

Our Parish COUNCIL

by Bernard Lyons

You have some authority as an elected officer or committee chairman of your parish council, but you normally can not use the army habit of "volunteering" people to fill committee and project assignments.

If you told a parishioner, "You are going to be the new lector trainer (or whatever)..." he might tell you to what unbearable-zone-of-heat to go.

If there was a period that could aptly be called an "age of authority" — the authority of churchmen, kings, generals, the elderly and parents — then this time of ours might be called the "age of persuasion."

Simple declarative sentences and commands are now harder to come by, and even more difficult to get followed.

Dwight Eisenhower, who exercised a great deal of authority as a general and then as president, described persuasion as "the knack of getting people to do what you want done because they want to do it."

That is a good pragmatic definition, but a Christian should add a unique dimension to that definition, by changing the phrase "what you want done" to "what Christ wants done."



The Rosary and Altar Society of Our Mother of Sorrows Church will celebrate its 25th anniversary Nov. 21. There will be a special anniversary Mass at 5:30 p.m., followed by a tureen supper at 6:30. Above are past presidents of the society, Mrs. James Noble (left) and Mrs. Charles Thines.

Borrowing from salesmen's literature and the Gospels, I have created a formula for persuading volunteers, called B-E-L-I-E-V-E.

If you wish to be more effective in your job, try this formula:

Be a friend. Follow the Chinese saying, "Dig a well before you're thirsty." Your friendliness can persuade many people to take active roles in parish life.

Engage him in your presentation. Christ often used a story or a scene around him (the lilies of the field) to engage his audience's attention and make a point. Prepare an interesting "presentation" or "sales pitch" for the prospective volunteer. If the job the volunteer is being asked to do is worthwhile, then your presentation should be worth preparation.

Listen. After you have made your initial presentation, listen to the prospect. Is he favorable? What are his objections? Do you need to clarify the task further?

Imagine the benefits. Use word pictures that will concretely show the prospect how he will benefit and how the parish and community will be better because of his help. Do not ask someone merely to train lectors; rather, ask someone to put his talents at the service of the community and picture a more alive, attentive congregation responding to better prepared lectors.

Express his objections. Having listened well, you can repeat his objections to the prospect. Answer those that you can; the others that you can not answer become less burdensome, because he knows you listened and he appreciates that you understand.

View the presentation with Christ's mind. If you are interested that Christ's job be done, you will be disinterested enough to accept if the prospect turns you down or changes your request. ("Gee, I'd like to help, but my time is so limited, I'd better be a lector only.")

Extend an invitation to action — the simpler the better.

School Musicians Set Festival

Approximately 400 high school student musicians will participate this weekend in the annual sectional All-State Music Festival. The festival begins Friday Nov. 17 at Gates-Chili Senior High School and concludes Saturday with a formal concert at 8:00 p.m. featuring orchestra, band and chorus.

The students will represent more than 50 school districts in central Western New York. The program is sponsored by the New York State School Music Association. Chairman is Robert J. Zale, director of music at the host school.

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Wednesday, November 15, 1972

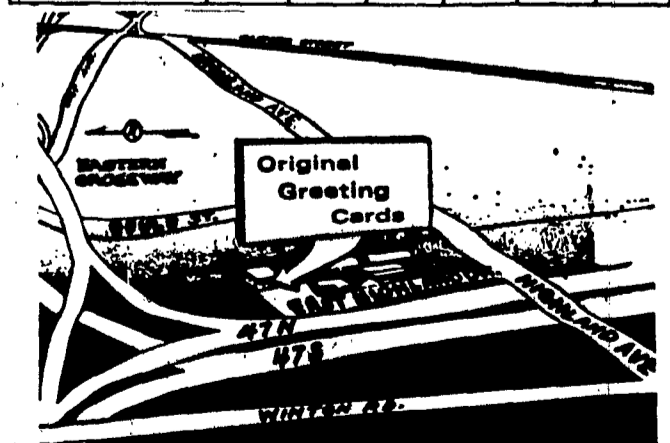
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