

"In *Imagining Abundance* Kerry Robinson invites us to accompany her on a holy journey as she takes us on a personalized journey through her life as a philanthropist and fundraiser. The result is an insightful book that is a must read for donors and fundraisers who want to explore the ways in which faith and spiritual values can inspire and inform transformative and thoughtful giving."

William G. Enright
Senior Fellow & Founding Director
The Lake Institute on Faith & Giving
Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
Indiana University

"*Imagining Abundance* is a spectacular achievement. I'm not surprised—no one is more capable of writing it than Kerry Robinson. She has so well integrated faith and philanthropy throughout her own life. She reminds that 'to whom much is given, much is expected' (Luke 12:48). It will be an inspiration to all of us to be good stewards of what God has given—so abundantly."

Thomas Groome
Professor of Theology and Religious Education,
Boston College
Author of *What Makes Us Catholic*

"This is an essential and instructive book—and at the same time, it is also deeply spiritual and inspiring. It will speak profoundly to anyone interested in the deeper call of vocation, and in achieving great impact for God's people and the common good. Kerry Robinson speaks from firsthand experience and keen understanding of the two interrelated worlds of philanthropy and fundraising."

Alexia Kelley
President and CEO, Foundations and Donors
Interested in Catholic Activities (FADICA)

"In a voice that radiates joy from every page, Kerry Robinson shows us that there is grace to be had on both sides of the asking/giving coin, that 'other-centeredness' can truly be a vocation, and that we needn't worry about always slicing the pie more thinly. We have the ingredients to make vastly larger, more nutritious ones. This book, *Imagining Abundance*, makes me proud to be in the fundraising business!"

Craig J. Leach
CEO, Graham-Pelton Consulting, Inc./
Collegium, Inc.

“Pope Francis tells us that there is only one mission and it is Jesus’ mission. Kerry calls us to live that mission with great hope, enthusiasm, and joy in abundance. Everyone involved in development should read *Imagining Abundance*. It would be a perfect gift to share with a board of directors or trustees. It is well worth the read, but more importantly worth the conversations and ideas it will inspire.”

Sr. Georgette Lehmuth, OSF
President and CEO
National Catholic Development Conference

“*Imagining Abundance* is an autobiographical case study of one of the most impressive campaigns in history to build a vibrant Catholic campus ministry center at a major research university. Kerry Robinson knows development both as a member of a philanthropic foundation and as a chief development officer. Her account provides more than principles for effective fundraising; it provides a spirituality of development work. This is a must read for all involved in faith-based development.”

Gregory E. Sterling
The Reverend Henry L. Slack Dean
The Lillian Claus Professor of New Testament
Yale Divinity School

IMAGINING ABUNDANCE

Fundraising, Philanthropy, and
a Spiritual Call to Service



Kerry Alys Robinson



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“It’s good to be blessed. It’s better to be a blessing.”

—unknown



“What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.”

—Albert Pike

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Introduction



Imagine that you have the ability to transform your organization.

Imagine being able to advance the mission of your charitable nonprofit to unprecedented effect. Picture yourself as an agent of change for your faith community bringing to full fruition what most think is impossible. Imagine that as a consequence of your dedication, your ministry reaches more people than you will ever fully realize, providing them hope, encouragement, and help. Imagine that your nonprofit is financially healthy, well-respected, and carried forward with excellence at every level.

What would you need to have such an impact?

Many in the world see limitation, scarcity, insurmountable obstacles, and inability, while yearning for the opposite.

There is no magic wand, no secret formula, no set of perfect preconditions for profound positive impact. Yet everyone can be an agent of transformation.

You can be an agent of transformation. You have everything at your disposal right now to advance your organization's mission, to raise money, to equip your ministry to be profoundly beneficial to others.

My guess, and the reason for this book, is that you are not yet fully aware of all that you have at your disposal to play such a meaningful role in the life of your organization or community. And whether you are the pastor, provincial, bishop, executive director, development director, trustee, founder, benefactor, program officer, or advocate of your organization, you can be extraordinarily effective.

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If, by virtue of your role, you have been given a mandate to be part of the new life of the organization or to advance the mission but don't know where to start, or doubt your ability to be effective, or hate the idea of raising money, this book is for you. You and the ministries and missions you value that are oriented toward making this a better world for others are the reason this book was written.

