



CHRISTIAN BROTHERS
OCEANIA PROVINCE

OCEANIA PROVINCE WEEKLY NEWS

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We Acknowledge the Traditional custodians who have walked and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

Leadership from Hero to Host

Reflection 2 on The Congregation Leadership Group meeting in Rome – June 2018



During the recent CLG meeting reference was made to a style of leadership that enables cultural change. The facilitator, Mathieu Baum, encouraged us as leaders of the Congregation to move from hero to host model. Hero leads with firm direction and vision and is able to manage and control the direction being pursued. Whereas the host invites others to share in the decision making and become co-creators in developing a future that is owned by many within the organisation.

Hero model of leadership brings security to the group and many members leave the decision making and responsibility to the leader. The Western world generally likes a hero to be proud of, and to set trends that they can follow. With such leadership many become followers and admirers. In the host model of leadership, leaders recognise the gifts, creativity and leadership of others that encourages their participation as fellow leaders – not as followers. The host seeks to find and develop other leaders, whereas the hero promotes loyal followers.

The facilitator encouraged the group to find creative ways to implement the host leadership model in order to regenerate the flame of brotherhood. Such participatory leadership helps the group to recognise what needs to die. It is in dying that new life can emerge. He further explained that “let die” means we need to grieve the passing of something we valued; we collectively honour what has happened and we let go. In the letting go, we can move to creating new, relevant and life-giving ways of being brother for the world.

All brothers, not just the leader(s), need to be accountable for the health of the body. The host model promotes accountability and transparency of all.

“Leaders are **accountable** for the decisions they will take; these are based on proposals generated by the collective, which the process invites to be responsible – and accountable – for the solutions it offers. This **mutual accountability** means that the main task of leadership is no longer to convince, or “sell” good solutions



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– but to ensure that the conditions are not only conducive for people to be co-authors, but also for them to feel responsible and accountable for its outcome.” (Mathieu Daum)

Transformation and regeneration invite a process that divests the institution from life-draining processes and attitudes that prop up something that needs to die. Artificial means of continuing an unhealthy practice / attitude prevents regeneration. The negativity within the group prevents action and paralysis sets in. Even though the status quo is killing the group, the group does not have the energy to move and change.

It was suggested during the CLG meeting that many brothers have not fully grasped the serious illness and decline of the Congregation. The Congregation is verging on collapse due to the lingering poison within our group. How Provinces respond will vary; however, it is a Congregational issue that will not solve itself. Our group requires a major shift in attitude that supports transformation, letting go of outmoded and unhealthy practices.

It was noted that many brothers who are in the active stage of their lives (under 70) are content to be isolated or remain on the fringe of Congregational life. How does Oceania Province engage with the 79 brothers who are currently under 70 years of age and encourage them to be actively involved with all aspects of Province / Congregational life? Being on the fringe of Province life may be a coping mechanism for a total group that is withering on the vine (dying). What is preventing these brothers from being fully active members of our brotherhood? If some of these men are disgruntled with Religious life why do they stay? How can these brothers be motivated and enthused to consider their role as leaders within our Province and Congregation?

The host model of leadership is shared by all members of the Province. it is up to each of us to respond in an active and appropriate way suited to our current circumstances. However, we cannot simply leave the health and direction of our Province to others. It is **our** Province and **we are the change** that will bring about a healthy and purposeful future.

One of the key features of the leadership of Co-Creation is the transformation of the very perception of what the role of the leader is. Here, the central role of leadership is to provide and sustain the conditions in which the whole organisation can engage in a truthful exploration of what the future is likely to include, and take responsibility for proposing and implementing the solutions that seem most conducive to the organisation fulfilling its purpose in this emerging future. Mathieu Baum



Peter Clinch cfc
Province Leader