

CHURCH COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

By
Rev. Luna L. Dingayan¹

A. Jesus' Mission and Ministry

- 1. Transformation as the heart of Jesus' mission and ministry** - The heart of Jesus' mission and ministry according to the Gospel account of Mark was his commitment **to transform persons as well as systems and patterns of relationships and even of governance**. And the main means that he used was **to organize people**: challenge them with the demand of the Kingdom, orient them with the Kingdom perspective and Gospel values, develop them the sensitivity to the needs of people, form them into clusters of two, twelve, seventy-two for their collective learning and experiences. And finally, he would send them on their own, organizing people for the Kingdom of God, facing the risks and sacrifices that are demanded for those who follow Jesus and his way to do God's will that his Kingdom may come.
- 2. Integral concerns** - Very often, the Church overlooks people's needs, their lives and struggles. These are relegated to works of charity and social concern. Priority is given to what is categorized as the spiritual needs of the people. In fact, the Biblical faith and the Gospel are concerned very much in tackling matters that affect people as persons such as their physical, social, emotional and spiritual make-up. All of these concerns are integral to each other.

The Church's involvement with people from various sectors - peasants, fisher folks, urban poor, workers and indigenous people - is not only out of welfare and charity. These are integral and inherent in the Christian faith. The Gospel speaks of people discovering their worth and dignity as persons and as children of God; it speaks of their empowerment.

- 3. Empowering by organizing** - Jesus empowered people by organizing them. This underscores the imperative of the practice of liberation rather than simply a theology of liberation. People are empowered as they are organized. And to organize people is already a liberating act that initiates the process of liberation and development towards fulfilment of their basic and human needs.
- 4. Faith as foundation for involvement** - Identification and integration with the oppressed, impoverished and marginalized sectors as well as initiatives to organize them do not simply emanate from a political, economic or ideological orientation. It stands to reason and on the basis of faith that such work and involvement proceed from a Christian commitment and the desire to re-discover the liberating elements of the Gospel. Re-reading the account of Mark is not simply an attempt to confirm what framework and perspective one already has. Rather, one is confronted with the essential values and

¹ **Dr. Luna L. Dingayan**, is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and presently the President of the Ecumenical Theological Seminary, 42 Bokawkan Road, Baguio City

ways of the Kingdom as Jesus illustrated it with his methods and practices in preparing his disciples for Kingdom-building.

B. Portraits of Jesus in Gospel of Mark

Biblical Passages:

1. The Son of God - Mk. 1:1
2. Greater than John the Baptist - Mk. 1:4-8
3. Preacher- Mk. 1:14
4. Teacher- Mk. 1:21-22
5. God's Holy Messenger - Mk. 1:24
6. Healed the sick and drove out demons - Mk. 1:34
7. Lord of the Sabbath - Mk. 2: 27-28
8. Whom the wind and the waves obey - Mk. 4:35-41
9. Prophet, wise man, miracle worker - Mk. 6:1-6
10. The Son of Man - Mk. 8:31
11. The Son of David - Mk. 10:47
12. Messiah - Mk. 8:64-62
13. King of the Jews - Mk. 15:2

Emphases:

1. **Doctrinal Emphases** - It puts stress on such pictures of Jesus as the Son of God, the Son of David, the King of the Jews, the Messiah. The ascriptions bring into focus what he has done for and in behalf of others.
2. **The emphasis on the marvellous feats of Jesus** - The characterization of Jesus is associated with the unusual, spectacular and miraculous. Identification with Jesus is one with awe and amazement and the aspiration is to be able to accomplish similar or related accomplishment.
3. **The emphasis on key leadership roles and functions** - It highlights the position and function that a person plays. People revere a person with authority and depend on him to perform an important function because of his position.
4. **The fourth emphasis presents a portrait of Jesus as organizer** - This refers to the various deeds, activities, relationships and interactions which are the foundation of the community of faith, hope and love that Jesus wishes to build.

C. Why Organize

Biblical Passages: Mark 6:1-6; 8:34-38; 10:17-22; 10:35-45

Emphases:

1. **To change traditional system** - The traditional system of leadership Jesus opposes is a kind of power and authority enjoyed as matter of birthright. This means that power is inherent in a person or passed on from generation to generation. If one is born into a family or class that wields power, then he automatically becomes powerful himself. Jesus refers to the elites who wield both political and economic power as the epitome of the traditional leaders he eschews. To their advantage they possess academic privilege, special training, superior and hordes of wealth - all of which bestow on them a higher social status.

2. **To empower people** - Jesus chooses to empower people rather than associate with those in hierarchy. The implication is that Jesus finds time for the children and women; and the sick and outcasts of his society. Suddenly, the spotlight is beamed on those who are voiceless, behind the curtain and in the dark comers of the stage. They who used to be nameless and unknown instantaneously become key players with important roles to achieve in society.

3. **To introduce a new leadership style** - If there is to be a symbolic representation of the relationship between the leader and his followers, the leader will be at the bottom of an inverted pyramid while the followers will be on top. This is a kind of leadership espoused by Jesus wherein he would rather serve his followers than be served by them.

