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Development Directions

A free resource for pastors, principals, development directors, volunteers and anyone engaged in the ministry of Catholic development.

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BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND: DOLORES: THAT WILD AND CRAZY CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

By Frank Donaldson, President

Preface

Over the past nineteen years of working with Catholic schools and parishes throughout the United States, ISPD has had the pleasure of meeting hundreds of people associated with this wonderful world of Catholic development. In our workshops and seminars, and even in our on-site consulting, all of us from time to time will poke fun at some of the crazy ideas that we have heard about or even tried ourselves. Most of the time, these "delusions and distortions" take us back to the times when we were development directors, teachers, or administrators and really didn't know development from archeology. We have always felt the need to laugh at ourselves and have a good time with this ministry. And so, with this tongue-in-cheek mind set, we present to you: Dolores.

Dolores is a middle age development director who is in her first year of working at St. Zachary Parish. She is in charge of development for both the parish and an elementary school of 320 students.

Dolores is dedicated to her profession and loves her job, but is scared to death that she may fail. She has not received any training in advance of her job, and what she does know she has learned from reading, attending a half day workshop, or networking with another development director who seems to be in the same boat as she. She also receives a lot of advice from her board and council - most of whom relate the word *development* to "*gimme your money.*" One question always seems to

surface day after day. What should I do first?

So, in this issue, let's have some laughs, recognize our own shortcomings, and come to realize that we can always learn from our mistakes. Dolores is simply a composite of folks we've met along the way - pastors, principals, board members, faculty members, parents, parishioners, key donors, finance and parish council members, alums, campaign chairs, staff, diocesan personnel, and ourselves. Join us now as we exaggerate and have fun, for beneath all of this craziness lies the true meaning of Catholic development.

How Dolores Got Her Job

Week after week, members of the Parish Council at St. Zachary Parish raised the question to their pastor, Father Bob, "How long are we going to stay in this run down church that is now over 50 years old? We've got to build a new one. Today! And, the school gymnasium must be renovated. It only seats 28 on a good day. We must begin, Father."

To which Father Bob would answer, "Folks, folks, I've told you time and time again to be patient. Our collections have not increased, the school enrollment is down, our parish is getting smaller, and there is a decline in priests in this diocese. We do not know what the future holds for St. Zachary."

"Father, with all due respect," said Tim, the head of the Council, "we can't just sit here and do nothing. We must act or be acted upon."

"Right. Yes. Right on. Uh huh," was heard the rally cry around the table. "Build it and they will come." Father Bob could not convince them otherwise.

It was late in May when a direction was taken. Tim again said, "Father, now is the time to act. Our festival raised an extra \$2500 this year. Bingo is helping us balance the school budget, and we must move forward on this building project."

Father finally began to give in, but with one basic question that had to be answered, "Where will this money come from? **We will need to raise over \$3,000,000!** Our Sunday collections are at \$7400 per week with an annual budget of \$410,000 for the parish. How can we expect to go from where we are now to over \$3 million? Please help me understand."

With confidence, Tim answered, "This is when we need to hire a development director. A good one can come in, hit the ground running, and raise this kind of money in no time. That's what they do. I mean other parishes and schools have hired them. Look at St. Cletus over on the north side of town. They hired a development director a few months ago and bingo receipts have soared."

"Where would we find someone like this? And, how much would we have to pay?" asked Father Bob.

"Well," Tim replied, "I understand that most of these people make between \$25,000 - \$30,000 per year on the elementary school and parish level. We must find the money and get this going. Let's put an ad in the local newspaper, the diocesan newspaper, and then send an announcement to the surrounding parishes and Catholic schools asking people to submit their application."

Everyone on the Parish Council, with the exception of Father Bob and Wendy, a new member, totally agreed with Tim. Even Father and Wendy felt that the plan had merit; they just did not know where the money was going to come from.

When Dolores saw the job announcement in the local newspaper, she immediately responded. After all, she had worked for years in public relations, sales, marketing, and advertising and had much of the "skill set" that was being requested. Plus, she had been a volunteer at her own parish, serving on the Stewardship Committee and also helping in the local efforts of United Way. She had no experience as a development director, but she had the people skills. This looked like the perfect fit. Dolores was hired.

She knew her assignment from Day 1. Raise that \$3,000,000. You can do it. After all, you are our new development director.

Dolores was excited as she got into her car that morning and headed off to a half day workshop in a nearby city. Father Bob had received a brochure in the mail several weeks ago and had shown it to Dolores. Although she was somewhat reluctant to go, Father Bob insisted saying, "Dolores, one of the main things we need to do is to make sure that you get trained and that you rub elbows with people who are doing the same kind of work you are doing."

"*Fund-Raising Made Easy*" was the name of the workshop, and it was being sponsored by Williams, Drake, Hoffman, Kempter, Roberts, Lowell and Associates - a fund-raising company from the northeast. Dolores really hoped she wouldn't get bored to tears. However, she knew that she would probably get some free handouts and maybe a binder, and that would make the trip all worthwhile. It was so important to come home with handouts, a certificate, and a bunch of "stuff."

As Dolores walked into the YMCA lobby and saw the conference registration table, she approached with some reluctance. After all, St. Zachary Parish had paid \$35.00 for the half day workshop, and although it was only 20 miles from her home, that was a lot of money for just halfday. They better give her some goodies that were worthwhile. She approached the table.

