



WINTER 2003

RECALLING CHICAGO

Each Biennium of the Association of Theological Field Educators presents a smorgasbord of opportunities. But to change the metaphor, it is not a cacophony of Babel-esque voices, but rather the Pentecost-like, "How is it that we hear, each one of us, in our own native language?" Our common commitment to the mission of theological education provides common ground, and as we were reminded in Dudley Roses' Steering Committee Chair's address, we engage each other in a common language thanks to the dedication and hard work of our forbears in theological field education.

The smorgasbord was far richer in its selections at this biennium thanks to the affirmation that we are multi-disciplinary in our work. This was affirmed through the contributions of Emilie Townes, Anthony Stevens-Arroyo and Jeanette Rodriguez in the plenary sessions. While this was an affirmation of Theological Field Education's leadership role in our seminaries, again, Dudley Rose challenged us, "our Association cannot be served well without continuing our intentions to better reflect the whole reality of our demographic fabric."

And of course, the Biennium provided a low-fat, high-fiber and nutritious meal through all of the tasty workshops and the informal conversations that processed information, found new friendships and colleagues and took time to affirm and celebrate another's contribution. Maybe that's not a smorgasbord. How about Chicago Deep Dish with everything on it? I look forward to what Toronto will serve up in 2004.

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All Who Minister: New Ways of Serving God's People, Maylanne Maybee, editor. ABC Publishing Toronto, 2001 ISBN 1-55126-341-6, 251 pages.

Maylanne Maybee edits stories and case studies written by 22 practitioners of ministry in the Anglican communities of Canada. Dealing with a cross-section of Canada's geographic and cultural realities, the authors identify challenges and transformations happening in the contemporary alternate ministries. These involve such variations as mutual ministry in the West Kootenay, ministry formation for indigenous people in Manitoba and Ontario, inner city ministry in Vancouver, Ottawa and Montreal, and ecumenical shared ministry in Slave Lake, Athabasca.

Maybee assumes that ministry is relational, that ministry among baptized Christians is much wider and more varied than the ordained offices, and that ministry is about equipping, encouraging and supporting ordinary Christians to do God's work and be God's people.

The final unit of essays highlights a theology of ministry. The main focus of the book is on the ministry of the baptized laity. Maybee's essay "The Bread will Rise: The Distinctive Calling of the Laity" symbolizes that priority! Two final essays focus on Priestly Ministry and the Episcopate. Towards the end of the book, biographical sketches tell about the 22 authors and their educational and ministerial backgrounds. Suggestions for further readings are offered on the main topics discussed in the book.

This book is a valuable overview of contemporary Anglican ministry in Canada. Specific chapters could be very helpful to persons in any faith tradition who are developing similar ministries.

-Lorraine Ste-Marie

Choosing Civility: The Twenty-five Rules of Considerate Conduct by P.M. Forni. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002. ISBN 0-312-28118-8.

Many of us have perhaps wondered whether or not thoughtful behavior and common courtesy are in short supply, or simply forgotten in the hurried lives of people multitasking between e-mail and cell phone connections. P.M. Forni has also and gives direction to the Civility Project at the Johns Hopkins University. In *Choosing Civility* Forni has provided a terrific resource for our students and any community that wishes to be grace-full. The point of the twenty-five rules he describes, with wit, is that life is difficult and yet good relationships make life qualitatively better: therefore, let us give attention to those behaviors that make ours and others' lives richer.

Amidst the dissonant tones in a fallen world his commendations sound like grace notes. For example, rule number one is, *Pay Attention*. To live a mature and civil life one must be able to transcend oneself. Paying attention enough to notice another's need, to exercise one's empathic imagination and then to act on behalf of another begins by paying attention. Some others of the twenty-five include: Acknowledge Others, Listen, Be Inclusive, Accept and Give Praise, Respect Other's Opinions, Apologize Earnestly and Thoughtfully, Refrain from Idle Complaints, and the list goes on to 17 others.

Do seminarians need to reflect on these? How about seminary faculty and staff? Would our church lay leadership do well to reflect on these? I introduce the concept of civility and cultivating communities of grace as part of the orientation to theological field education.

-Matthew Floding

From Ministry to Theology: Pastoral Action and Reflection by John Patton. Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, 1995. 128 pages ISBN 0-929670-13-2

Birthered primarily in the field of Clinical Pastoral Education, this small book is a valuable tool for the discipline of theological field education whether the student's ministry placement is hospital, congregation or campus. It attempts to take seriously the relationship between action and reflection, believing that Christian theology can be constructed from the practice of ministry, even as the practice of ministry is formed by Christian theology. This volume is adamant that the movement between ministry and theology is two-way. A practical focus on enabling those involved in ministry to recover "meaning-full" events from their ministry experience is enriched by instruction on how to formulate Christian theological beliefs that grow directly out of pastoral events. This book would serve well as a resource for first year theological students as they begin to learn to prepare case studies for theological reflection.

-Barbara Mutch

I Come to Do Your Will by Rob Taylerson. Veritas Publications, 2000. 135 pages. ISBN 1-85390-506-2

"Pastor, what is God's will for me?" It should not strike us strange that Christian disciples be interested in knowing how to and where to follow Jesus. Yet frequently, when the question of God's will is raised, many

Christians practice divination rather than discernment. Taylerson's book, divided into eighteen brief chapters, is a guide to discernment practices grounded in the Scriptures and tradition of the Church. Some of the most important topics which Taylerson covers include: "relationship with God"; "prayer, listening and choice"; what we mean by God's will; the importance of courage in doing God's will; the Ignatian method of discernment; the role of passions; the role of the conscience; and the importance of community.

