thing to canonize my sister, but you know she's bigger than all of that, you know like the Beatles, and more popular than Jesus Christ' and nonsense of that caliber. But then, he clicked into gear and says 'Why was my sister so

popular? People say she was a beautiful woman. There are a lot of woman beautiful and some more beautiful than her, who weren't more popular at all or hated. My sister was not loved because she was more beautiful. She was loved because she was vulnerable. She was unable to protect herself in public with her disease and all her faults, and anorexia, out there for the world to see. People were able to identify, that's why they called her The People's Princess.'

Watching that funeral, I was thinking, 'that is exactly why I am watching this funeral.' I don't even know why I liked this woman, but I did. He said it was her vulnerability. It was her *exousia* that drew people, not her *dynamis*, or her energy. He made a good point when he said lots of women are really beautiful and are not loved at all. In fact, they might suffer from that. He said, 'she was so loved for a different reason.' It was interesting. The two women were connected in terms of that that was one of princess Diana's mentors, part of her kind of spiritual—I don't want to say schizophrenia—but in a certain sense of what it was. She was a wonderful sincere woman who would spend a week or two with Mother Theresa, say the rosary, decide she's going to serve the poor, and then come back the next week and go on a vacation with a playboy on the French Riviera.

The interesting thing is her popularity and why people gravitate so much towards her has a lot to do with her *exousia*, as opposed to her *dynamis*. Mick Jagger will not get that kind of funeral. Keith Richards might! That is meant to be a joke, okay.

**Question:** How does righteous anger figure into servant leadership? Or is that an oxymoronic expression?

**Fr. Rolheiser:** There is a place for righteous anger. But two things about it. First of all, it's got to be righteous. And secondly, it has got to be anger that doesn't—well, first let me get to this next point, and then I'm going to get to your question. Which is precisely, incarnating God's complete non-violence, non-intimidation, and non-fear. I want to give you a text on servant leadership. This is truly a brilliant piece of literature. It's a brilliant piece of theology that is the woman caught in adultery in John's gospel. John is the only person who records this. This is a powerful image. John says, 'One day Jesus was by himself. Jesus is alone when a crowd brings a woman to him. They bring the woman to him and they say, 'we have caught this woman in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses says we should stone women like that to death. What do you say?' And Jesus didn't say anything. Jesus bent down and began to write with his figure on the ground. Jesus says, 'Let the person without sin cast the first stone.' Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again, they all walked away one by one, beginning with the eldest. That is a powerful piece of literature which links a whole bunch of things in the Old Testament and to a bunch of symbols.

It begins with 'One day, Jesus was by himself, and a crowd comes.' In the gospels, the word 'crowd' is almost always majoritive and negative. Scholars say that whenever you have the word crowd in the gospel, you can add the word 'mindless.' Crowds don't think. Crowds are caught in hysteria. They are caught in hype, and alone you are reflective. Jesus is reflective. He is alone, and the crowd is caught up in hype and all kinds of nonsense. The mindless crowd; they bring a woman; they set her in front of him and say 'we have caught her in the very act of committing adultery. Moses says we can stone women

like these, what do you say.’ Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. What was he writing? Was he doodling: Memo to self? It’s not important what he wrote. What is only important is that he wrote with his finger and he wrote twice. Now, who writes with their finger and who writes twice?—God. In John’s gospel, Jesus is always God. There is almost no humanity to Jesus. And God wrote twice. He wrote the Ten Commandments twice. Why? Because the first time he wrote them, Moses goes up the hill. God wrote the commandments with his finger on stone, gives them to Moses. When Moses comes down the hill to the camp, he catches the people in the very act of committing adultery. There is only one vowel difference.

So Moses has the Ten Commandments. This is God’s law. He comes down and he catches them in the very act of committing adultery, and what does he do? He stones the people with the Ten Commandments. He breaks the commandments, but he literally breaks them over people’s heads. And so John wants you to get the pun here of what Jesus does. Moses was the first person to break the commandments. He was the first person to break them and he broke them physically over people’s heads. Moses stoned the people with violence in God’s name. So Jesus’ gesture, you might want to think about your dear friend Moses, because he’s the first one who got it wrong. And then he had to go back up the hill to get the commandments written a second time. Before that second time, God gives Moses a very strong lecture. He says, ‘Don’t do violence in my name. Don’t use my commandments for righteous anger. Don’t put anger in the name of God.’

Al-Qaeda started blowing up airplanes, burning people at the stake, or doing whatever but don’t do it in my name. Now, you can do it, but don’t say you are doing it in God’s name. And to their credit they get it. John says they laid down their stones and everyone left one by one. Notice they came unreflectively in a crowd; they go home one by one. Jesus turns and looks at the woman. He hasn’t looked down at the woman. Jesus was bent down looking at the ground because he did not want to look at her in her shame. He looks at her and says, ‘Has anyone condemned you?’ She says ‘no.’ ‘Then neither do I. Go away and don’t sin anymore.’ In there you see, as in many texts in the gospel, that we have to be really careful with righteous anger. Don’t go and stone people with the commandments. We did it for centuries. Al-Qaeda is doing it today. In the name of Allah, where error has no rights, we are going to kill you. We are still doing it in subtle ways. ‘You are going to be right or we are going to take you out.’ That is still the woman caught in adultery before Jesus. He says you can do that, but don’t do it in the name of religion. He says we have to be real careful with righteous anger.

The most divisive moral issue in this culture is what?—Abortion. Abortion divides the sincere from the insincere. It divides the western world. When I look at both sides, whether it is pro-life or pro-choice, on both sides there is a lot of subtle and not so subtle violence. But both in terms of righteousness. If you are pro-choice, I say you are a bunch of narrow bigoted people, don’t pose your morality on me—that’s violent. If I say you are a baby butcher; that’s violent. The cause may be right, but that’s not the point. Invariably we replicate on the very violence we are trying to stop. Somebody who burns the flag for peace; what’s wrong with that? Well, everything. They are trying to warm your heart to peace, by doing an act of violence that violates something that is precious to you. It is completely counterproductive. It’s doing exactly what they are trying to stop. We are going to wage war for peace. It just doesn’t work.

Let see if you catch the irony in this true story. Captain Cook, who is not a Disney Character, he was a real English explorer, and he did sail the world. At one point he stayed about 2-3 years in the Polynesian islands, and he befriended the chief, learned the language, and one day the chief took Cook to witness a human sacrifice at an altar. So, Cook is a pretty sophisticated Englishman; he watches this and is horrified. The chief said, what do you think of that, and Cook said 'That is terrible. He says that is awful. You are a very primitive people. In England you would be hanged for that.'

I hope you get the irony. They call it human sacrifice, we call it capital punishment, or we call it abortion, or whatever. But somebody is still dying. So often, we don't see the blind spots in our violence. That's why that text from John, of Jesus and the woman in adultery, is genius. In fact, there is another part about that text. Remember the famous text of Susanna? In the Old Testament, the book of Daniel; Susanna is unjustly accused of adultery by these two dirty old men. Daniel, inspired by the spirit, separates the men and asked them what tree did they see her commit adultery, and she finds out they lied. She is exonerated and the two men are killed. Two points that John is trying to make in this gospel; that it does not matter whether the person is guilty or innocent, Susanna was innocent, this woman was guilty. It doesn't matter. She's innocent in a deeper way, she is structurally innocent. She is standing against the crowd. She's got to be the victim of violence done in God's name. It doesn't matter whether you are guilty or innocent. This is why capital punishment is not good. It doesn't matter if the person is guilty. That's not the way God does it.