Questions/Implications:

1. What is the organizational structure of the group you are leading or organizing?
2. How was the organization formed? How are decision-making, planning, struggle and reflection expressed in the organization? Differentiate the roles assumed by the leaders and mass members in undertaking the tasks mentioned.
3. What are the criteria for choosing or electing leaders in the organization?
4. Are the values in the Kingdom with regards to leadership and greatness relevant to the present system and structure of the church, community and society?
5. How much of the values of culture, politics, economics and social standing and classes reflected in church structures and systems?
6. How much of the value of culture, politics, economics and social standing and classes reflected in movements and in the organizing of communities and sectors?
7. What is your perception of the role and status of an organizer or leader in your community or sector?
8. What is the perception of your community or sector as to the role and status of organizers and leaders?

D. Whom to organize

Biblical Passages: Mark 1: 16-18, 19-20; 2:14, 18, 23, 3: 13-19

Emphases:

1. **Common, ordinary and simple folks** - From all indications, Jesus in his organizing work reaches out to common, ordinary and simple folks of his day and age. The crowd or multitude who come to his meetings, who hear his preaching and who attend his teaching sessions are mostly from what we could categorize as the basic masses.

2. **Crowd of nameless and faceless persons** - And what those persons who Jesus called to follow him, who were to become his disciples? What is striking is the commonness of the choice of Jesus. These men could well be among a crowd of nameless and faceless persons and they will not stand out as different from their kind. Of

significance is the fact that of the 12 apostles: 2 are named Simon (Peter and the Patriot); 2 are James (Zebedee's son and Alphaeus' son); and 2 Judas (one Thaddeus and the other, Iscariot). Their names are commonplace and to get 12 with three pairs of similar names means there is not that much to choose from.

- 3. Ordinary rural and village folks** - What special qualities did Jesus find in his disciples? From the records as well as from the social and cultural backgrounds of his disciples, most likely their origins are not any more different from ordinary rural and village folks. As to their training and educational achievement, they probably attained basic or even minimal instruction which is not unlike what their contemporaries managed to obtain. It is an age rich in oral and spoken tradition with a very elitist written heritage. But apparently, they never had any access to this tradition as some of them do not even possess the rudiments of reading and writing.
- 4. Not prominent people** - Are there among his apostles men of rank, distinction or social prominence? From the records there is not much evidence. There is actually so little known about most of them except for a mention of their names with an additional line or two in some cases. But this much can be said about them. They generally belong to the toiling sectors such as: fisher folks, peasants and artisans. Jesus himself is a worker - a carpenter like his father Joseph; he is also a fisherman and a peasant. Such jobs are more seasonal in nature rather than permanent full-time occupations.
- 5. People who are related by kinship** - Another area to explore is the level of relationships within Jesus' inner circle of followers. It will be observed that kinship is very close in that there are two pairs of brothers among them. These are Simon (or Peter, the fisherman) and Andrew; and the brothers James and John. This makes these brothers comprise a third of the group. And probably, there are others relate to each other, if not on the first degree, then through other blood or kinship relationship patterns. Is it the same Alphaeus who had Levi (Alphaeus' son) and James (Alphaeus' son)?
- 6. Trusted People** - How familiar or acquainted is Jesus with his followers? Are they his childhood or youth friends, village neighbours or town mates? Are they his peers with whom he developed some kind of friendship, trust and confidence? Did Jesus initially form a small club or gang with his followers? Judas Iscariot, to have been trusted with the treasury, surely could be a person taken into Jesus' confidence and a close member as well of the inner circle.
- 7. Fearful and uncertain people** - What can be said of the traits and characters of Jesus' followers? The impetuous and vacillating Peter whose loyalty wavers depending on his company; the rational and proof-seeking Philip; the unbelieving Thomas; the financial opportunist and disillusioned Judas; the ambitious and mercurial brothers, James and John; the fervent nationalist-lover of his people and country, Simon the Patriot; and the efficient and shrewd tax collector that is Matthew. Altogether, there is the fearful and uncertain lot who is slow in learning and understanding the essence of the message and mission of Jesus.

- 8. People of contradictions and conflicts** - In spite of their contradictions and conflicts, either individually or collectively, Jesus trusts this group of men to be his intimate friends and his soul mates. Jesus is willing to take them for what they are. He is trustful enough to provide them with opportunities so that their potentials could be unravelled and their capabilities discovered.

Questions/Implications:

1. On the basis of practice and priorities, who are the target groups in your community and sector organizing, or in your church and group formation?
2. What level of relationship have you established with your target group?
3. Those you organize belong to what class, or social status? What educational level have they attained? Analyse the status of those whom you organize in relation to the whole community and society.
4. On the basis of the passages, what are the reasons given for the preference of Jesus in sharing the message, vision and values of the Kingdom with the "outcasts", the tax collectors, and those who are like "sheep without a shepherd"?
5. Jesus chooses mostly fishermen or those from the basic masses such as workers, peasants, and other common folks in forming his circle of disciples. How relevant is this in your own choice of persons who would compose your organization or movement?
6. Compare and contrast the advantage and disadvantage of organizing in the community and society the impoverished or oppressed sectors on one hand and that of the rich, powerful and influential persons on the other. What is your attitude towards organizing the elite?
7. Discuss and analyse who are the most organized, the least organized, and the unorganized sectors in the community and society.
8. How does one go about discovering the potential and capabilities of those whom society considers as the worst and the least, or as the deprived and impoverished?
9. How do the people you organize react to labels that they may be influenced by leftists or subversive elements?

