



# All Are Called to Lead!



## REFLECTIONS FROM FR. ROSS

Part of our calling as baptized and confirmed Christians is to lead others. The areas of our leadership might differ, but all are important. I came across the following *ABC's of Leadership*.

**Attitude:** Attitude, even more than circumstances, can determine whether we succeed or fail in what ever we do. We are to be positive, filled with faith and hope.

**Bible:** You will never lose your sense of direction if you use the Bible as your guide. Saturate yourself with Scripture.

**Character:** We are to be persons of integrity. Say what you mean, mean what you say. Let your deeds match your creeds, and your behavior your belief. Ralph Waldo Emerson's statement is worthy of careful thought: "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

**Determination:** The difference between success and failure, between the impossible and the possible, lies in determination. Difficulties erode in the presence of fierce determination.

**Enthusiasm:** Cultivate enthusiasm. When times are tough, the chances slim, the odds long, enthusiasm will always propel forward. The spirit of enthusiasm lifts us (and those around us) during low times. Enthusiasm adds vigor to all things and helps build community.

**Failure:** Expect some. It comes to every person, sooner or later. Don't let it demoralize you. Rather, let the failure strengthen you, toughen you, mobilize you. Think about Washington Irving's observation: "Little minds are tamed and subdued by misfortunes, but great minds rise above them."

**Gratitude:** Never fail to show appreciation. Gratitude strengthens relationships, energizes colleagues, and fortifies friendships. "Always be joyful... No matter what happens, always be thankful" (1 Thess. 5:16, 18).

**Hope:** Always let your hopes, not your hurts and handicaps, shape your future. Clare Booth Luce wisely observed, "There are no hopeless situations in life; there are only people who have grown hopeless about them."

**Influence:** A person leaves all kinds of foot prints when they walk through life. Some you can see, while others are invisible: the help given; the words spoken, the jokes, the gossip that has hurt others, encouragement. Do your best to leave behind a legacy of positive influence.

**Joy:** Spiritually balanced leaders live with joy. They know that life is a glorious gift; they allow themselves to be dizzy with joy and grateful for the many blessings that flow their way. Also, they rejoice in the success of others.

**Kindness:** Toward others, always be charitable, courteous, decent, gracious, hospitable, and thoughtful. Kindness reaches minds, touches hearts, and changes lives.

**Learn:** "There is only one corner of the universe where you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self," wrote Aldous Huxley. Spiritual leaders are lifetime learners.

**Money:** Money brings you food, but not appetite; medicine, but not health; acquaintances, but not friends; servants, but not faithfulness; days of joy, but not peace and happiness. Keep money in proper perspective.

**Nip:** Spiritual leaders know the wisdom of nipping things in the bud, of catching things in the early stages, and thus preventing major issues from emerging. Deal with the difficult while it is still easy. Solve large problems when they are still small.

**Opportunity:** Every adversity contains opportunity. When Edmund McIlhenny returned from the Civil War in 1865, his sugar fields and salt works were ruined. One of the few things left were some hot Mexican peppers that had re-seeded themselves in the kitchen garden. McIlhenny, living hand to mouth, started experimenting with the ground peppers to make a sauce that would liven up his bland diet. His creation today is known as Tabasco sauce. A century later, his product is still sold the world over.

**Perseverance:** With ordinary talent and extraordinary perseverance, all things are attainable. Spiritual leaders understand this.

**Quiet:** Be certain to give yourself ample times of quiet. God shapes mind and heart through silence and solitude. Wrote Trappist monk Thomas Merton, "It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brother and sister."

**Respect:** Effective spiritual leadership always involves respect for others. Spiritually mature leaders listen respectfully even when the speaker is offering a different view point. Leaders need a core sense of confidence that allows them to be comfortable receiving input, including disagreement, from others. The best leaders are neither wimps nor arrogant."

**Struggle:** Life is not always smooth sailing. Nor do things move in predictable patterns. There will be stormy times—occasions when the unexpected, even the disastrous, occurs. Strong leaders are prepared to struggle through hard times.

**Trustworthy:** While Jim Copeland was CEO of the multibillion-dollar Deloitte Touche accounting firm, those who worked closest with him admired him for his trustworthiness. He demanded that Deloitte audit every expense report he turned in. Copeland, a Southern Baptist deacon and Sunday School teacher, ended each year by writing a \$500 personal check to the company to cover his personal use of the copy machine.

**Universe:** Permit the magnitude and majesty of the universe to remind you of God's vastness.

**Values:** Those who lead effectively have values beyond mere materialism. They are more focused on family, friends, colleagues, and their relationship with God than on building empires.

**Words:** Choose them carefully. What you say can inspire or injure, hurt or heal, wound or win over.

**X:** The letter "X" is the mathematical symbol for the unknown. Those who lead are not intimidated by the unknown. In spite of uncertainty, they move forward into uncharted waters, trusting God.

**Yearn:** Strongly desire to continue thinking, learning, growing, developing, expanding. Keep challenging yourself. Yearning should never end.

**Zoom:** Learn to zoom in on what's important and what's not. Separate the trivial from the urgent, the necessary from the superfluous. Be a spiritual leader who sees the bigger picture.

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