Secondly, notice how the texts end differently. In Daniel's, Daniel turns the violence of the crowd, like a western movie, against the bad people and they take the bad people out and kill them in God's name. In this end of this story, nobody dies. They just go home real somber and more reflective than they have ever been before. That's the way Jesus works differently. For Daniel, it is still important, like in our movies, that the bad guys get killed at the end. For Jesus, it is much more important that we all go home much more deeply reflective than we have ever been before, and nobody dies.

Very good question on righteous anger. I'm still going to do a little piece on that. But we have to be very careful because we've had a long history in all the churches and all the religions end civilly of doing that badly. That somehow in God's name we have to punish. John is so clear when Jesus says, 'Don't stone people with the commandments, with dogma, and with God.'

### **Leadership as helping spreading God's abundance**

**Fr. Rolheiser:** One of the things that is clear everywhere, in particularly with Jesus, is that God is a God of abundance. God is not a God who is miserly. God is not a God without resources. When you are ministering, when you are serving, you are working with endless resources. You always have to think that you are ministering out of abundance, never out of poverty scarcity.

Let me a couple of text. You have to be a farmer to pick this one up. Jesus said, 'A sower went out to sow. And he sowed some on the road, threw out some seed into bushes, some onto grassy parts, some in the desert.' So you stop and think; who seeds like that? My father was a farmer and he was pretty

careful with where he sowed seed. We didn't sow on road, the ditches, and so on. He only sowed on the carefully prepared ground. He said God puts the seed everywhere because it is limitless. You are ministering on limitless resources, mercy and forgiveness. There is no limit. It's important that we minister out of that abundance.

Let me take you to another text now. It's about the multiplication of the loafs. It says, Jesus is out in a desert place, and he has 5,000 people who have not eaten in three days. So the apostles come and they say, the people are hungry, should we go to the neighboring towns and buy food? Jesus says, 'No, what have you got?' And they say, 'We only have five loafs and two fish.' Jesus says, 'Well send it out before the people.' Now, this is a hopeless equation. You have 5,000 – 7,000 people, and you have five little loafs, two fish, and you are going to feed 5,000 people with that? Sometimes commentators try to explain it, they say 'No, the miracle is that people shared because they brought food,' and that has its own value, but that is not what the text is saying.

The text wants you to see the hopelessness of the equation. Go to the beginning of the text. They sat there with Jesus. Jesus was just talking about the bread of life. The disciples come and they say, 'The people are hungry. Should we go away and buy food. This is the key line. What is ironic about that? They are with the bread of life. They are with God's abundance. You don't have to go anywhere to buy anything. You are with limitless resources. Jesus is saying you have to trust. You have to trust even when the equation seems hopeless. So they sent it out, and it's enough. It's more than enough because they gathered 12 baskets of scraps. This is a very important part of servant leadership. We have to always trust that we are ministering out of super mega infinite abundance. Everything we have is there, and we can give it away. We can trust because there is always more. Not just with money, but particularly with God's mercy and forgiveness. There is no limit to God's mercy. There is no limit to God's forgiveness. There is no limit to God's resources. Trust. If they give it away, it will come back.

It's provincial of the oblates in Canada, one year we had some land that the government gave us. It was just useless. Somebody wanted that for some development. We ended up getting \$2 million for the land which we didn't know what we had. We go to our convocation, what do we do with this money. One of our very young, idealistic oblates says, 'Let me make a suggestion; I know this is ridiculous and you are going to laugh. I think we should take those \$2 million and give it to the natives.' We took the land from them a couple of hundred years ago. He said, 'We didn't ask for that money and we don't need the money. Wouldn't it be an incredible gesture if we take this and give it to the natives. It would be something we would do for us, not for the natives, just to say we trust in God's great abundance.'

He hadn't even sat down and about 15 people were saying it was just ridiculous young idealism. Of course they vote it down about 96-4. When he was defeated, the young guy stood down and gave a great biblical quote. He said, 'They didn't get it about the loafs. Remember how that passage ends? The next day they come and they want to be fed again, and Jesus said they didn't get it. They didn't understand about the loaves.'

This young man was right. We didn't get it. We ended up using the money for a mission in Kenya, so it's not like we went to a casino and blew it away. But this is a gesture of just abundance. He was right, let's

trust God. Do a biblical act, for ourselves, not that the natives need the money. That would be a faith act that would be something for ourselves. That's philanthropy. That is servant leadership. That's trusting in providence. I'm going to talk this afternoon about one of the occupational hazards and that is our anxiety. We are always anxious. Don't be anxious about what you are going to eat, or what you are going to wear. The Father knows you need that. The father takes care of sparrows, and hair falling off your head. You don't have to worry about it, but we always worry about it.

If you give that money away, and then what? Then we are unconsciously operating out of scarcity. We are not operating out of abundance.

A couple of little stories, just to get the microphone warmed up, that have nothing to do with this. We're going to call her Sr. Martha. Sr. Martha is principle at this Catholic School, and on a Monday morning she gets this phone call from the IRS. The man says, Are you Sister Martha. She says, I am. He says, Are you the principle at St. Patrick School? She said, I am. He said, Do you have a Jack Hennessy on your donor's list? She checked and she said, "In fact we do." The tax man says, "Has he given you \$25,000 to your school this year?" Sr. Martha says, "He will."

This one is a little more pious story. The story told is about a young woman. She has just a bit of a weight problem. She decided to give up sweets for Lent. But there was a problem because between her and her place of work, there was a very beautiful pastry shop. She had a hard time driving past this pastry shop. She thought, the only way I would be able to do this, is to take an alternate route to work. So she took an alternate route to work. No temptation; no pastry. Until one day, the alternate route to work was blocked by construction. She had to drive past the pastry shop, so she thought to herself, I am Catholic and this could be sign from God. Sometimes that's the way providence works; this may be a sign from God that today I should have a pastry, but I will discern this. We've all done this type of discernment, we say 'I'll do this, but this is the deal.' If when I get there and there is a parking spot open, then God wants me to have a pastry. No parking spot; no pastry. Well God is good, because on her sixth circle around the parking lot, a space opened up.

### **Leadership as learning on trust in providence and the bread of life**

We are looking at Jesus as servant leader. We looked at leadership as incarnating *exousia*, the non-violence, God's abundance, and next God's trust. In the gospels the opposite of faith is not doubt. Normally, we think of the opposite of faith as I doubt, or unbelief. Notice, Jesus never talks about unbelief or doubt. The opposite of faith is anxiety. Jesus always says, 'Don't be anxious.' The opposite of faith is when I'm anxious, which means I am not trusting. That famous text: You are anxious about many things. Take the lilies in the field, they don't spend or toil but salmon never looked as beautiful as the lily. Or birds, they don't put up in barns, but God takes care of them. No hair will fall from your head, except that God notices.