E. Organizing a Core Group:

Biblical Passages:

Mark 1:2, 7, 8, 16-21, 29, 35-36, 38	8:11, 27-38
2:14-16, 23	9:2-41
3:7-9, 13-20, 23-27, 31-35	10:28-45
4:1, 10, 33-36	11:1-3; 27-33
5:21	12:13-17, 37-40
6:30-32	13:3-37
7:1-2, 14-18	14:10-11, 32-33,

Emphases:

1. **Twelve as manageable number** - Jesus wants to prove that 12 is a manageable number to work with when he chose 12 disciples as a starting point in organizing his

core group. There are two reasons for this. Apparently, the number allows for sufficient interaction between the leader and his followers; the number is also ideal because it also promotes maximum participation among the group members.

The number 12 is neither too big nor too small such that everyone, including the teacher and his students, get a fair share of attention and no one is neglected. Even among learners, the amount of interaction and the dynamics of individual and group interaction are fairly broad and even.

The number 12 in Biblical terms is often viewed as a symbolic number: in the choice of 12 disciples, the reference to the 12 Israel tribes is a natural flow and symbolism in religious language.

Are there only 12 disciples of Jesus? From Mark 1:21, 29 and 2:23, it could be inferred that Jesus has more than 12 disciples; and that there are also women, who became his followers and disciples. From among those whom he called to follow him and who eventually became his students and disciples, he chose 12 to be with him.

- 2. Formation of an organizing team** - The formation of the core group of Jesus is alike in many respects to the establishment of organizing teams which are really the foundation of many people's organizations today. The recruitment process starts with those whom Jesus has identified; then he initiates a process of self-discovery among his disciples. The training program and delineation of tasks follow.
- 3. Process of developing a team** - The formation of the organizing teams follows the same pattern. Potential members are initially identified. Later their capabilities, resourcefulness and daringness are developed. Several tasks may be assigned to them and these include: a). Social Investigation and Analysis; b). Education; c). Identification of potential leaders; d) organizing, and e). Initial organizing work

Questions/Implications:

1. What criteria do you use and what factors become decisive in your selection of prospective trainees in organizing?
2. Is a person's class origin and social standing important in your choice of prospective organizers?
3. What is the implication of the criteria followed by Jesus in his choice of disciples and to your own selection and training of prospective organizers?
4. Two passages involving a rich man (Mk. 10:17-22) and a teacher of the Law (Mk. 12:28-33) tell of the stories of prospective recruits in the course of organizing for the Kingdom; what insights could be learned from these in the recruitment and training of your prospective organizers?
5. The impoverished, deprived and oppressed are preoccupied with their daily existence and are burdened with the problems of where and how to obtain their basic needs and subsistence. And if they are involved in organizing, the load and demands of organizational work could still take their precious time and effort which otherwise would be devoted for their search for a source of livelihood. Because of this, many find the impoverished difficult to organize and mobilize for

action. Often, they are unorganized if not disorganized. Cite cases and experiences that support or disprove such views.

6. Do you have a story to share regarding your experiences in organizing a core group? How successful was it? What are some of the difficulties and problems that you encountered in your choices and in your training of such persons?

F. Knowledge of the Social and Cultural Milieu

Biblical Passages: - Mark 1:16, 19, 29-30; 2:15; 3:16, 32-35; 5:18-19; 6:1-4

Emphases:

1. **Gathering socio-cultural data** - Organizers gather socio-cultural data before venturing to organize. Gathering of such data is part of social investigation as it allows him to identify issues and problems. As a result he can map out strategies and courses of action. An organizer can gain insights as well into the potentials that people can use to empower themselves.
2. **Knowing the people** - How long has Jesus known his disciples? How much does he know about each of them? Not much is said of particular instances of such acquaintances. And the little that is said does not provide enough clues whether there had been long time liaisons. Is it possible that Jesus chose some of the 12 without knowing them personally, and that he relies on reference or recommendation from others? Or, possibly Jesus depends upon his own intuition and power to read other people's mind and intentions? Or, relies on his ability to mould and influence the personal attitude, values and behaviour of those whom he calls to be his followers and disciples?
3. **Developing a keen grasp of socio-cultural realities** - How does one develop a keen grasp of socio-cultural realities? Is such perceptiveness a gift or an inborn trait? Is it something that one has or does not have? Or is it something that one could learn and acquire? And develop and enhance as well? We have to grant some people as being more perceptive than others, who are more sensitive and with a deeper discernment of realities; it is possible that given the opportunities such sensitivity can be cultivated.
4. **Listening to people's voices and cries** - Given one's commitment and willingness to submit to the discipline of listening to the people's voices and their cries; of being attentive to the longings and aspirations of people who are struggling, the prospect for sharpening this trait of sensitivity becomes possible.
5. **Developing social consciousness through first-hand experiences** - There are two instances wherein such keenness could be developed. These can be either through first-hand experiences or through secondary sources and means. What could we possibly mean by first-hand data? All of us are born into a given social and cultural milieu which provides the basis for certain behavioural patterns, value and attitudinal systems. On the basis of experiences and relationships, one could grow to be more conscious of social realities and be aware of the underlying cultural context.