There is a very old folktale that has been passed through the generations. So sweetly entertaining to children and adults alike is this tale, of which there are many versions, that the powerful moral of the story is nearly always overlooked. It centers on a single person, a stranger,

who happens upon a village. The stranger is hungry and thirsty; the villagers are timid, afraid, isolated in their impoverishment. There is a stultifying air to the community. Everyone is

“Start by doing what is necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”



—St. Francis of Assisi

reserved; there is little vitality. A pall is cast upon the village. When the stranger gently inquires if there is food that can be shared with her, she is met with blank stares, fear, embarrassment, and regret. Gently prodding, she is told of the pervasive scarcity in the village. The villagers simply have nothing to offer. Each has only enough and barely enough for his or her own family.

The stranger changes everything. She announces that she has what the community needs: a special stone. The stone has the power to create a spectacular, succulent, nourishing soup. The villagers do not believe her, but she persists. So enthusiastically does she speak of the power of the special stone, so vividly does she describe the aroma and taste of the soup that soon some of the villagers become curious. She entreats the villagers to experience the power of the special stone and to see for themselves. She asks, “Surely there is someone who has a large pot in this village. And surely someone in the village has enough water to nearly fill the pot.” One villager, figuring there was nothing to lose by lending his pot, retreats to procure it for the soup, and another, skeptically, offers to fetch water. Now with water and a pot, the stranger takes great care to drop the special stone in it. A fire is lit beneath the pot, and the stranger stirs the water and stone

with great reverence. “Carrots and potatoes would go very well with this stone soup, if anyone in the village happens to have any,” she suggests. Carrots and potatoes are soon added, and as the soup is stirred and excitement grows, other villagers begin to volunteer ideas for additional ingredients. Beans and spices, herbs, tomatoes and corn are gathered from villagers’ homes and brought for the communal soup. Before too long everyone is participating, volunteering to contribute something to add, and when the pot begins to overflow, villagers bring out other offerings. They set up tables and chairs and gather plates and silverware, napkins, glasses, flowers, bread, and wine. Excitement grows all the while the stranger stirs the soup with the special stone and encourages and invites everyone to participate. And at last the soup is ready, the table is laid, and there is an abundant feast for all in the village.

This book is for you. You are the one in possession of the stone.

1

Two Sides of a Philanthropic Coin



Seventy years ago, our great grandparents John and Helena Raskob established a private family foundation with two expressed intentions: they wanted all of the foundation's resources to be used exclusively to support the activities, apostolates, and ministries of the Catholic Church throughout the world, and they wanted their children and descendants to be stewards of the foundation's resources.

Sounds simple enough until one considers that being open to any activity, apostolate, or ministry of the Catholic Church anywhere in the world hardly narrows or focuses the field of philanthropic opportunity. Compounding the challenge, John and Helena had thirteen children, one of whom, our grandmother, had fourteen children. Our family has grown exponentially. Invitations are extended upon family members reaching the age of eighteen; the fifth generation is now well represented in formal membership. All participation is voluntary, non-remunerative, and understood to be a serious commitment of time, focus, and engagement in the life of the church.

Today there are nearly one hundred members, all descendants of John and Helena, actively engaged in the work of the foundation,

making site visits, reviewing proposals, and meeting to determine which applicants would most benefit from the foundation's resources. It has been an uncommon privilege to serve the church in this way, with the unanticipated, beneficial consequence of evangelization for

our family. Our faith lives are stronger because we have had the opportunity to meet, learn from, and support some of the most inspiring, generous, compas-

"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver."

—Maya Angelou



sionate, effective people the church has to offer. These women and men, ordained, religious, and lay, offer a broken world hope by extending mercy, alleviating suffering, educating children, providing catechesis, championing justice, advancing peace, healing the sick, and reducing poverty.

Our applicants are more than deserving grantees; they are role models. They restore our faith in the church and in humankind. It is a humbling privilege to play even a tiny role in their lives by directing foundation resources to their ministries. As children and young adults we marveled at their example and wondered how they could daily encounter so much human suffering and inequality and yet possess a palpable sense of joy and purpose. Grounded in deep spirituality and prayer, profoundly self-aware and other-centered, able to see God so readily in others, especially the poor, they were deeply compelling role models.