I was at a church once, and a priest gave a wonderful homily on this. I'm stealing this story, so I have to acknowledge it. He said, "You know one of our unconscious fears is this. Have you ever had this happen

to you? You go to your closet, and you are looking for an item of clothing, and while you are looking you find a completely different piece of clothing you forgot you had. Our unconscious fear is that some day God will look down and say, My God he is still alive?!”

He said we have this unconscious fear of being forgotten. But Jesus is assuring us of God’s abundance and that God’s radar screen has no gaps. We are all solidly locked there. He said, “Don’t worry no hair falls from a person’s head. God notices.” Our story will be told. There is this deep invitation to trust. Jesus completely trusted his father to the point of dying, not knowing he was going to rise. But trusting and leadership, Christian leadership, is to trust and not be anxious. That sounds abstract but it is not. All of you have worked for people, and all of you have people under you. I’ve worked for different provincials, bishops, generals, and you know the difference in your boss when they are anxious and when they are trust filled.

I served for six years in a general council in Rome. We had a wonderful Superior General. He was a very shy and introverted man, and not a great dynamic leader. There wasn’t a lot of *energia* or Mick Jagger in this guy. But there was a calm that always steadied the room. No matter what kind of crisis we went through, he’d speak calmly and say, ‘This too will pass; we’ve been through these crisis before; if we need lawyers we’ll get lawyers.’ But always a powerful calm in the room. He was never anxious. He trusted it was going to work out. God is good. There is providence. Mother Theresa; a calm, complete trust. What are we going to eat tomorrow? God will take care of that. Remember in the mass, just before they changed it, we had that prayer and priests always try to improve, ‘And save us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our savior Jesus Christ.’ Some priests would say needless anxiety, useless anxiety. They should have said ‘biblical anxiety.’ Jesus says, ‘Don’t be anxious. Trust, trust.’ That is a quality for all Christians , but particularly for leadership. If I’m anxious and I am president of a school, the school will be anxious, the faculty will be anxious, the staff will be anxious. Eventually, event he students will be anxious. Trust.

### **Leadership as solicitousness for wholeness**

I want to emphasize this today because this is a quality that we are losing in our societies, sometimes in our family, and particularly in our church. Solicitousness means; the healthy anxiousness for wholeness. One of the clearest and most powerful is Luke 15. In this, Jesus is going to give there parables of which have a lot of deep meanings. The overriding theme of all these is wholeness. So the first parable is this:

Jesus said, ‘A good shepherd, if he loses one sheep, he leaves the 99 and goes after the one, and he doesn’t rest until he brings the one back, so that he has 100 sheep.

The second parable, often the forgotten parable, is the parable of the woman with the 10 coins. Jesus said, ‘There was a woman in the kingdom of God who had 10 coins.’ These coins are worth about a dime. Imagine she has 10 dimes and she loses one and gets frantic. She lost the dime and she sweeps the house, and lights lamps. Finally, she finds the coin and she’s delirious with joy and calls her friends together and throws a lavish party, which costs more than all the dimes put together.

The third story is the parable about the compassionate father with two sons. The prodigal son, who leaves the house out of youthful weakness, and the older brother who is home working, but is also out of the house. Notice, the father is trying to coax both of the boys back into the house. He finally gets one to come back, and the story ends with him outside pleading with the brother to come back to the house to bring the family back together. There are many dimensions to the story, but the overall dimension to the story is God's solicitousness for wholeness.

Let's look at the second story. Woman scripture scholars often point out how neglected this story is because he puts God as a woman. You notice, there are three stories of equal value. God as a man in the shepherd; God as a woman; and God as the father of the prodigal son. We've had all kinds of iconography of the first two, and we ignore the middle one. Between the good shepherd and the prodigal son, we have some eccentric woman looking for a coin. Let's look at the story because it's so well done.

What does this woman represent? What is the frantic search? Well, in all of the stories there is a symbolism of numbers. For a Jew, 100 is a whole number, so 99 is not whole. 10 is a whole number, nine is not a whole number. You can't rest when you don't have a whole number. Let's recast the woman with the 10 coins. Imagine a mother who has 10 kids, and nine of them are coming home for Thanksgiving. Nine of them still come to the family table and one of her daughters is alienated for years. But this mother won't rest. Next Thanksgiving she still tries to phone this daughter and connect with this daughter, and finally she does. Now she's overjoyed because her family is whole. Everybody is back at the table. God and Jesus are solicitousness about wholeness and leadership should be solicitousness in wholeness.

One of the reasons I am emphasizing that today is because in our church today we almost have the opposite. An example: in the United States right now, the biggest denomination is Roman Catholics, and the second largest denomination is ex-Roman Catholics. Do you know the attitude of those of us who are Roman Catholics? – "Good riddance. They were Catholic-lite anyway. They weren't real Catholics." Notice, this woman doesn't say, "Well my daughter, my daughter was a daughter-lite. No sense in her coming to the table." Or if Jesus said, "Well, I have 100 sheep, this one was a useless piece anyway. That one may as well be lost. It's too easy to slide into "We're in and these people are out.

They weren't real Catholics anyway; or the family is better off without her." That is not Christian leadership. Christian leadership is always as solicitousness for wholeness. 99 isn't a whole number. Nine isn't a whole number. 10 is a whole number. When everyone is at the family table, it's a whole number. Before that, it is not a good number. That is a strong text and we need to challenge ourselves with that, and the church needs to challenge itself today. I don't know the circles you are in, but in the circles I am in it is too easy where people using the word "Good riddance." Now, we are going to be a purer church. We are going to be a purer family. Notice, this woman didn't say, "That coin was useless anyway. Now I'm going to have a purer set." Nine is not a good number. Half of Catholics coming to church is not a good number. Christians being divided among each other, into 200 denominations, is not a good number. We have to be solicitousness.

**Question:** Sometimes in leadership you hear these phrases like if you get 80% correct, or if you get 90% correct, you have arrived and can move on from there. Its pretty counter to what you're just proposing. In your experience as a leader, Have you been given those circumstances and maybe the wholeness applies not just to the people but also to the task?

**Fr. Rolheiser:** Yes, very good point. Let's say if you have a faculty and you have 85% with you, you always say, "That's a good start." But it's not a good finish. We're never going to have 100%. But we have to be solicitous for the 100%. I'm the president of a university. If I try to try to build a consensus on the faculty, and I learned you better do that because if your faculty is fighting you, it doesn't matter if you are right, you are going down. They are your players. It's like a football coach. If your team isn't playing, you are not going to win. So you try to build a consensus. You might only get 80%, but you look and think, "That's a start," but you still have to keep working in spite of the 20% and that's healthy enough. What is unhealthy is when we polarize and we say "good riddance." If I say we are much better off without that 20% of the faculty, they are a useless weight anyway. That's going against the gospel.

