

# THE Catholic News

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*"It is actually the responsibility of all in the business world to focus on those things which impact the population in general."*

- Derek Hudson

Read about the new Chair of the Catholic Education Board of Management in this first issue of our business supplement, *God @ Work*. This supplement also focuses on weddings as we are entering the month of June. Check inside for practical tips on wedding planning, and awesome wedding reception venues.

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Photo: Gerard-Paul Wanliss

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# God @ Work

## BUSINESS

### The Catholic Mission @ Work

"According to Christian tradition, (work) is more than a mere doing: it is, above all, a mission," said Pope Francis in 2017, in a letter for the conclusion of a conference on labour at the Vatican.

He continued, "We collaborate with the creative work of God when, through our work, we cultivate and preserve creation: we participate, in the Spirit of Jesus, in his redemptive mission, when by our activity we

give sustenance to our families and respond to the needs of our neighbour."

It is in this vein that the new monthly supplement to the *Catholic News*, 'God @ Work' was created, as an extension to our Integral Living thrust. Our faith is to be practised in ever sphere of our lives, privately and professionally.

The focus of God @ Work is dual: to encounter Catholics in their many

roles in the workplace and offer advice for the sometimes-conflicting issues that may arise on the job. We invite you to send in any questions in this regard.

Secondly, as each supplement will have a specific theme, relevant businesses-large, medium, and small-will be highlighted for our readers according to their needs.

Given the difficult economic climate now, this supplement

creates a targeted space for small businesses to advertise with us, and a space where their business will have special focus.

We at CAMSEL are excited by this evangelisation, and hope that with each supplement your faith and practice of the faith also grow.

**Simone Delochan**  
Associate Editor

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## Humility is *key* to leadership

Derek Hudson became Non-Executive Chairman of Scotiabank Trinidad and Tobago in December 2020 (a position he still holds). Prior to this, he was President of BG Trinidad and Tobago from 2007 - 2012; and Vice President and Country Chairman of Shell Trinidad and Tobago from June 2016 to July 2019. Between 2012 - 2016, Derek Hudson ran BG and subsequently Shell's business in East Africa. He also now holds the position of Chair of the Catholic Education Board of Management (CEBM).

In this interview with CAMSEL's *Dominique Heffes-Doon*, Hudson reflects on leadership as a Catholic and his new role in Catholic Education.

#### **Q. What motivated you to take on the position of the Chair of the Catholic Education Board of Management?**

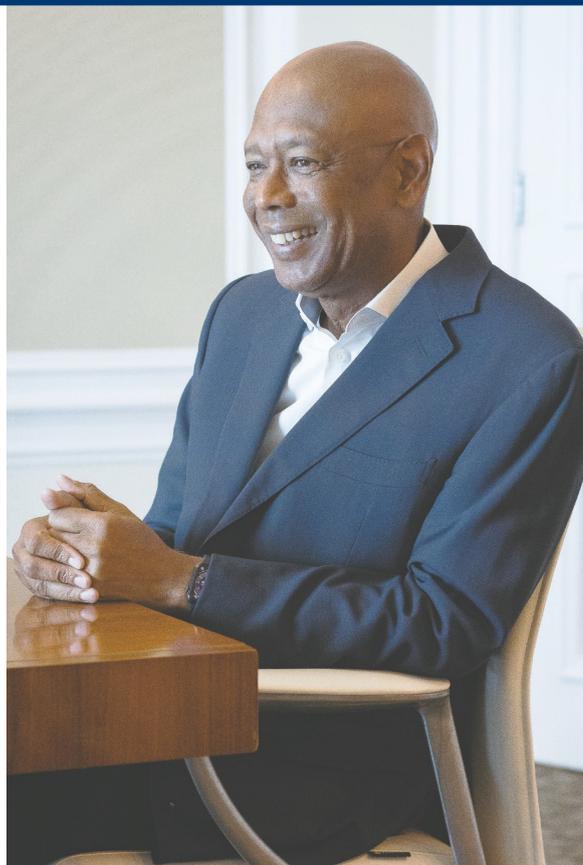
The move happened simply because His Grace asked. It's not something I was thinking about in conversations with His Grace over the years, even when I did other jobs in the energy sphere and now in the financial world, with a financial institution, Scotiabank. He would have conversations with me as to what help I could provide to him and the Church. And this one came across. He asked me about it, and I had no other choice but to say yes.

#### **Q. What is your vision for the Catholic Education Board of Management?**

In leadership, when you begin to think of legacy, you have a tendency to lose your objectivity. What should be done with respect to critical leadership roles is that you simply get up every day and try to do the best that you can and let the chips fall where they may and somebody else will judge your performance over time. If you begin to focus as to what mark you think that you would like to leave behind, you run the risk that you make the wrong decision.

I would say that the Catholic Education Board needs to continue to cement their relationship with the Ministry of Education to ensure that we operate in sync, [and] to continue to cement the relationship with the other denominational boards because this is about education for all children of Trinidad and Tobago.

It is key that we have some specific deliverables which we have been working on to achieve over the next couple of years. One of them is leadership training for people in those roles. Another is development programmes for teachers. A third 'bucket' is looking at the challenges of students, in terms of disabilities, learning challenges, and get to the bottom of that and see how we could support. Of course, there are



Derek Hudson. Photo: Gerard-Paul Wanliss

brought was a grounding of recognising that what you are doing is really not the most important thing in life. And when you look around at the level of poverty, at children not having access to proper education, you begin to think that okay, in this role as much as you want to be successful from a profitability perspective, how else could you utilise this corporate objective to deal with the socioeconomic challenges which this country faces?

