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The Pontificate of John Paul II: A Pastoral Model for Effective Leadership

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Abstract

Throughout the course of human history, there have been individuals whose lives have transformatively impacted entire generations in the Catholic Church. One such person was Pope John Paul II. This paper attempts to designate him as an effective leader by analyzing his personal life, pastoral engagements, and relationships with others through the lens of value-based, authentic, and positive leadership. The resources for this analysis were based on documents and archival materials. Upon analyzing the data, it was concluded that John Paul II's pontificate was an era of effective leadership. From this conclusion, the implications for contemporary leaders at different levels and contexts were examined. The recommendation for possible research on the subject focuses on ways of modeling pastoral leadership in the Church after the late pope's works, edicts, and everyday actions.

Introduction

From the beginning of human history, there have been people whose existence has indelibly and tremendously impacted others by virtue of their distinct roles in life. One such person was John Paul II, the visible leader of the Roman Catholic Church, whose papacy extended from October 16, 1978 to April 2, 2005. In "Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II," George Weigel (2001), a papal biographer, provides a profound insight into the life of the late pope. The leadership qualities described in the book will constitute the narrative frame of reference for this analysis. In other words, this paper will rely largely on Weigel's biographical insights in analyzing and evaluating the leadership qualities of John Paul II.

The purpose of this paper is to reflect on how John Paul II, former Bishop of Rome and head of the Roman Catholic Church worldwide, used his power base (French & Raven as cited in Podsakoff & Schriesheim, 1985) to distinguish himself in his pontificate as a value-based, authentic, and positive leader. Aligned with this purpose, the goal is to understand and construct meaning from an account of a leader who wielded considerable influence globally and who enjoyed much popularity among many people irrespective of culture or creed. An understanding of how he reordered his numerous disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow & Taylor, 2009) could benefit leadership in the 21st century. In particular, his pastoral style could serve as a frame of reference in evolving a Christo-centric paradigm of leadership in the Church.

In the course of this analysis, comments and testimonies about John Paul II's pontificate will be explored and evaluated to determine whether his leadership qualities relate to the value-based, authentic, and positive leadership qualities of an effective leader. This process involved identifying and categorizing from existing documents those leadership qualities that characterized the pope's life and pastoral engagements.. The data has been categorized into themes in a search for commonalities between the pope's leadership qualities and the three qualities of effective leadership under consideration. The resultant discussion focuses on the impact of John Paul II's leadership and its implications for the 21st century world generally, and for the Church, specifically.

It should be noted from the outset that any leadership qualities associated with Pope John Paul II has been validated on the basis of triangulation. Three questions guide this analysis. Firstly, how effective was the leadership of Pope John Paul II in his pontificate? Secondly, what evidence is there to substantiate such claim? And lastly, if true, what are the implications of the pope's leadership style for contemporary leaders in the workplace and in governance?

Historical Background

Based on Weigel's (2001) account (again, which constitutes the primary source in this narrative), John Paul II was born in Wadowice, Poland on May 18, 1920 and was given the name Karol Jozef Wojtila. His upbringing was beset by many personal and socio-political tragedies from childhood. He lost his mother when he was eight years old. He then lost his older brother and only sibling when he was twelve. In 1939, Germany invaded Poland and polluted the socio-political climate of his homeland with Nazism. In 1941, he lost his father — the last surviving member of his immediate family — at the age of twenty-one.

Despite these tragic experiences, Karol Jozef Wojtila decided to become a priest. He clandestinely began his priestly formation for the Archdiocese of Krakow in 1942. As the German Occupation of Poland ended in January of 1945, the Red Army arrived from Russia and replaced the Nazi rule with Communist manifesto. Undeterred, he continued in the pursuit of his priestly vocation and was ordained on November 1, 1946.

