

# February Newsletter

Friends,

I write on a below-zero Martin Luther King Day in Barrington, Illinois. Keep “the dream” alive! And stay warm!

This is our February letter and also the Lenten letter! Winter is a good time for some healthy contemplation; so, our scripture reading situates Jesus in the desert 40 days and nights in preparation for his public ministry. And then, in Jesus’ hunger, Ol’ Scratch offers him the three temptations. The readings offer a real opportunity for us to reflect on the temptations in our business and public life. This is an election year, and the temptations abound. So let’s examine our public discourse by engaging “It’s Election Season. Here Comes the Morally Charged Language,” by William Brady, Kobi Hackenburg, and Manoa Tsakiris. Between Scripture and the article, you might generate some heat in a civil way.

I have read a good deal on the Ignatian concept of discernment, but in January, I picked up Henri Nouwen’s book *Discernment* (2013) published by the Henri Nouwen Legacy Trust long after his death. Henri was a remarkable priest, spiritual writer, and human being. Being snowed in gave me time to recall having met Henri in Boston and then hearing him speak a number of times in Chicago. His books *Reaching Out* and *With Open Hands* are 20th-century classics. If you are looking for a book to jump start your spiritual life in 2024, *Discernment* really worked for me.

Finally, a **SAVE THE DATE**. The Conference on Faith & Work at Seton Hall University, postponed in the summer, will take place with the same cast on Saturday, March 9, 2024. Flyer attached! I encourage attendance! In the coming weeks, I will solicit help from coordinators with the IBC presentation and workshop.

Stay warm and healthy, and Happy Valentine’s Day!

John Fontana



## MISSION

The Mission of the Ignatian Business Chapters is to establish and lead a national and international network of business executives to explore their respective religious traditions in order to help the individual executives

- integrate faith, family, and professional life,
- develop a corporate culture that is reflective of their religious faith and values, and
- exercise a beneficial influence upon society at large.

The chapters, grounded in the Roman Catholic tradition, welcome believers who are open to and respectful of one another's religious traditions. They are committed to the conviction that ethics and values grow out of one's religious heritage.

## SCRIPTURE READING:

### Matthew 4:1-11 - The Temptation

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

## ARTICLE

["It's Election Season. Here Comes the Morally Charged Language"](#)



## REFLECTION

**Be attentive:** Listen to the “morally charged language” in the media as we move through the primary season. Make connections between the scripture readings and the three temptations for bread/money/the needs of the flesh, power, and reputation versus public service and good governance.

**Part B alternative:** You might consider having a conversation about the business temptations you have faced in your careers and the lessons learned.

**Be intelligent:** How are you filtering the barrage of messaging?

**Be reasonable:** How do you cope? How are you evaluating the morally charged language and, finally, are you able to contribute to good civil dialogue?

**Be responsible:** What were key insights that surfaced in today’s discussion? Any food for further contemplation? Any action steps? What are the implications for you at work, in your community, and at home? Leverage the conversation for good!



## CLOSING PRAYER

### Personal Prayer of Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

Grant me, O Lord, to see everything now with new eyes;  
to discern and test the spirits that help me read the signs of the times;  
to relish the things that are yours, and to communicate them to others.  
Give me the clarity of understanding that you gave Ignatius.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen!

*The scripture passage is taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition, copyright © 1989, 1993 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*

