



December 3, 2023.
Saint Francis Xavier.

Dear friends in the Lord,

We are organizing a meeting of the international team at the end of January 2024 to review our mission across different continents, as well as our collective projects, and to discern the new horizons that the Holy Spirit is guiding us towards.

Attached is a document written by ESADE, School of Business Administration and Management, which outlines the process of transforming the Apostleship of Prayer into the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network between 2009 and 2019. The original document is in Spanish (full version). **ESADE and "Discerning Leadership" program, have prepared this material for the formation of leaders.**

This document provides a valuable review of the recreation process up until 2019. While there may be some errors or inaccuracies, it is an important resource to read and reflect upon, particularly for new directors, coordinators, and their teams. It offers insight into how the mission's renewal has been carried out thus far.

In the framework of leadership training in our Prayer Network, this material can help to work on decision-making, collaboration processes, conflict resolution, way of proceeding when faced with problems, the ability to adapt, tolerance for frustration, temperance, confidence in the face of risks, openness to dialogue, listening, the construction of plural decisions. And there are other topics that are included in the formation of leaders that are clearly reflected in the story.

What this story reveals is that leadership is not defined by "opportunities or grand achievements or epic endeavours." True leaders are shaped by the quality of their responses, rather than the magnitude of the opportunities. The story highlights the importance of responding to seemingly invisible or small opportunities, going beyond mere planning. The international team recognized certain events as opportunities and responded accordingly. That has been the cornerstone of this leadership process. Their ability to respond was possible because they remained open to "reality" rather than being solely focused on planning. While planning helps provide structure, it does not dictate the path. The path is shaped by the inner process that is the fruit of prayer, both individually and as a community, as well as discernment while listening to the Holy Spirit.

It is crucial to understand the value of planning within its proper context, as a means of organization rather than a rigid rule. The true value of leadership lies in the processes of reflection, prayer, community, listening, and discernment in the light of the Holy Spirit. These elements should be separated from personal attributes and strict planning, which can be helpful but are not decisive. When Saint Ignatius contemplates the formation of his followers, he envisions leaders who engage with the reality of the mission, utilizing their abilities and acknowledging their limitations. They strive to provide quality responses, offering their best efforts and utilizing all available resources when presented with any opportunity that arises within the mission. In essence, nothing is too small—it all depends on the response of those who have the vision to see and the willingness to listen. This story emphasizes how leadership is ultimately defined by the quality of responses to the opportunities presented by reality.

The story clearly reveals the spiritual process behind it, prayer and discernment. However, in order to be useful to a wider audience, an attempt has been made to remove any overly explicit religious

reference. The secret of this process of institutional recreation, which is for us a spiritual process, is that this whole process was led by Christ. It is He who leads the mission, that is why we must listen, to allow ourselves to be led by Him. It is this attitude of listening, of discernment, that I value in the international team. In other words, the heart of this whole process is a spiritual experience.

The apostolic plan and its qualities are elements that order the mission, but the determining factor for a leader is the work on his personal process: prayer, community, openness, listening to the Holy Spirit. Your own personal process and not so much your qualities or planning. There are no leaders if there is no personal work. The secret is to let the Lord be the protagonist.

We wish you a pleasant reading.

Fr. Frederic Fornos SJ - International Director

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