

Principles for *"The Spirituality of Fund-Raising"*

Taken from the booklet *The Spirituality of Fund-Raising* by the late Fr. Henri Nouwen

From the Henri Nouwen Society, www.HenriNouwen.org

(as interpreted by Dr. Mike Gable, Mission Office Director, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Oct. 2011)

#1. What is Fund-raising?

Fund-raising is a form of ministry, a way of announcing our **vision** and inviting others into our mission. "It is the proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people and opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission."



#2. It's about **VISION!** ...which:

- Brings together needs and resources to meet those needs (Acts 9: 1-19)
- Give us new direction (Acts 16:9-10)
- Call us to conversion: to shift how we see, think and act (Prodigal Son, Luke 15:17-20) to seek the God's reign first, (Mat. 16:23) and to reduce the fear of asking .
- Jesus' vision and mission for God's reign is clear, empowering, challenging, inviting, liberating and yes, exciting! (Luke 4: 16-20 & 28-30)

#3. Discerning and developing our own vision **empowers** us to:

- Clarify** our mission, goals, purposes, objectives when fundraising
- Be confident**, properly motivated for God's reign of peace, justice, harmony
- Not to be apologetic but rather to invite others to something **amazing and exciting**.

#4. Develop personal **relationships** with donors

-We need to invite potential donors to connect with us for the **long-term**, to directly participate in our vision and ministry. (Reciprocal visits solidify partnerships)

#5. Fund-raising is **spiritual ministry** too

- It unites those with money to a new relationship with their wealth and those we serve.
- "It is as spiritual as giving a sermon, entering a time of prayer, visiting the sick, or feeding the hungry."**
- This ministry can help with our own conversion: to reduce our fear of asking for support and being rejected since we are grounded in Christ's mission. We know in our guts, in our heart of hearts, Jesus' promise of eternal love & solidarity with us. Do live and demonstrate that?
(more below)

#6. It's about building the God's reign = community of love

- "Kingdom is where God provides for all that we need."**
- "Make love your aim!"** (1Cor. 14.1)

-Fund raising as ministry calls people together in communion with God with one another, it must hold out the real possibility of friendship and community. People have such a need for friendship and community that fundraising needs to be about community building...its one of the greatest gifts churches (and missionaries) have to offer. **If we ask for money, it means we offer a new fellowship, a new brother and sisterhood, a new way of belonging....we offer friendship, prayer, peace, and solidarity with those in need.**

#7. Love the rich as well

-God does not say we should love the rich less than the poor. Many of the rich are lonely and struggle with the sense of being used....many suffer rejection and depression. They need care too. Therefore, have courage to love the rich not for their money **but for who they are**. Can we offer them the opportunity to develop a closer relationship to God, ourselves and those we serve with by supporting our vision and mission?

#8. Where do we find our security?

-If your security is totally in God, then we are free to ask for money. Only when we are free from money can we ask freely for others to give it. This is the conversion to which fund-raising as ministry calls us. ...We are also not free if we are jealous of the rich and envy their money."

-Once we place our trust in God and are concerned only for God's kingdom, loving them for who they are rather than what they have, once we believe we have something to give them, then we can ask for large donations.

-“Asking people for money is giving them the opportunity to put their resources at the disposal of the kingdom. To raise funds is to offer people the chance to invest what they have in the work of God.”

-Whether they give much or little is not as important as the possibility of making their money available to God. Think of the Jesus feeding the 5,000. He showed us that God's love can multiply the effects of our generosity. (Mat. 14: 14: 13-21)

#9) Prayer

-Prayer is the spiritual discipline and starting point through which our mind and heart are converted from hostility or suspicion to hospitality toward people with money.

-Prayer uncovers our hidden motives and the wounds that shape our relationships.

-In prayer God wants us to know that we are all loved. And in prayer we also come to know that we can trust God to work fruitfully through us no matter where we are or who we are with.

#10) And Gratitude

-Gratitude is the sign that this conversion of trust in God is spreading to all aspects of our life and ministry, that we can constantly see God's goodness at work.

-Gratitude releases us from the **obligation** to workto the **freedom** of ministry where we freely co-create the kingdom. We then develop deep joy and confidence that God will supply us with what we need.

-With this confidence in God, our mission and vision, we are better able to ask others for donations without worry about their potential rejection or acceptance.



Love never ends! (1Cor. 13:8)