Even Mother Theresa didn't have 100%. I remember when I was at Provincial. In Saskatchewan, we had some rural parishes that didn't have parish priests and we put pastoral ministers, and in one of them we put an Ursuline sister who was actually very good, but a very sensitive woman. We got good readings from the parish and probably 85% or 90% of the parish supported her. But she had a 10% undertow, which you will always have. She'd come into my office and sometimes crying, and say, "Father, I can not work like that. I have all these people—and I would say, "Sister, even Mother Teresa hasn't got better numbers than that." You got 90%. But notice, in her tears there was a health. Because in her tears she didn't say, "Well screw this other bunch." It's more of a "No, I would really rather work with the 100%." Even in her tears, she showed a health. "I'm uncomfortable if I have 10% of the people hating me."

Today, sadly, people are comfortable if they have 60% of the people hating them. So always solitinousness for wholeness. Nobody ever gets the 100%. Notice Jesus had very strong opposition. In fact, if you are a sensitive person, it makes you wonder how did he operate. How do you preach love when there are people in the audience starrng and saying, "I hate your guts. You're a charlatan."

I was sharing this with Fr. Bob the other day. Joseph Champlin, who died a couple of years ago, was this wonderful pastoral theologian. I don't know if we would ever reproduce another Joseph Champlin. In one of his books, he says, "I gave a workshop to 104 priests. I looked at the evaluations; 102 were positive, and two were negative. What do you think I thought about: those two. What do these people hate me?)

Now, that's hypersensitivity, and the other side is healthy. Like this woman, saying I've got nine coins, but I am missing one. The shepherd: I've not 99 sheep, but I'm missing one. At a certain point I leave the 99 and go after the one. Or the father in the last parable, which is the strongest of all, who is leaving his dignity as a father to come to come to desperately coax his two sons to come into the house. He finally gets one of them in, and has to get the other one. Notice, he is trying to coax him in gently. That is a gentle tone when he says, "Son" because remember the son is angry. The son says, "I stayed home and I

did all the work and this guy blew your money on prostitutes.” And he says, “Son, everything I have is yours. This guy has been dead. You have never been dead. Come into the house.”

**Question:** I thought your comment about the opposite of faith being anxiety is spot on. But could you talk a little more about how you would address that? I thought the prophetic, wonderful stories of the widows: the widow who gives her last two pennies; the widow who gives her bread to Ezekiel, are examples of fantastic faith and trust that something will happen. How do you help someone that worries that they don't have enough. They may have millions, but they have an anxiety. Ironically, I don't think that telling them that God will find them just like the pair of pants that they didn't notice. That may be exactly what I think they are worried about. I think they are thinking, “I hope I am the pair of pants in the back that no one notices.” How do you coax somebody to have less anxiety and more faith?

**Fr. Rolheiser:** Very good question, and there are two levels to it. One level is easier to answer and the other level is harder. Lets take the harder level, which is the level of our own psychological and emotional makeup. To put it quit simplistically, some people are just—and I include myself—a little more neurotic than others and are worry warts. Some people were just born anxious, and it's almost like a character trait where you worry and sweat the little things, and it's so easy to lose the big picture. It's almost like a temperamental character. Some people are born to where it seems like they don't worry about anything. Drive over a baby and kill, go home and have a beer. It doesn't bother them. Partly it's how sensitively we are internally wired.

This is the catch-22; the more sensitive you are—in some sense—the less damage you are going to do as a person. You may sweat that internally. A couple of years ago I was a spiritual director to a young diocesan priest, who was really a great man. He was a young man, temperamentally very deep, but always operating on the edges of clinical depression. In fact, sometimes he would slide over and we would have to go to a clinic for awhile. But because of that depth, he was able to work with people at a very deep level. He could do a funeral, or visit someone in a hospital who was dying. I could only envy his skills, because that's where he was. He was always on the edges and yet his own life was very painful. He could not function or go to a party and cut loose, and yet at the same time it made him a great minister. He was sitting in my office one night and he was really down, and I said, Gerard, at least you are not a jerk.” – except I didn't use the word ‘jerk.’ That's the temperamental part. That's an emotional temperamental thing that has to do with therapy.

The other part is easier. Theologically, what we have to push ourselves onto is God's abundance, and the fact that the well never goes dry. Remember just last week we had the beautiful text with Elijah, when he tells the widow, “I've just got this tiny bit of oil and this tiny bit of flour left and when we eat that we are going to die.” He says, “Don't worry about it. Cook up the cakes and the jar will never run empty, the flour will never run empty” and it didn't. That is Jesus feeding the loaves. You are with the bread of life. It's going to be enough, don't worry. God always takes care and trust that you can give it all away.

Let me give that less abstract. When I was a seminarian, we lived with other seminarians, and most of us were Saskatchewan and Alberta farm kids. We came from—I wouldn't even say blue-collar that would be flattering—we came from very strapped economic families. So we are all these young farm boys who never had a penny to our name, but inside our group was the son of a millionaire. He grew up in Vancouver, millionaire's son, in some sense a spoiled kid—even by his own admission. In the summer time, we would be doing summer jobs and he'd be in Hawaii taking tennis lessons. This rich kid had a great quality, which he got from his family. They were very wealthy, but they were very generous. I've watched this guy through 40 years of ordination and he has grown into one of the great priests that I know, simply because of his dad's philosophy. He has given away more money and more things than I've ever seen anyone give and he has always gotten it back. His idea is that you never give away anything that you don't get back. That's kind of a deal you have with God: give it all away, get it all back.

And those of us who ironically came from economic impoverished backgrounds, where we are unconsciously always dealing with scarcity. He's generous, because he is dealing out of abundance. He's dad had millions. Give it away, we've got lots. We grew up dealing with scarcity, and ironically it has turned many of us into misers. He grew up rich. God could have turned him into a miser, but in this case it turned him into an extraordinarily generous man. He has no qualms about giving away lots of things, because he is confident that it will always be there. I grew up poor, so I'm never confident that it's going to be there. It's going to be there. It's God's abundance.

It's interesting and I should know because my mother raised a large family. But she had a sense of abundance, even when we didn't have it. She always had extra plates at the table, fed the neighbors, gave our old clothes away and so her own idea was that it would always be there. Sometimes we'd ask how, but it always worked. My family still laughs about this because we were a huge family in a small farmhouse, and one day there was a bit of a storm and this man who was traveling and his car broke down. My mom invites him in for supper and asks him if he would like to stay for the night. She says, "You can stay in our guest room." (he laughs) We didn't have a guest room, but somehow she made a room. Trust it. There is enough. There is always room for one other person. You can give it away. We have to challenge ourselves with that but that's at a theological spiritual level. We do at levels of retreat, but the anxiety thing that is in our temperament is something different.

**Question:** One of the ties that bind this community here is that we have collectively spent decades hoping to make a meaningful difference in the mission of the church. Personally, I resonate so deeply with all of your attributes of servant leadership. In my own life and service to the church I think in terms of abundance and wholeness, inclusivity, vulnerability, non-violence, mercy. I want to live those attributes in my own service to the church. But I am also very aware of the multiple power dynamics that exist. I work with a lot of bishops, and I know there is an authority that is conferred on me by baptism, but I am a woman in a very patriarchal church. I am a lay woman, working with a lot of people who are ordained and the perceptions around that hierarchy of value, but I am so perceived as representing serious philanthropic dollars in service to the church, and money has a power dimension. And then I represent a network of CEO's and Army generals, and other leaders. What advice do you have to someone who really loves the church and the church's mission, but has to navigate constantly this sea of competing powerful symbols and dynamics?