- 6. Developing social consciousness by listening to people's stories** - Secondary sources of information could be gathered from other people's stories and accounts; previous studies on the history of the community and its people; and life stories of individuals, families, clan and tribes. All these could shed insights about a given society. Formal data gathered from surveys, census, research and documentation, and academic studies are good sources of facts and figures.
- 7. Areas to be explored and studied** - For organizing purposes, the following could be the initial areas to be explored and studied:
- a. Population** - people: name, age, sex, race nationality and social status:
 - Linguistic and regional background
 - Family and class origin
 - Religion, social and political affiliation
 - Basic needs and facilities: employment, education, food, energy, water, sanitation and transport
 - Recreation and leisure
 - b. Community and people's history**
 - Stories of individuals, families, clans, tribes and community, and national history.
 - note historical moments and particular persons who contributed to the country's struggle
 - focus on the people's struggle and movement
 - c. Relationships and interactions** between and among persons and social units such a families, tribes, clans, racial and ethnic groups and even linguistic and regional entities, social and cultural practices and values. Religious events and themes may also provide insights about the people. Even the rites of passage such as birth, childhood, youth, adulthood, marriage and death could provide clues and answers in dealing with the situation and problems of the community.
 - d. Political and economic systems, structures and relationships.** An understanding of the sources, distribution and flow of power and resources will be invaluable for organizing work. If one is able to determine the basis of and process in decision-making, efforts in organizing could be concentrated where people could make an impact and be able to initiate changes through social transformation.

Questions/ Implications:

1. What is the significance of knowing a person formally and informally? What difference is there in calling a person through his formal title rather than through his first name? How close and intimate could you be with a person to be able to call him by his first name or by his nickname or pet name such as "*Boanerges*" (men of thunder) or by inclination and loyalty as Simon the Patriot?; Or, to be identified as Galilean or Canaanite?; Or, by his occupation or skill whether he is a fisher folk, carpenter or tax collector? What is the cultural and social

significance of such expressions with regards to relationships in your own society and culture?

2. "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers? Look! Here are my brothers and my mother. Whoever does what God wants him to do is my brother, my sister, my mother". Reflect on this passage and relate in what circumstances are kinship, blood and social relationships transcended? When is the concept of clan, nationality and even race set aside? When could one call another as colleague, equal, friend, fellow, male, partner or even a comrade - as such doing away with class and social distinctions?
3. What basic personal information should be known about a person? How much should an organizer attempt to get to know about the person he relates and deals with?
4. What is the significance of knowing about family, working and social relationships to recruitment, training, formation and effective organizing?
5. What process and mechanisms could be used in sharing life histories, personal and collective needs, and values and goals in life?
6. In what ways are families, social and working relationships a hindrance to organizing? In what ways, do they facilitate organizing work?
7. How is trust and confidence built and developed among prospective organizers?
8. What are the consequences of neglect and oversight in knowing the background, interests and attitude of another person in the organization and movement?
9. How are new relationships formed and mutual acceptance, respect and equality fostered in the organization and movement?

G. Grasp of the Geographical Terrain

Biblical Passages:

Mark 1:9, 12,14,16,19, 21, 23, 35, 38, 39, 45

2:1, 13, 15, 23

3:1, 7-8, 13, 20

4:1, 10, 35-36

Emphases:

1. **Spending time with people** - There is some significance in having a fine grasp of the geographical terrain. Organizing demands one's presence in the broad spectrum of people's experiences, including their sufferings and difficulties, and in the midst of coping with their problems and crisis. It also requires spending time with people and moving about where they live, work, socialize, worship and where they engage in leisure activities.
2. **Groundwork and Legwork** - Very often, an organizer who involves himself with people applies groundwork and legwork. He moves about on foot or by means of transportation to be among the people he is organizing. In the process he gets to know the features and conditions of the area. But more importantly, an organizer gets to know the people and gains their trust and confidence. By establishing such

contacts, harmonious relationships and open lines of communications are fostered as the organizer engages in recruitment, mobilization, and organization.

3. **Working knowledge is sufficient** - An organizer need not have a complete knowledge of the territory. A working knowledge is sufficient for him to maximize the results of his mobility and accessibility to the various areas of the territory.
4. **Wasteful Movement** - One who has a feel and knowledge of their territory cuts wasteful movement -it saves time and effort spent in aimless and fruitless moving about.
5. **Not there to stay** - "We must go on to the other villages around here. I have to preach in them also because that is why came". This passage means that an organizer need not settle in a particular area when his usefulness outlives itself. An organizer comes to an area to integrate with people and to have a grasp of their way of life. But he is not there to stay as there are other areas and communities waiting to be organized. There are more people who need to experience the organizing process or has to be trained as organizers.

