



B: SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

B17c

THE WORKING STYLE OF A 'GUIDING LEADER' or 'ANIMATOR' AS A COMMUNITY BUILDER

TOPICS OF AsIPA TEXTS:

A : GOSPEL SHARING

B : SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

C : A PARTICIPATORY CHURCH

D : TRAINING FOR PARISH TEAMS

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B\7c

THE WORKING STYLE OF A 'GUIDING LEADER' OR "ANIMATOR" AS A COMMUNITY BUILDER

INTRODUCTION

In the previous texts B\7a & b\7b we have reflected on 'guiding' leadership and the attitudes that a guiding leader should have. In this text we want to go further to look at the 'working style' of a guiding leader.

Our 'working style' is the fruit of our inner attitudes and our understanding of leadership in the New Way of Being Church.

Our 'working style' is a clear indication of how much conversion of heart has actually taken place in our parish councils, small Christian communities and ministries.

A. MR ENERGETIC GETS THINGS DONE



Questions for reflection

- 1. What do you see?*
- 2. What is happening?*
- 3. What is the working style of this person?*

B. YOU ARE MY FRIENDS

Form small groups of 5/6.

*Read the text twice: **John 15:12-15***

Keep two or three minutes silence

Discuss the question and report after 5 minutes

Question for discussion

What does the text tell us about the working style that Jesus exercised with his disciples?

Supplement

- Jesus had a real love for his disciples and a real longing for them to understand the truth about his father and about himself.
- Jesus calls his disciples friends. This means that he makes them equal to himself even though he is Lord.
- Jesus said that he had told his 'friends' everything that he himself knew. This complete sharing of knowledge is important if a community is to experience equality and unity.
- As a leader, Jesus built up the unity of the group by sitting down at table with them often – sharing stories and bread.
- We know that Jesus journeyed with his disciples teaching them on the way, using examples from life and respecting their questions.

- The basis of Jesus' teaching and leadership is love - the love that comes from the Father.

C. OUR OWN WORKING STYLE

Form small groups of 5/6.

(Take at least 30 minutes for (1) and (2).)

- (1) Choose three working styles from the list below which you think are most important for being a good animator. Discuss the consequences if this working style were missing.*
- (2) Choose one working style and prepare a role-play to demonstrate it to the whole group.*
- (3) After each role-play has been presented, ask the question: Why is this 'working style' so important?*

Working style of a guiding leader

1. Refrains from providing, even if asked to do so.
2. Holds back his/her opinion, even if asked to give it and even when others keep silent for a long time.
3. Never says, 'They know nothing - I have to tell them!'
4. Accepts a 'guiding' role that does not present a concrete plan of action too quickly. Does this in order to stimulate thinking and interaction in the community.

5. Refrains from persuading, since people might follow just to please, without believing in it themselves. It may not concern them. This will not bind people together as a community because the focus is the leader's concerns.
6. Works WITH people, rather than FOR people. Believes that people should interact with each other, not only with him / her.
7. Is patient. Gives people sufficient time to find a solution.
8. Helps people to decide for themselves. If he/she decides for them, they can easily fall into apathy and passivity. If the whole community or the whole group should change, all must be involved in the entire thinking and searching process.
9. Helps people to think by asking questions that open new perspectives and stimulates thinking.
10. Helps people to find all the advantages and disadvantages of a solution. Disadvantages should be discovered early to avoid disappointments later.
11. Encourages them to find many alternatives in solving a problem. Collects all suggestions without discussing them at this stage.
12. Draws the attention of people to things they may have overlooked - not by telling them - but by asking questions.

13. Encourages people to find the facts themselves and provides only such facts and information that they cannot find themselves.
14. Lets people decide freely, since they will decide any way. (even if they do so by boycotting or by staying away!)
15. Is aware of the fact that a solution is only good if the people themselves implement it and go on implementing it.
16. Trusts in the common sense of people (and in their 'faith-instinct'). Even unsophisticated people will find good solutions if you give them time and if all the facts are given.
17. Accepts solutions even if he / she thinks they are only half as good as the solution which he/she had in mind. Lets them identify with their own solution. Only then a spirit of responsibility can grow.
18. Refrains from scolding when mistakes are made. Rather reflects with them on the reasons and consequences of the mistakes.
19. Is truthful and sincere. Avoids 'hidden agendas'!
20. Is prepared for a long struggle. Does not dream of a magic solution.
21. Is content with very small initial successes. It is only such small steps which will encourage us to take greater steps in the future.

D. OUR WORKING STYLE AND THE WORKING STYLE OF JESUS

Work in the whole group for 10 minutes

Discuss the question below – allow all to share their own desires to change or difficulties.

Question

How does the working style of Jesus compare with our own style?

CONCLUSION

Let us ask the Lord to give us the courage and wisdom to see our strengths and weaknesses and to improve our working styles as leaders.

All are invited to pray from the heart.

Sing a hymn to end.

METHOD OF ASIPA TEXTS

ASIPA TEXTS are compiled for Christian men and women at grass root level of the parish. They can be conducted most fruitfully in Small Christian Communities, Neighbourhood Communities, Parish Pastoral Councils or any other small groups in the parish.

ASIPA TEXTS can also be used with larger groups, e.g. in the parish hall - provided the “participatory method” is maintained in smaller working groups.

Features of the “ASIPA approach”

1. ASIPA TEXTS adopt a “**participatory approach**” in which all participants of a group search and discover for themselves as far as they are able to.
2. The texts are compiled in such a way that the facilitator can use them with a **minimum of preparation**.
3. The facilitator is requested to **follow the text** as closely as possible and allow the participants to contribute when indicated in the text.
4. The facilitator is not content with one answer to a question but he/she encourages as many participants as possible to search for an answer. “**Buzz groups**” of 2/3 are helpful to achieve maximum participation.
5. The **SUPPLEMENT** can help add to the findings of the participants and summarize them.
6. The **SUMMARY** is meant to be used as ‘input’.

ASIPA:

As-ian -I-ntegral -P-astoral -A-pproach

The Asian Bishops declared in the Final Statement of their Fifth Plenary Session in Bandung: The Church of 1990s has to be a "Participatory Church", a "Communion of Communities", a Church that "witnesses to the Risen Lord" (*FABC5,#8*).

The question was, how to promote this "new way of being Church". Therefore, late in 1993, jointly sponsored by the FABC Offices of Human Development and of Laity, a consultation meeting was held in Malaysia. It was during this consultation that the pastoral process for promoting a "Participatory Church" in Asia was termed ASIPA: Asian Integral Pastoral Approach.

ASIPA TEXTS (training programmes) follow this directive:

ASIAN

They want to implement the vision of the Asian Bishops and help Asian Christians face Asian life in the light of the gospel.

INTEGRAL

They aim at achieving a balance between the "spiritual" and the "social", between the individual and the community, between hierarchical leadership and the co-responsibility of the laity.

PASTORAL

They train the laity in their pastoral mission in Church and world.

APPROACH

The process of ASIPA TEXTS can be described as a pastoral approach which is "Christ- and Community centred". It involves the participants of workshops to search for themselves and allows them to experience a "New Way of Being Church."
