

So how are you doing, Norma?

Thank you for your wonderful responses to our parable! Some very compelling thoughts and reflections. I so much appreciate your openness, your trust and your courage in stepping out and sharing your responses with me!

Let me recap at this point Our Parable:

Norma is invited to join the distinguished financial consulting team of Murphy, Blarney and Bull, B.S. L.L.C. She is welcomed by the C.E.O. and introduced to all staff members.

So, each of them comes from outside their cubicle where they have been standing and they greet Norma, "Hi my name is Teresa. Welcome." "Hi my name is Patrick. You're welcome, Norma." "My name is Marion. You're welcome Norma." The last person to come along in the line was pretty quiet, she slowly came up to Norma, and said, "I'm glad you're here. Welcome," Her name was Bridget. Bridget Mary O'Leary, she quietly sauntered back to her station, and then Norma went to her station. Norma's supervisor followed her back into her station. She said, "Norma you are very welcome. I hope you will be as happy here as I have been for these past 30 years in this great environment. I'm just down the corridor if you should need anything, don't hesitate to call on me. Lunch is from 12:00 to 1:00, and most people gather in the cafeteria. I'll see you there." And, she proceeded back to her office.

Norma comes to the cafeteria at noon, and picks up her lunch. She sees two of the ladies seated at a table and decides to sit with them. They engage in superficial conversation to begin with. Then, looking around, Norma asks her confreres, "Where is Bridget?" She had been struck by Bridget's withdrawing demeanor in their earlier introduction.

"Bridget doesn't come and eat with us!" Marion answered. "Oh! Is there a reason?" Norma asked. "Well, it's a little complicated you know, she's different," Marion responded. "There's something going on in her life." Teresa volunteered. "Oh, what might that be?" Norma asked. "Well, I don't know," said Teresa. "But, I am in the cubicle next to her and I hear her crying sometimes. I asked her one day what's wrong, are you ok? And she snapped at me and said, 'I am fine thank you.' She doesn't come to lunch with us."

Two more staff members, Patrick and Vicki, joined the table. "Oh, we were just telling Norma about Bridget," says Marion. "Oh Bridget!" says Patrick. "You probably don't want to fool with her. Somebody said they asked her a question one day about a financial concern, and she nearly ate their head off." "Oh," said Norma, "Do you know who that person was?" "No," Patrick replied. "Just somebody. Somebody told me!"

Norma's mind flashes back to the C.E.O.'s glowing introduction. "Our Primary Goal is People." Norma wonders is that really our Goal?

I asked the question, "What are the possibilities for Norma to be healthy in her work environment?"

What I did not let you know at that time was that Norma had just finished reading a book titled, "Putting Kids First in Divorce." The central theme of the book was that children can sometimes become collateral damage in a divorce. The authors suggest individuals don't have to go down the traditional path of hiring a divorce attorney and battling it out in court. Rather, you can choose conciliation over conflict and put your children first.

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From this text, she is introduced to another author, Dr. Brene` Brown, and her book, "I Thought It Was Just Me!" Brene` Brown contends that we can't take off the lens from which we see the world. We all view the world differently, based on our information, insight and experiences. That is what makes it so difficult sometimes for us to understand others. In speaking of understanding another person's feelings, Dr. Brown observes: "In order to do this, we must be in touch with our own feelings and emotions, and we need to be comfortable in the larger world of emotions and feelings. For many, this world is completely foreign. It's a complex world of new language and thinking. For example, if we can't recognize the subtle, but important, differences between disappointment and anger in ourselves, it's virtually impossible to do it with others. If we can't recognize and name fear when we are feeling it, how will we emphatically connect to someone else who is in fear?" (p. 40)

Dr. Brown devotes a chapter to "Shame Resilience and the Power of Empathy." She declares boldly in this chapter that "empathy is the strongest antidote for shame." Empathy reduces shame, whereas sympathy exacerbates it. There is an enormous difference between feeling with someone and feeling for someone. Shame causes one to feel they are alone. Empathy helps one realize they are connected — understood, not alone.

Empathy we feel with. Sympathy we feel for!

Norma is really excited about these new insights! How do you see these insights being helpful to her in her new work environment? Please take a moment to share your thoughts.

Thank you! Fr. Gerry

Mass Intentions ~ March 5-11, 2018

Monday @ 7:30 am — Philip DeMarco (RIP)

Tuesday @ 7:30 am — Nolen Hughes (RIP)

Wednesday @ 6:00 pm — Jeffrey Simon (RIP)

Thursday @ 7:30 am — People of the Parish

Friday @ 7:30 am — People of the Parish

Saturday @ 5:30 pm — Edward & Eileen Prybylski (RIP)

Sunday @ 8:00 am — Rod & Elaine Route (RIP)

Sunday @ 10:30 am — Mary Hammond (RIP)

New Prayer Requests

Special Intentions:

Paul Gallardo Jr., grandfather of Tonya Sweeney

Charles Sweeney, father of Rush Sweeney.

Chris and Cindy Haslob, son & daughter in law of Mary Haslob

Mary Roy, sister of Michelle Lalo

Shaun Moody, son of Kay & Robert Moody

Repose of the Soul:

Everado Diaz Hernandez, father of Anamari Johnson

Joyce Levron, aunt of Iris Harrison

Kay Miguez, mother of Margaret Nielsen

more on our website www.saintpaulcatholicchurch.com

Church office @ 601-992-9547

Stations of the Cross; every Friday during Lent @ 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary; followed by a parish fish fry

Mar 4 — Baptism Preparation Class; 2:00 pm in the Family Life Center Lounge; parents must attend before baptisms

Mar 11, 14, 18 — Spring Break; No Religious Ed Classes/Youth Group

Mar 11 — Catholic Relief Services Collection; help provide food to the hungry, support to displaced refugees, and bring Christ's love and mercy to all people here at home and abroad. Please give generously and help Jesus in disguise. Learn more about the collection at www.usccb.org/catholic-relief.

Mar 19 — Parish Lenten Reconciliation Service; 6:00 pm

Mar 23 — Living Stations of the Cross; presented by the Confirmation Class @ 6:00pm

Mar 29-31 — Easter Triduum; Holy Thursday Mass 7:00 pm, Adoration 8:00 pm—midnight; Good Friday Stations 12noon
Good Friday Passion Service 7:00 pm; Easter Vigil 7:30 pm; Easter Sunday 8 & 10:30 am

CSA — We thank all at St. Paul who have generously responded to the annual Catholic Service Appeal. We ask those who have not sent in your pledge to please consider a gift. Each of us is called to respond in faith, knowing and trusting that God recognizes your willingness to live out the message of the Gospel. To date, our parish has raised \$ \$36,783. For more information about the Appeal or to donate online please visit www.jacksondiocese.org.