



A JOURNAL OF DEVOTION

—LARRY SPEARS

This inaugural issue of *The International Journal of Servant-leadership* marks a significant step forward in the ongoing evolution of servant-leadership. In the thirty-five years since retired AT&T executive Robert K. Greenleaf first coined the term in his 1970 essay, “The Servant as Leader,” interest in the study and practice of servant-leadership has grown steadily. Countless individuals and organizations around the world have been influenced by the idea of the servant-as-leader, and the pace is quickening. Examples of this may be found in many places, including:

- Hundreds of books, essays, audio-visual resources, and the like published on servant-leadership since 1970.
- Hundreds of articles published in a wide variety of journals and magazines.
- Over one hundred doctoral dissertations produced on servant-leadership.
- Greenleaf’s books and essays translated into a dozen different languages and available around the world.
- Greenleaf Center locations in eleven countries.
- Graduate and undergraduate courses taught on servant-leadership, and many other courses now including books and other resources on servant-leadership as text readings.
- The presence of servant-leadership in education: in leadership and management courses; as part of service-learning programs; and in other areas. There are even a handful of residential living units at colleges that have been inspired by Greenleaf’s *Teacher as Servant* (contained in *The Servant-leader Within*, 2003, Paulist Press).
- A great many businesses, not-for-profits, community leadership



groups, and other kinds of institutions today seeking to faithfully practice servant-leadership. Some of the better known business practitioners of servant-leadership include Starbucks, The Men's Wearhouse, The Toro Company, Synovus, Southwest Airlines, US Cellular, and TDIndustries.

With the publication of this first academic journal devoted to research and writing on servant-leadership, we hope to take another significant step forward. This journal is the result of a wonderful and growing collaboration between Gonzaga University and The Greenleaf Center. It has been my pleasure to get to know a number of folks at Gonzaga as this joint project has evolved, chief among them: Michael Carey, Mary McFarland, Fr. Robert Spitzer, and Shann Ferch. I am particularly pleased that this premier issue includes Shann's own groundbreaking essay, "Servant-leadership, Forgiveness, and Social Justice."

I believe that the development and study of servant-leadership is likely to grow significantly in the years and decades to come. Much as the burgeoning field of philanthropic studies was some ten or fifteen years ago, the study of servant-leadership is now poised for a similar kind of development. *The International Journal of Servant-leadership* has been established to help lead the way in the further development of servant-leadership as a legitimate and powerful field for study, research, teaching and publishing.

Welcome.

Larry C. Spears

President & CEO, The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership

Senior Advisory Editor, *The International Journal*

of Servant-Leadership