



Formation *for* Ministry

Theological Field Educators have the unspeakable privilege of assisting all whom God calls to study at our institutions with the process of discerning their direction in ministry. Unlike others who provide vital assistance in this process—including family, friends, clergy, co-workers, and educators—our work may take a unique tack at this time of discovery.

Our commitment to integration through appropriate experiential education can lead us to aid students in securing the very kinds of experience that prepare them for future service. Students *en route* to graduate school and teaching are assisted in securing teaching assignments in a church or local college or university; those moving towards care-giving positions in specialized ministry with hospice, hospitals or assisted-living environments, among others; future religious educators are mentored by seasoned veterans in the local church, summer camps and at retreat and conference centers. Theological Field Educators take special delight in providing those tailored experiences where an elevated degree of integration may take place—Formation *for* future ministry happens.

At the same time Theological Field Educators are committed to the integrity of the degree programs they support in the formal curriculum. Supervised ministry that provides the breadth and depth of experience appropriate for the program of the student is our commitment.

Formation *in* Ministry

Placement in the supervised ministry setting is only the first step of course. Students must design learning covenants that release their best

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energies and are experienced as empowering. There is no place for “jumping through hoops” here.

Trained and committed mentors who value an action/reflection pedagogy are critical to formation that takes place *in* ministry. Courageous and compassionate mentors accelerate growth in self-awareness as they reflect with their students on the person in the practice of ministry as well as professional polish. Add to this the perspective and prayers of lay support committees and a permission-giving congregation and a well-rounded formation *in* ministry experience can result.

All of this takes place under the watchful eye of the Theological Field Educator who serves as a bridge between seminary and site delivering training, support, encouragement, feedback and accountability.

As this fall issue arrives, the cycle has begun again. The literature abstracted in this issue can aid us in our important service to those who will soon serve.

Contributions should be approximately 200 words in length and sent to matt.floding@westernsem.org. The editorial board reserves the right to select and edit contributions to be published. An annual index will be published and printable copies of past issues of *TFEA* will be archived at www.westernsem.org

Clergy Women: An Uphill Calling by Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair T. Lummis, and Patricia M. Y. Chang. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998. ISBN: 0-6642-5673-2 (alk. paper)

This book is the result of extensive empirical research done in 1993-1994 in fifteen predominantly white Protestant denominations. The authors divided the denominations into three distinctive groups, each one seeing calling and vocation differently. The three groups are: Spirit-centered denominations, congregation-centered denominations, and institution-centered church. The groups locate authority in the work of the Spirit, the local congregation, and in the institutionalized church. Each group then views female clergy differently. This book does well in describing the contextual issues and historical development of the ordination of women, describing it in statistical form. In addition, the book gives voice to the experiences of a sample of female clergy. A whole chapter is devoted to how female clergy experience their call to enter the ministry. This chapter provides a brief discussion of the theological interpretations and traditional boundaries that denied females ordination.

-Jaco Hamman

Ethics in Pastoral Ministry by Richard M. Gula. New York: Paulist Press, 1996. 166 pages. ISBN 0-8091-3620-1

As a Sulpician priest and moral theologian, Richard Gula has dedicated his life to the education and formation of pastoral ministers in both the Roman Catholic and ecumenical context. In this particular book, Gula offers a systematic theological-ethical framework for reflecting on the moral responsibilities of pastoral ministry as a profession. Gula contends that identifying pastoral ministers as professionals recognizes that the proper exercise of their ministry requires expert knowledge, skills and good moral character to serve the religious needs of the people.

Gula first offers a theological framework which lays the foundation for his subsequent ethical reflection. This theological framework consists of three main components; namely, the motif of the human person as the image of God, ministry as discipleship, and the moral vision of covenantal relationship. He then proceeds to provide an ethical framework in which he examines the character and virtue of the pastoral minister; the duties which follow from being a professional minister, and the minister's responsible use of power in the pastoral relationship. This three-part ethical framework becomes the foundation to explore the issues of sexuality and confidentiality, always in the context of the pastoral relationship. The book closes with a proposed code of ethics, which summarizes Gula's theological-ethical framework for professional ministerial responsibility.

The issues which are examined in this book are foundational to an integral ministry formation process for ordained and non-ordained ministers in all Christian traditions.

-Lorraine Ste-Marie

Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment by Rose Mary Dougherty. New York: Paulist Press, 1995. 122 pages. ISBN 0-8091-3598-1

Dougherty, a staff member of The Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation, organizes the "distillation of her learnings (6)" in seven chapters meant to encourage the reflective practice of group spiritual direction as a resource for Christian community. Her writing assumes an interest in spiritual direction but not expertise. The seven chapters move helpfully between practical concerns of the facilitator to concerns of the group. For example, chapter two provides definitions and overview of

the nature of spiritual direction and chapter four expands upon this in its application to group spiritual direction. Another feature of the book is outlines for sessions and a useful appendix with definitions and suggested questions for use in spiritual direction.

