

**QUID PRO QUO....** Have you heard that phrase before? QUID PRO QUO is a Latin phrase that means “something for something” or “this for that.”

If you’re a fan of TV shows like Law and Order, you’ve probably noticed how suspects in these shows are sometimes offered a reduced sentence or more lenient treatment in return for information or a confession.

That’s a QUID PRO QUO—a situation in which someone does something in exchange for something else.

Quid Pro Quo often happens whenever there is an exchange of goods, services, favors, or any other kind of value.

The idea is often expressed in English with sayings such as:

-one good turn deserves another

-you scratch my back and I will scratch yours.

-tit for tat

-even the often-quoted Golden Rule is a quid pro quo...

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

A successful quid pro relationship is based on agreed upon terms. I go into Starbucks and order a grande nonfat caramel macchiato with a drizzle of caramel no whipped topping. The barista tells me how much that will cost. I pay that amount. Starbucks gets what it wants ... my money. I get what I want... a grande nonfat caramel macchiato with a drizzle of caramel no whipped topping. Transaction completed. Quid pro quo.

One day, James and John come to Jesus with what a quid pro quo request. “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” They see Jesus as destined for glory, and for them, that means destined for power. They see Jesus as a powerful ruler, maybe someone who is going to crack some heads and take back power from the Romans. They picture Jesus as a powerful King, seated upon a throne of glory, with his attendants seated beside him, one on his left and one on his right. These seats on the left and the right are also places of great power, and they are asking Jesus to promise that when he becomes a powerful king that he will remember them and give them a couple of choice positions in his court. They see Jesus as destined to be a winner, someone on the way up in the world, and they are hoping that he will bring them along for the ride and give them a couple positions of power and prestige in the Kingdom.

And after all, don't James and John have some reason for expecting a little payback? Didn't they give up everything to follow Jesus? Didn't they leave family and profession to follow him? Why wouldn't they expect a little something in return on the day when their guy comes out on top? They were counting on their guy to be a winner after all, and this promised to be their own ticket to the top. They've been faithful followers; therefore, shouldn't they get something in return?

The other disciples were indignant that the Zebedee brothers were vying for the best seats in the kingdom, and tension mounts. Once again, Jesus talks about not about what one can get but rather what one can give.

We know from scripture and tradition that this band of believers/brothers does go on to serve and sacrifice, enduring great hardships, persecution, and even martyrdom. Somehow, by walking the way of the cross with Jesus, they eventually "get it." They do not stray from the faith but rather serve as faithful witnesses whose stories are passed from generation to generation of Christians even as they passed on the Good News to all whom they encountered.

The opposite of quid pro quo is pro bono, another latin phrase that means literally "for good", and is akin to the phrase "for the sake of the greater good." Something is given, and nothing is expected in return

We live in a world of quid pro quo arrangements. Some transactional relationships can be beneficial, some are necessary, and some harm. The way of Jesus invites us to be not just about transactional living. Jesus demonstrated through his words and actions a way of living that not only transforms our lives but also transforms everything and everyone around us.

Freddie Scott is a retired American football player who now works as a motivational speaker and life coach. He describes transactional vs transformative living in this way:

"Mother Teresa once said, *"Intense love does not measure, it just gives."* A common mistake in many relationships is to start to measure what the other person has or hasn't done, and using that to justify what you do or don't do. True love doesn't measure. Love doesn't compare. Love just loves. The question we must ask our self is what is the type of relationship that we want to have? Do we want to have a transactional relationship, or a transformational relationship?

A transactional relationship is a relationship that will use people for their gifts or talent. Your needs come first ahead of anyone else. The other person must "perform" their role in order to please the other person. A transformational relationship is a relationship that focuses more on the message not the task. The focus is to simply love, inspire and care for the other."

Jesus modelled transformational living. He treated people with kindness, patience, and forgiveness. He healed those who were sick or hurting. He loved and showed compassion to everyone. Jesus sets the pattern for our relationships.

When the rich young ruler, the man with many possessions asks about eternal life and how to get it, in other words, what transaction must happen, Jesus replies: "Follow me." When we follow the way of Jesus, our purpose in life then becomes seeking ways on purpose to be transformative with our words and actions.

For me, the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi sums up what that means:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

