



## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A LEADER IN THE CHURCH?

As we prepare for the discernment and nomination of congregational members to serve on the Vestry it is important that we consider some fundamental biblical principles of leadership.

**1. Leaders are called more than they are chosen.** Think of the great leaders in the Bible: Abraham, Moses, Jeremiah, and Paul, to name a few. Each received a specific call from God. In Jeremiah's case, God spoke to him these words:

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born  
I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)*

While our calling may not be as dramatic as Jeremiah's, it is nevertheless a real calling and one that forms the foundation for service. Nomination for and election to the Vestry is not a "beauty contest," but a prayerful discipline of discernment, guided by the Holy Spirit and informed by Holy Scripture.

**2. Leaders need "seasoning"** – "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands..." (1 Timothy 5:22). While Paul speaks to Timothy specifically about the appointment of elders in the church, the principle applies to Vestry leadership as well. Genuine faith, tempered with godly character and experience is vital for effective Christian leadership. Understanding the parish, its people and its vision are all critical to being a strong and effective leader.

**3. The call of God is a two-way street.** In today's "me-centered" culture, one's subjective feelings about a calling have a tendency to trump a more objective discernment by other congregational leaders. While it is important that there is a level of inner confidence in a call to leadership, it is far more important that those being served acknowledge that very calling. In fact, many great biblical leaders (see the list above) had a reluctance, even a fear, of serving in the capacity of a leader! Perhaps such hesitancy reflects the kind of humility needed for effective servant leadership.

**Please pray for our parish leadership.**

As you pray, the Lord may lead you to nominate someone for our parish Vestry. As you approach that person, appreciate what you are asking them to consider and pray for them. Finally, pray for our existing leaders. Given today's world, the burdens of church leadership grow more complex and challenging every day.

-- Fr. Marc