

## Responsibility

Character Council of Hamburg, Inc.

“Creating a Culture of Character”

By, Sr. Sharon Erickson, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Lake View

We welcome TV programs featuring heroes and heroic actions. Weekly newscasts feature a special person of the week who is making a difference in the lives of their family, their community, our country, indeed the global village, as we now refer to Mother Earth. Just this past month we witnessed the tragic deaths of Lt. Charles McCarthy and Firefighter Jonathan Croom all in the line of duty. Not one person interviewed was surprised that they plunged forward into a burning building because they believed someone needed to be rescued. No explanations, no second guessing and no apologies. What is the “bottom line”? RESPONSIBILITY!

We honor their memories forever, as we do our military personnel often in danger on a daily basis, public servants and ordinary citizens who spontaneously move into heroic modes of action when another sister or brother in our human family is placed in a life threatening situation. What is their response to this sudden act of heroism? “I was just doing my job.”; “I did it instinctively.”

We, all know that people are conditioned for such actions. Responsibility is taught and caught. Responsibility takes practice and intention, beginning in small day to day routines. Every parent, teacher, coach, crossing guard, scout leader, DARE officer, drug counselor and Pastor knows the patience required to teach responsible behavior. The most demanding aspect of mentoring is the time required to sit through practice, re-doing assignments, supervising after school make-up and “grounding.”

The most often complaint heard these days is about tardiness, absenteeism on the job, incompetence, costly mistakes and poor work ethic.

On the other hand praise for a job responsibly performed also needs to occur more often. We are witnessing a generation of highly motivated persons-smarter, wiser and more committed to addressing hunger, pollution, and re-cycling. So, let us not take for granted anyone who tackles their assignments with promptness and thoroughness. They are our heroes in formation.

Make it a weekly habit to catch the reported service projects, including a link with developing nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America that our local schools in Western New York have initiated (Next Generation – The Buffalo News). Our churches continue to engage our youth in local and overseas projects.

In the Soul Care Bible, Woodrow Kroll identifies the Call of Jeremiah with the virtue of responsibility. (Jeremiah 1: 4-10).

“Say not, ‘I am too young.’ To whomever I send you, you shall go, whatever I command you, you shall speak ... This day I set you over nations and over kingdoms (A 21<sup>st</sup> century spirit implies collaboration rather than domination)

To root up and tear down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.”

Elements of this theme can be identified in the following: Isaiah 43:23, Isaiah 49, Psalms 27, Psalms 34, Psalms 72: 1-2, 12-19, Psalms 83: 9-14, Psalms 94

Parables: Luke 19: 11-27 (Sums of Money)  
Matthew 24: 45-51 & Luke: 12: 42-48 (The faithful and Worthless Servant)  
Matthew 21: 28-32 (Two Sons)

Responsibility then, is planted, nurtured, strengthened and perpetuated in solidarity with others who are faithfully committed to its priceless value as a foundational virtue in the life of an individual and our community.

As Disciples of Jesus and Believers in God as our Sustainer, we choose to be Responsible!