

## **THE BUNGALOW**

*From: "Stories, Parables and Fables of Life" of P. Ribes, s.j.  
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### **Intent of this Session:**

- ✓ To offer moderators a paradigm or a model to conduct sessions on a variety of topics.
- ✓ To realize that success in any sphere of life is a Building-up- Process, never a final Product
- ✓ To teach participants how to achieve success.

## **The Story**

Uncle Tommy was a good man. His only dream in life was to build for himself a cozy and comfy bungalow. He went to the countryside and chose a charming site to build his bungalow. He collected wood, stones and sand to build his dream.

In earnest, he began to construct his house. He was in such a hurry to finish his work that he had no patience to dig deep into the ground until he would strike rock. All he wanted was to enjoy as soon as possible the coziness and the comforts of a big house.

At last, his dream came true. He constructed a lovely bungalow, a small little palace to live in. He was proud of his work. Uncle Tommy's house was an object of admiration and of jealousy by all the villagers around!

One day a fierce storm broke up. The clouds were black and loaded. The winds grew strong and threatening. It was a gale. Inside his house Uncle felt secure. His house was the best miles around. He closed the windows, shut the doors and confidently stayed inside. The clouds burst, the storm raged, the water fell, the winds battered the walls and at last, with a loud thud, the house crashed. Uncle Tommy was trapped within. Strange enough, the small houses around his bungalow stood the gale

Village people around wondered: "Why among all, only Tom's house collapsed? "Was it not the best?"

(An adaptation of Matthew 7/24-27)

## **THOUGHTS IN PREPARATION FOR THE SESSIONS**

- The simple Parable of "**The House Builder**" is pretty well known to the general public, yet it's very rich in applications and lessons. The "key" word to unravel the meaning of the parable is the word: "**building**".
- Our entire life is nothing but **building**. Nothing is given to us at birth in its final and complete stage. Through life, right from birth, we have to keep growing and

building at all levels, Life, in fact, is a building process never to be 100 % completed even at the moment of death!

## **We Have to Keep Building at All Levels:**

- **Personal Level:** Our bodies, our health, our character, our intellectual life, our emotional life, human values, our moral life, our happiness, etc.
  - **Social Level:** Family relationships (*Parents and Children*),. Marriage relationship. (*Husband and Wife's shared life*), Social relationships (*Neighbors, Friendships*) Etc.
  - **Formation Level:**; Studies, Careers, Training, Specializations,..
  - **Work Level** Office work, occupations, workshop, teaching profession, any possible job and occupation.
  - **Recreational Level:** Sports, athletics, games, social life, leisure, hobbies, etc.
  - **Religious Level:** Church, Parish, Any Religious Group Religious associations,
  - **Spiritual Level:** Prayer life, faith, hope, moral behavior, etc.
- If we wish to lead meaningful and fruitful lives, **we have to work hard to build strong and solid foundations at all levels**
- Maturity, Success and Perfection at any Level it does not, just, happen. Only through hard work and dedication we make them happen.
- **If we have to stand up against the strains and onslaughts of life - there are many storms and floods threatening us. To stand up against them, we have to keep building solid foundations throughout life.**

## **Hints for the Moderator**

1. Explain to the participants the main thoughts expounded above.
2. Keeping in mind the condition and the pressing needs of your audience, choose one area life For instance: Prayer Life; Need for a healthy marriage relationship; Success in studies: Securing a meaningful job, moral life, etc
3. Impress on the participants that their future success and growth in that area of their lives, has to be built right now in the present
4. Our future will rest on our present.. **We can't expect things to happen. We have to make them happen.**
5. If we build the proper foundations now, things, in all likelihood, will shape well for us later on in life..
6. We can not expect to enjoy of a " *big, cozy house*" later on, unless we lay the proper foundations today.
7. **Let us not fool ourselves. Without sacrifices, pains, renunciation and efforts today we cannot expect to secure a happy and successful future tomorrow .**

## **HOW TO CONDUCT THE SESSION.**

- 1) Read and retell the parable.
- 2) Next; ask the audience this question. Is it possible to have a strong and lasting bungalow without investing time, money, efforts and labors in building strong foundations?
- 3) We have gathered here today to think, discuss, pray and take some resolutions on how to build our future bungalow.
- 4) What is the bungalow we shall start building to-day? Disclose the topic chosen: for instance, Our Marriage, Our Family Life, Our College Studies, Our Character, Our Parish, Our foot-ball Team, etc
- 5) Frame some questions for personal reflection according to the topic chosen keeping in mind your audience.

### **A Set of Sample Questions:**

#### **For instance for a Marriage Relationship.**

- We want to build a strong, loving and lasting Marriage relationship.
- What do you think are strong and lasting foundations for a happy, successful and lasting married life? What makes you say so?
- Can we have a happy married life without investing time, efforts and sacrifices?,
- Will married partners be able always to have it all the way each one likes?
- Can anyone enjoy a peaceful and pleasant marriage relationship if he is not ready to compromise in quite many points?
- What are the sacrifices you foresee you will be called to face to make your marriage succeed?
- Etc.

#### **Others:**

**Proficiency in singing:** We aspire to be good singers.

**Foot-ball team:** We want to build a strong foot-ball team.....

**Success in College:** We want to secure high grades in our College Examinations.....

**Prayer Life:** We want to grow in prayer life and come close to God.....

#### **Education of your children.**

**To be a successful teacher.**

**Success in your particular profession?**

**Small Christian Communities in your Parish** How to build a well knit S.C.C.....

***You can apply this parable to innumerable topics and situations.***

#### **Basic principles::**

1. **What I really want + what I Invest (foundations) = Success or Failure**
2. **Perfection is not found by chance but to be striven for.**
3. **Perfection is a process not a finished product!**