As children, we wanted to be like them but presumed we could never be so selfless, so holy. We prayed to do something with our lives that would have a beneficial effect on their lives, our moral heroines and heroes. If we couldn't *be* one of them, perhaps we could support them with full intention, helping to make their ministries even more effective, less burdened. Maybe then our lives, by extension, would be imbued with purpose, too.

Flowers with Care

As young members of the foundation, we were captivated by one particular grantee. The story went as follows:

A newly ordained priest was assigned by his bishop to work within the juvenile justice system and minister to young adults who were incarcerated. It was tremendously difficult, often emotionally wrenching, dispiriting work. Every day he would visit the prison to meet with the young adults and extend consoling words of encouragement and hope. Nothing he did or said seemed to make any difference in the gulf of despondence, regret, anger, resentment, and apathy his young charges expressed. It all seemed so hopeless, so futile, and the young priest, himself, was close to despair.

He sought help, spoke to his spiritual director, and took it all to prayer. And he didn't walk away. All these kids needed, he figured, was one more adult giving up on them. What he wanted was the ability to provide a horizon for them, something that would give them a reason to have hope, hope in a future that would be better than the misery of their incarceration. It wasn't enough to convey that they would soon be released from prison because they knew the high percentage of recidivism, and, worse, they knew what daily life on the outside entailed for them.

So he set about figuring out what would break the cycle of poverty, violence, bad choices, and despair.

An idea surfaced, a possibility to consider. As improbable as it seemed, it surely had merit because it was an idea that was born of other-centered, loving intention. The idea was full of potential but would take enormous work. The young priest set out to visit all of the local, mom- and pop-owned flower shops in the metropolitan area. He shared his predicament, his ministerial assignment, and how hard it had been in the absence of anything concretely hopeful to offer the young adults in prison. He spoke of the goodness and dignity he saw in each of them, of the potential he knew was their birthright. He described his idea for a novel intervention and asked them to be part of it. The idea was this: each flower store owner was asked to participate in a new ministry and serve as a mentor to one of the young adults upon his or her release from prison. The young adult would serve as an apprentice, learning everything about the flower trade and flower arrangement craft as possible under the tutelage of the owner and staff. The young adult would agree to work in the flower shop, and stipends would be provided through the fundraising the young priest would do to support this ministry. At first there was

skepticism and foreboding. The priest persisted and persuaded, and soon the first few owners agreed to participate. And soon a few more agreed, and the fear dissipated, and the skepticism was put aside, and before long the priest had enough shops for every young adult.

What was the outcome? Imagine you are celebrating the birthday of a dear friend or relative. You stop in at your local florist to place an order and discuss how much you are interested in spending, what

kind of flowers you would most like, and other details. You continue to run errands and return to pick up the flower arrangement at a later time in the day. When you walk into the

“Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present.”



—Albert Camus

shop, you let the shop staff know that you are here to pick up an order. The young apprentice goes into the back of the shop to retrieve the arrangement, brings it to you, and the very first thing you are likely to say is, “That is beautiful. Thank you.”

For many of these young adults, it was the first time anyone had ever told them that something they created was beautiful. The positive affirmation and genuine gratitude continued with every order. Over time this had a beneficial effect on the self-esteem of these previously demoralized young adults. Now they had a marketable skill, a craft, an income, role models and mentors, affirmation, and beauty on a daily basis. And they had someone who believed in them. The flower store owners and staff who participated in the mentoring effort reported greater levels of meaning in their own work, customers who knew of the program wanted to increase their patronage of participating shops, and donors were grateful to be part of something life-giving. Everybody benefited.

Here was an example of a person of faith who didn’t just want to care for what had been entrusted to him; he saw potential and acted on it, and he gave everything he had to bring that potential to fruition.

Maximizing the Impact of the Grant Dollar

I was not quite ten years old when my father, Peter S. Robinson, was appointed the first president of FADICA (Foundations and

Donors Interested in Catholic Activities), a remarkable consortium of Catholic philanthropic foundations whose members and trustees intuitively knew that shared knowledge and collaboration would strengthen the efficacy of their individual grant-making and set the stage for greater potential collective impact. The Raskob Foundation was one of several founding members of FADICA. FADICA was an intriguing idea born of the desire to be even more effective in philanthropic mission, to be an even more effective steward of entrusted resources. Our relatives, active in the Raskob Foundation at the time, observed that many of their most inspiring grantees were indicating that they were receiving additional grant support from several other notable family foundations. It made sense to these families that they meet to explore how they could be mutually supportive in a shared mission, that is, philanthropically supporting the Catholic Church and faith-based ministries. For the members of the Raskob family and foundation, this was a specific opportunity to be an even greater steward of the resources that had been entrusted to us by John and Helena Raskob.

