

Mourning vs. Maligning

Schools, churches, and parishes
are as mortal as the people
who built them:
they flourish, they decline,
they die!

When they cease to exist,
however,
the reaction to
realigning
should not be
maligning,
but mourning.

Both are emotional responses,
but maligning assigns
culpability,
whereas mourning accepts
inevitability.

Those who mourn
the death of the
terminally ill patient
do not malign
the doctor or the hospital.

Maligning is
suspicious and malicious,
imputing motives and malfeasance;
mourning is respectful
of natural processes
and is grateful
for measures taken.

Maligning tends to
sour the community,
stifle creativity,
and reject solidarity.
Mourning helps to
restore alacrity,
reinvigorate vitality,
and reunite with family.

Maligners
complain and condemn;
mourners
cooperate and construct.

Maligners
decry and denounce;
mourners
cry and create.

Those who malign
will seek scapegoats
to blame and punish;
those who mourn
will strive to memorialize
the good of the past
by building the future.

Administrators do well
to incorporate the people
in the process of termination
so that they are predisposed
to mourn,
not malign.

Finally, focus on the essentials.
The when, where, and how
of education and worship
will change,
but the who and the what
remain the same:
Jesus the Lord and His Kingdom.

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