

# Reflections

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# 111 July 15, 2011

## Eagles or Chickens

Father Kentenich, founder of the Schoenstatt Movement, denotes three types of persons who can usually be found in an ecclesial community.

1. On the one hand, **those who pull strongly downward.** He also calls them the “seducers.” They are the ones who give in too much to their nature. They seek a comfortable and tranquil life. They have a naturalist mentality. They may be good, but they make no big effort. They have forgotten the words of the Lord: “.....The Kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent are taking it by force” (MT 11, 12). They are like chickens who always look downward, they only see their small world.

2. On the other hand are **those who push forward and upward.** Father Kentenich calls them drivers, leaders. They are the ones who extend their hands towards the stars. They are the eagles in the Kingdom of God, the ones who aspire to the heights.

3. And finally, the third group of **those who are in the middle of the other two.** They are the undecided ones, the dependent ones, those who are inclined toward the eagles or toward the chickens, according to who is dominating or influencing more in the community. They are like sheep which allow themselves to be dragged along by the shepherds who are more convenient for them or convincing.....be it upward or downward.

Now then, what are the **leadership characteristics** which members of an ecclesial community should have? Evidently not everyone can assume an office or a task of leadership in whichever place. But “each one should be able to be a driver, a leader in his/her state of life and in his/her circle.”

In other words, that means **“the capacity to influence in his/her own confines.”** He/she should be ferment in his/her world, know how to pull the others along, leave his/her personal seal. Let us ask ourselves if we have been able to transform something in our family, profession, or neighborhood in which we live.

Another leadership quality is **“firmness of character and principles.”** If tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, we have to our right or to our left someone of whom we are embarrassed, the community also ends up losing its own self-esteem. The leader must then be a person solidly rooted in the ultimate principles and truths, in the supernatural world. For that, he/she must study, know the doctrine of the Church and of his/her community.

Additionally, the leader personality must stand out for his/her **“capacity to commit himself/herself, to accept and fulfill commitments.”** For the majority it is not too difficult to accept commitments. What really is difficult is to fulfill the assumed commitments.

This lack of responsibility we often find among ourselves. It always reminds me of the parable of the two sons (MT 21, 28f) “There was once a man who had two sons. He went to the older one and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ‘I don’t want to,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. ‘Yes, sir,’ he answered, but he did not go.” In the first son, perhaps a few melancholics see their reflections. But more must recognize themselves in the second son.

Therefore, this quality often means: knowing how to reject commitments which one does not feel capable of fulfilling well. We do not know how to say “no” when we do not want to or when we do not know how to do something. The heart impedes us. Or, someone else’s persuasion is so convincing. And then we say “yes,” but perhaps with the intention of not fulfilling it. It is a lack of responsibility, a lack of serious commitment. Our words should always express our inner conviction. If not, it is better that we remain silent!.....because someday we will be made accountable, also for what we say.

### Questions for reflection

1. To which of the three types do we belong?
2. Am I an influence where I work?
3. Do I fulfill my assumed commitments?

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