Questions/ Implications:

1. In your organizing experiences, what significance is there in having knowledge of the territory and being familiar with its various aspects?
2. How do the physical features or character of the area affect your organizing efforts? What aspects facilitate or inhibit organizing work?
3. What facilities and resources do you have access to which enable your organizing work more effective in the community or sector?
4. How does an organizer's mobility enhance interaction with the people? How does it affect the organizing and education components of your program?
5. Is your program centre-oriented or field and community-oriented? Does your program emphasize the setting-up of the office and its facilities and equipment? What percentage of the program involves doing field work, contact work and living with the community people?
6. What is the significance and implication of such calls and challenges like *"Go to the People"*, *"Learn from the People"*, and *"Serve the People"* for the staff and organizers in your program?
7. What significance do you attach to communications, modern media and modern technology and direct person-to-person meetings and encounters in the community or sector?
8. Ask the staff, organizers and trainees to draw a map or diagram indicating their movement for a day, a week or a month. Provide the following description and information:

When?	_____	Who?	_____
Where?	_____	What?	_____
		Area and distance covered	_____

9. In your organization or institution, how is travel monitored? What is the purpose of travel? Is this discussed and decided collectively? Who has access to private transport? How much of public transport facilities are used?
10. Meeting places are important resources for the organization and movement, how does your group manage to avail of such venues for meetings, small-group gatherings or for large conferences and mobilizations? In what ways are churches, religious institutions and agencies able to assist in providing such facilities?
11. Groundwork, fieldwork and legwork are essential to contact-building and relating with local people in the community. How much of foot or leg power do your organizers still use in moving about the community to visit persons and families in their homes?

H. People in Need as Priority

Biblical Passages

Mark 1:29-33, 40-41; 2:15-17, 23-28; 3:1-6; 6:34-44, 56; 7:1-23; 8:1-9; 10:13-16

Emphases:

1. **People's needs vs. observance of the law** - The needs of people take precedence over the compliance and observance of rites and rituals, rules and regulations, and the requirements of the bureaucracy and hierarchy. By being disrespectful and irreverent to the values and standards of the Pharisees, elders, chief priests and teachers of the Law, Jesus is pointing towards the deeper and more essential respect and reverence; that it is more important to fulfil the spirit of the Law rather than just observe the letter of the Law.
2. **People's expectations** - The presence of an outsider, whether he is a politician, a social scientist, a professional, or an organizer, raises levels of expectations regarding issues and concerns in the community. Expectations are there regardless of its nature, quality or quantity -it can be in the form of financial or material help, alms or sympathy, a listening ear or a helping hand.
3. **Using available resources** - Using available resource is a key to meeting people's needs no matter how small and limited they may be. Rather than rely on grand and long-term solutions which are impractical, it is best to use resources: either personnel or material, moral and spiritual help which are available.
4. **Monopoly of resources** - Very often, what is projected is the absence or lack of resources, the people's poverty, their helplessness and their desperation. What is emphasized is what people don't have. As we search further and as we look around, we are surprised to find that there is food, there are enough provisions for housing, medical needs, and education among others. But these resources are not "broken"; the products are not "divided". The fish and the bread of the world are monopolized and concentrated in the hands, pockets, bank accounts, barns and warehouses of the few who are rich, powerful and greedy.

5. **Reliance on outside** - The tendency to rely on outsiders to meet one's needs reinforces certain negative characteristics of the oppressed. One is the lack of self-confidence in bringing about their liberation. That is, the oppressed look down on their selves and avoid making their own decisions, or they would say, "What can we do? We are poor, uneducated and helpless".
6. **Basic attitudes** - To be able to meet the demands of the people, an organizer can develop certain basic attitudes. These are: irreverence, sense of humour, creativity, flexibility, tenacity and genuine love for people. Christ in his time provided various situations whereby these traits are manifested.
7. **Results of assistance** - When assistance is brought to people, any of two things can result: either the people become self-reliant and liberated or dependent and reliant on the organizer.

Questions/ Implications:

1. There is a Philippine folk saying which goes, *Aanhin pa ang damo, kung patay na ang kabayo?* (Of what use is the grass, if the horse is already dead?) Are there similar sayings, proverbs or expressions in your own community or sector which emphasize the value of the person and of assisting people in their needs?
2. When you offer help to a community, does it offer relief and release or does it raise false hopes and leave people restless and dissatisfied? In cases of disappointment, does it add to the people's layers of frustration so that people have to look elsewhere for another source of hope and alternative at another time and occasion?
3. What stance have you developed in responding to people? Are you meeting their needs head-on or do you ignore if not "pass the buck" to other persons or agencies?
4. Cite cases in your organizing work wherein your "irreverence", sense of humour, creativity, flexibility, tenacity and genuineness of concern for people are challenged.
5. Differentiate between how bureaucracies in government and non government organizations (NGOs) address the problems of people in need. You can use case studies, disasters or calamities as examples and discuss how these were addressed by the two entities.

I - Mass and Popular Education

Biblical Passages - Mark 1:14-15, 21-22, 27, 35-39, 45; 2:1-2, 12-13, 18; 3:7-9, 20 ;
4:1-2, 35; 5:21 ; 6:1-3, 6; 7:14 8:1-3

Emphases:

1. **Mass and popular education** - Much can be learned not just in terms of techniques but also in terms of educational philosophy espoused by Jesus whenever he preached the Good News. Jesus is familiar and adept at mass and popular education; he knows its principles both in theory and in practice.

