

April

## Confidence in God

*He will take care of us*



### VIRTUE CORNER

Over these past three months, we have focused on the Lumen core value of faith. Four Lumen virtues help to make us men of faith: spiritual drive, prayer, stewardship, and confidence in God. Last month we discussed spiritual drive. This month we will focus on the final virtue connected with faith, confidence in God.

One of the most important lessons to be learned is that we humans should trust God will always do what is best for us, at all times, no matter how bleak the situation. With total trust in God, we can never fail in the long run, because He will always care for us. The Bible says in Matthew 5:48 to “Be perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect.” Part of “being perfect” is growing in trusting Him with a growing totality and perfection.

We should always know that God is our loving Father. Therefore, if we totally trust in Him to take care of us no matter what the situation, if we strive to obey all of the Commandments, and if we strive our best to live out the Christian message with our thoughts, words, and deeds, then we have a spiritual hedge of protection around us (Job 1:10). This hedge can only be taken down by our sinful actions, which proclaim that we prefer the ways of the devil to the ways of God. This was true in the Old Testament, and it is certainly true today for us, who now wander through the arid and hazardous desert known as secular America.

Some quotes from the Saints that speak to us about Confidence in God include:

*“I tell you that one suffers less in following the cross than in serving the world and its pleasures.” St. John Vianney*

*“He who trusts himself is lost. He who trusts in God can do all things.” St. Alphonsus Liguori*

*“Anxiety is the greatest evil that can befall a soul except for sin. God commands you to pray, but He forbids you to worry.” St. Francis de Sales*

*“Consider seriously how quickly people change, and how little trust is to be had in them; and hold fast to God, who does not change.” St. Teresa of Avila*



## GOSPEL REFLECTION (30 MIN)

Both the Old and New Testaments reveal specific individuals whom God calls to respond in faith and to place their confidence in Him. In all the below occasions there was little immediate evidence to support God's call for trust, other than his past fidelities. Here are a few examples:

**Abraham** (Genesis 12:1) The Lord said to Abram: Go forth from your land, your relatives, and from your father's house to a land that I will show you.

**Moses** (Exodus 3:10-12) Now, go! I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt. But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" God answered: I will be with you, and this will be your sign that I have sent you.

**Jeremiah** (Jeremiah 1:4-7) The word of the Lord came to me: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you. "Ah, Lord God!" I said, "I do not know how to speak. I am too young!" But the Lord answered me: "Do not say, 'I am too young.' To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak."

**Peter and Andrew** (Matthew 4:18-20) As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed Him.

**The Blessed Virgin Mary** (Luke 1:31-33, 38) Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Which Bible passage above speaks the most to you about having confidence in God?
2. Can you name one or two obstacles in your life that hold you back from having more confidence in God?
3. What are some best practices to grow in your confidence in God? Do these bible passages give you any tips in this regard?
4. How can you help some of your family members to grow in their confidence in God?
5. What next step can you take to deepen in this confidence in God in your own life?





## CASE DISCUSSION (20 MIN)

Leadership Behaviors That Lose Employee Trust and Respect

<https://www.inc.com/marissa-levin/9-leadership-behaviors-that-lose-employee-trust-and-respect.html>

1. Inauthenticity. Authentic leaders stay true to what they believe. According to Harvard Business School professor and authoritative leadership expert Bill George, authentic leaders remain true to their values and mission even in the face of difficulty.

They don't waiver simply because it would be easy to do so. They can be entrusted to show up in the same way, every time, because they operate from a place of total honesty. Employees know when leaders are faking it.

2. False promises. Leaders must be careful about the carrots they dangle to motivate their employees. If a leader makes a promise, his or her employees have every right to expect follow-through. So often, leaders share ideas in the heat of a conversation, not realizing that employees are taking every word to heart. Marshall Goldsmith's What Got You Here Won't Get You There explains that when leaders offer suggestions or ideas, employees hear them as commands or promises.

Failing to deliver on a promise -- no matter how large or small -- will violate the trust of employees.

3. Ambiguity. Employees require specificity when it comes to communicating direction. Ambiguity signals two things: 1) lack of clarity regarding direction, and 2) secrecy. Both of these impressions drive mistrust and skepticism. The clearer you can be regarding your vision and direction, the quicker you will engage others.

4. One-way communication. In traditional, hierarchical organizations, information flowed from the top down, through a tightly controlled funnel. Employees simply did their jobs, and received the precise information that the leadership wanted them to have. Today, employees have a powerful voice. In healthy cultures, they are empowered to contribute ideas and observations. Employees have valuable feedback and want to be heard. There are many ways to create a culture of two-way communication, including routinely soliciting anonymous feedback, and addressing it in Town Hall meetings. Your employees are your single most valuable resource for insight into what is happening in your organization.