**Fr. Rolheiser:** Good question. Let me just name the pieces in the directions. One of them is we need to confront any kind of dysfunction that you see that you think it is not fair. I'm not going to start by saying; be patient, be the loyal suffering servant. That's part of it. Church is family, and inside of a family if there are dysfunctions where if your dad is an alcoholic or whatever we don't do the families a service by letting it ride. Today, both civically in the church, we are under pressured to do that, even though we know better. The old expression: "My country, right or wrong." That's really dumb -- that's not loyalty. My country when it's right. When it's wrong, you stand up to it. Or "My church, right or wrong. Love it or leave it." No, if you love it, you might want to say, "We can't continue this way." If you love your family, you have to go after dysfunction. Realize that it is always limited—these are the structures of the church—but to the extent that you as a person, and you as a philanthropist, and you as in command of some power, you can use that as leverage (if I can use a bad word like that) for power, do it.

Sometimes the only way we get better is by getting hit on the head. For instance, the church did not get the sexual abuse crisis until there were multi-million dollar law suits. And today I'm not sure if we've still completely got it, but we're getting it—not because we had inspiration from the Holy Spirit, but at a certain point we had to get it, we were forced to get it. So that's the first thing.

The second thing is that we also have to realize that we are part of a big historical picture. We have to be humble enough to know that we can only make a little difference. Nobody fully changes the world, but you can change it a little bit. And sometimes historical perspective can give us the vision for patience. As an example, it took the Christian church 1800 years for us to get slavery. You realize that slavery is wrong. We had saints for up to 1800 years, and up to 900 years who believed in slavery. It took us 1800 years for us to see through the gospel and say, "No, slavery is wrong. We can't do it." It took 2000 years with the last pope for it to seep through that capital punishment shouldn't be done. Now, with the status of women, it's been 2000 years...and we're kind of getting it. We haven't really got it, but its progress. Sometimes it's helpful to look elsewhere and see that as bad as it is—and I'm not just talking about the Roman Catholic Church—but within the faith of Christianity we've probably done the best of anyone. We haven't done it completely well but look at other parts of the world. Our gospel has moved us along. Sometimes it's helpful to look at the big picture, instead of waiting like, "it's coming. It's coming. It's coming. I wish it came faster." Or for instance, as a woman, to realize that all the women who initially fought for women to vote, but today you get to work. See the work you are doing is helping your children and grandchildren and their grandchildren.

When Martin Luther King was buried—and I don't know what network I was watching the funeral—the cameras were rolling out in the cemetery and they were interviewing people. They were talking to this old black man. The commentator asked the man, "Why are you sad today?" Brilliant question at a funeral! This old man, through his tears says, "The man we buried today was a good man. He was a faithful man, because he stayed with us when we weren't worth staying with and he believed in us when we didn't believe in ourselves." Notice, that the word to have faith, to be faith-filled, isn't a pun to say to be faithful. That's what faith means. He was faith-filled, he was faithful because he stayed. He stayed with us when we weren't worth staying with. He believed in us when we had stopped believing in ourselves.

Sometimes today in the church, and even civically, we have stopped believing in ourselves. We need men and women of hope who can say there is a bigger picture, a bigger future. I think that can give us a vision for patience. Sometimes it doesn't give us the strength for patience, but it gives us a vision for patience. See there is a big picture here, and what you are doing today is part of that big picture.

Last thing about patience. Great parable about Jesus, and I'm not sure we ever get this. I read a homily by Carl Reiner, that I very much enjoyed, where Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven is like a measure of yeast that a woman threw and raised the dough." Carl says, "Notice what Jesus doesn't say. He doesn't say the kingdom of heaven is a microwave, you turn it on and it goes zoom. It's done. He said its yeast. Yeast can only touch something, which touches something, which touches something." See, you can't microwave the church or the planet. But you can touch somebody, who touches somebody, who touches somebody. That is Jesus' major metaphor for the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is yeast, not a microwave. I thought that was a brilliant analogy. You turn on the microwave, and zoom, it's done. I think that's what we'd like the kingdom to be. That ties into what we talked about this morning. Jesus comes in to this world as a baby; this helpless kid lying in the straw crying is supposed to save the planet. He will, but it's going to take some time.

But thanks for the question. It's a good question. Not an easy one to answer, but a good question. As they say here on the east coast; it is what it is.

**Question:** You know Ron, even when you talked about confronting, which I think the *how* we do that is interesting. The only thing I can look at right now is LCWR. I think they have made a very conscious effort not to take this public, to stay in the dialogue, to be solicitousness about wholeness, but they also set some boundaries about *do no harm*. Our mission is our mission, and I think sometimes the hardest part is the *how* we confront or the way we do that, whether it can lead to solicitousness, or can lead more toward the unhealthy and greater dysfunction. I think that is the greatest challenge for all leaders.

**Fr. Rolheiser:** Very good point. I have a priest colleague of mine, who I very much respect, who struggles with that. He has a nice expression. He says, "I've always calculated each cross as if it were worth dying on this one. There are crosses that are worth dying on and crosses that are not worth dying on—not because they are not right but because they are not going to lead anywhere." You could lead a cause but at the end it's not going to be helpful. You've got to pick your crosses and say, "if I die on this one it's going to make a difference. If I die on this other one, I'm just going to be dead and it's not going to make any difference."

When I was at Provincial, we had a wonderful missionary who was a good friend of mine who was in South Africa in the time of apartheid. There were all sorts of gangs and he phoned me one day and says, "I am under my desk." You could hear the gun shots in the background. He says, "You know Father, I truly believe that you can die for a people, but I want to fly home. He said, "The reason is because if I'm going to get killed, I'm going to get killed for nothing. If I could die for a good reason, I would stay here. But these gangs, they shoot you one day and then the next day they turn around. If I get shot, I get shot for nothing. I'm going to get on a plane and fly home," and he did. He said, I don't really feel like I am abandoning the people, otherwise I would stay. I don't want to get killed for nothing." Jesus died on the

cross died on the cross, but it made a difference. But we can pick crosses and die on them, and in the end it might make it worse. Sometimes you have to weight these things practically. What's long range going to work here?

For instance, I work in the theological community. I think I can say this without giving away any secrets; there is a huge amount of self censorship in our writings. Basically we are saying, "If I say this, it's true, but it's not going to go anywhere." It's not so much that it's lack of courage for prophecy. It's being practically weighted out. With this church and this pope, and there is no sense in getting yourself excommunicated. You're better to stay and try to work in it than to die. Like the South Africa missionary says, "I don't want to die for nothing."

I have an older brother who is a priest. He's a wonderful man and has all these eccentric expressions, but they are brilliant. One of them says, "If you die for a good reason it's something you can live with."

If you die for no reason, it's senseless. Sometime s we have to self censor, we have to swallow hard and chew things. And not just in the church, it's also true in families. You're all parents and grandparents. Sometimes as a mother you just swallow real hard, and say this is sometimes what it takes to keep the family together. Other times you have to say it's an intervention and this person has to go to a clinic.

