

Consistency between what one professes to be and how one lives



VIRTUE CORNER

Physical integrity means physical solidity; solid, one piece, no weak points. A bridge that has integrity won't collapse under pressure, because it has no cracks in its foundation, no weak spots in struts and crossbars – it is one, whole, undivided unity of construction; strong and sturdy, dependable and sure, no matter the situation.

Moral integrity means moral solidity. A person with integrity is someone who sticks by what he believes in, someone with consistency, someone you can count on, who doesn't say yes with his words and no with his actions, either to God, to himself, or to others. Like the sturdy bridge, this person will earn the confidence of others, and wherever he goes they will be disposed to follow.

The opposite of integrity is hypocrisy, dishonesty in living. The hypocrite cares for how he appears, not how he really is, from the inside out. He is focused on the immediate, not who he becomes. And though he may fool people temporarily into thinking or doing what he wants, in the end he will reap bitterness and rejection. At some point, under some particular strain, that bridge will reveal it's internal division and collapse, destroying itself and all those who were crossing over it.

Jesus was merciful and gentle with all types of sinners except one: the Pharisees. Why? Because they were hypocrites, promoting themselves as examples of holiness and wisdom while living all the while to indulge their own pride and vanity. They lacked integrity. And because of it their lives and institutions came tumbling down around them, to their ruin and that of countless others. No doubt God is merciful for the sincere person who strives for ever greater union between who they are and who they profess to be. It is the persistent rebuttal of grace and our conscious towards conversion that saddens his heart and leaves his divine hands tied in our regard.

Integrity of life results from a person being who they are – as a man, a husband, a father, a grandfather, a business leader, board member etc etc Being who you are and living coherent with that, both when being watched and above all when not.

The past is no longer yours; the future is not yet within your power; you have only the present wherein to do good.

(St Alphonsus Ligouri, Doctor of the Church)



GOSPEL REFLECTION (30 MIN)

Matthew 5:25 - 28

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may be clean. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead men's bones and every kind of filth. Even so, on the outside you appear righteous, but inside you are filled with hypocrisy and evildoing. (Jesus, Matthew 23:25-28)

Luke 12:1-3

Meanwhile, so many people were crowding together that they were trampling one another underfoot. He [Jesus] began to speak, first to his disciples, "Beware of the leaven-- that is, the hypocrisy-- of the Pharisees. "There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. Therefore, whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed on the housetops."

Questions for Discussion:

1. Context. Jesus is preaching his Sermon on the Mount – the Magna Carta of his doctrine. He is listing the key points of his teaching. Essential is an new attitude toward the spirit of the law which leads to a faithful and generous living of its precepts.
2. The first point is a contrast between outside purification and inside impurities. It is the inside of the cup that eventually contaminates the wine which enters into the person. Give some examples where external appearances can mean more to me than internal attitudes? Eg. Perhaps a greater concern (time and energy invested) for healthy eating and exercise (very good in itself) than with a healthy soul and moral integrity.
3. He compares appearance driven religious leaders with tombs – decorated outside, inside full of death. Everyone knows that is the nature of a tomb, but doesn't expect that from a person. What are some ways I can make my inside as beautiful as my outside?
4. Integrity for a lumen member is "Consistency between what one professes to be and how one lives." What are some key practices to close the gap between "professed ideals" and "life".
5. What are some fault lines in my own heart – they normally coincide with the dominant defect discovered in my core value assessment from the Business Plan of the Soul.
6. Can I renew my efforts to be more consistent in the means I know will help me live with integrity?





CASE DISCUSSION (30 MIN)

2 ways to go about it. Read the Case and discuss afterwards how it can apply to your life of Faith. Or ask a member to voluntarily offer their challenges in living out Stewardship at home, in the work place or in their lumen action (volunteer work). The circle can offer some personal experiences on how they have confronted and resolved similar difficulties.

Integrity in the work place is especially important. The rash of sexual assault cases from the clerical, entertainment, and sports world reveal a stunning lack of moral integrity. The same type of moral failures can happen in other areas such as expense account fraud, involvements in conflicts of interest and inappropriate sharing or using information. When no one is looking or one feels “untouchable” we can begin to permit ourselves things that sacrifice our integrity for immediate personal gains.

Here are some examples of a variety of workplace ethics-integrity.

- ✓ You call in sick to your supervisor because it’s a beautiful day and you decide to go to the beach, or shopping, or ...
- ✓ You engage in an affair with a coworker or customer while married because no one at work will ever know, you think you’re in love, you think you can get away with it, your personal matters are your own business, the affair will not impact other employees or the workplace.
- ✓ You tell potential customers that you are the vice president in charge of something. When they seek out the company VP at a trade show, you tell your boss that the customers must have made a mistake.
- ✓ You overhear a piece of juicy gossip about another employee and then repeat it to other coworkers. Whether the gossip is true or false is not the issue.
- ✓ A moral issue comes up in the lunch room and you cower to share your thoughts as you know your opinion may be criticized.
- ✓ You spend several hours a day using your work computer to shop, check out sports scores, pay bills, surf the celebrity news and even view pornography.
- ✓ You allow a part that you know does not meet quality standards leave your work station and hope your supervisor or the quality inspector won’t notice.
- ✓ You claim credit for the work of another employee, or you fail to give public credit to a co-worker's contribution, when you share results, make a presentation, turn in a report or in any other way appear to be the sole owner of a work product or results.