"Good morning. I am Dolores from St. Zachary Parish and I am here for the workshop. Do you have my registration?"

"Yes mam," was the reply. "We have you signed up for two presentations this morning - *How to Find the Money* and *How to Get the Money*."

"That's correct," answered Dolores. "When will they be starting?"

"Well, the first course starts at 9 AM in Room 203 and the second course begins at 10:30 AM in Room 117. Course materials will be handed out at that time."

Dolores entered Room 203 and took her seat. She was excited to learn all she could in 90 minutes on how to find the money. After all, she did have to raise \$3,000,000 in one year and the clock had already started. At 9:05, the presenter came in, introduced himself, and then had all attendees in the room say who they were, where they were from and what position they held. Dolores was the only one from a Catholic parish.

The presenter handed out a booklet and began to talk about how to find money and how important it was to identify the "heavy hitters" right away.

"Excuse me, sir," Dolores said as she raised her hand. "What do you mean when you say 'heavy hitters'?"

"Well, Dolores," the presenter said, "these are the people who are either directly or indirectly associated with your institution that have all the money. One check from them and your troubles are over. I mean why waste all your time trying to be nice to a whole bunch of people when 5-10 heavy hitters can get you what you want?"

"Well, I guess that does make sense," Dolores said. "But, where do we find these people?"

"There are ten basic questions to ask on how to find the money," the presenter said. "And, here they are:"

1. In the last 10 years, who has given your institution a gift of over \$100,000 on an annual basis?
2. On your board, who talks like he or she is loaded?
3. Who do you know associated with your institution that drives a BMW, a Lexus, a Mercedes, a Jag or some other luxury car?
4. Who do you know associated with your institution who has more than one home?
5. Who sends their kids to private schools?
6. Do you know any doctors, dentists or attorneys who are associated with your institution?
7. Does anybody wear real expensive jewelry who sits on your board?
8. Do you know anyone who has taken a luxury cruise in the last year or so?
9. Has anyone associated with your institution gone on a European vacation in the past year or so?
10. Who do you know who is always flashing money around and has a wad of bills ready to spend?

"Having the answers to these questions will lead you to the money all the time. So, open up your ears and eyes and find the answers and you can be sure you'll find the money."

"Excuse me, sir," Dolores blurted out, "What do we do when we get the answers to the questions?"

"Well, mam, that's the topic of your next course - *How to Get the Money*."

Dolores left excited. She knew she could answer many of those questions, and if that led her to the money, then she just needed to know how to get it. She entered the room for the next course at 10:30 AM.

"Good morning, everyone," the next presenter said, "I hope your first course was informative. In this one we will be talking about how to get the money. Probably many of you took the first course on how to find the money, and the presenter gave you ten questions to answer. Well, I don't have ten questions but I do have five rules on how to get the money, so let's get started."

- Don't waste your time trying to pry money out of people who do not have any. Going after \$50 and \$100 gifts is simply a waste of time. Devote your time to heavy hitters. So, the first rule is to develop your Top 25 list of people that you

want to get the money from.

- Rule #2 is to find out who knows these Top 25 people the best and get that person to go with you to ask for the money.
- Rule #3 is make sure you ask for more than what you think they can give you.
- Rule #4 is make sure that if they write you a check for less than what you expect, then tear up the check in front of them and tell them that they are not getting off that easy.
- Rule #5 is when everything else fails, say that they need to give money so you can put their dear old departed mom's name on a plaque to hang in the lobby of whatever building you call home.

"Folks, if you stick to these tried and true rules, you'll be able to get the money. I mean, after all, that's your job as a development director. Show me the money!"

On her ride home, Dolores thought back over all the things she had learned and wondered if all those questions and rules were the right ones to ask and live by. The more she thought about it, the more it all made sense. Why waste time trying to get money from people who didn't have any? Sure, they may have good ideas and wonderful levels of expertise, but that wasn't going to get her to \$3,000,000. She needed big bucks; she needed to get to the "heavy hitters." She needed to look at all those people who had given over \$1,000 in Sunday collections over the past year. And maybe, just maybe, she might get lucky and get a big chunk of money from somebody's will. St. Zachary did have a lot of elderly people, and some of them weren't looking that good lately. She needed to get the dollars - after all, isn't that what a development director is supposed to do?

ISPD WELCOMES OUR NEW ASSOCIATE

We would like to take this time to welcome David Kissell as an ISPD associate. Since 2002, David has served as Director of Development at St. John the Baptist Parish in Cincinnati, OH. He has attended numerous ISPD workshops over the years, and has been responsible for creating and implementing his parish's strategic plan, the Total Stewardship process, the parish annual fund, and the parish website. David has also managed the parish marketing and communication efforts, worked at educating all parish leadership groups, and coordinated all development events for the parish and the school's alumni base. David has served as a mentor to other development personnel in the area and is viewed as one of the outstanding Catholic leaders in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

He is a graduate of Ohio University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism and specialization in Public Relations, Marketing and Economics.

The Institute of School and Parish Development is excited to have David join our team. We view his hiring as another positive step in bringing on board the very best Catholic Development leaders in the country.

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