



FAITH: A *FRESH TAKE*



September 12, 2013

Balancing Act: Faith in the Workplace

As a young professional, it is a balancing act to figure out where your faith fits into your job. I am an attorney working for a government agency so there are obviously boundaries regarding religion in the workplace. Being an attorney, I understand the value of the separation of church and state. It is important, in order to protect the religious freedom of all, that there be some separation. As an individual though, that leaves me to figure out how my personal faith fits into my job.

I am active with my Church, both at the parish level, singing in the Choir and assisting with PSR, and at the Diocesan level, assisting with planning the Diocesan Youth Conference. It isn't easy to compartmentalize my life and leave my faith at the doorstep of my office. After all, it is my faith that sustains me when I encounter challenges in my professional life. Attending mass and experiencing the presence of Christ in the Eucharist makes it easier for me to experience the presence of Christ in those I encounter on a daily basis. I try to find ways to walk the spiritual



tightrope between living my faith and acting as a professional in a secular workplace.

If someone brings up the topic or asks a question I am always happy to answer questions or discuss my faith but I don't generally bring up the topic. I find that the best way I can live my faith in the workplace is to be a good example of a Christian. I take the 'actions speak louder than words' approach.

When I act as a responsible and ethical attorney and approach every job duty with diligence, then I believe I demonstrate my faith. My colleagues don't have to know that I pray the rosary in the car between meetings to know that I take my faith seriously. They can hopefully see it in the manner

in which I treat those around me. Lighting a candle at Mass becomes meaningful only to the extent that I carry the light of Christ out into the world when I leave the church building.

— Ella York

Ella York is a member of St. Kateri parish in Gallatin County. She graduated from SIU School of Law in 2009 and works for the Illinois Attorney General's Office.

Be True to Yourself and Find a Smile

My name is Karlie Nattier. I am a parishioner at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Sandoval, Ill. I am a sophomore now at Kaskaskia College in Centralia, Ill. Kaskaskia College is a small community college near my hometown of Patoka. I love it there!

It gives me a chance to be close to my family while I figure out the career path I want to take. Luckily, I found out exactly what I wanted to do within my first semester. My goal is to transfer to Murray State University to study Communications. I was just elected student trustee which is an experience for which I will forever be grateful.

Going to KC allows me to gain skills



I will need in my career. I'm at a place in my life right now where I am really growing and figuring out where my life is headed. It's a great feeling when you get at a point in life when everything is going so well.

My first day of college I just told myself – to be myself. I am exactly who I am supposed to be. I am bubbly, outgoing, quirky, weird, serious and nerdy all at one time; but I have never tried to hide any of that because that's exactly what God intended for me to be.

This worked out well for me, and that is probably the best piece of advice I could give anyone my age. We were all created for a purpose and if we withhold all of the beautiful qualities God gave us, beautiful things won't happen.

I have always been a person to put my faith in Christ. I have never been that person to have an "ah-ha this is it! I know who God is moment!"

I have been blessed to always have felt God's presence. I don't need everyone to hear me say I am a Christian, but I do need everyone to see Christ in me.

I have never been a person to push faith on someone. I just want to be there for them and show them how blessed and wonderful life is. I want them to know that God has given everyone purpose.

I smile every day all the time because so far I haven't ever found a reason not to and even though every day may not be a good day there is always good in every day.

— Karlie Nattier

Owning Latest Technology Does Not Equal Happiness

When I opened the box at the back of my closet, I didn't know I was going to be sucked into a time warp.

In it were memories of a bygone age: Neon scrunchies, papers for English class, notes passed in class and a bunch of fascinating, obsolete electronics, like my old iRock MP3 digital music player and battered yellow Game Boy.

Once upon a time, the iRock was the only game in town. Slim and silver, it held a dozen MP3 files and didn't skip when it got bumped around like a Discman did. When my parents bought me an iRock, I finally felt my popularity problems were all over. The iRock made me feel like the coolest person ever.

The effect didn't last. Soon after, people started arriving at school with the first iPods, and I went back to feeling like a wallflower.