In 1958, he was ordained auxiliary bishop of Krakow and in 1962, was appointed temporary administrator of the Archdiocese of Krakow. From 1962 to 1965, he took active part in the proceedings of the Second Vatican Council in Rome where he made positive contributions to different topics that bear on the life and mission of the Church. In 1964, he was installed as the Archbishop of Krakow and in 1967, he was created a Cardinal by Pope Paul VI.

On October 16, 1978, he was elected pope and he took the name John Paul II. Notably, he was the 264th pope and the first non-Italian in 455 years. His pontificate lasted until April 2, 2005. In other words, he served as pope for almost twenty-seven years. His term of service as pope is the focus of this paper which will be explored from the theoretical perspectives of value-based, authentic, and positive models of leadership.

Value-Based, Authentic, and Positive Leadership Models

Leadership goes beyond a series of behaviors and actions to include emotional

connections, interpersonal relationships, integrity, and concern for others (Nahavandi, 2012). This is even more important and necessary in the pastoral context which entails “spiritual guidance and development, restoration, care, correction, protection, unity, and encouragement of parishioners” (Carter, 2009, p. 261). Therefore, more than being task-oriented, the leader must be person-oriented and seek to establish a bond between himself and his followers in order to enhance follower commitment and achievement of organizational goals (May-Chiun, Ramaya, de Run, & Voon, 2009). Within the context of religion, a person and relationship oriented approach to leadership may be an effective and a viable strategy for evangelization.

Value-Based Leadership

“Values are important to understanding leadership because they explain the focus and direction of people’s actions” (Fernandez & Hogan, 2002, p. 25). It is closely related to spirituality and both refer to a meaningful inner life that influences people’s beliefs and actions (Nahavandi, 2012). Value-based leadership recognizes the interconnectedness between persons and their shared values (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008; Prilleltensky, 2000).

Spiritual leaders and followers develop an altruistic culture that translates into organizational transformation and mutual care by tapping into their basic values. As outlined in Table 1, these values include integrity, love, hope, humility, faith, honesty, and self-awareness (Fernandez, Hogan, 2002; Nahavandi, 2012). Value-based leadership also requires ingenuity (Nahavandi, 2012). This implies the leader’s ability to innovate and adapt as well as the willingness to explore new opportunities. Lastly, it calls for heroism which is the willingness to take risks and make the best of every situation (Nahavandi, 2012).

Authentic Leadership

Closely associated with value-based leadership is authentic leadership. Northouse (2010) provides three perspectives of this leadership model. From an intrapersonal perspective, it focuses on the leaders’ self-concepts and how these self-concepts are expressed in what they do. Developmentally, it can be nurtured over time. From an interpersonal perspective, it is relational. It involves mutual interactions between leaders and followers.

Authentic leaders require the same type of self-awareness and moral authority as described in value-based leadership. They have to understand and develop their personal strengths (Nahavandi, 2012; Northouse, 2010). “Authentic leaders display high degree of integrity, have deep sense of purpose, and committed to their core values” (Hassan & Ahmed, 2011, p. 750). As shown in Table 1, criteria defining such leadership include genuineness, conviction, originality, value-based actions, moral authority, self-discipline, and transparency (Champy, 2009; Hassan & Ahmed, 2011; Nahavandi, 2012; Northouse, 2010).

George (as cited in Northouse, 2010) developed five dimensions of authentic leadership and their traits: purpose — which they pursue passionately; values — by which they behave toward others; relationships — by which they are connected to others; self-discipline — which helps them keep cool, calm, and consistent in times of stress; and

compassion —which makes their hearts reach out to others. These characteristics form the basis of authentic leadership.

Positive Leadership

This leadership model is rooted in positive psychology (Lopez & Snyder as cited in Nahavandi, 2012). It is also based on the concept of positive organizational behavior (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn; Luthans as cited in Nahavandi, 2012). Instead of focusing on the negative and seeking to correct weaknesses, it focuses on “what is right, on things that make life worthwhile, and on human strengths” (Seligman, 1998; Snyder & Lopez as cited in Nahavandi, 2012, p. 201). Restating Cameron, Snyder, and Lopez’s characteristics of positive leadership, Nahavandi (2012) stresses that positive leaders are optimistic. They encourage positive deviance in terms of promoting outstanding results that precipitate positive change. They focus on success instead of failure. They create a climate that makes people thrive. They retain relationships that nourish. They are good communicators and neutralize negativity in a timely manner. These characteristics of positive leadership are articulated in column 3 of Table 1.

