



# MISSION ENRICHMENT

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*The Spirit of the Gospel in Service of the Mission*

**“Has it never dawned upon you that the essence of witnessing is just plain honesty? You are salt – whether you feel like it or not. You are not told to act like salt but to be what you are. You are a light. God has done a work in your life. Don’t try to shine. Let the light that God put there shine out. It demands no more than honesty.”** ~John White

## TATTOOS ON THE HEART

by Greg Boyle, SJ [Ed. note: a truly inspiring book by a Jesuit priest who creates jobs and personal growth opportunities for the poor]

God can get tiny, if we’re not careful. I’m certain we all have an image of God that becomes the touchstone, the controlling principle, to which we return when we stray.

My touchstone image of God comes by the way of my friend and spiritual director, Bill Cain, S.J. Years ago he took a break from his own ministry to

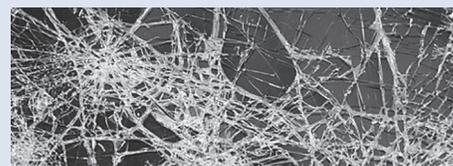
“You are my Beloved, in whom I am wonderfully pleased.”  
There is not much “tiny” in that.

care for his father as he died of cancer. His father had become a frail man, dependent on Bill to do everything for him. Though he was physically not what he had been, and the disease was wasting him away, his mind remained alert and lively. In the role reversal common to adult children who care for their dying parents, Bill would

put his father to bed and then read him to sleep, exactly as his father had done for him in childhood. Bill would read from some novel, and his father would lie there, staring at his son, smiling. Bill was exhausted from the day’s care and work and would plead with his dad, “Look, here’s the idea. I read to you, you fall asleep.” Bill’s father would impishly apologize and dutifully close his eyes.

But this wouldn’t last long. Soon enough, Bill’s father would pop one eye open and smile at his son. Bill would catch him and whine, “Now, come on.” The father would, again, oblige, until he couldn’t anymore, and the other eye would open to catch a glimpse of his son. This went on and on, and after his father’s death, Bill knew that this evening ritual was really a story of a father who just couldn’t take his eyes off his kid. How much more so God? Anthony De Mello writes, **“Behold the One beholding you, and smiling.”**

God would seem to be so occupied in being unable to take Her eyes off of us to spend any time raising an eyebrow in disapproval. What’s true of Jesus is true for us, and so this voice breaks through the clouds and comes straight at us. “You are my Beloved, in whom I am wonderfully pleased.” There is not much “tiny” in that. †



**“See the Glass as Already Broken (and Everything Else too)”**

This is a Buddhist teaching that I learned over twenty years ago. It has provided me, again and again, with greatly needed perspective to guide me toward my goal of a more accepting self.

The essence of this teaching is that all of life is in a constant state of change. Everything has a beginning and everything has an end. Every tree begins with a seed and will eventually transform back into earth. Every rock is formed and every rock will vanish. In our modern world, this means that every car, every machine, every piece of clothing is created and all will wear out and crumble; it’s only a matter of when. Our bodies are born and they will die. A glass is created and will eventually break.

There is peace to be found in this teaching. When you expect something to break, you’re not surprised or disappointed when it does. Instead of becoming immobilized when something is destroyed, you feel grateful for the time you have had.

The easiest place to start is with the simple things, a glass of water, for example. Pull out your favorite drinking glass. Take a moment to look at and appreciate its beauty and all it does for you. Now, imagine that same glass as already

*continued on back page*

Ideas or comments are welcome.

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# TEN LEADERSHIP BLUNDERS

Comedian Bill Cosby once said, “I’m not the boss of my house. I don’t know how I lost it, I don’t know when I lost it, I don’t really think I ever had it. But I’ve seen the boss’ job...and I don’t want it!”

Like it or not, there are times we are in charge. There are times we are all leaders – as a parent, in the classroom, through work, in a club, on a sports team or in a volunteer organization. And we can always become better leaders. Here are ten common leadership blunders better leaders avoid.

1. Some leaders are blind to the current situation. They solve the wrong problems in the wrong way. They bandage an infected thumb but do not pull the splinter. Better leaders work hard to understand the real problem before responding.