2. **Education as instrument of control** - Mass and popular education promotes knowledge and ideas that liberate and its value lies in its being used as a tool for the liberation of people. It is contrasted with a kind of education that is used as an instrument of control by a dominant class in society.
3. **Education as response to needs** - Since mass and popular education is a response to the needs of people - it deals with issues and concerns that have a direct relation and impact on their daily lives and aspirations such as food, health, housing, employment, land and basic services.
4. **Education for involvement** - Information and education which deals with the people's basic needs and relates with their situation encourage interest and participation from the people. This is one basis for their concern and involvement in the organization and movement.
5. **Effective use of language** - The language that is understandable and used by common people, even by young ones, are most effective when used in mass and popular education.
6. **Medium of communication** - Mass media such as radio, television, print and film are most effective in conveying messages to people. But the visual medium has a greater appeal than the written word especially when the masses are its audience,
7. **Jesus' method of teaching** - Jesus employs familiar and common symbols and illustrations through stories and parables in his teaching and preaching; this method has appeal to adults and even to children.
8. **Learning to ask questions** - As an attitude, most people simply bow down and keep quiet before authorities and those-in-power, or to anyone who is considered above in education, economic and social status. On one hand, people hear promises and pledges to help them but on the other hand, they are ignored, neglected, and forgotten in their miseries and needs. What is desirable is for people to learn to ask questions rather than learn how to deliver speeches. This puts people on the level of the authorities who will be forced to explain and will be on the defensive. Asking questions is a way of arming people - as though questions are ammunitions that can be used to "shoot" those in power or it could induce those in power to listen to the people's voice.
9. **Irrelevant solutions** - Personal or life problems are often complex such that alternatives or solutions tend to muddle instead of resolving the problem. For example, spiritual solutions are given for material and economic problems in nature. To put it in another way, medicine and drugs are prescribed to problems that are emotional or psychological in origin. In a larger sense, military solutions are pressed for problems that are economic and political in nature.

Questions/ Implications:

1. Identify some issues and general content of your information and education services. Plot out one specific campaign and spell out the components and processes involved.
2. What means of communication or media do you employ in your information and education campaign for your community and sector?
3. If you were to plot the area which you are organizing, how extensive is the area of your reach in terms of the territory wherein you are conducting the educational campaign?
4. If you were to do a headcount of the population whom you are trying to reach in your information and education campaign, what is the percentage in relation to the total resident in the area?
5. Has your education campaign resulted in any change of attitude, behaviour, if not in consciousness among the people being organized? For example, do they continue to think that people are rich and enjoy privileges because they are lucky, educated and modern in their thinking? On the other hand, do they think that to adhere to traditions held by people is to be backward and primitive and to remain uneducated?
6. How much do you rely on folk communication system (by word of mouth or person-to-person) as compared to the modern, sophisticated and expensive high technology communication systems, like printed, radio, television, computer, cell phones? Do people in the community rely on rumours as a source of information? Does it work for or against your organizing work?
7. What other local and indigenous communication and education means could you identify and utilize? What network or contacts that make for effective, efficient and reasonably-priced communication system have you used?
8. What symbols have you used in your education and information campaign? How did people respond to them?

J. Training Program for the Core Group

Biblical Passages:

Mark 1:17, 21, 38	8:16-21, 27-30, 31-34
2:18, 23, 24	9:2, 10-11, 14, 16, 28, 30, 33-34, 38, 40
3:13-15	10:10, 13-14
4:1, 2, 10, 33-36	13:3
6:1-2, 6-7, 12-13, 30-32, 35-40, 51-52	14:13-16
7:5, 17-18, 21	16:14-20

Emphases:

1. **Mutual Learning** - The training program's goals, content and method developed as a result of the apostles' relationship and interaction with people. A process of mutual learning and education transpires between the people and the apostles.
2. **Exclusive Teaching** - There are matters which Jesus teaches publicly but there are some aspects of his teachings which could be deemed exclusive or confidential to his core group.

- 3. Guided Tours** - Many of us are familiar with guided tours or educational trips. Groups are organized for special or to so-called tourist spots. But there is also the "alternative tourism" in the Third World countries arranged by church-related or social conscience groups. Instead of visits to standard places like museums, shopping malls, restaurants, casinos, discos, and other entertainment fares, group members are brought to communities where local people live. In these communities, the groups confront the reality of everyday living.

In this kind of guided tour the scenario is usually like this: the home is shack; the family consists of an unemployed father, a sickly mother and unkempt children. They enter the one-room structure called "home" by the family of six. There is no tap water not toilet. The kitchen serves other purposes - it can be used for both dining and sleeping altogether. And this is not one-day happening for those who live in the area. Very often, this is their shelter for the rest of their lives.

- 4. Problem-solving approach of Jesus** - In the miracle of two fish and five loaves of bread, the problem-solving approach of Jesus could be successively identified in terms of:
1. Jesus presenting a situation of need to his disciples;
 2. The disciples seeing the problem and other problems;
 3. Jesus proposing an alternative challenge;
 4. The disciples countering;
 5. Jesus presenting to them what they have;
 6. The disciples going and searching; and
 7. Jesus telling them to organize.
- 5. Reporting and Assessment** - Upon completion of their exposure, the disciples have stories to tell. This underscores the importance of providing reports and conducting an assessment of the organizing work as part of the training process.

Questions/Implications:

1. What is the content of the curriculum you are using in training your core group members on how to organize?
2. What is the duration of the training program? How long does it normally take before trainees completely grasp and understand the organizing principles?
3. Describe the "exposure program" or the "immersion/integration" component of your training program.
4. Describe the assessment process and the evaluation component of the training program that may be used as gauge to certify the qualification of a trainee for organizing.
 - a. What criteria are emphasized?
 - b. How important is the venue and time for evaluation and reports?
 - c. What is the value of oral report and/or written report in the evaluation process?
 - d. Whom do you usually involve in the report and assessment process?
 - e. How often do you hold an evaluation session?