Table 1: Characteristics of Value-Based, Authentic, and Positive Leadership

Value-Based	Authentic	Positive
Integrity	Genuineness	Optimism
Love	Conviction	Encouraging attitude
Hope	Originality	Focusing on strengths
Humility	Value-based actions	Positive attitude
Faith	Moral authority	Fostering good relationships
Honesty	Self-discipline	Productive communications
Self-awareness	Transparency	Timely response to negativity
Ingenuity	Purpose	
Heroism	Relationship	
	Compassion	

Leadership Qualities of John Paul II

In the prologue of his biographical account of Pope John Paul II, Weigel (2001) made the following comments,

The pontificate of Pope John Paul II has been one of the most important in centuries, for the church and for the world. Some would argue that John Paul II has been the most consequential pope since the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth century. As that period defined the Catholic Church’s relationship to an emerging modern world, so the Second Vatican Council and the pontificate of John Paul II have laid down a set of markers that will likely determine the course of world Catholicism well beyond “modernity” and into the third millennium of Christian history (p. 4).

Following this statement, he continued to present John Paul II as an exceptional historical figure whose outstanding contributions to the modern world have been lauded by many institutions and influential persons both within and outside the Church including *Time* magazine, which named the pope “Man of the Year” in 1994; Mikhail Gorbachev, who acknowledged his indispensable contributions in bringing the Cold War to a peaceful end; and Fidel Castro, who said unobtrusively that his first meeting with John Paul II felt like a family reunion. Others include the pope’s close associates within the

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Church, who, in spite of their disagreements on his administrative style, admitted that he was a man whose life radiated personal sanctity, kindness, and attentiveness.

In verifying these claims, the pope's pastoral assessment will be divided into three categories following Northouse's (2010) tripartite dimensions of authentic leadership. Accordingly, the *intrapersonal dimension* will be typified by his personal values. The *developmental perspective* will be epitomized by his pastoral activities. Finally, the *interpersonal perspective* will be exemplified by his relationships with people.

Personal Values

The literature describes John Paul II as a pro-life advocate, a person who promoted respect for the dignity and sanctity of the human life, and who courageously fought for the right of all to live from conception to natural death. As pope, he continuously made pronouncements against abortion and the use of artificial birth control (Ioannes Paulus PP. II, 1995; Noonan, 2005). In *Evangelium Vitae* or *The Gospel of Life*, he addressed women directly on the issue of abortion exhorting them to "reconcile people with life" (Ioannes Paulus PP. II, 1995, No. 99). Concerned about the conditions of the underprivileged and the voiceless around the world, he courageously denounced the disparity and poverty that exist globally. He equally condemned the manipulation of the materially poor countries by the affluent west and challenged the developed nations on the issue of international debts (Jones, 2005; Gorski, 2002; Noonan, 2005).

The theological foundation for his firm stance on social justice was the notion of *Imago Dei* which holds that everyone was created in the image and likeness of God. This implies that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect (Coughlin, 2003; Formicola, 2005; Noonan, 2005). In the same vein, he fought strenuously for Polish liberation from Communist control and the democratization of the entire Eastern European countries (Appleby, 2000; Coughlin, 2003; Gorski, 2002; Jones, 2005; Klekot, 2007; Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Having experienced the trauma of oppression and subjugation in the Nazi and communist occupations of his homeland (Weigel, 2001), he was an ardent promoter of social justice and addressed the problem of corruption in every totalitarian country he visited throughout Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America (Formicola, 2005; Gorski, 2002; Stricker, 2001).