**Question:** I think the decision in the part of LCWR was profound. To have a conversation with the men in Rome, but to be very firm about what their ministry is. I think one thing that we can think of more strategically as a philanthropic community is a more proactive partnering with the media at its best, and trying to get communicated concerns of Catholics, those who have left. The more you publicize what people's real deep seeded concerns are about the church, as Margaret Farley said, "People who are in pain in their ministry." The more that that is publicized that it is healthy for the family to air some of these things.

**Fr. Rolheiser:** It is strategy and it is also where you are positioned. For instance, right now I am president of a Catholic theological school that has 125 seminarians in it. I am writer; I have to be real careful with what I write. If I write the wrong thing, the next day bishops are going to yank the seminarians out. It would be nice to be a private poet, I could say whatever I want.

All of you in this room, you are individuals, but you also carry a constituency. When you speak, are you speaking as Jack Smith or Jack Smith head of this foundation? You always have to weigh the two and what we need in the church are wild poets who have nothing to lose. An example would be Daniel **Baracket**, who I think was a great prophet. But Baracket never had anything to lose. He was completely free and could say what he wants. He had the freedom because he was a poet. Sometimes I envy that. I can't say what I want to say. It's also a great challenge to think how we build positively. This is the truth for all of you, precisely as leaders. You are an individual, but you also represent constituencies. So when you say something, you are not Daniel Baracket. You have to step down from what you are doing and then you will pay another price for that. I envy novelists because they can say absolutely anything because they put it in a novel and it's fiction. It's not read as fiction and they can have the powerful moral or immoral voices because they are not indebted to anybody.

But when you are inside the church, especially if you are in a leadership position, you're indebted. You simply can not be as free as you want to and you have to weight that off. It's a legitimate weighing off. It's not that you are doing it out of an unhealthy or a neurotic fear. Again, you have to say, "Is this a cross I can die on or is this a cross I better let go?"

**Question:** I think that when you do start to self-censor out of neurotic fear, then you have found the enemy. I think that is the truly unfortunately part of some of our leaders in any number of different circumstances these days is the self-censorship out of fear.

**Fr. Rolheiser:** That's true. Notice that she said that if you self-censor out of neurotic fear or even for your personal position that is compromise. But if you self-censor out of the sense of the common good, that is different.

### **Leadership as keeping a focus on the preference for the poor**

When the great prophets came along, up until then religion was very much consumed with proper religious practice. So if you read people like Walter Bergamon, who analyze things like this in the Jewish scriptures. Up until the great prophets came, for a pious Jew, the define Judaism a lot by proper religious practice. Do I belong correctly; am I keeping the commandments; am I obeying the law; am I worshipping? And they come and they blow us out of the water, and this is their great mantra. They say the quality of your faith will be judged by the quality of justice in the land. Not judged by whether you are going to church or not. They say the quality of your faith will be judged by the quality of justice in the land, and the quality of justice in the land will always be judged by how widows, orphans, and strangers (that's code. Fair while you are alive) the three most vulnerable groups in society, how are they doing? That's a test always of any leader. How are the three weakest groups in this society doing?

There is a pastor in New York, who coined this famous expression: Nobody gets into heaven without a letter of reference from the poor. As you leaders, you always have your eyes out on a lot of things, but also on the poor.

### **Leadership as "washing his disciples' feet."**

In the entire New Testament, if someone said to pick one text where Jesus shows where leadership ultimately stretches us out to, I would take the text of Jesus washing the disciples feet at the last supper. That text is in John's gospel and places it at the last supper, where the other gospels have the institution of the Eucharist. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, when we get to the last supper Jesus takes the bread and wine saying, this is my body, this is my blood. At the last supper of John's gospel there is no bread and wine. Instead, he says Jesus took a basin and the towel and began to wash the disciples' feet—and it's a Eucharistic text. That is the text that we read on Holy Thursdays as the institution of the Holy Eucharist—not the bread and wine, but the basin and the towel. Why?

In John's gospel, the Eucharist comes long before the Last Supper, and Jesus does not link the Eucharist to the Last Supper. He links it to the Humana, the feeding of the people in the desert. This is where we Roman Catholics get our practice of the daily Eucharist. But that text was written around the year 100. Jesus had been dead for about 70 years when that was written. And John would have been an old man in his 90's. Imagine, the last living Apostle, over 90, who has seen 70 years worth of church life. And 70 years of church life then, was exactly like church life now. They fought about everything, especially the Eucharist. By the time John's Gospel was written, there were already four or five practices of the Eucharist. They argued about how often it should be celebrated. Some did it once a year, some did it four times a year, some did it every Sunday and some did it every day. They fought about who should preside, and who should be ordained. So, John does not record Jesus doing the bread and wine, but records Jesus with the basin and the towel. This is a gesture of humility, and that is usually what we pick up. Jesus is the master but he washes the disciple's feet. That's humble. There is a lovely poem about it that says, "At the Last Supper, Jesus took the mantle of privilege, reversed it and turned it into the apron of service." That is servant leadership. In John's Gospel you can never preach wrongly on a text, because it means that and it means five more things, but it always means that. But for John it also means something else. It's a particular kind of humility.

There is clean humility and messy humility. For instance, yesterday you fed a bunch of people here in a soup kitchen. That is a wonderful thing to do. It's a humbling thing to do. It's not that hard to do. You go home, you take a shower, and you feel good about yourself. Now if on Christmas Day, before you have your dinner, you go and serve in a soup kitchen; that's wonderful and it's a little hard to do, but it's not that hard to do. And you go home feeling good about yourself. That's clean compassion. What's messy compassion? You know what John would do today if he came back to our society with the question of abortion?—which I said before is the most divisive thing in our entire culture. He would not argue, but he would take out a basin and towel and he would say, "I want pro-choice to wash pro-life's feet, and I want pro-life to wash pro-choice's feet. I want Obama to wash Romney's feet and I want Hilary Clinton to wash George Bush's feet, democrats to wash republican's feet, and then I want the bishops to wash the women's feet, and the women to wash the bishops' feet. Then we would have some chance of bipartisanship and community and Eucharist. That's what the Eucharist means. You are reaching across not just to serve or master, you are reaching across the line to where it really stretches you. It's the ultimate gesture. Can you reach across and wash the feet?

There is something else that is really deep in this text. John sets it up this way, he says "At the supper Jesus, knowing that he would come from the Father, was going back to the Father and therefore all things were possible for him, took off his outer garment and began washing the feet. The outer garment is deeply mystical and symbolic. It doesn't just mean the outer sash. What is an outer garment? We're Roman Catholics: we're pro-life, this we're that, we're democrats, republicans—this is all our outer garment and when we wear that we can not wash everybody's feet. If I'm a Roman Catholic, male, Anglo, I won't give you my political affiliation, there are only certain people's feet I can wash. If I take off that outer garment, wearing only my

inner garment which is what? I've also come from God. I am also going back to God and therefore all things are possible for me. Notice that afterwards he puts it back on. It's not like you take it off forever. There are significant times when we have to take off our outer garment and wearing only our inner garment you embrace everybody.