2. Some leaders discourage those they lead. They find fault and blame. They criticize when things don’t go right. Better leaders encourage. They give credit when things go well and take responsibility for problems.

Alabama football coach “Bear” Bryant was once asked how he inspired his players. He responded, “Well, I’m just an old plow hand from Arkansas, but I’ve learned a few things about getting people to do what you want them to do. When things go wrong, I did it. When things go semi-good, we

did it. And when things go good, you did it. That’s all it takes to hold a team together....”

3. Some leaders believe they have all the answers they need. Better leaders keep learning. A cross-discipline study of leadership indicated that effective leaders in all fields are always learning. They understand that a spurt here and a spurt there does not make an expert.

4. Some leaders shy away from courageous decisions. They prefer to keep things as they are, even if the system is not working all that well. They will almost always follow the well-worn path. Better leaders will often go where there is no path and leave a trail. They trust their instincts and act boldly.

5. Some leaders keep others in their place. They remind them who is boss. Better leaders know that authority earned trumps authority granted.

A young Army officer found that he did not have the correct change for a soft drink vending machine. Noticing a subordinate nearby, he said, “Private, do you have change for a dollar?” Cheerfully, the man said, “I think so. Here, let me look.” “That is no way to address your superior, soldier!” scolded the officer. “Now, let’s try it again. Private, do you have change for a dollar?” The soldier snapped to attention, saluted and said, “NO, SIR!”

The officer’s authority was granted, but he had yet to earn respect from those he led.

6. Some leaders would rather do the work themselves. They are slow to delegate. They micro-manage and control. Better leaders identify strengths and limitations of those they lead. They assign, train, encourage and then get out of the way.

7. Some leaders sabotage the successes of others. When those below them succeed, they feel threatened. Better leaders help their subordinates find success. They give a hand up. They realize that when one is lifted onto another’s shoulders, both stand taller.

8. Some leaders ask others to do what they are not willing to do themselves, and try to get others to go places they have not been. Better leaders always lead by example. They get out in front and lead, they don’t push from behind.

9. Some leaders motivate by force. They cajole, intimidate, threaten and issue ultimatums. Better leaders understand that people respond best to positive incentive. They build morale.

10. Some leaders do not listen well to those they lead. Their minds are already made up and they charge recklessly ahead. Better leaders listen closely to those they want to influence.

U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk once said, “One of the best ways to persuade others is with your ears -- by listening to them.” Great salespeople know this. Great motivators know this. Great leaders know this.

Maybe you’ve seen the boss’ job and you don’t want it, but we are all in charge at times. Be a better leader and you will help build a better world. †

## Change Your Life by Changing Your Habits by Dr. Denis Waitley

You can change your life by changing your habits. Here are some guidepost rules regarding change:

**Rule 1:** No one can change you and you can’t really change anyone else. You must admit your need, stop denying your problem, and accept responsibility for changing yourself.

**Rule 2:** Habits aren’t broken, but replaced—by layering new behavior patterns on top of the old ones. This usually takes a least a year or two. Forget the 30-day won-

der ones. I don’t know where motivational speakers got the idea that it takes 21 days to gain a new habit. It may take that long to remember the motions of a new skill, but after many years of being you, it takes far longer to settle into a new habit pattern and stay there. Habits are like submarines. They run silent and deep. They also are like comfortable beds, in that they’re easy to get into, but difficult to get out of. So don’t expect

immediate, amazing results. Give your skills training a year and stick with it, knowing that your new ways can last a lifetime.

**Rule 3:** A daily routine adhered to over time will become second nature, like riding a bicycle. Negative behavior leads to a losing lifestyle, positive behavior to a winning lifestyle. Practice makes permanent in both cases. †

# St. Louis University School of Medicine's Gift of Body Program

Every year, people donate their bodies to SLU School of Medicine's Gift of Body Program through the Center for Anatomical Science and Education. Established in 1836, Saint Louis University School of Medicine has the distinction of awarding the first medical degree west of the Mississippi River. The school uses the bodies as an educational resource for training physicians and biomedical scientists. Research at the school seeks new cures and treatments in five key areas: cancer, liver disease, heart/lung disease, aging and brain disease, and infectious disease.