What stood out in the pope's quest for justice and equality was his strong sense of solidarity. He distinguished himself on many fronts as a true Christian humanist who laid strong emphasis on the need for people to connect with one another as members of the same human family. His conviction was that humanity cannot realize its hope unless they operate within a network of solidarity and collaboration (Appleby, 2000; Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

Despite the difficulties and tragedies he witnessed in the world, John Paul II kept his optimism and would not settle for a cheap solution. He exemplified this quality in the way he handled liberation theology in Latin America when the clergy proposed a Marxist solution to the problem of political corruption and poverty in the region. Instead of accepting the Marxist solution that would undermine the dignity of the human person, he called for a positive change based on Christo-centric values and the principles of common good (Formicola, 2005; Weigel, 2010). The statement that underscored his optimism and courage was, "Do not be afraid" (John Paul II, 1978, No. 5) which he spoke

at the inauguration of his pontificate.

Just as he was apprehensive of the communist agenda, he also spoke loudly against the evils of capitalism which tend to undermine the dignity of the human person in the pursuit of material profit. In *Centesimus Annus* (John Paul II, 1991), he reiterated the social teachings of the Church already set forth in *Rerum Novarum*. He emphasized the need to treat people with care and respect which means “a sufficient wage for the support of the family, social insurance for old age and unemployment, and adequate protection for the conditions of employment” (No. 34). In *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (Ioannes Paulus PP. II, 1987), he stated that liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism are two imperfect concepts about human development that stand in need of drastic improvement.

Beyond the aforementioned qualities, he was highly spiritual and prayerful, spending hours in personal prayer in his chapel every day before mass (Formicola, 2006; Jones, 2005; Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001). The 14th Dalai Lama described him as “a determined and deeply spiritual minded person for whom I had great respect and admiration” (Tibet-Vatican, 2003, Para. 2). He was charismatic, electrifying every arena he entered (Noonan, 2005; Stricker, 2001). He was compassionate (Noonan, 2005; Burrows, 2006). For instance, he forgave Mehmet Ali Agca, his would-be assassin, and regularly visited him in prison (Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001). He was trustful and faithful (Gorski, 2002). He was intelligent, feeding his flock with words of wisdom (Appleby, 2000; Jones, 2005; Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001) and he was a role model for numerous adherents. His way of life brought many fallen Catholics back to the faith and led to the conversion of many others (Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

Pastoral Engagement

From the discussion on his personal values, it is apparent that John Paul II was an open and innovative leader. He distinguished himself as an ecumenical leader by charting new paths in the history of the papacy and venturing into areas not hitherto explored (Appleby, 2000; Jones, 2005; Noonan, 2005; Stricker, 2001; Weigel, 2001). On April 13, 1986, he became the first pope in history to visit the Great Synagogue of Rome (Appleby, 2000; Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Similarly, he was the first pope to visit the Umayyad Grand Mosque in Damascus (Abbott, 2001; Appleby, 2000). Many search engines such as Yahoo, Google, YouTube, and Bing, will lead to numerous testimonies about his ecumenical efforts around the world.

Within the context of his ecumenical outreach, he apologized for the sins of the Catholic Church against different religious organizations, groups, and individuals including Jews, Orthodox, Protestants, and women (Appleby, 2000; Blumenthal, 2005; Noonan, 2005; Robeck, 2005; Stricker, 2001; Weigel, 2001). He created a formidable alliance between the Holy See and the emerging states of Eastern Europe after the fall of Communism and established diplomatic relations with the state of Israel (Formicola, 2005; Weigel, 2001). His leadership qualities in this area could be summarized in the words of Peggy Noonan (2005) who says, “This is a pope who is impatient in his apostolic zeal; a shepherd to whom the usual paths always seem insufficient; who looks for every means to spread the good news to men” (p. VIII). The encyclical, *Ut Unum sint*, which is a document on Commitment to Ecumenism (Ioannes Paulus PP. II, 1995), contains the pope’s relentless

efforts in the area of ecumenism (RealCatholicTV, 2011).