I was very fortunate in my formation to three times have Raymond Brown, a great scholar, as a professor. He was not just a great professor, but he was also a great man. Brown said, "You know when you are young you should be causey, you should have plaques, you should get out there. When you become a grandfather or grandmother sometimes it's good to park the placard and grab a basin or towel and just say enough with the divisions, I'm going to embrace everybody. I'm going to truly be bipartisan. It's not a wishy-washy position. Your embrace is nondiscriminatory and it's discriminatory at the same time. Imagine your daughter is getting married but she is getting married by a Swami in Hawaii. Now, I know this because one of my nieces pulled this (laughs). Do you go to the wedding? Another example; you have a daughter in college. She comes home for the weekend and she brings her boyfriend along. You know they are living together. Do you tell her, "In our house you are not going to sleep in the same bedroom?" You hold your ground. You go to the wedding, you kiss your daughter, and you tell her that you love her. It doesn't mean that you agree with her and she's smart enough to get that. She knows that your embrace is saying I love you and at the same time that you don't agree with this. We need to embrace pro-choice. We need to embrace everybody, not to say we agree with them, but we are doing the opposite. We are demonizing. Today everybody is demonizing everybody else.

There is no possibility that our community is going to solve the abortion issue while we are demonizing each other. John would say bring out the basin and towel. In the end nobody wants abortion. So why do we have it? One of the reasons is there are no basins and towels. Raymond Brown once said, "Imagine how much different the church would be if instead of institutionalizing the bread and wine, they institutionalized the basin and the towel. We would go to church and wash each others feet because that's the Eucharistic gesture. That's servant leadership. It's a little more complex than Jesus was a good guy because he washed his servant's feet. That's true. That's the first level, but he stretches us out to a new level.

### **Presentation Two – Servant Leadership – Out Interior Struggles**

There's a story told about a pastor who was at his parish for eight years and he was going to be moved. Some of the parishioners were quite upset and said, "The bishop can't just come here, snap his fingers and move you. We're going to write a letter of protest to the bishop." The pastor says, "No, no, no, you don't have to do that. It's very normal for a priest to be moved today. More importantly, the bishop sent me a letter to read to you on Sunday, which is to assure the parish that the new priest coming in is a wonderful young man, great homilist, a community builder, good theology, and you will do very well with him. One woman said, "A likely story. That's what they told us last time."

One more point about leadership, which is not listed on the sheet. That is that leadership has to be strong enough to stand up to dysfunction. Leadership has to be gentle. It's exousia and at the same time organizations fail when leaders do not stand up to dysfunction. A family goes under if somebody is an alcoholic. I've lived in a number of religious communities, some healthy ones and some unhealthy ones. They always became unhealthy when you had somebody who was dysfunctional and was not confronted. This is true for the church and any kind of organization. One of the key duties of a leader is to address dysfunction. I've been on Provincial, I've been a General Council, and I am president of a school. Often times, unless you are Clint Eastwood that is the hardest part of your job. You want to be nice people. But how do you call on somebody? How do you fire somebody? It's really hard to do. In each of my positions, the hardest part of every one of my jobs is to address dysfunction. And yet it has to be done.

### **Presentation Three – Servant Leadership and Philanthropy –**

#### **Towards a Spirituality of Philanthropy**

1. Biblical: All blessings given us are given in function of us blessing others – “through you all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.”

When God chooses the Israel. Remember that Jews are the people of Israel. He says, “I'm choosing you so through you all the nations of the earth will be blessed.” That is true for every blessing. If you grew up and you were given gifts, talents, wealth, that's wonderful. But it's that you used that for other people. Were given gifts, were given wealth, were given talents, but always (that's the subordinate clause) every time they talked about the Jewish people, the chosen race, but not for yourself, but through you all the nations of the earth will be blessed. That's your basic major point for philanthropy. You've been gifted, not for yourself, but to help other people. Through you, everybody else should be blessed.

2. Biblical: The need to trust in God's abundance and that thus we make ourselves vulnerable.

Philanthropy always begins with God's abundance. It's limitless. Always work from a theology of abundance, never of scarcity. As soon as we start thinking scarcity we're going to get miserly and it's not going to work.

3. Biblical: Ownership as stewardship – “*ad usam*”

Biblically, nobody owns anything. You don't own your property. You don't own your foundation. You don't even own life. It is given to you in trust. You are the steward. The Stewart is the gardener. The gardener does not own the garden. The gardener just makes things grow. You don't own your wealth. You don't own your life. You're in charge of it. That's a subtle thing, but it's very important. As soon as we think, “This is mine.” Biblically nothing is ever yours. It's given to you in trust. You're the gardener. Your life is a garden. Your foundation is a garden. You're the gardener. It's not yours, but you are responsible for it. You don't own it.

The expression *ad usam* is a Latin expression. I remember I was a 17-year-old novice. We went to novitiate and we have a vow of poverty. Everything they gave us in novitiate, whether it was a Bible, a rule book, a hockey stick, but always our novice master would make us write with a felt pen *ad usam*, which means in Latin: it's for your use. Don't get any illusions that you own it. You get to play with this hockey stick, but it is not yours. This Bible is in your room, or this car is yours, but only for your use. That teaches something. I had a very close friend, still a close friend, and we were in the seminary together for eight years. I was ordained, he left and got married and became a medical doctor. A couple of years ago, I was in his office, was looking through some of his medical books, some of which are over \$400. In front of every one of his books he had written *ad usam*.

I thought it was kind of humorous and said, "You know Gary, you don't have to do this." He said, "I take that seriously. These are not my books. I learned my novitiate training well. These are for my use. I have no illusions that I own it." He's clear; stewardship. Everything is given to us in trust. For the gardener, the garden isn't yours. That's biblical. Also true incidentally for the whole earth.

We don't own the earth. We don't own this country. Nobody owns it. We are Stewarts.

#### **4. Our need to give to others in order to be healthy ourselves – the poor and rich as needing each other.**

It is so clear in scripture when Paul goes around doing collections for the churches. Notice what he never says, "I need this money because the poor need it." He's saying, "You need to do this for you to be healthy." We need to give away stuff, not just in philanthropy, not because the poor need it—they do—but because we need it so we can be healthy. They've studied this anthropologically in a lot of cultures and at a certain point there is a moral principle that isn't always obeyed, but in every culture, for instance in our native culture they have something they call *potlatch*, which means you can only get so rich and then you have to do a potlatch, where if you get a bunch of property you just give it away, because otherwise you won't be healthy.

When we ask people to help us, it's not so much helping me because I need it, I do need it. We all need money, but that's not the reason. We need for us to be healthy. We become healthy by giving away. Paul is really clear on that. He says, "You need to give to the poor for you need to be healthy." We do philanthropy more for ourselves than for the poor. The biggest gift we ever got for our school was from a wonderful man, and it was the first time he'd ever given such a large gift. When he came to give it to me he said, "God if I would have known it felt this good, I would have done this years ago? He realized he needed to do this, not because the school needs it or the poor needed it, but he needed to do that. He's a healthier man for that and he knows it. Since then, he has opened his treasure chest to a lot of people.

