



CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

TO: IBC AND MICAH PARTICIPANTS

FROM: MONSIGNOR RICHARD LIDDY

SUBJECT: THE COST OF WINNING

DATE: APRIL 2020

APRIL 2020 MEETING

- **Welcome and Self-Introductions**
- **Ignation Business Chapters Mission Statement**
 - 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:
 - To integrate faith, family, and professional life,
 - To develop a corporate culture that is reflective of their religious faith and values
 - To exercise a beneficial influence upon society at large.
 - The conference, grounded in the Roman Catholic tradition, welcomes believers who are open to and respectful of one another's religious tradition. It is committed to the conviction that ethics and values grow out of one's religious heritage.
- **Scripture Reading** Micah 6: 9-16

The voice of the Lord cries to the city (it is sound wisdom to fear your name):
Hear, O tribe and assembly of the city! Can I forget the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is accursed? Can I tolerate wicked scales and a bag

of dishonest weights? Your wealthy are full of violence; your inhabitants speak lies, with tongues of deceit in their mouths. Therefore I have begun to strike you down, making you desolate because of your sins. You shall eat, but not be satisfied, and there shall be a gnawing hunger within you; you shall put away, but not save, and what you save, I will hand over to the sword. You shall sow, but not reap; you shall tread olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil; you shall tread grapes, but not drink wine. For you have kept the statutes of Omri and all the works of the house of Ahab, and you have followed their counsels. Therefore I will make you a desolation, and your inhabitants an object of hissing; so you shall bear the scorn of my people.

- **Quiet reflection:** five minutes followed by sharing insights

Article: Do We Strive Together or Win at Any Cost?

by Fred Harburg



“Ninety percent of this game is half mental.” - Yogi Berra

There are essential matters in a small rural town, and then there is baseball. Baseball rests on an entirely higher, almost religious, plane above other less momentous concerns. As a boy, I yearned to play under the bright lights of the baseball diamond on hot summer nights.

I was reminded of my undistinguished baseball career this week as I read Michael Baumann’s challenging article in *Ringer*, “Are We in the Golden Age of Brazen Cheating?” (See below.) Unlike me, Baumann is a real baseball guy. He makes the disappointing observation that *“Breaking the rules isn’t a new phenomenon in sports, but the level at which it’s happening—both in cadence and severity—is alarming and reflective of society.”* Baumann describes disappointing events pervasive in competitive fields far beyond baseball.

The origin of the word *competition* is the Latin word *competere*—“to strive together.” *The Oxford English Dictionary* defined the term in the 18th century as meaning to strive (alongside another) for the attainment of something. Since then, we have strayed far from the spirit that fueled great women and men to come together to attain something worthy. Our definition of competition has become to strive against. We are in an age in which “win at any cost” has become the combative norm. The price of this shift is more costly than we ever imagined.

In the best baseball games, eighteen players strive alongside each other to bring their best abilities to the event. As iron sharpens iron, each player sharpens the other. Our opportunity and

hope reside in recapturing the *competere* spirit. In an age of easily transmitted diseases and economic and political turmoil, our very existence depends on our willingness and ability to strive together.

Fred Harburg is clinical professor of executive education at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Are We in the Golden Age of Brazen Cheating?

by Michael Baumann

Be Attentive: Retrieve stories of cheating in your life. What have been the consequences? Are there any stories from your experience about playing baseball and playing by the rules?

Be Intelligent: What are your insights about the role of competition as you contemplate various contexts—sports, business, family, etc.? Similarities and differences?

Be Reasonable: Michael Baumann’s article starts with these words: “*A major sports league is in crisis mode after a powerhouse club earns unprecedented sanctions for flagrant and repeated rule violations.*” Comment on the context of “crisis mode” in baseball and the coronavirus pandemic. Reflect on communication and its implications.

Closing Prayer: The Prayer of St. Ignatius

*Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous.
Teach me to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not count the cost,
to fight and not heed the wounds,
to toil and not seek rest,
to labor and not ask for reward,
save that of knowing that I do your will.*

*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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