

WE TAKE THE WORRY OUT OF RAISING FUNDS

Campaigns During These Economic Times...

A Word to our Clients and Future Clients

C. Eugene Musser, President



As daily headlines carry messages about economic uncertainty, we want to reassure you that, as a client or potential client of our company, you have entrusted your Capital or Stewardship plans with us. We are the experts in this field, and you can trust that we will assist you throughout the current crisis and in the future.

This is a sound company. Our company is conservatively managed, and has withstood the peaks and valleys of the nation's economy since our founding in 1938. We have conducted Capital and Stewardship Campaigns through world wars and times of peace; recessions and eras of prosperity. Despite changing economic cycles, Kirby-Smith Associates has remained a sound firm providing successful campaigns to our clients. We have served and will continue to serve our clients and faith communities in good times, as well as challenging times like those that face us today. We have added Millennium Consulting to our services to offer a wider and varied approach to meeting the needs of our clients.

(continued on page 2)

God's Prescription for Happiness

Rev. Dr. Gary Nicolosi/Kirby-Smith Associates, Inc.

What would it take to make you happy? Respondents to a recent survey settled on \$10,000 as the amount that would solve their problems. "No doubt about it," says Roy Waddle: "If I were handed \$10,000 of happiness, life would turn out rosy. For about ten minutes. That's how long it would take for me to spend it all—for bills, a new roof, a Greek isle cruise, a handful of charities, and the retirement kitty. Then it would be gone. And I'd return to daydreaming about the next \$10,000."

So what would it take you to make you happy?

Happiness is what we want, isn't it? We may not agree on what happiness is or on how to achieve it, but we want it. For some people, happiness is taking all you can get out of life, living for today because there may not be a tomorrow. For other people happiness is a consequence of a certain kind of living. For others, it is in sharing that we obtain happiness.

So what would it take to make you happy? As Christians we possess the spiritual resources for happiness no matter the economy, the weather, or hardships we face. Simply put, the Christian prescription for happiness is purposeful living, a meaningful life, and a hopeful future. Let's examine each one of these in more detail.

First, happiness is a matter of purposeful living.

Purpose supplies direction. It gives us goals. It is having something to aim at, something to pursue, something to achieve. Organizational theory maintains that every effective business should have a purpose statement. The same is true with individuals. To live a fully human life, we need a purpose.

Christianity claims that you and I are here on this earth for a purpose. We are not accidents of nature. We are not the

(continued on page 2)

Campaigns During These Economic Times *(continued from page 1)*



What we suggest:

- If currently involved in a campaign, continue with your plans. Remind your members that this is a three-year pledge that can be modified at anytime. If things do continue to slow, we can always extend our plans.
- If you wish to delay solicitation, do not delay planning. This will enable you to move directly into a campaign when you do wish to start the solicitation.
- Some of our clients are in need of immediate repairs, i.e., roof, boiler, and plans that cannot be changed.

Kirby-Smith Associates can modify your campaign to solicit only limited gifts at this time from those able to give to meet immediate needs. You can then conduct a campaign for all members at a later date. Discuss this option with your Kirby-Smith consultant, if appropriate for your church.

We value our relationship with our clients and the trust that they have placed in us. It is important that they feel secure in having us as their partner. We hope the information we have shared will reaffirm that, together, Kirby-Smith Associates will continue to provide you with our expertise, earned over 70 years of serving our clients.

God's Prescription for Happiness *(continued from page 1)*

products of blind chance. We are created by God to do God's work in the world. We each have our reason for being. Christians call this a *vocation*.

Our primary vocation is to be in relationship with God. Rick Warren, the author of the *Purpose-Driven Life* put it very well when he wrote: "You were made by God and for God, and until you understand that, life will never make sense."

We are on this earth to be in relationship with God, but this necessarily means that we also will be in relationship with one another. Many of us have a vocation to be a parent or spouse – touching lives close to ours. But we also have other vocations. It may be to do some work in the community—to contribute to the common good by our employment, our participation in the church, or our involvement in civic affairs.

How do you find your vocation? You have to engage in a discernment process and be willing to honestly examine yourself. A good rule of thumb is

that you can find your vocation at that point of intersection between what you do best and what you like to do. However you go about it, finding your vocation—and then acting on it—can lead to a happy life. Happiness is a matter of purposeful living.

Second, happiness is having a meaningful life. To find meaning is to make sense of our existence. Christians believe in a God of order. We who are made in the image of God need order to exist. None of us can survive in a purely chaotic world. No human being – and certainly no community – can exist in a state of sheer unpredictability. We need to make sense of our world if we are to live fully in the world.

Some of us may know the challenge of doing a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece separately makes no sense, but once we put the pieces together, we discover the meaning of the picture. The secret to doing a jigsaw puzzle is to discover the key that "unlocks" the meaning of the picture. The key allows us to connect the pieces together.

