

BOOK REVIEW

A Spirituality of Fundraising – Henri Nouwen's

A Spirituality of Fundraising is a small book, yet it speaks with remarkable clarity. Nouwen does not treat fundraising as technique or persuasion. He treats it as a spiritual practice rooted in relationship, trust, and shared purpose. This vision aligns closely with the present work of St. Joseph's Care Group, where healing depends on the cooperation of many people who bring their gifts with generosity and hope.

Nouwen begins with a statement that frames the entire book. Fundraising is ministry. He writes, "Fundraising is, first and foremost, a form of ministry. It is a way of announcing our vision and inviting other people into our mission." He invites the reader to consider that asking for support can deepen community rather than burden it. For Nouwen, the invitation to give carries spiritual weight. It asks the giver to join a work that honours human dignity and reflects God's care for the world.

This understanding speaks directly to the mission of the Care Group. Every day staff work with people who face pain, illness, disability, or isolation. They offer rehabilitation, mental health support, and long-term care. None of this work is abstract. It unfolds in real rooms with real people who need compassion, patience, and skill. When the Foundation invites support for this mission, it seeks partners who share a belief in the worth of each person who comes for help.

Nouwen strengthens this point when he writes, "We are inviting people into a new way of relating to their resources, to the vision, and to each other." He wants readers to see that generosity does more than meet a need. It creates connection. It allows people to take part in God's work in a concrete way. In this light, giving to a health care ministry becomes a form of fellowship. Supporters join a circle of care that includes staff, volunteers, patients, and families.

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Recent workshops hosted by St. Joseph's Foundation invited participants into a thoughtful examination of their lives. They looked at the whole arc of their story and considered how prepared they felt for moments of difficulty, loss, and eventual passing. Many reflected on the influence their death would have on the people who care for them. They asked whether their affairs were arranged in a way that would allow others to honour their life without confusion or strain. The conversations were tender and honest. People spoke about the desire to ease burdens for their families and to leave behind a sense of order rather than uncertainty. As the discussions deepened, participants recognised that this kind of

preparation can become an act of love. It can also become a way of offering one's life back to God with gratitude. In that recognition, something in Nouwen's writing rang true. He teaches that our choices about giving, planning, and preparing are not separate from our spiritual lives. They form part of the shared work of trust and communion that binds a community together.

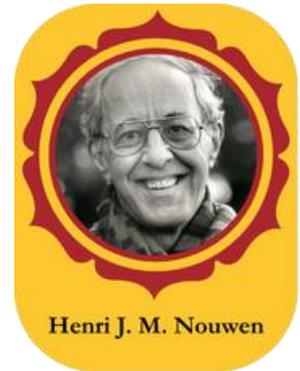
This experience reflects Nouwen's final message. He encourages readers to trust God's provision. "If our vision and mission are truly God-given," he writes, "God will also give us the friends and partners to fulfill them." Trust becomes the ground on which generosity grows. It also becomes the ground on which ministries like the Care Group stand when they face uncertainty. The mission remains strong because the community recognises its importance and because people respond when they see the difference their support makes.

A Spirituality of Fundraising offers a way of thinking that suits the life of smaller communities. Nouwen writes with a pastoral patience that invites reflection. He understands that generosity flows from belonging and belief. His insights help readers see giving not as loss but as participation in a shared mission. The Care Group embodies this vision as it continues to serve the vulnerable with dignity and compassion.

This short book deserves thoughtful reading. It deepens our understanding of generosity and challenges us to view giving as an act of fellowship. It speaks to the work of anyone who seeks to build a community

where healing is possible and where every contribution becomes part of God's work in the world.

A Spirituality of Fundraising remains one of **Henri Nouwen's** most accessible and enduring works. Its reflections continue to guide churches, foundations, and



community organizations that hope to cultivate generosity with integrity and faith. The book is available through [The Upper Room](#) and most Catholic booksellers.

Paul Wolfe serves as the Sr. Philanthropy Associate of St. Joseph's Foundation of Thunder Bay, where he works to strengthen the mission of St. Joseph's Care Group through community engagement and donor relations. He welcomes conversation with anyone who wishes to learn more about this work or explore opportunities for support. He can be reached at:

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