

Questions for Discussion

I

Welcome one another as Christ welcomed you,
for the glory of God (Rom. 15:7).

- a) How can you recognize (and repent of!) tribalism in your *own* tribe? Are there any tell-tale expressions that reveal it starting to take root?
- b) When have you witnessed tribalism or factions transcended through collaboration? What were some of the features of that collaboration? How was it cultivated? What were its fruits? What practices are definitely going in your playbook?
- c) The ubiquity of A.I. (even on “social” media) highlight the call to hospitality of eyes and ears: eyes that look away from our screens and invite others into a personal encounter, where gaze is met with gaze, and words with a hearing. How can your personal or institutional use of social media facilitate such a human (and humanizing) encounter?
- d) How can listening and mutual forgiveness (Col. 3:12-13) support “having the same mind” in Christ (cf. Phil. 4:2)?

II

Do not stifle the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19).

- a) Pope Francis (and now Pope Leo) warned us about the clericalism that implies a “one size fits all” model of service in the Church. Where have you witnessed the vitality of a genuine culture of collaboration in which a variety of charisms were able to flourish and bear fruit?
- b) Being surrounded by a variety of gifts can sometimes feel threatening. What are some of the challenges (or even obstacles) to recognizing and supporting a charism that is active in someone else, especially a peer?
- c) Drawing from St. Paul’s exhortation in Col. 3, what are some remedies that you might put in place in view of the splintering tendencies of rivalries or factions?

III

Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable:
your spiritual worship (Rom. 12:1).

- a) “[T]he universal call to holiness...[is] ‘a call in grace to share in the distribution of grace and, therefore, a call to the vicarious bearing of the guilt of all’ ” (Turek, *Atonement*, p 192, citing von Balthasar, *The Christian State in Life*, 419-420). What does this insight have to do with collaboration? How would Paul respond to the writers?
- b) How is the practical asceticism necessary for self-mastery a component of the “spiritual worship” Paul exhorts us to? What does it contribute to apostolic collaboration?
- c) How can an appreciation of the mystery of weakness (like Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”) help you to recognize and accept the “sufferings of Christ” in your life with all their pastoral fruitfulness?
- d) How can a robust theology of *suffering as participation in Christ* assist ecclesial ministers in a healthy integration of the inevitable experience of personal failure?