(continued on page 3)

God's Prescription for Happiness

(continued from page 2)

Now think of life as a jigsaw puzzle. It consists of a wonderful variety of parts. To connect those parts, to make sense of the parts, to get a picture of the whole, we need a key. Christians claim that Jesus Christ is the key to life. In Christ, we get the whole picture rather than fragmented parts. In Christ, we make sense of our world, and therefore our lives.

Of course, there will always be mystery in life – more questions than answers—or as T.S. Eliot put it, “we shall never cease our exploration.” Still, Christ is the key that helps make sense out of life—Christ is the human face of God who shows us what God is like and who God is and what God’s plan is for our world.

This Christ gives us the assurance that amidst the terror and chaos of a world that sometimes appears to have gone mad, at the heart of the universe there is love. So we never despair, we never give up, we never lose heart, as St. Paul puts it, because Christ is the key to living a meaningful way. Happiness is having a meaningful life.

And third, happiness is a hopeful future. By hopeful I mean that we can face the future with

confidence that come what may, God is with us. We can’t predict every phase of history, but we do know that at the end of history there is God. God is triumphant. God is victorious. God reigns. God wins. And therefore, Christians have hope not just for the coming year but for eternity.

If we look at things in light of eternity, our perspective on life is bound to change. We can take greater risks for peace, greater risks for justice. We can love more deeply, act more courageously and live more generously because we know that at the end of all things there is God. Things the world views as of ultimate importance for the Christian take on a provisional character. Disappointments and setbacks, tragedy and failure never have the last word in our lives—God does. What matters—what really matters—is our personal relationship with God and through God with others.

Purposeful living, a meaningful life and a hopeful future—take hold of these three things and you have God’s prescription for happiness.



A Spirituality of Stewardship

By Most Rev. Robert F. Morneau

To receive God's gifts...gratefully

To nurture God's
gifts...responsibly

To share God's gifts...justly and
charitably

To return God's gifts...abundantly



Spiritual Growth Through Stewardship

Entrusted With Talents and Gifts



José De Jesús, Kirby-Smith Associates, Inc.

Then the one who had received the one talent came forward and said, 'Master, I knew you were a demanding person, harvesting where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter; so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground. Here it is back.' Matthew 25: 24 -25

We are accountable to God for all that we have received and all God has entrusted to us. What does it mean to be accountable? It means that we first realize all that we have received. God, in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to entrust you and I with individual gifts and talents to fulfill His saving mission. Through our Baptism and Confirmation, we have become co-creators and active participants in God's plan.

It also means that we are challenged to take risks. Accountability to God means that we must overcome the obstacles that our Ego sets before us in an effort to maintain control. Our Ego is the idea that we carry around about ourselves. Beliefs we often hold that may be obstacles to Stewardship as a way of life. Some of the ideas include the following:

- I am what I have. So I measure my worth on the basis of my stuff.
- I am what I do, that is, all of my achievements define who I am.
- I am my reputation. (I am what others think of me.)
- I am separate from everybody else instead of knowing that the same God connects us all since we all come from God.

The erroneous belief is that I am separate from God and that God is something outside of me instead of seeing myself as a piece of God. The fullness of God is present in all. There is no place I can go to be far from God. Indeed, God has given us every gift necessary. It is simply up to us to cultivate and use our gifts and talents.

When St. Francis was feeling that he didn't have any peace in this life, he didn't say to God, "I need some peace. Please just bring me peace." What he asks is "Lord, make me an instrument of **your** peace." In other words, let me be like you. Allow me to imitate you. That is what is called "God realization." We are empowered through our Baptism to be priest, profit, and kings—to be ambassadors for God. We are not separate from God, in fact God counts on us. We can therefore decide at any time in our lives to surrender our Ego that wants to keep us separate from God and each other, and embrace our true identity as children of an almighty God who loves us unconditionally. The risks in getting involved and being committed can sometimes be great; however, the rewards are nothing short of awesome!

When we truly "know" Who it is that is asking us to take risks, how can we say "no," or "I am not good enough," "not now," or "maybe someone else?"

Services offered by Kirby-Smith Associates, Inc.

- Capital Campaigns
- Increased Offertory Campaigns
- Stewardship Appeals and Training
- Consultation Services
- Feasibility Studies
- Vision Development
- Christian School Campaigns
- Diocese, Synod, District, and Conference-wide Campaigns
- Annual Appeals
- Workshops/Seminars
- Development Officer Training

For a complete listing of services, please visit our website.

Kirby-Smith Associates/Millennium Consulting, the Experts in Church Fund-raising Since 1938.

Call us at 1-800-762-3996 or e-mail us at kirbysmith@aol.com for a free consultation.