

# TEAM PURPOSE - REFLECTION



I ask for what I desire as we begin this topic



I pray that my entire being become open to God's grace



I imagine these texts being addressed to me, and note my response

**Grace: to connect to a compelling purpose that injects meaning and energy in our collective work**

You work that you may keep pace with the earth and the soul of the earth.  
For to be idle is to become a stranger unto the seasons, and to step out of life's procession, that marches in majesty and proud submission towards the infinite.  
Always you have been told that work is a curse and labor a misfortune.  
But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born,  
And in keeping yourself with labor you are in truth loving life,  
And to love life through labor is to be intimate with life's inmost secret.  
You have been told also that life is darkness, and in your weariness you echo what was said by the weary.  
And I say that life is indeed darkness except when there is urge,  
And all urge is blind except when there is knowledge,  
And all knowledge is vain except when there is work,  
And all work is except save when there is love;  
And when you work with love you bind yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God.  
And what is it to work with love?  
It is to weave the cloth with threads drawn from your heart, even as if your beloved were to wear that cloth.  
It is to build a house with affection,  
even as if your beloved were to dwell in that house.  
It is to sow seeds with tenderness and reap the harvest with joy, even as if your beloved were to eat the fruit.  
It is to charge all things you fashion with a breath of your own spirit,  
And to know that all the blessed dead  
are standing about you and watching.  
Work is love made visible.

*On Work - Excerpts from Khalil Gibran*

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What gives meaning to our work as a team?
2. Which parts of the three extracts suggested by this reflection resonated the most with you? What invitation do they carry for your team?

The goal of our life is to live with God forever. God, who loves us, gave us life. Our own response of love allows God's life to flow into us without limit. All the things in this world are gifts of God, presented to us so that we can know God more easily and make a return of love more readily. As a result, we appreciate and use all these gifts of God insofar as they help us develop as loving persons. But if any of these gifts become the center of our lives, they displace God and so hinder our growth toward our goal. In everyday life, then, we must hold ourselves in balance before all of these created gifts insofar as we have a choice and are not bound by some obligation. We should not fix our desires on health or sickness, wealth or poverty, success or failure, a long life or a short one. For everything has the potential of calling forth in us a deeper response to our life in God. Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want and I choose what better leads to God's deepening his life in me.

*The first principle and foundation - From the Spiritual Exercises [23] of Ignatius of Loyola, Contemporary version by David Fleming, SJ*

"A man came across three masons who were working at chipping chunks of granite from large blocks. The first seemed unhappy at his job, chipping away and frequently looking at his watch. When the man asked what it was that he was doing, the first mason responded, rather curtly, "I'm hammering this stupid rock, and I can't wait 'til 5 when I can go home."

"A second mason, seemingly more interested in his work, was hammering diligently and when asked what it was that he was doing, answered, "Well, I'm molding this block of rock so that it can be used with others to construct a wall. It's not bad work, but I'll sure be glad when it's done."

"A third mason was hammering at his block fervently, taking time to stand back and admire his work. He chipped off small pieces until he was satisfied that it was the best he could do. When he was questioned about his work he stopped, gazed skyward and proudly proclaimed, "I...am building a cathedral!"

*The Three Stonecutters*