It was an immediate success, and over time the consortium grew. Although my father served as founding president and catalyst, he is famous for saying that the greatest contribution he made to FADICA was finding his successor, Francis J. Butler, whose leadership spanned three decades, whose contribution to the church cannot be measured, and who became one of my most important mentors in the world of philanthropy.

Members of FADICA meet to inform themselves of the pressing needs facing the church, the better to anticipate how they can meet those challenges efficaciously through their philanthropy. My uncle, Charles Raskob Robinson, who served on the board of FADICA representing the Raskob Foundation for many years, always spoke of the importance of “following the vibrancy.” What he meant by this was that those individual leaders—ordained, religious, or lay—possessed a combination of insight, courage, passion, fortitude, and integrity that engendered confidence in the grant maker. Identifying the “vibrancy” meant a funder could take a risk on supporting a seemingly wild idea, because the leader had established a track record of getting the job done, demonstrating keen prophetic insight, sticking with the effort, and commanding respect. FADICA provided a venue for funders to meet such leaders in the church and faith-based

ministries, to learn from thought leaders and each other, and to cultivate the art of recognizing potential the better to act on it.

The FADICA experiment met the test of win-win-win. It was not only the members of FADICA who benefited from greater knowledge, shared best practices in the mechanics of philanthropy, and new opportunities to maximize the grant dollar. Grantees also benefited. It is far more advantageous for a grantee to receive \$250,000 from five separate, credible foundations than to receive the same amount from only one. Investment by multiple funders in a charitable cause establishes legitimacy and sets the stage for ongoing relationships between the

funders and grantee. And while we were never excused from conducting our own due diligence in evaluating a grant opportunity for Raskob, it added to our measure of confidence when one of our respected partners in FADICA was already on record as supporting the grantee.

FADICA has provided the occasion to meet exceptional and visionary philanthropists, including strong women who lead their families' philanthropy and, from my earliest memories, championed the importance of meaningful roles of leadership for women in the church and in the world.

The best philanthropists are looking for the best opportunities to invest for the greatest return. And the return in philanthropy is impact. A dazzling example of the beneficial outcome of dedicated, faith-filled, tenacious, smart, and mission-driven leaders working together is the Cristo Rey Network. The world is better for the friendship of Fr. John Foley, SJ, and B. J. and Bebe Cassin.

In 1996 Fr. Foley founded the very first Cristo Rey college preparatory high school in Chicago for students whose families had few if any options to provide quality education for their children. What was particularly ingenious was the innovative business model built

“My mother taught me that to maximize your philanthropic potential, you need to constantly challenge your capabilities and put yourself in situations that are not always comfortable. Through her example, I discovered that there is no more beautiful way to live a life than to live a life of service.”

—Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen



into the concept. Since this was a private Jesuit Catholic high school for children living below the poverty line, there would be no revenue from tuition. Ensuring the sustainability of this lifeline out of poverty for Cristo Rey's students was essential. The solution came in the form of partnerships with local businesses. School days are extended at Cristo Rey, during which meals are also provided. Every high school student at Cristo Rey works one day a week at a local law firm or business, essentially sharing a full-time position with four other classmates, each assigned to a different day of the week. The compensation goes directly to the school to offset tuition costs.

Much like Flowers with Care, the benefit was far more than merely economic. The personal relationships that are developed are deeply meaningful and often extend beyond high school. Students were assigned to places of employment in parts of Chicago they had never been to before, they rode on elevators in skyscrapers for the first time in their lives, they were being exposed to a business environment whose full-time employees quickly became the students' champions, and everyone's consciousness was expanded. Cristo Rey properly boasts an exceptionally high graduation and college matriculation rate. It is a success story from every perspective. And it was the comprehensive thoughtfulness of so many details, coupled with passion for a deeply important and urgent mission, that attracted B. J. and Bebe Cassin's interest.

