



PEACE BY PIECE

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THOSE
WORKING TOWARD PEACEABLE SOLUTIONS -

PUBLISHED BY THE
OFFICE OF CONCILIATION - ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Spring 2008

From the Director...

Spring is here, so the calendars tell us, although it seems at times that Mother Nature hasn't yet read the memo! More importantly, we are now in the midst of celebrating the Easter season. In both spring and Easter we rejoice in new life – the flowers and trees producing buds – and in having journeyed through a Lenten experience of spiritual reflection and growth in our faith in the Risen Christ.

In the midst of all of the changes around us, we can become caught up in the flurry of activity and not take the time to listen – not only to those around us, but our inner voice as well. Being, or in fact becoming a good listener calls us to learn to shut out the static around us and concentrate on the one speaking to us – either from within or those seeking us out.

I hope you find the next few pages of this issue of *Peace by Piece* interesting and helpful on your path to becoming a better listener. Until next time – enjoy and appreciate what you hear!

Ralph Bonaccorsi
Director – Office of Conciliation
Archdiocese of Chicago

Easter Blessings

from the Executive Board of the Office of Conciliation:

<i>Mr. Emilio Carrasquillo Sr.</i>	<i>Diane Mason, SP</i>
<i>Mrs. Marty Fraunheim</i>	<i>Deacon Leonard Richardson</i>
<i>Rev. Frank Kurny</i>	<i>Mrs. Marie Wheeler</i>
<i>Mrs. Josie Mayzara</i>	<i>Mr. Angelo Salutillo</i>
<i>(Chair)</i>	<i>(Vice-Chair)</i>
<i>Mr. Ralph Bonaccorsi – Executive Director</i>	



PEACE BY PIECE...

MAKING THE PIECES FIT...little words, full of wisdom

WITHOUT COMMENT

“Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.”

John F. Kennedy

“The most destructive elements in our world today are not the weapons of mass destruction...but the millions of petty diminishment and spiteful hurts that we inflict on each other every day.

And the most creative elements of human life are not the space probes or the heart transplants, but the countless quiet words of kindness, the small acts of courage or generosity...the friendly smiles that touch and inspire another’s heart.”

Margaret Silf

PRACTICAL PEACE

“When we offer others a hand, we ourselves are lifted; when we offer others a harbor, we calm our own storms; when we help strangers, we occasionally aid angels.”

Anonymous

A QUICK QUIP:

Speak softly...Listen Loudly

FOR PARENTS AND CARETAKERS

Ponder and reflect:

What is it that you yearn for most as you “live” family and family relationships?

What are some of the barriers/things that get in the way of satisfying those yearnings?

What are two or three “things” that if changed would give renewed life to the family and its relationships?

Now try this:

- Share (as appropriate) your yearnings with family members.
- Invite family members to join you as “partners” in making changes that give renewed life to your relationships.
- Give the “change” efforts a chance to mature and ripen during these life-renewing weeks of spring. (And the Pentecost season)....

Just maybe, together with the Holy Spirit, yearnings will become realities...relationships will blossom anew...refreshed and green with life yet again!

FOR LEADERS ONLY...NOT!

A thought to ponder: there is no “quick fix” for the resolution of conflict. But think about this: if you want less conflict, invite folks to speak up more, give voice to their concerns, and come forward to dialogue when they disagree.

Contact the Office of Conciliation for more

details on “Conflict Paradox.”



POKER FACE...OR...



PEACE MAKER?

Emotions, feelings, and the humanness of relationship are at the center, and the stakes of collaboration and dialogue are high when it comes to resolving conflict. Often times the most difficult part of working toward a solution is initiating the conversation to get both parties on the path toward peace. You can think of it as a card game – everyone has to “deal” with the cards they’ve been dealt; you “up the ante” too high and people are going to “fold.” However, if you’re willing to “put your cards on the table,” and you just might end up “splitting the pot” instead of playing with the mindset of “winner take all.” So, here are some helpful hints and words of wisdom to begin that conversation toward a peaceable solution!

Open the bidding.....”Will you say a little about how you see things?” ”I want to understand what is really important to you in this matter.” “Won’t you please share with me?”

We’re not all of the same suit...”I’m interested in learning how you see the matter differently than me. I hope we can share our differing perspectives and any differing information that each of us might have.”

Don’t call each other’s bluff...”What is it that I might have said or done that has hurt/disappointed/angered/surprised you?”

Take another card...”Are you able to say more about why you think that this situation is my fault? I would find it helpful if we both shared what we think the other may have contributed to this unfortunate time in our relationship.”

Lay your cards on the table...”Your opinion, perceptions and points of view on this matter are important to me because I value our friendship/relationship. And because I do, I will “stay” with you – listen fully to you (without interruption).”

When any one of these occurs in the parish setting or affects the parish family:

- When disagreement happens...
- When a relationship has been injured...
- When Table Harmony is broken...

Consider the **Office of Conciliation**. Touch base with us for confidential assistance, respectful consultation, or just plain processing for possibilities. We’re just a phone call or email away:

Phone: (312) 751-8291 Email: rbonaccorsi@archchicago.org

Good listeners...

- First of all pay rigorous attention to their own internal dynamics - so that their readiness and disposition to listen to others is with an attitude that is slow to judge...yet quick to embrace their story. In other words, a mindset that listens “with the ear of the heart.”
- “Invite”- encouraging others to share their story and their feelings as instruments of understanding and insight (for the listener).
- Check their own understanding along the way by paraphrasing and asking for clarifications with graceful questions. This method demonstrates to the other that the listener is taking in the information correctly and “getting it right.”
- Acknowledge and accept the feelings of the other - free of judgment.
- Refrain from dispensing “pious platitudes” but rather ask questions to empower the other. (e.g. What options do you see for yourself? Is there another way you might look at this situation? Are there things that you might do /have not done to overcome the situation? What are two or three things that you might do differently/that if changed about your situation would make this matter go better for you?)
- “Accompany,” that is, stay with the person in his/her efforts to see things through.
- Finally: The person(s) who have come to you have very likely opened themselves to you and allowed themselves to be vulnerable in your presence. They have entrusted to you their deepest longings, needs and yearnings. Treat what has been shared with you with confidentiality, and even more...with gentleness and sacredness.



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