

Are you visibly Catholic?

By Linda Weaver

Three scenarios:

◆ After a talk at the cathedral earlier this year, a law student at Loyola came up to me and expressed how happy she was to see a lawyer who was open about faith. She said that she rarely saw Catholic businessmen and women being, what I will call "visibly Catholic."

Faith was very important to her daily life. She seemed to want a sign that it was also important to others in the business world she would soon be entering. Do the young people who work with you see you as a Catholic? As a Catholic who might be open to a discussion about faith?

◆ I attend a lot of business functions, and I also attend a lot of church functions. Most often, these

two worlds are separate. I live in two different bubbles, each with its own set of friends. I am amazed when I see someone from my business world bubble, who I had no idea was Catholic, at a First Friday luncheon or some other church event.

Why should I be surprised? I'm not the only one groping my way toward God. It just seems that way sometimes in my business world bubble. Do you feel like your faith life and your business life exist in separate bubbles? How do we become visible to each other as Catholics regardless of the world in which we operate on any particular day?

◆ Last year I came out of my condo and got into a cab. As the cab pulled out, the driver said in a deep Nigerian accent, "Are you Roman Catholic?" I was flabbergasted! Why would he ask me that question? I thought, for a moment, that maybe I had finally succeeded in living my faith so well that I was actually

glowing. I said, "Yes, why do you ask?"

As it turned out, the driver, Patrick, was friends with Richard, one of our doormen, with whom I regularly discuss faith. Richard had told Patrick about me. As Patrick drove me to the Palmer House, we talked about our faith journeys.

After listening to his story, I told him about all my church activities. As I was about to get out of the cab, Patrick, a Baptist, had one more question for me. He said, very seriously, "Are you a nun?" I laughed and simply said, "No, I'm an attorney!"

Patrick did not associate living one's faith on a daily basis with us regular Catholic lay people. Yet, you and I know that many Catholics are VERY involved in ministry and other charitable projects. We are simply very private about it—invisible.

Yet, the Bible says: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." Matthew 5:13-16

We are meant to be visible Catholics—visible to our young people, visible to each other, and visible to the world.

How do we become visible to the Patricks of the world so that the world will see the good we do and know that our faith has meaning? Don't be afraid to shine. That's what you are meant to do! It is the best way to evangelize and the most effective.

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More Mission Chicago events

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