The strength of this book is its accessibility and helpful aids for the spiritual director as well as its commitment to the value of a spiritual community present to God that assists persons in ongoing individual discernment.

- Matthew Floding

Invitation to Theology by Michael Jinkins and Alan J. Torrance. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001. 278 pages. ISBN 0-8308-1562-7

While Jinkin's *Invitation to Theology* does not fall within the standard genre of theological field education texts, it would make a valuable resource for ministry students. It is described as "a guide to study, conversation and practice", thus positioning itself as concerned with integration. For this reason alone it may be worthy of inclusion in a seminary field education syllabus.

Jinkins believes that theological reflection on the practices and beliefs of the church ranks among the most crucial tasks of our common life as Christians. To that end, the author frames his book around the ancient formulation of the Christian faith known as the Apostles' Creed. His development of this familiar confession is responsible, engaging and meaningful. Committed to a trinitarian perspective, every element of the Apostles' Creed is explored within the framework of theologians past and present.

In keeping with the concern for integration, every chapter concludes with homework assignments. The assignments include writing theological essays, attending a live jazz performance to discuss how it illustrates our participation in the life of God, and praying with an icon to explore the meaning of the Trinitarian God. Some of the assignments appear to be more helpful than others, but the focus on integration comes through clearly. Jinkins writes with understanding of and love for the church. A careful study and discussion of this book fosters both in the lives of men and women preparing to lead the church.

-Barbara Mutch

Leadership in the Wesleyan Spirit, by Lovett H. Weems. Abingdon Press, 1999. 158 pages. ISBN 0-687-04692-0

Increasingly, the study of leadership is becoming of importance for seminary education. An uncertain future for many Protestant denominations causes a renewed emphasis upon the necessity of strong pastoral leadership. Lovett Weems, President of St. Paul School of Theology, has written an interesting meditation upon the early years of the Methodist movement, believing that the best path to the future begins with a backward glance. Divided into three parts, the book considers the "principles of leadership," the "practices of leadership" and the "passions of leadership". Although primarily designed for persons in the Wesleyan traditions, the book would prove useful for all students preparing for pastoral ministry.

This book would serve well as a discussion starter for Field Education reflection groups. Its twelve chapters cover well the many components of pastoral leadership. Each chapter could be used to highlight both a particular aspect of congregational leadership as well as using the past as model for future planning.

-Philip Jamieson

Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community by Suzanne G. Farnham, et al. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1991. 143 pages. ISBN 0-8192-1563-5

Farnham and three other writers share the fruit of a community-based inquiry into discernment of call. The book is divided into three sections, Call, Discernment and Community. Definitions, explorations and practical implications are presented in each of the nine chapters informed by a variety of scripture and historical Christian sources. The writing style is reminiscent of Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* or Pascal's *Pensees*. An annotated bibliography and four helpful appendices follow including "Suggested Procedures for a Discernment Group" and "Possible Questions to Raise in Discerning Call."

Listening Hearts is a particularly useful starting place to explore call and discernment because it digests a good number of Christian sources and points readers in additional helpful directions. Farnham's book could profitably be studied with Rose Mary Dougherty's *Group Spiritual Direction* to discover some useful approaches for peer group settings especially in the first year of seminary to encourage benefiting from

community involvement in the discernment of call and to establish good small-group habits.

-Matthew Floding

Living with Paradox: Religious Leadership and the Genius of Double Vision by H. Newton Malony. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998. ISBN 0-7879-4057-7

Living with Paradox is a good resource for seminary students or those discerning their call to enter the ministry to come to terms with a key aspect of religious leadership. For Newton H. Malony, a psychologist and ordained United Methodist pastor, religious leadership is defined by the ability to be comfortable with paradox. One such paradox is God calling humans, another is that religious organizations are based on otherworldly concerns, yet must function in this world. The author draws on empirical research to challenge the way religious leadership is viewed. *Living with Paradox* empowers religious leaders to be comfortable with the paradoxical tension of their calling. It not only asks seminarians and religious leaders whether they have the ability of “double vision,” but also outlines critical skills needed to live with paradox. Malony argues that such skills can be learnt. Finding ways to reconcile paradoxes, rather than fight them are identified.