B. J. is the founder of the Cassin Educational Initiative Foundation dedicated to establishing quality Catholic middle and high schools in economically challenged communities and is credited with providing both the intellectual capital and the initial philanthropic capital to take the Cristo Rey model and expand it nationwide. The Cassins did not merely make a grant, they brought their experience, their intellectual capabilities, their social capital, and their fine business acumen to the equation. Their involvement and investment helped to attract the interest and subsequent financial support of the Gates Foundation. Today twenty-five Cristo Rey Network high schools and sixty-four Nativity Miguel Network middle schools enroll more than 12,390 students. The schools serve only economically disadvantaged students.

Fr. Foley and B. J. and Bebe are heroes to us and to thousands of children. They saw potential and acted upon it, refusing to give up

until it was a success. And when we thank them or tell them how much we marvel at what exemplary stewards they are, what is their response? Total humility. They deflect the compliment and light up as they begin to talk about the extraordinary young adults who are the pride and joy of the Cristo Rey alumni network.

From Philanthropy to Fundraising

I would have been content to dedicate my entire professional life to the activity of philanthropy, helping funders and foundations make sound investments in people and social enterprises. Philanthropy sounds easy, even luxurious, but anyone who has ever attended to philanthropy seriously knows how demanding and exacting it can be. There are inherently limited resources to extend, always more opportunity and need than available dollars to offer. Consequently the dominant challenge for the dedicated philanthropist is to be strategic, set priorities, exercise effective due diligence, maximize the impact of the grant dollar, and measure impact. No easy feat, made all the more difficult by having to turn down inherently worthy proposals and applicants, in favor of those that will be funded. Yet even so, I vastly preferred the role of grant maker to its corollary: fundraiser. All of that changed the day I found myself cast in a most unlikely role: director of development for Saint Thomas More Catholic Chapel and Center at Yale University, charged with leading a multi-million-dollar capital campaign.

In the summer of 1997 I received a call from Fr. Robert L. Beloin, the Catholic chaplain at Yale University. He told me that he was concluding his third year at Yale and had persuaded his predominantly lay board to embark upon a professional development effort to benefit Catholic campus ministry at the university. The goal was \$5 million to be raised over five years. The position was envisioned to be part-time, low stress, entail very little travel, and could be evaluated on a year-to-year basis. One million dollars was intended for a 3,000-square-foot student center to be built adjacent to the existing Catholic chapel, and \$4 million was earmarked for endowment. (When Fr. Bob first made this proposal, a trustee opined that he agreed a capital campaign was needed, but he thought the goal

should be \$1 million, and he doubted whether even that amount could be raised.) Fr. Bob explained that the board had advised that fundraising companies be considered, that several representatives from these companies had been interviewed but none presented an affordable, personal match that would work. A trustee had then generously recused herself from the board and volunteered to serve as the development director in a part-time capacity. A few months later, however, the trustee accepted a full-time position out of state and had to resign, which brought Fr. Bob to this point. He worried about losing his board's enthusiasm for the campaign. And there was the matter that no money had been raised yet. I listened patiently, accustomed to calls that were often appeals for advice on how to obtain grant support or which foundations to approach. When I asked Fr. Bob how he thought I might be helpful, he replied, "I would like you to be the director of development and lead this capital campaign." He paused and then added, "Your name came to me in prayer."

"If you want to make God laugh,
tell God about your plans."

—Woody Allen



Perhaps the best development pickup line I have ever heard.

But there was no way I was going to assent to his request. I hated the very thought of fundraising. I couldn't imagine being responsible for directing a major campaign. I was wholly untrained in fundraising, admitted to terrible biases about the activity of fundraising, and assumed it would be arduous, thankless work. I had not so much as been entrusted to serve at a bake sale for our toddler's daycare. And then there was the practical matter that I was pregnant with our second child, and my plans were laid out quite clearly and cozily and centered on quiet domestic bliss.

I took a deep breath and began to prepare Fr. Bob for my gentle decline of his kind and flattering, if wholly misguided, invitation: "Thank you for thinking of me. I am honored. I should let you know that I am pregnant with my second child."

Long silence on the phone.

I waited. And waited. And then came a surprisingly enthusiastic response, "Congratulations! Wonderful news! Very happy for you. You can work from home."

In the space it took for me to realize what had just happened, Fr. Bob filled the void, “Kerry, please don’t give me your answer now. All I ask is that you pray about this for five days and then call me. Whatever your answer is after five days of prayer, I will of course accept and respect it.”

And what do you do with a request like that? If you are like me, you readily agree, knowing that after five days of prayer your “no” will be especially eloquent and gracious.

