**The five rules to keep from being the agent of the devil in the middle of the church**

**- by John McKnight**

1) Never do for others what they can do for themselves.

2) Find another's gift, contributions, talents, dreams, and capacities.  Use them.  Give them a place in the community.

3) Whenever a service is proposed, fight to get it converted into income.

4) If those in power are hell-bent on giving poor people services rather than income, than fight for those services to come in the form of vouchers.  That way the person who must be served has a choice as to who will serve them.  And there may be some competition.

5) Practice hospitality.  Abraham, the head of a tribe decided to follow a God who claimed to be the only God.  That made Abraham and his people strangers in their own land.  They journeyed as strangers through the world.  They developed some unique ideas about responsibilities to strangers because they were strangers themselves.  Jesus' disciples were also people who decided to become strangers -- in their own land and in others.  They built communities based on their decision.  That renewed their understanding of obligations to strangers, and hospitality was renewed.  In every household, in every tent, the door was open -- to the stranger, the outsider, the enemy, or potential enemy.  And the stranger was one with whom one acted not in services but in equality.