Likewise, bringing a Game Boy to school meant that I felt cool. People would make friends with me just to borrow my Game Boy at lunch, and it didn't matter that the rudimentary graphics were in black and white. I felt accepted and popular until someone else brought in a Sega Game Gear, which was faster and better.

That's the problem with growing up in a consumer society: We're trained to think that buying things will make us

happy, popular and fulfilled. Advertisers tell us that we're going to need all sorts of new things – a new car, phone, clothes – to fit in and succeed in school and in life.

Who hasn't seen all of those back-to-school ads from the phone companies this year, telling teens and their parents that if they only have this new phone or that new tablet, that they'd be more likely to study and succeed? Be honest: In a battle between Facebook and algebra, who has the advantage?

As usual, those advertisers are wrong. All you have to do is look into the time warp at the back of my closet – or even your own – to see the truth.

How many obsolete toys, games and electronics do you have? How many made you happy or popular?

All of today's must-have gadgets – smartphones, Google Glass and tablets – are just tools and things. The most common way advertisers try to sell their products is by trying to convince us that it will make us happy, that buying their new gadget will fill the empty spaces in our hearts. All they really do is empty our wallets.

To fit in, to succeed, to be happy and popular, you have to turn your gaze inward.

Instead of buying new technology to

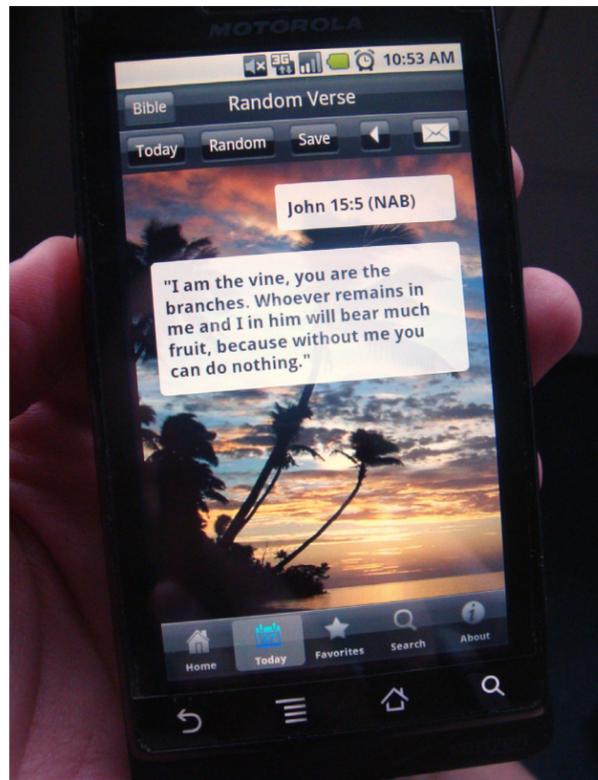
make you more popular, think about how you can use the technology you already own to make someone else's life better. You can tutor someone no matter what computer you have, send someone a compliment on Facebook through an older-model phone or a nice thought via email.

Instead of buying new clothes, mix and match for a unique style, or swap clothes with your friends to switch up your wardrobe.

You can save the money you'd spend on the newest gadget to host a party, which could have a longer-lasting effect on your popularity in high school than the newest iPhone.

What the advertisers don't want you to know is that it's not what you have that counts – it's how you use it.

— Karen Osborne
Catholic News Service



CNS/GRETCHEN R. CROWE, Arlington Catholic Herald

The church capitalizes on technology with the iMissal application, available on iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad and Android phones. It provides daily readings, Catholic prayers and Bible verses.

This page for, about and by young adult Catholics in the diocese

This is an online-only page dedicated to young adult Catholics, their interests, their needs, their challenges and their faith.

We're tapping into young adults who have been active in their parishes and who have reached out in faith to begin lives of their own.

To make sure this page is about you and what you want to see, we need your input. Send us your story ideas, your concerns, your hopes and your stories of faith.

Email us at cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org with questions, suggestions or for more information.

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