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Reflective Leadership

In one capacity or another, all consecrated persons are leaders. Besides having numerous and varied responsibilities and tasks, leaders most importantly are called to cultivate and to carry the vision and charism. From a human formation perspective, when leadership proceeds through openheartedness, then creativity, joy, fulfillment, and peace of mind unfold and thrive within the leader. Alternatively, when leadership pushes and stresses with what we call self-interest-ego strivings (being harsh, closed-minded, critical, prideful, etc.), the experience of leadership is more stressful, worrisome, burdensome, and with little joy and peace.

A leader's unchecked, unprocessed, and unresolved human stuff is the number one obstacle to effective leadership, leadership that unfolds with peace of mind. Floundering, insecurity, and disappointment in self as a leader are not due usually to lack of skill or experience, competence, or commitment. Rather, what messes up leadership (whether as congregational leader, local pastoral team member, committee member, or in an ad hoc leadership situation) is unmindfulness and unawareness concerning the impact that people and circumstances have on the leader. When unaware, we respond in an automatic manner rather than in an intentional, openhearted, reflective manner. Through unmindfulness, our ego strivings are often activated and add unhelpfulness and stress to the situation.

For example, tracking the interactions of a group talking around a conference table, an observer would readily notice the active and abundant presence of self-interest-ego strivings. What can be heard are varying tones of insistence, annoyance, blaming, dismissing, minimizing, aggressiveness, disrespect, and pressuring. As a leader over the years, how many times have you caught yourself in a state of impatience, insistence, irritability, harshness, or being closed-down to the conversation? It is always the human stuff that hinders authentic, helpful, creative, and peaceful leadership. It is never the task or the other people. It is always "how" we take up and assume the people, events, and things that brings about helpfulness, openheartedness, and peacefulness, or unhelpfulness, closed-heartedness, and stressfulness.

FCS's Reflective Leadership process assists individual leaders and leadership teams, committees, and communities with leading with openheartedness. We assist leaders in noting, acknowledging, diluting, and transforming their self-interest-ego strivings. Our *Reflective Leadership* process results in assuming leadership with joy, creativity, fulfillment, and peace, irrespective of the many storms that arise throughout the day.

For detailed information concerning our *Reflective Leadership* process, please review our web site via the link here: <http://www.fcs-bilotta.com/pages/cfReflective.cfm>.