

IBC Newsletter

Friends,

Well, it is the dog days of August, hot and humid with thunderstorms in the forecast. But I write for September and the return to school, the start of another academic year, the start of the football season, the beginning of the end for those baseball teams not headed to the playoffs, and the beginning of fall, a time of transition.

So, we open with Ecclesiastes, a favorite scripture, and a song written by Pete Seeger and popularized by the Byrds to contemplate turns in the calendar. Remember the feelings we had starting a new school year or a new program; remember the big transitions starting school, or junior high, or high school, or college, or graduate school. Think about your children or grandchildren as they embark on these transitions. Whether they were fraught with anxiety and fear or with hope, use these feelings to connect, to tell your stories, and invite conversation. Give witness to the fact that you survived and are here to recollect, wonder about the next generation, and be a purveyor of hope and support!

Staying with the sports theme, we have for our topic the issue of sports gambling. The short article, "The Sporting Life" by Miles Doyle, is from *Commonweal* magazine. It is introduced with an alert: "Sports betting poses a growing threat to young men in the United States." This article should provide good grist for our conversation.

I am also including another, longer article from *First Things*, a Catholic publication more conservative than *Commonweal*. I send it along for any engineers in our groups, for we have not focused on engineering, a very important discipline with tremendous application to business and professional development. The author is Edmund G. Seebauer, the James W. Westwater professor emeritus in chemical and biomolecular engineering at the University of Illinois. The article is titled "Engineers for the Gospel." If I have students or family going into engineering and they want to understand engineering as a vocation, this is the article I would ask them to read. What lured me into the article was



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the author's opening story and then a quick turn connecting the Beatitudes and engineering. I was hooked. Then the article moves to a conversation about Christianity, science, and engineering from a rich theological perspective. The author is clearly a man who thinks with the Church and with our tradition. And then the article concludes with the understanding that the work of "building the earth" is the work of the laity. The last paragraph is a brilliant conclusion:

"Be not afraid!" the Resurrection impels Christians to build for a new creation, which undoubtedly includes specific devices, technologies, and software that never existed in nature. Yet the engineering process of discovering, designing, and manufacturing with the eyes of faith transforms people. Thus, God works through people to redeem his creation, and his faithful people are redeemed in the process. Evil throws up constraints. But in the elegance of this design for our salvation, one can readily discern the hand of the supreme engineer."

I did not include questions for this article but offer it for your personal reflection, and if your reflection spills over to the group all the better!

I thought about ending here but couldn't resist offering a book for you or for kids going off to college. Christine Eberle, a campus minister at St. Joe's in Philly, has written a wonderful short book of daily meditations, titled *Finding God in Ordinary Time*. She has wonderful short vignettes, often of college students, that tee up her reflections. I find that her stories are also pertinent to my aging process, and her opening introduction titled "Origins and Observations" is worth the price of admission!

So, enjoy the turning of the season and reap the harvest of the summer and the changing colors of the fall. And let's begin again.

Pray for our new Pope Leo and for the Church and for peace and the end of violence around the world and for our democracy!

Pax,

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:

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

ARTICLES

["The Sporting Life"](#) by Miles Doyle. *Commonweal*, April 24, 2025

- ["Engineers for the Gospel"](#) by Edmund G. Seebauer, *First Things*, July 31, 2025.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Be attentive: What have you noticed about the proliferation of gambling in sports?

Be intelligent: Does it concern you? Have you, family, or friends been affected by the craze?

Be reasonable: How does sports gambling today contrast with the episodes involving Shoeless Joe Jackson and Pete Rose, the gambling scandals at LIU and other schools, and Knute Rockne's defense of collegiate football? What has happened to our cultural standards, and is there a corrupting power of money operative in our society?

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!

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