5. What other methods, resources and personnel do you can use in your training program for organizers?

K. Jesus and the Religious and Political Powers of His Time

Biblical Passages:

Mark 1:40-45	11:15-18, 27-33
2:21-22, 5-11, 16, 18, 22-23	12:10-12, 13-17, 18, 24, 28-34, 35-37, 37-40, 41-44
3:1-5, 22	13:9-13
7:1, 2, 5	14:10-11, 43-45, 53, 54-65
8:11-12, 15	15:1-5, 6-15, 16-20, 42-45
10:2-3	

Emphases:

1. **Confrontation with authorities** - Many of the meetings and encounters between Jesus and the religious and political authorities of his time seem to be characterized by confrontation, conflict of interests and varied interpretations of the essence of faith and power.
2. **No respect for law and persons in high office** - It seems that Jesus has no respect for the Law or for persons who are in high places. And on top of that, even his disciples adopt some of his attitudes and practices, among them is to be critical of those who implement the Law. He does not observe the requirements and the rules and regulations set by traditions and those upheld by the religious leadership.
3. **Alternative interpretations** - Jesus presents alternative interpretations of the Law, traditions, religious practices and value systems of those in power. People receive well the methods offered by Jesus: "The people who heard him were amazed at the way he taught, for he wasn't like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority"(Mk. 1:22). This puts to question the integrity and respectability of the religious leaders and also affects their following among the people.
4. **Dealing with vested interests of people in power** - Jesus also deals with the interests (economic, social and religious) of those in power. He is both critical and confrontational: "Jesus went to the Temple and began to drive out all those who are buying and selling. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the stools of those who sold pigeons, and he would not let anyone carry anything through the temple courtyards." (Mk. 11:15-18).
5. **Exposing the truth** - Jesus exposes those who claim authority and superiority (Mk. 12:37-44) as opportunists, exploiters, status-seekers and hypocrites. He belittles what they try to show off as charity and generosity. In discussions and arguments with them, Jesus not only answers their questions but in the process exposes their ignorance and mistaken understanding of the Law and its essence. In many occasions, the response of Jesus embarrasses the Pharisees, teachers of the Law and high priests.
6. **Establishing a community** - For three years, Jesus and the 12 are in an inner circle during which they share life and learn the values and the Kingdom's demand which Jesus is

preaching about; they establish a community that is founded on confidence and trust. They have disagreements, some petty quarrels; and at times they are severely critical of each other. But these are meant to strengthen their fellowship and unity. But one of the 12 is not with them. For what reason and since when no one knows. But the rift is deep and deadly. For this man has become a traitor who betrays the organizer and leader and seeks to destroy the group and the movement they have initiated.

7. Jesus' incarceration - Jesus' incarceration is a graphic illustration of what could happen when a movement's leader or its followers get arrested. The tactics, methods of arrest, torture, trial of so-called "political dissenters", "rebels", "revolutionaries", "subversives", "nonconformists", "community and sectoral organizers and leaders" and even of plain, ordinary and innocent persons have not really changed much since the time of Jesus. The tactics and methods only became more sophisticated through modern technology.

For example, as a means of extracting information, chemicals, drugs and psychological means are used. Most of these new methods are done in the name of the law and the constitution by those legally authorized to exercise power and control; by those tasked to protect the interest of the country and the people. In many cases, the ones supposed to be safeguarded and whose rights need to be upheld are the ones who end up as victims and subject to abuse from those who wield power and authority.

8. The organizer's death - For many organizations and movements, the leader or organizer's death means the group's end. Once the head is gone, the body dissipates and scatters. Once the movement's founder is dead, the reason for the group's existence is lost. On the other hand, to other organizations and movements, death does not come as the final blow to the *raison d'etre* of the group. It sometimes becomes the rallying point so members can continue with the cause, issues and struggles initiated by the organizer and leader. The sacrifice and memory of those who offered themselves - body and blood - become the continuing inspiration for those left behind.

9. Martyrdom - The commitment, deeds, suffering and ultimate sacrifice of martyred members become the challenge that pushes the movement towards its final goal and victory. The martyr's body and blood become the soil and nourishment for the emergence of a new commitment, a new way of life, and the foretaste of a coming Kingdom.

Questions/Implications:

1. Cite cases of how support and assistance from those vested with power and authority such as government, church, business, landlords, military police, and traditional leaders are able to compliment the needs of the people and the community.
2. Describe general and particular cases wherein religious and political authorities are able to uphold the basic interests and needs of the various sectors in society such as the:
 - a. Peasants, workers, tribal communities, fisher folks, women, youth, elders, and students
 - b. Impoverished: the homeless, landless, unemployed, slum dwellers, out-of-school youth, abandoned children, and the sick and elderly.