You may know some of these generous souls – friends, family, and a few Oblates. Actually, when my mother told me she had done so (getting the paperwork together in the 1970's) I tried to talk her out of it. I wanted her body for viewing to help my grief, I didn't want medical students using her remains to joke with during anatomy class. Good reasons, selfish reasons - it is easy to become selfish with other people's lives. By God's grace Mom's wishes came to be. I had the opportunity to read reflections from students at one of the Memorial Services held each Fall for the families of those who have donated their body to science.

"This service gives our students an opportunity to think about what the individuals have done in donating their body, and how that will help them learn and become a better physician," said Margaret Cooper, Ph.D., professor of anatomy and associate director of the Gift Body Donor program. "It is something very special for students and the families."

The following is one of those reflections that helped change my mind. This student graduated the year my mother died.



*Memorial Service Reflection* by Katie Fernandez,  
St. Louis University Medical Student, Class of 2010 (October 13, 2006)

"Heart" is a word with many meanings. Anatomy tells us that a heart is a vital organ that circulates blood throughout our bodies. History has taught us that a heart is a quality of people with determination and courage. On Valentines' day we use a heart as a symbol of love and passion. We also use a heart to describe qualities of selflessness and generosity for others, which I believe characterizes the donors for whom we have gathered to honor today.

As friends and family, you knew them as unique and special people; and while we as students could not know their minds and souls, we were awestruck and fascinated by their anatomical individuality. The heart within each person varied as they did, in size, structure and history. We studied their complexities and tried to understand their variations. If the pictures in our textbooks are worth a thousand words, than we would need volumes to describe the amount of knowledge each of these individuals has taught us.

The decision to donate must not have been an easy one. It must have taken courage to tell loved ones and courage to face the unknown. You, the family, were also part of this decision and you chose to honor it and see it through. I believe that it was the love for you and faith in the SLU medical program that inspired these donors. They have given of themselves both physically and in spirit, in life and in death. While a different person or event may have inspired each individual, they nevertheless were alike in their desire to help others. The students before you have chosen to become physicians because we share this desire and thank you for helping us in the realization of this goal.

We are here to celebrate not only what these individuals accomplished during their lifetimes, but also what they will continue to accomplish through ours. Each donor possessed a literal, physical heart that was necessary to our education. However, each person also possessed a more rare and intangible kind of heart, one filled with courage and love for others that led them to make the noble decision to donate. Your loved ones will live on through your memories and also in the minds and knowledge of the future caregivers you see before you. The gift we honor today is like a drop of water creating ripples on a pond. I am confident that the ripples arising from these critical first few drops of knowledge will be the beginning of a greater wave that will carry us into the future. For that, we at SLU are forever grateful. †

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## THE PROMISE THAT KEEPS US WARM

(from *Workday Prayers* by Timothy Jones)

Sometimes winter, with its cold days and long nights, leaves us discouraged, hardly able to believe that spring will again warm our hearts. The title of one book says it well: *The Winter of Our Discontent*. We may forget the glorious changes spring promises. But the promise of warmth and sunshine allows us to endure winter's nights.

**Pray:** Lord, I do not always remember that you are a God of light and

warming goodness. Remind me that winter turns always to spring, nighttime ever rotates to morning, and my most desolate moments can bring me ultimately to awareness of your constancy and goodness.

**Remember:** "My people shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord... Their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again... I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow." (Jeremiah 31:12-13) †

# All Used Up by Steve Godier

A well-known surgeon was attending a dinner party and watched the host adroitly carve and slice the large turkey for his guests.

When he finished slicing, the host asked, “How did I do, Doc? I think I’d make a pretty good surgeon, don’t you?”

“Perhaps,” said the physician. “But anyone can take them apart. Now let’s see you put it back together again.”

Like surgery, some tasks require special talent, skill or training. There are those who have what it takes to work in an operating room. Others have the kind of aptitude needed to teach a class or repair an automobile, and still others can cook a delicious meal, play a musical instrument well enough that folks want to listen or solve difficult mathematical problems. Some people have a natural ability to relate to others, some people are imaginative problem-solvers, some people can organize almost anything and others possess the gift of empathy. I have yet to meet anyone who does not exhibit a unique talent or ability.