5. Personal agendas/ego-driven leadership. Leaders require thick skins to power through setbacks and negativity. They also require strong self-confidence because of the non-believers who question their abilities, and would find pleasure in seeing them fail.

However, leaders have to check their egos at the door—and ensure they subjugate their own personal agendas to the greater good of the organization. This may be one of the most difficult behaviors to eliminate because it requires a lot of self-awareness and honesty about personal motivation.



6. Anger. There is no place in leadership for uncontrolled anger. It conveys fear, disrespect, lack of control, and lack of concern for those who are on the receiving end.

It is true that the stresses that accompany the leadership journey are intensive and potentially debilitating. However, it isn't our employees' responsibility to be our emotional sources of support, which is why it's essential to seek out healthy options and communities of support to release or share our frustrations.

7. Refusing to delegate/empower. Leadership is a team effort. When employees join your organization and support your vision, they bring experience and skills that can move your strategy forward. It can be difficult to release control, knowing that others may not do things exactly as you would.

However, one person -- or even a team of leaders in a growing organization -- can't complete all tasks. Effective delegation enables you to stay focused on what you do best, and what you love most.

Delegation not only expands your ability to get things done, and creates redundancies within your firm; it also tells your employees that you trust them. Employees want to know they are making impacts and contributions. They want to feel needed and empowered.

8. An attitude of superiority/lack of appreciation. Employees see their bosses and the C-level community very differently from the way they see themselves. In companies, there is a line of demarcation between leadership and the rest of the company, even if the leaders don't intend to create such a division.

As our organizations grow, it's easy for us to get disconnected from our employees. We have to be intentional about creating appreciation strategies. It takes the entire system to make the company function well, and we must constantly be re-recruiting our talent internally to keep everyone engaged through gratitude and appreciation.

9. Playing favorites. One of the most demoralizing leadership behaviors is favoritism. While every organization has "linchpins" who are essential in holding the company together, ideally organizations should aim to be "process-centric" rather than "hero-centric."

When companies revolve around a handful of heroes, the remaining employees can begin to feel that they are disposable. To minimize dependency on heroes, companies must invest in the creation of processes so that if key people leave, there is minimal disruption on operations.

Questions for Discussion:

1. How does Jesus Christ display the opposite of these negative leadership behaviors?
2. How can we build trust in our family, friends, and coworkers?
3. How does the Church need to work to regain trust after her recent scandals?
4. Christ has promised that He would be with us until the end of times. Despite the current situation, how are you deepening in your trust in Christ?



## Resolution (10 minutes)

**Develop a specific group resolution for improving our Lumen Spiritual Drive scores in the month ahead.**

### What are Lumen's Core Values?

Lumen has identified three specific areas where it seeks to form and strengthen its members: Character - Faith - Leadership. Within each category lay more specific values, as follows:

#### Character



*Prudence* - sound judgment in determining action.

*Perseverance* - a strong commitment to overcoming all obstacles.

*Fairness* - giving God and others their due in thought, word, and deed.

*Self-Mastery* - controlling one's passions amid personal drive and success.

#### Faith



*Spiritual Drive* - a firm desire to live one's faith in thought and action.

*Prayer* - regular communication with God seeking His will and friendship.

*Stewardship* - maximizing personal and professional resources entrusted by God.

*Confidence in God* - a willingness to place trust in the hands of Providence.

#### Leadership



*Excellence* - the pursuit of distinction in business, family, and community life.

*Integrity* - consistency between what one professes to be and how one lives.

*Magnanimity* - commitment to serve by putting others' needs first.

*Influence* - moving others to think and act uprightly through conscientious effort.



## UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Manhattan Chapter

- Leadership Circles:
  - Greenwich April 9 May 9
  - Manhattan April 17 May 23
  - Rye April 17 May 15
  - New Jersey April 10 May 8
  - Naples April 1 May 6
- Men's 3-Day Retreat with RC April 4 - 7

### Atlanta

- Leadership Circle April 16 May 16

### Houston

- Leadership Circle
  - Downtown April 16 May
  - Woodlands April 26 May

### Chicago

- Leadership Circle April 17 May 15

### WDC

- Leadership Circle April 2nd May 7<sup>th</sup>
- MAN/DC Golf Outing June 4

### New Orleans

- Leadership Circle April 24 May 21

### Philadelphia

- Leadership Circle April May

### Nationally:

- National Retreat in New York City – October 4-6, 2019
- Pilgrimage to the Holy Land June 1 to 10



## Lumen Core Values Self-Assessment (10 minutes)

**Core Values Assessment.** Spend 10 minutes in silence assessing positive and negative examples of how you express your confidence in God in your relationship Him and others. 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.