Some positive examples of Integrity

- √ The CEO of the company kept the employees up-to-date on the struggles the business was experiencing with clear and frequent communication at team meetings. Employees felt as if they knew exactly what was happening.
- √ Ellen missed a deadline for an important deliverable her team was supposed to have developed. Rather than throwing her team members under the bus, even though they hadn't delivered as promised, she took responsibility for the missed deadline. She addressed the problems with her team and they put in place safeguards that would keep them from underperforming again. Team members recognized their contribution to the failure but there were no repercussions because Ellen took responsibility as the team leader.
- √ Two team members were discussing another team member's failure to perform. They talked critically about the individual's lack of skill and imagination. They criticized his follow-through efforts and his production. Paul entered the room in the midst of the gossip and discussion, listened for a minute, and then, interrupted.

Does George know that you feel this way, he asked? How will he ever improve if no one talks to him about his perceived failures? There may be reasons that we don't know about. Reasons that we could help him overcome. Let's plan to speak with George so that we can pull the team together to best get the project done. Who wants to approach George? Let's have this conversation quickly so we don't screw up the project.

- √ A customer asked Mark, a customer service rep, whether a software product would perform certain functions that she needed. These capabilities were the deciding factors in whether she would purchase the product. Mark thought that the software would perform the needed tasks and told her so.

However, he also indicated that he was not positive and that he would talk with the other reps and the developers and get back to her that day with an answer. After talking with the others, he discovered that one capability was missing. He called the customer who decided to purchase the product anyway as she had been unable to find one that did a better job.

- √ Mary, the HR manager, was approached by an employee who wanted to formally complain that her boss, a senior manager, was bullying her. Mary immediately investigated the situation and discovered that indeed, the manager was acting in ways that could be considered bullying. Other employees had experienced the same behavior. Mary asked the complaining employee how she wanted the situation handled. The employee asked Mary to mediate a conversation because she was afraid to talk to him on her own. Mary set up a meeting and was able to facilitate the conversation. She also warned the manager that he could not retaliate against the employee. It would be a positive outcome to say that the manager stopped the behavior.

But, unfortunately, he did not. This required the next step in followup. Mary finally went to his boss, a Senior VP, who intervened—powerfully and immediately. Then, the person's behavior changed. This story is an example of employees doing the right things, having professional courage, and demonstrating personal and professional integrity at each step of the journey.



Questions for Reflection:

1. Would I have a problem with any of these negative workplace ethics issues?
2. If they seem small, remember, fissures or cracks always start small.
3. Do I know how to keep very clear ethical boundaries in relationships at work and do I keep them?
4. Are there any ethical integrity issues I should get input on from the group or from my lumen coach?
5. Do you have any other positive examples?

Integrity in Practice

Integrity Does...

- Inform and follow its conscience, even in the smallest things
- Admit its faults
- Confess its sins
- Apologize when appropriate
- Take responsibility for its actions and decisions
- Keep its promises
- Live in according with its principles and its faith, even when doing so involves sacrifice
- Correct its mistakes
- Think before it acts
- Measure decisions and actions by principled standards

Integrity Doesn't...

- Flee responsibility
- Pass the buck
- Criticize others to take the attention of one's own failings
- Calumniate, detract, or gossip
- Say anything about anyone that you wouldn't say if that person were present
- Cover up its mistakes
- Lie, falsify, or deceive
- Stretch the truth beyond recognition
- Ignore the tugs of conscience – even the smallest ones
- Do X in public and Y in private

Benefits of Integrity

1. Spiritual progress. God doesn't make saints out of nothing. He needs some raw material, something to work with: a character marked by a good dosage of honesty, humility, and integrity. Sanctity is a relationship, an intimate friendship with God. Real friendships require those qualities, and your friendship with Christ is no exception. Integrity, then, is a prerequisite for spiritual progress.
2. Peace of mind. Lies and deceptions breed more lies and deceptions – you need the second batch to cover up the first, and a third batch to cover up the second, and so on. Navigating through such a sticky and tangled web leaves a wake of uncertainty, doubt, fear of discovery, concern, and worry. Integrity simply clears that web away.
3. A clear conscience. Nothing bites like a wounded conscience. Regret, remorse, and guilt gnaw at the deepest level of the soul, creating profound discontent and anxiety. It just gets worse over time. Integrity keeps the conscience healthy and happy, so it can keep you on the right track to worthy living.
4. Greater influence. You can't win loyalty if you're not loyal to yourself. People follow leaders primarily because of who the leader is, not where he's going. Instinctively they want to associate with people who exude moral stability, because, instinctively, they know that such a person won't lead them astray – at least, not on purpose.



UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Manhattan Chapter

- Leadership Circles:
 - Greenwich February 13 March 20th
 - Manhattan February 21 March 21st
 - Rye February 13 March 14
 - Summit February 14 March 14
 - Naples February 5

Atlanta

- Leadership Circle February 13

Houston

- Leadership Circle February 6th March 6

Chicago

- Leadership Circle February 21 March 21

WDC

- Leadership Circle February 20 March 20
- Couples night April 7

Nationally:

- National Retreat in New York City – September 14 – 16, 2018
- Pilgrimage to the Holy Land June 1 to 10
- Pilgrimage to Rome – June 11 to 17



Lumen Core Values Self-Assessment (10 minutes)

Core Values Assessment. Spend 10 minutes in silence assessing positive and negative examples of how you live this core virtue. The below quadrant can help in jotting down some of your assessment as well as a tool for the whole Lumen Circle and how you can let it be a leaven in your life.

What struck me in this circle and how I might apply it to my THINKING. What CRITICAL ISSUES am I facing? What is the biggest CHALLENGES with these issues I face and what OPPORTINITIES does it present.

Prayer:

Family:

Business:

Lumen Action:

What ACTION STEPS can I take now or long term? Develop a concrete resolution for how you can improve in your efforts to exercise Christian charity in you interactions with others during the next month. Your resolution should be a specific action or activity that is easily measured.