But Spanish cellist Pablo Casals said it well: “Don’t be vain because you happen to have talent. You are not responsible for that; it was not of your doing. What you do with your talent is what matters.”

And what’s the best thing to do with talent and ability? Use it. Use it generously – even extravagantly. And use it for good.

Erma Bombeck was known for her humorous journalism. But she frequently seasoned her writing with pinches of wisdom. At the end of a newspaper column on March 10, 1987, Bombeck wrote these words: *“I always had a dream that when I am asked to give an accounting of my life to a higher court, it will go like this: ‘So, empty your pockets. What have you got left of your life? Any dreams that were unfulfilled? Any unused talent that we gave you when you were born that you still have left? Any unsaid compliments or bits of love that you haven’t spread around?”*

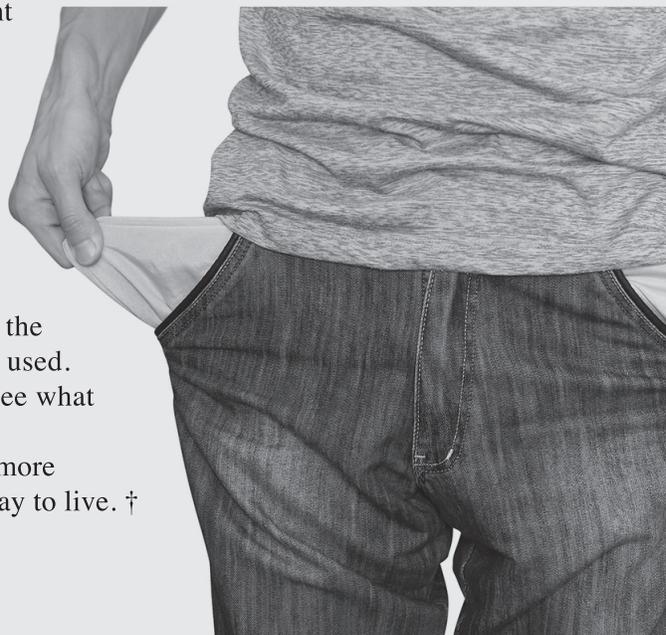
*“And I will answer, ‘I’ve nothing to return. I spent everything you gave me. I’m as naked as the day I was born.’”*

She would agree that what we do with what we’re given is what matters.

My question is this: what would you find if you emptied your pockets today? Any unused talent? Is there anything inside that should be spent, shared or given away? When it comes to your time and resources are you living a life of extravagant generosity?

I’m going to mentally empty my pockets tonight at bedtime and see if I’ve been holding back. I think that’s important. I want to make sure there is nothing left at the end of the day that could have been used. And then tomorrow I’ll see what I can use up.

I can hardly think of a more worthwhile and joyous way to live. †



from  
*St. Eugene's Letters*

August 22, 1831 letter to Fr. Tempier--



.. In the course of the conference, I noted nothing but virtue. The only thing is that Dassy lets the bossy side of his character have too much play and it is the same with his stubbornness when he has once got some idea into his head.

Let us turn to matters of management. It is a great pity. There will be no harvest this year. The whole ground was sown, three sacks of wheat I think... It would have been as well to leave the land unsown. There will be absolutely no profit of any kind whatsoever. That leaves the potatoes, turnips and some cabbages. I don’t understand a thing of the mess they have got into over their cows: they sold the ones that were giving milk to buy some younger ones that give practically none. I haven’t yet plumbed the depths of this mystery but I suspect that Mille has been duped by the tenant-farmer who has only his own interest in view, and it doesn’t always coincide with ours.... In short, I am very dissatisfied without knowing who precisely to blame for the situation. †

**See the Glass as Broken...** *continued*

broken, shattered all over the floor. Try to maintain the perspective that, in time, everything disintegrates and returns to its initial form.

Obviously, no one wants their favorite drinking glass, or anything else, to be broken. This philosophy is not a prescription for becoming passive or apathetic, but for making peace with the way things are. When your drinking glass does break, this philosophy allows you to maintain your perspective. Rather than thinking, “Oh my God,” you’ll find yourself thinking, “Ah, there it goes.” Play with this awareness and you’ll find yourself not only keeping your cool but appreciating life as never before. †