3. Cite examples and describe the occasions when people and communities, with and through their leaders and organizers have to deal with authorities: government, business, church, landlords, companies, military and police.
4. Identify the issues and reasons for such meetings, negotiations and even confrontations. What are the areas of agreements and disagreements?
5. Describe the general attitude of authorities towards sectoral or popular organizations, and towards their leaders and organizers.
6. In what ways are the constitution, law, national interest and security, reasons for upholding the welfare and well-being of people and communities?
7. In what ways are legal and constitutional instruments used to protect the interests of the rich and powerful; how are they used to perpetuate in office the ruling and dominant classes? In what ways are they used as instruments of oppression?
8. What are the reasons for persons to become traitors to the organization or movement? Why do they become disenchanted with the movement or its leadership?
9. Do you know of cases wherein persons defected from an organization and betrayed its leadership and members to the enemies?
10. What attitude do you have against those who turn out to be traitors or defectors to the enemies' camp?
11. What are the consequences of such acts of betrayal and treachery?
12. Cite examples similar to Jesus' experience when he was arrested, accused, tortured, tried and abused. Discuss particulars about the: a) arresting event; b) physical torture; c) interrogation, accusation and trial; d) insults and verbal abuse; e) imprisonment; and f) others.
13. When Jesus was arrested, his disciples and followers reacted differently, one of them went to the point of denying knowledge about him. Are there similar experiences and reactions that you know of in communities or organizations that could be compared to those of the disciples? Describe the story and the circumstances.
14. There are still tasks and roles to play when an organizer, a leader or a member dies. Arrangements for the burial and final preparations and rites have to be performed. And then, there is the last farewell, the remaining moments before the tomb is sealed. Describe the feelings, attitude, and behaviour whether spontaneous or expected during such burial.
15. Describe the impact of such final rites over the group members. What efforts are done to keep the group intact and the movement from fading away?
16. Describe in your own terms and understanding the hope and assurance that you have in an organization and movement that transcends death.

L. Challenges and Risks in Organizing

Biblical Passages:

Mark 1:2-3, 17	9:33-35
2:14, 16-17	10:17-23, 27-31, 35-39, 40-45
3:13-15	13:9-13
6:7-11, 12-13, 33-44	14:17-19, 27-31, 32-42
8:27-30, 34-36	

Emphases:

1. **Not very inviting** - Organizing is not a very inviting field or course. To be an organizer is not a popular profession, not a good paying job that young people and qualified persons will prepare and line up for it. It is an area in which the demands seem to be excessive in relation to the promised rewards which very often are not that promising either. Also, the occupational hazards are not commensurate with the pay nor are there benefits such as insurances and retirement claims. Well, that is if there are any at all.
2. **Need for commitment** - What cause is so worthy so that a person will commit to the call of being an organizer, such that he will submit to the training and discipline and engage in the task of organizing people, and in the process, accept all risks and consequences in the pursuit of his cause? Why are persons bold and daring to take up the challenges of becoming an organizer of people, community or sector? Is it due to youthful adventure, religious idealism or ideological fanaticism? Or, is it a response to one's sense of compassion, justice and love for people? Or is it a vision of the Kingdom of God or the earthly Utopia of a just and classless society?
3. **Demanding** - Participation in the people's struggles and organizing of people are very demanding means of involvement. There is exhilaration in one's idealism as one begins to learn and grasp the basic principles and methods of organizing. One discovers a source of energy and enthusiasm in the challenging phases of integrating with the people and immersing in the community or sector. There are great expectations about events and people's movement.
4. **Not attractive** - The daily grind of work can overtake the fervour of serving the people. It is good while it is novel, but the lustre and the glitter do not last long, because things can look grey and faded. At the rock bottom of experience, the real characters are revealed. Most often, they are not that attractive or encouraging. Sooner or later, the objective realities of daily living become too clear. What of people's temperament and attitude, the whims and demands of those with whom one works and serves; even the unpredictability of friendship and loyalty - today, they are your friends, tomorrow, they become your enemies.

Questions/Implications:

1. What are the present-day implications of Jesus' demands and call to become his disciples, to follow him and to learn how to "catch men"?
2. How realistic and practical are these demands and requisites in terms of the training program and organizing experience?
3. Share and discuss the challenges and risks in becoming an organizer when it involves the following:
 - a). the individual or person concerned,
 - b). the family,

- c). a person's social and professional standing,
 - d). a person's security, future and stability.
4. In what ways can being an organizer become a fulfilling, meaningful and creative involvement? In what ways can it be treated as a commitment and profession?
 5. What are the risks encountered in organizing the community, sector, or area in relation to the following:
 - a). social and cultural traditions and practices?
 - b). Economic or business interests and the establishment?
 - c). Religious or Church bureaucracy and hierarchy?
 - d). Political leadership and authority?
 - e). Military and police authorities?
 - f). Other institutions, agencies, groups or movements?

M. Some Concluding Statements:

Basic Elements and Principles of Church Organizing:

1. Have a clear understanding of the mission and vision of God's reign.
2. Have a clear target or aim as to whom to organize
3. Form a core group of prospective organizers.
4. Acquire an understanding of the social and cultural context as well as of the physical and geographical setting.
5. Respond to people's needs and in the process provide learning experiences for both the masses and core group.
6. Provide the core group with continuous experience and training to further advance organizing work.
7. The core group is eventually dispersed for them to reach out to other areas, communities and people.

REFERENCES:

- Berkley, James D., *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker House Company, Inc., 1994.
- Cunanan, Jose P.M., *Jesus the Organizer*, Hong Kong: CCA-URM, 1994
- D'Souza, Anthony, *Leadership*, Bombay: St. Paul Press, 1989.