**5. Biblical: The invitation to give away what's surplus (and the "uber" invitation to give away what we need for sustenance) and our deep struggle to do that, with anxiety, not selfishness as the real culprit.**

Scripture makes it clear. We are obliged to give away surplus. Remember the famous parable of Jesus and the widow from Sunday's gospel. Notice she gives away her sustenance. Jesus does not demand it. That's a wonderful thing, if you can give away not just your surplus but also what you need to live on. That's biblical faith. That's an invitation. It's not a command. A surplus is more than an invitation.

The thing about anxiety, when we are anxious to do that. Notice Jesus doesn't say people are selfish. He's saying people are anxious. This is a subtle thing. There is a famous incident about Jackie Kennedy, who was once approached by a foundation. She said, "I'd like to give you more but I'm not that rich." In her world, she wasn't. But if you're a poor person in India she's pretty wealthy. Even by our standards, she's pretty wealthy. Take all of us in this room, who don't consider ourselves very wealthy. But go to India and by their standards we are extravagantly wealthy. But in our world, it is not that much. All of us are unconsciously thinking like Jackie Kennedy. In our world, we are not that rich. That's biblical anxiety. We worry about what we're going to wear, how we're going to pay the mortgage, and so on. Jesus zero's in and says the canker is not so much that we are selfish or greedy. The canker is that we're anxious. We're all Jackie Kennedy's "I'd like to give you more, but I'm not that rich."

**6. Biblical: Luke's condemnation of the hoarding- rich, but praising the generous rich.**

That is an interesting point. John Shea and other Lutheran and Jesuit scholars will point that out. Luke's gospel is the most social justice gospel in the entire New Testament. In Luke's gospel, every sixth line is a direct invocation to reach out to the poor. But yet Luke makes a distinction. In Luke's gospel, it's not wrong to be rich. It's only wrong to be hoarding if you are rich. Luke's Jesus praises the generous rich. It's ok to be rich if you are generous because God is rich. God is the wealthiest person there is. God owns everything and heaven is going to be a place of wealth and abundance. We should never make an ideology of poverty and sometimes we do. Poverty is not a good thing. It is to be eliminated. Luke's Gospel makes a subtle distinction, but it's an important one. It's not a question of whether you are rich or poor. It is a question of am I generous or am I hoarding. Luke begins with the generous rich getting praise, beginning with God, throwing seeds and life all over the place. The person who puts it into barns for himself, remember that famous parable of the rich man who had a crop and said, "I'll build a bigger barns and I'll never have to worry again." He never had to because he died that night. Wealth is not condemned in the scripture. Hoarding is condemned in scripture. In wealth, if you can be generous, you are praised.

**7. Biblical: The concept to justice and the preferential option for the poor.**

**8. Theological: Gratitude as our deepest motivation.**

Theologically, the basis for everything is gratitude. We need to do what we are doing, not because we feel guilty, and not because the poor need it, but because we operate out of gratitude. Gustavo Gutierrez was the father of liberation in theology. To my mind, he is a great man. I've heard him say this twice to audiences in Peru. Gustavo would say, "If you are a North American and you are privileged and you are watching your television screen, and you see the poverty of the third world and you want to come and help us because you feel guilty, don't come. The third world has many problems without importing your neurosis."

He says don't come out of guilt. He said, "If you are grateful. You can look and say God has blessed thee, then come and share." There is only one real motivation. It has got to come out of gratitude. Rather than of guilt when you say, "I'm rich and the poor have nothing." That's a neurosis. He says gratitude has to be your motivation.

I read recently a little book by Morris West, the novelist, who on his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday released a small little biography. A wonderful book called, "The View from the Ridge." It's a real mature biography. It's not Justin Beaver, *My Life Up to Now*.

In there he says, when you get to be 75, there should only be three phrases left in your vocabulary; thank you, thank you, and thank you. You've won the lottery. You've won all the lotteries. He said, "Get rid of bitterness, guilt. When you are 75, nurture three phrases; thank you, thank you, and thank you. In the end gratitude is the ultimate virtue. It's even deeper than love. If someone says love is the deepest virtue, no. Love is founded on gratitude. If love isn't founded on gratitude, it will be manipulative always. It will have an angle. Love is only free, like when Gutierrez says, "God has blessed thee. I want to help you." Then you are operating out of the largeness of God and not out of some guilt or neurosis. I love the line when he says, "The poor have many problems without importing your neurosis."

**9. Ecclesial: The great Social Encyclicals of the Church.**

Starting with Leo the 13<sup>th</sup>, right through John Paul and into this pope, we've had great social encyclicals. Sadly, most Catholics have not taken all that seriously. Paul the 6<sup>th</sup>, in 1968 wrote an encyclical called *Humanae Vitae*, which blew the church up. It was an encyclical in birth control. The year before, he wrote an encyclical called *Populorum Progressio*, which is much more demanding than *Humanae Vitae* and nobody even read it. Yet those two had the same weight. John Paul, the hero of a lot of conservative Catholics, didn't read the social encyclicals. He had the most far reaching social principles of any pope ever. In all those encyclicals there is a very fine line there that says you don't have the right to surplus. You only have the right to surplus when everybody else has enough. So you have two pairs of

shoes, you should not have it until everyone else has one pair of shoes. Those are ideals that are being held up to us.

**10. Social: Society has rightful claims on the wealthy.**

I want to read you a piece from Bill Gates Sr. No wonder his son is a great philanthropist now. He wrote this in 2003 for *Soujourners*.

“Society has an enormous claim upon the fortunes of the wealthy. This is rooted not only in most religious traditions, but also in an honest accounting of society’s substantial investment in creating fertile ground for wealth-creation. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all affirm the right of individual ownership and private property, but there are moral limits imposed on absolute private ownership of wealth and property. Each tradition affirms that we are not individuals alone but exist in community—a community that makes claims on us. The notion that ‘it is all mine’ is a violation of these teachings and traditions. Society’s claim on individual accumulated wealth is...rooted in the recognition of society’s direct and indirect investment in the individual’s success. In other words, we didn’t get there on our own.”

Bill Gates became the richest man in the world and he did not get there on his own. He’s wise enough to realize ‘I have got to give this stuff back.’ Anyone who has made millions of dollars, they didn’t get there alone. It’s a wonderful principle. If the pope had written it, nobody would read it. But Bill Gates Sr. wrote this and I think he has some claims on us.

I want to thank you for being patient here with me today. I want to end by reading you the best poem in the world. Have you ever heard the best poem in the world? I don’t know who wrote this. Someone left this on the lecture once when I was preaching. But it is the greatest poem in the world.

*I was shocked, confused, bewildered as I entered heaven’s door  
—not by the beauty of it all, nor by the lights or the décor.  
It was the folks in heaven that made me sputter and gasp;  
the thieves, the liars, the sinners, the alcoholics of the trash.  
There stood the kid from 7<sup>th</sup> grade, who swiped my lunch money twice.  
Next to him was my old neighbor, who never said anything nice.  
Hurb, who I always thought was rotting away in hell,  
was sitting on cloud nine looking pretty well. (laughs)  
I nudged Jesus, ‘What’s the deal. I would love to hear your take.  
How did all these sinners get up here? God you might have made a mistake.  
Why is everyone so quiet and so somber? Give me a clue.’  
“Hush my child,” said Jesus. They’re all in shock.  
No one thought they’d be seeing you.”*