Interpersonal Relationships

Pope John Paul II had a good rapport with people with whom he came in contact. He was at home with adults, children, Catholics, non-Catholics, and non-Christians alike. Modeling his life after Christ, he was not discriminatory, but associated freely with people. Noonan (2005) articulated some jovial moments in his life. For instance, when asked about his health he responded jovially, "I'm in good shape from the neck up! Not so good from the neck down" (p. 10). When asked repeatedly to retire and rest, he would say, "Christ didn't come down from the cross" (p. 11). And when American journalists consistently asked for his retirement in his old age, he said, "Tell those American journalists the pope doesn't run the Church on his feet" (p. 6).

He was an optimistic and cheerful person who bore no ill against anyone. Jones (2005) maintained that he was cordial and personable in his relationships with people including those of other faiths and denominations. He treated people with respect and with a sense of equality, and even welcomed people of other Christian denominations and non-Christian religions to his summer residence at Castel Gandolfo (Robeck, 2005).

The 14th Dalai Lama, a Buddhist spiritual leader, attested to his personal friendship with the pope. Beyond this personal relationship, he spoke highly of John Paul II in his relationship with people. In his message of condolence at the death of the pope, he talked about the pope's commitment to enhancing harmony among different religious traditions. He referred to the pope as a courageous man who dedicated himself to the cause of global peace. He also described the pope as a compassionate person who sympathized with him over the Tibetan situation with China (Tibet-Vatican, 2005).

Table 2: Leadership Qualities of John Paul II (as derived from the literature)

Personal Values	Pastoral Attitude	Interpersonal Relationships
Pro-life	Ecumenical	Cheerful
Courageous	Inclusive	Fraternal
Optimistic	Activist	Cordial
Hopeful	Innovative	Respectful
Prayerful	Purposeful	Collaborative
Spiritual	Outreaching	Sociable
Compassionate	Engaging	Accommodating
Trusting	Charismatic	Tolerant
Faithful	Visionary	Influential
Intelligent		
Resolute		

Equally, Rabbi David Blumenthal (2005) testified that Pope John Paul II had a very cordial relationship with the Jews. His interactions with people of other faiths created a positive attitude toward the Catholic Church and led to a significant increase in the Catholic population during his pontificate (Noonan, 2005). In social media sites such as YouTube, a wide range of testimonies allude to the strength of the pope's warm relationship with Catholics – especially among youth. This is evident in his 1979 visit to the Catholic University of America (29Bairdr, 2006). The pope's leadership qualities in the three areas of personal values, pastoral leadership, and interpersonal relationships

are tabulated in Table 2, above.

Comparative Analysis and Discussion

Even without a detailed analysis of the data, a cursory look at the characteristics of the three leadership models and John Paul II's leadership qualities as outlined in Tables 1 and 2 respectively reveal terse similarities between the two. These similarities classify the pope as an effective leader. Using the parameter of authentic leadership, Kerfoot (2006) points out three determinants of an effective leader, namely,

- People hunger for personalized leaderships that speak to their hearts and inspire them.
- Authentic leaders love challenging people to do what they didn't believe was possible.
- Authentic leaders generate the energy to make the impossible possible by their passion for their people, their patients, and for doing the right thing (p. 319).

Drawing on the discussion about his pastoral commitments and his relationships with people, it is evident that Pope John Paul II exemplified these three criteria of authentic leadership. First, in his pastoral visits to the different countries of the world, his personalized way of relating to the people strengthened the faith of many Catholics and inspired the youth as evident in numerous YouTube video clips. As stated in Kerfoot's (2006) first criteria, he was a source of inspiration for the people he encountered in his life and ministry (Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

Secondly, when Latin American Bishops proposed adopting Marxist socio-economic ideology in combating political corruption and poverty in their region, the pope challenged them to initiate positive change by following the principles of Christ (Formicola, 2005; Noonan, 2005; Weigel, 2001). This fits into the demand of Kerfoot's (2006) criteria of challenging people to accomplish the impossible. He would not accept a seemingly convenient solution that does not conform to the gospel values. He therefore challenged the bishops to see beyond the obvious.