-Jaco Hamman

The Mentored Life: From Individualism to Personhood by James M. Houston. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2002. 193 pages. ISBN 1-5768-3318-6

In his introduction, James M. Houston cites an old Xhosa saying, *Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu*: “persons depend on other persons to be persons”. This, for Houston, is what the Christian life is all about—building relationships based on God’s own nature with other human beings. Of supreme importance in human relationship is the role of mentor, which, as it has throughout history, holds a distinguished position in our modern culture. As people encounter new circumstances, the natural tendency is to seek skilled guidance. The purpose of the *Mentored Life* is to examine the traditions of mentoring that have been passively absorbed into our culture. Effective as these mentoring systems are, they still fall short of God’s divine plan. According to Houston, if Christians interpret mentoring to mean Christian discipleship, then we must move away from many of the contemporary mentoring formulas.

Houston's book is not a "how-to" manual on ways to find a mentor. Instead, Houston looks at secular models of mentoring that focus on the "individual" and Christian models of mentoring that focus on the "person". Houston's secular models include the heroic myth of the mentor, the stoic model of mentorship, and the psychotherapeutic mentoring relationship. His Christian models include mentoring as discipleship for Christian living, mentoring as discipleship to be persons in Christ, mentoring by the Word of God, and mentoring as discipleship for worship in community.

The purpose of Houston's book is to "explore how the Christian finds the authentic Mentor or "Other" in his or her life" (p. 13). The book's broad range and scope makes it a valuable resource for pastors, seminarians, pastoral counselors, spiritual directors, and all men and women seeking or already called to the mentoring relationship under the discipleship of Christ.

-Steven Chase

What to Expect in Seminary: Theological Education as Spiritual Formation by Virginia Samuel Cetuk. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998. 200 pages. ISBN 0-687-01728-9

The title of this book may at first suggest that it would be written only for students just entering seminary life. However, when read through the lens of theological educators, it becomes a tool for understanding, or perhaps even *reliving*, the many expectations, doubts and concerns that also arrive when new seminary students, their families and all the baggage show up at your institution's door. In chapter 3, The Call to Ministry, Cetuk begins by examining the notion of "call" and how even the interpretation of that experience can affect each student's expectations of theological education. It is especially helpful to remember these expectations when designing first-year syllabi and class schedules!

Cetuk provides a brief discussion of Luther's understanding of vocation and ordination process from three mainline denominations. Showing an understanding and familiarity with denominational expectations of the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Presbyterian Church (USA), she is not timid about reminding readers that an M. Div does not necessarily a pastor make! "...[T]he reality facing those who have their hearts set upon being ordained upon finishing seminary [*is that*] the call you feel must be ratified by the church or you will not be ordained." (p. 63)

Exploring the reasons for coming to seminary and expectations of theological education, Cetuk challenges students to see their seminary life as a journey with God. "Know that with God's help you will gain clarity about the nature of ministry to which you are being called: ordained or lay. Allow yourself to lean on God and your community and receive from both the encouragement and insight about yourself that you will need to make important decisions about your life." (p. 69)

Challenging too, are the exercises and prayers found at the conclusion of each chapter which would work well with small groups or individuals. *What to Expect in Seminary* is filled not only with helpful information but also with thought-provoking questions for seminary students at all levels, for those considering seminary and for those who would journey with them.

-Stephanie Croom

"'Can We Talk?': Boundary Crossing and Sexual Misconduct in Seminary Teaching," by Homer U. Ashby, Jr. and Carol Hepokoski, *Teaching Theology and Religion* 5, no. 2 (2002): 80-89.

While the public focus of recent months has been all on parish clergy boundary issues and violations, two theological educators have brought these thorny issues back home for reflection and admonition.

Seminary faculty negotiate ever more complex student-teacher relationships, involving not just dual but often multiple roles. As a result, "boundary crossing is inevitable," and we who teach more than preach are just as much at risk of *inappropriate* boundary crossing as are our parish-based colleagues. Ashby and Hepokoski call attention to this reality in a timely fashion and with some sense of urgency.

Their article, published in this very practical Wabash Center journal, acknowledges that our own professional boundary issues and transgressions are not matters easily discussed. All the more reason to do so, they contend. Like others of us in many seminaries, the authors both had been recent trainees under the Rev. Marie Fortune at the Center for the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Violence in Seattle. What we have learned is that secretive silence is the first barrier to be broken so as to rectify wrongs, do justice, and prevent future abuses of power by pastors *and* professors.

With brief vignettes and personal examples, Ashby and Hepokoski explore various professional boundaries of our vocational context. They

discuss student-teacher friendships relative to intimate and romantic relationships, and-too briefly-institutional accountability in sexual misconduct. Awareness, collegial conversation, training events, self-care and a balanced lifestyle are the primary preventative measures advised by the authors.

-Tarris D. Rosell

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