When I first started to run British Gas (BG), somebody said to me that there's so much oil and gas that is produced in the southeast area of Trinidad, and yet there are a lot of problems with roads and water and what are you doing about it?

And I said at the time, that is not my problem. My job is to produce oil and gas. I pay taxes and it is somebody else's job to fix the roads. Well, I was absolutely wrong then. It is actually the responsibility of all in the business world to focus on those things which impact the population in general.

The next thing is I spent a lot of time working with the staff at BG and then afterwards with Shell, on what I thought were the key leadership tenets to be successful.

And I would speak of 'focus'; 'control your own destiny'; 'grab opportunities with both hands'; and 'don't be afraid to go beyond your comfort zone'. But at the end of the day, much more important than all those things is actually humility. I think humility is key to successful leadership.

So, I come to this job and Sharon (Mangroo) and the team at CEBM, they are the experts. It is not my job to tell them what to do. It is simply my job to look and learn, utilise the experience that I have and in a very quiet, persuasive way suggest to them that maybe we need to look at a few other things, or maybe do things a bit differently. So in many ways, leadership is about influencing. It is not about direction and control.

infrastructural requirements that are needed both in terms of today's virtual world but also in the context of the actual infrastructure where the kids go to school.

#### **Q. How do you think your Catholic faith has impacted you throughout your life and when you were in the corporate world?**

I've always used my Christian spirituality to help me in dealing with my day-to-day job. I have the practice, on moving back to Trinidad, of going to the chapel at Opus Dei and spending quiet time there. I started off every Monday morning with church at St Finbar's, and of course, going to church again on the weekend. And what that

# Theology of Work

By Mark Carmino,  
Catholics in the Workplace

Contrary to what we may sometimes think, work itself is not punishment for the sin of Adam and Eve. But rather, because of the Fall, God cursed the Earth and we work by the sweat of our brows (Gen 3).

Pope St John Paul II, in his encyclical, *Laborem Exercens* (1981), argues that human labour is not in itself a punishment for sin. Work is our participation in God's creating, governing, and redeeming 'labour'.

He states "By enduring the toil of work in union with Christ crucified for us, man in a way collaborates with the Son of God for the redemption of humanity. He shows himself a true disciple of Christ by carrying the cross on his turn every day in the activity that he is called upon to perform."

Genesis teaches us that God created man in His image and likeness to "be fruitful and multiply

and fill the earth and subdue it". He put man in the garden to till it and in cloths so continue His work of creation. God created the world out of nothing (ex-nihilo), and we add value to God's creation by our daily work.

The incarnate Son of God continued the work of His Father and said, "My Father is working until now and I am working" (Jn 5:17) and "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (Jn 4:34).

In his second letter to the Thessalonians, St Paul commanded them to keep away from idle and disruptive people and follow his example as he worked night and day, labouring and toiling so that he would not be a burden to them. He even went as far as to say, "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

Work comes in all shapes and sizes (white-collar workers, students, teachers, homemakers) and does not just involve manual labour nor always attract monetary payment.

Ken Costa in his *God at Work* video series ([www.kencosta.com/god-at-work/](http://www.kencosta.com/god-at-work/)) lists the various ways God describes himself: gardener (Jn 15:1), artist (Gen 1:1), potter (Isa 64:8), shepherd (Jn 10:11), homemaker (Heb 3:1-

work as a calling from God, a vocation to be carried out as ministry to God and humanity. The example we set by the excellence in our daily toils? However they may be, provides opportunities for evangelisation as it helps to spread the gospel to co-workers, family members, and others.

The Hebrew word *avodah* means both work and worship. We worship God by being the best we could be in our work. Whatever work we conduct, we should do it with all our heart as working for the Lord, not for human masters (Col 3:23). When done for the honour of God, all work is good.

## God first in all things-For employers and employees

While employees should always strive for excellence, employers must treat them with respect and dignity with a fair wage and appropriate working conditions. This was made clear by Pope Leo XIII in

his 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* which addressed the harsh working conditions labourers endured during the industrial revolution in that era.

The Catholic Church is not a building but a communion of the faithful wherever they may be: at home, school, or the workplace. Where God's people are found, there the mission of the Church lives.

As Catholics we must put God first in all areas of our lives and this includes the workplace where we spend so much of our time. We must be courageous enough

to consistently put God ahead of the Boss and decline requests that are contrary to our Catholic teaching and beliefs.

Our co-workers should know we are Christians by our love, patience, forgiveness, and respect.

The following statement concerning the laity from The Second Vatican Council sums it up for us: For all their works, prayers and apostolic labours, their ordinary married and family life, their daily occupations, their physical and mental relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne-all these become "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ".

**We should see our work as a calling from God, a vocation to be carried out as ministry to God and humanity.**

6), builder (Psalm 127:1). We should see our

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- Start the day with prayer and the *Bible* and end with prayer and reflection
- Allow God to punctuate your day and reflect God's values in your encounters
- Love others as we love ourselves (Mark 12:31)
- Be honest (2 Kings 12:13-15)
- Live with integrity (1 Chronicles 29:17 and Job 2:3)
- Act justly and humbly (Micah 6:8)
- Be willing to forgive (Matthew 6:12)
- Be patient, kind, good, faithful, and self-controlled (Gal 5:22-23)

God rests on the seventh day. We too should get sufficient time to rest, praise God, give thanks, and avoid any workaholic type pursuits of riches, power, and prestige.

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