Thirdly, his solidarity with the people and his instrumentality in uprooting Communism from Poland and from other Eastern European countries as evident in the literature satisfies an authentic leader's requirement to generate the energy and make the impossible possible by his passion (Kerfoot, 2006). Through his pastoral visits and inspiring speeches, he was able to give the people of Poland and Eastern Europe hope and made them believe in the final liberation of their countries which seemed hitherto impossible.

According to Farber (as cited in Kerfoot, 2006), love, energy, audacity, and proof are the characteristics that define leadership. These are also the qualities that define value-based leadership as shown in Table 2. Existing literature shows that John Paul II possessed these qualities. He was audacious in his ecumenical decisions and actions. For instance, he was the first pope to enter the Great Synagogue of Rome (Simeone, n.d.). Moreover, he visited Umayyad Grand Mosque in Damascus (Weigel, 2001 & 2011) even when he was accused of "plotting a Rome-Riyadh Axis, an unholy Catholic-Islamic Alliance for the repeal of the enlightenment" (Weigel, 2001, p. 5).

Among other characteristics of positive leadership, Nahavandi (2012) cites "creating a

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positive climate” as an outstanding quality of a positive leader. This characteristic was a core value in John Paul II’s personal life and ministry as well as in his interpersonal relationships. Weigel (2001) described him as “the bridge builder” (p. 263). This description captures the essence of the pope’s pastoral qualities as a positive leader. As a bridge builder, he developed a positive attitude toward *religiously others* and encouraged interreligious dialogue by personally and actively connecting with other religious leaders and groups. This conciliatory quality was exemplified in the Assisi interreligious assembly he inaugurated in 1986 which has become an annual event (Allegri, 2013). Along this line, he apologized for the historic sins of the Church against different groups and persons as attested to in the literature.

In line with the characteristics of positive leadership, the vision which drove his mission was the need to understand and impact the “new worlds and new phenomena that are created by social differentiation and stratifications, demographic slices, and the reality of cultural sectors by which the gospel is absent or poorly represented” (Burrows, 2010, p. 134). Here, the gospel should not be perceived as a doctrinal tool for religious proselytization, but as a set of life-giving tenets aimed at unifying humanity in goodness and harmony. As evident in the discussion on his ministry and personal relationships, John Paul II preached this gospel effectively.

Based on the meaning he constructed from his personal and existential tragedies, he was visionary and worked toward the liberation of Eastern Europe from communist oppression. The series of disorienting dilemma he experienced led him through an impacting transformative process (Mezirow & Taylor, 2009) that characterized his pontificate as an era of value-based, authentic, and positive leadership.

A notable point about the pope’s transformative personality was his compassionate and positive disposition after he was shot by Mehmet Ali Agca in 1981. In that tragedy, he looked beyond his wellbeing to the salvation of Agca and made a joke of that life-threatening incident when he visited Agca in his prison cell. He told Agca that the Blessed Virgin Mary diverted the bullet from his heart (Noonan, 2005). His equanimity and leniency in that tragic event points to his inner character as a spiritual personality and revealed the value-based, authentic, and positive dimensions of his leadership.

Reminiscing on the pope’s compassionate disposition, the Dalai Lama stated in his condolence message, “I want to express my deep admiration for the Pope’s ability to forgive even his would-be-assassin. This was a clear indication that he was a true spiritual practitioner” (Tibet-Vatican, 2005, Para.7). While some individuals would neither forgive nor ever want to see their would-be assassin, John Paul II demonstrated the charisma of effective leadership by forgiving and constantly visiting Agca in prison (Weigel, 2001).

Implications for Contemporary Leadership

There are many lessons to learn from Pope John Paul II in his personal life and leadership style. Friedman’s (2006) comment about a flat world that has moved away from dominating and controlling to connecting and collaborating finds expression in the pope’s leadership. The pope did not only encourage a flat world by his actions, he was also a veritable catalyst for that accomplishment on many fronts.