Five days later, I called Fr. Bob with my reply. And even today, seventeen years later, as I write this chapter for a book that was commissioned about the spirituality of philanthropy *and* fundraising, I am both astonished and deeply grateful that I found myself saying, “Yes.”

What Happened in Prayer

What happened in prayer was the realization that this was not fundamentally a job offer to raise money but an invitation to work with an exceptional priest, pastor, and chaplain, to help bring to fruition a Catholic intellectual and spiritual center of consequence at one of the world’s great universities. He was not offering me a job but a chance to live out my vocation. And, furthermore, the success of the effort would not be measured by Yale having one more thing to be properly proud of, but rather, by the positive impact such an example of vibrant, innovative campus ministry would have on the whole field of Catholic campus ministry nationally. From the very beginning days of prayer, a dominant motivation for pouring ourselves into this effort was to elevate Catholic campus ministry nationally, extend hope to campus ministers, expand the programmatic imagination, highlight the possibilities at hand, and present an irresistible and concrete example as a viable beacon.

On one hand, it may seem that philanthropy—giving away money to support worthy projects and ministries—and fundraising—asking for money to support worthy projects and ministries—are diametrically opposite fields of endeavor. Having spent decades in each pursuit I am convinced they are interrelated, necessary corollaries. They are elegantly two sides of a charitable coin. And most of us are both grant makers and grant seekers simultaneously throughout our lives.

In fact, the more seriously we live out our faith, the clearer the call to be generous and to live lives that inspire generosity. No one is excused from the responsibility and invitation to be generous and other-centered.

I have long believed that the whole religious and nonprofit sector would be more effective and less misunderstood if philanthropists and development officers had the chance to complete internships in each other's field of experience. It is far harder to exercise effective philanthropy than development officers sometimes understand, and it is far harder to lead successful development efforts than philanthropists sometimes understand. The most inspiring, effective, impactful, and noteworthy examples of excellent philanthropy and development share common characteristics. And this is especially true in the context of religious philanthropy and faith-based ministries.

Philanthropy and development, when done faithfully and well, invite people into a relationship of common purpose, fulfill a noble purpose, point to meaning and transcendence, offer hope, and contribute to the lives of others, often those in great need. Both demand a radical generosity of spirit, time, effort, money, faith, tenacity, and conviction. One is not possible without the other. Both require a relinquishing of self, a disposition of humility before the great potential at hand, and the shared goal of blessing other people's lives.

“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”

—St. Catherine of Siena



On Generosity

We mistakenly assume philanthropy is the provenance of the very wealthy. This lets the rest of us off the hook. But a core tenet of faith is the call to live lives of authenticity, honesty, vulnerability, and generosity. Central to Christianity is the conviction that one finds life by giving it first away. Generosity, other-centeredness, mercy, compassion, relinquishment: these are constitutive qualities of being Christlike. Everyone has something to give others. We do a profound disservice to most of the world and to ourselves when we relegate philanthropy and giving only to the domain of the very wealthy.

A favorite story attributed to Mother Teresa takes place at a food-dispensing center in the midst of great poverty and hunger. One member of every family in the impoverished village would line up with a single bucket patiently waiting their turn to have the religious sisters fill their bucket with dry grains of rice. A novice was shadowing Mother Teresa as she methodically greeted each person and filled each bucket. Before long an elderly woman reached the front of the line and, to the novice's surprise, had in her possession two buckets.

Mother Teresa greeted her by name and proceeded to fill one bucket. After thanking Mother Teresa, the woman turned to leave, stopping a short distance later to empty half of her full bucket into the second empty bucket. The novice, miserable as a

“Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.”



—Albert Einstein

witness to the extent of the pervasive hunger and inequity, turned to Mother Teresa and asked, “Why did we not fill up both buckets for that poor elderly woman?” Mother Teresa replied, “There is only enough rice for each family to receive one bucket each day. She has her neighbors’ bucket and her own. Her neighbors are very ill, and no one from the family could come to collect the rice. She is emptying half of her family’s share into her neighbors’ bucket to bring to them because she cannot carry more.” Overwhelmed with sorrow, the novice demanded, “Surely we should fill both buckets and take the second bucket to the sick family for her.” Mother Teresa stopped what she was doing and admonished the novice. “These are among the poorest and most destitute people you will ever meet. Never take away the right of another person to be generous.”