In the foregoing discussions, his contributions to effecting changes in the aberrant political and religious status quo have been underscored. As already stated, he helped in reunifying the Eastern and the Western bloc in Europe. He worked equally hard to create understanding among the different world religions. One way he did this was by entering the synagogue and the mosque thereby bridging centuries-old interreligious distance.

The point in these events is that the pope was a visionary and courageous leader who led the Catholic Church in a crusade of change and reconciliation. From the seed of his ecumenical efforts, the Catholic “Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue” has come alive and its work has become robust and consistent. Since 1978 when the pope assumed the leadership of the Church, the council has been relating more cordially with other religious bodies by sending them goodwill messages at the celebration of their significant religious feasts (The Roman Curia, n.d.).

With respect to current global conflicts, world leaders could learn from the pope in dealing with one another. Historically, years of colonialism and the Cold War created division, mutual suspicion, and acrimony among nations. The dialectics of those experiences continue to constitute a significant factor in contemporary, cross-cultural tensions and conflicts (Saul, 2011). In these unhealthy situations, it will take global leaders to bring the different nations and cultures together by imitating the example of Pope John Paul II who adamantly inaugurated a new era of human relationship between the Catholic Church and people of other faiths. This strategy could be applied in political and organizational matters to enhance the spirit of oneness in global polity.

During the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign, the issue of sitting down to discuss with “the enemies” without precondition was an important political question. When U.S. President Barack Obama indicated his willingness to hold a discussion with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran without precondition, Senator John McCain accused him of “inexperience and reckless judgment” (Slevin, 2008, May, Para. 1). In that altercation, McCain’s accusation reflected the obsolete hegemonic attitude of dominance and self-will which neither acknowledges other people’s self-worth nor encourages inclusiveness and collaboration.

On this issue of conditional collaboration, Pope John Paul II was a model leader. He courageously traced a path for leaders to follow by visiting other religious sites without precondition. This act of pioneering the peace process by reaching out to different faith groups in this manner has created a considerable amount of understanding between the Catholic Church and other religious traditions. It could also reconcile antagonistic cultures and nations if contemporary leaders would imitate the pope’s example.

In 1961, President J. F. Kennedy shared a perspective in his inaugural speech about the Cold War that subsequently underscored Pope John Paul II’s relationship with others. Contrary to what McCain would advocate, he called for a change from the antagonistic past, reminding the people that “civility is not a sign of weakness” (Para. 15). Furthermore, he invited both sides to “explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us” (Para. 16). As John Paul II later exemplified in his pontificate, Kennedy intended to forge a global alliance that would ensure a happy coexistence for all of humanity. Global leaders in today’s world should imbibe these transformative qualities which are characteristic of value-based, authentic, and positive

leadership. Such leadership will reawaken the virtue of care and the spirit of oneness in the human family.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Noting the importance of leadership in any organizational setting, Kerfoot (2006) stated that, “Leadership traits of the person in charge work either as a magnet to attract, retain, and inspire, or as a force that repels” (p. 319). As this analysis has shown, John Paul II was a leader that attracted, retained, and inspired many within and outside the Catholic Church. In word and in deed, he was an exemplification of the Church’s description of a pope as the *servus servorum Dei* or the Servant of the servants of God (John Paul II, 2004).

The implication is for political, pastoral, and corporate leaders to emulate the pope’s examples in their personal lives, activities, and relationships. In the particular case of the Church, research should be undertaken to find ways of modeling and systematizing leadership emulating the pastoral pattern of John Paul II. The outcome of such study would provide Church leaders with a blueprint for pastoral guidance in their engagements within the Church and in their interactions with the *religiously and culturally others*. By imitating Pope John Paul II – whose leadership impacted people globally – pastoral leaders would help alleviate many social and political miseries in their communities and especially in the developing regions of the world.

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