This book would serve well as a discussion starter for Field Education reflection groups. Seminarians are all in a discernment process. Field education placements frequently bring many confusing issues to the surface. Understanding better their own discernment process can help the would-be pastor help his or her congregation do the same.

-Philip Jamieson

Leadership Jazz by Max DePree. New York: Doubleday, 1992. 228 pages ISBN 0-385-42018-8.

Max DePree, former CEO of Herman Miller (a premier office furniture manufacturer) and Forbes business hall-of-famer, gives leaders committed to servant leadership a gift in the form of a powerful metaphor for leadership: the jazz-band leader. "The leader of a jazz band has the beautiful opportunity to draw the best out of the other musicians. We have much to learn from jazz-band leaders, for jazz, like leadership, combines the unpredictability of the future with the gifts of individuals.(9)"

In sixteen brief chapters DePree holds up different facets of his view of leadership for examination in an anecdotal style that draws heavily from his life and business experience. "I learned that if you're a leader and you're not sick and tired of communicating you probably aren't doing a good enough job. (100)" Or, "People, relationships, values, and beliefs are most important to a corporation and, fittingly, the most fragile components. (72)" This style of writing allows us a glimpse into DePree's actual exercise of leadership as he notices, interacts with, affirms and even celebrates the contributions of forklift operators, custodians and master upholsterers. His vision of empowering leadership provides a complementary text to traditional views of leadership.

-Matthew Floding

The Promise of Partnership: A Model for Collaborative Ministry by James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead. Harper San Francisco, 1993. 244 pages ISBN 0-595-08895-3

Delivering on their promise, the Whiteheads draw on their experience, their prayer, and their scholarly learning to offer a model of Christian leadership as partnership. While most of the examples used in this book are drawn from the Roman Catholic experience, this book is addressed to all Christian ministers in their attempts to develop more collaborative styles of leadership and service in a variety of pastoral settings.

For the Whiteheads, partnership (*koinonia*) is both an ancient and a new practice in the Christian tradition. Partnership delights in diversity, recognizing that difference enriches relationships and provides possibilities for learning. Wherever there is difference, there exists opportunities for conflict. The Whiteheads devote a chapter to "Managing Conflict," exploring the benefits of conflict, especially as it becomes a catalyst to transformation when well attended. The Whiteheads call on pastoral leaders to develop the virtue of facing conflict, a virtue which combines both vision and practice.

Designed as a tool for individual and group reflection on the various facets of partnership, each chapter concludes with a reflective exercise aimed at the integration of the theory and key insights, as well as a list of additional resources. Written almost ten years ago, this book has become a classic for pastoral leadership formation, particularly as it challenges some underlying theological themes which have been used to support unhealthy leadership practices and abuses of power.

-Lorraine Ste-Marie

"Getting Technical: Information Technology in Seminaries," by Raymond B. Williams, *Christian Century* (Feb 7-14, 2001): 14-17.

Theological educators may have come late to the table of educational technologies; but most of us now are seated and sampling—perhaps with eyes too big for our pedagogical stomachs. Especially in the theological field education, technology both fascinates and frightens. Raymond Williams' article is helpful then as a brief treatment of issues arising for theological education generally in the face of technological proliferation.

Williams takes a balanced approach, noting both potentialities and pitfalls accompanying any appropriation of new technologies within our context. Online resources of the American Theological Library Association (ATLA)

and several other entities are suggested for their pedagogical promise. Indeed, internet access may be deemed nearly essential to education in the twenty-first century, and increasingly so as web-based informational resources multiply in this era of “disintermediation”—current terminology for “the explosion of information.”

Of course, the menu of technological teaching tools is much more expansive than just those involving the internet. Many of us are either vexed or smitten by the PowerPoint craze, for example. But it is the world-wide web that challenges traditional field education methodologies most; and this is Williams’ focus also. Via the web, exciting opportunities are provided for online distance learning from far-flung field locations. At the same time, Williams acknowledges that the “virtual seminary” concept threatens or at least “challenges the character of interpersonal relations between students and with faculty in ways that may be troubling.” Cash-strapped seminaries may find these teaching tools to be prohibitively expensive as well, involving initial hardware and software purchases, then installation and maintenance, user training, and ongoing technical assistance—and upgrades!

Williams concludes this summary of “challenges and potentials” by exhorting perplexed theological educators to “shape the technology to [our] purposes, rather than being distracted or even derailed by the technology.”

- Tarris D. Rosell

“Spiritual Discipline, Discipline of Spirituality: Revisiting Questions of Definition and Method” by Mary Frolich in *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, Volume 1, Number 1, Spring 2001: 65-78. ISSN 1553-1709

Mary Frolich, professor of Spirituality at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, takes her readers on a philosophical and personal journey to her conclusions regarding definition and method for the academic study of spirituality.

She concludes that the material object when we study spirituality “consists of constructed expressions of human meaning. (71)” This is of course boundless, thus the formal object of the study of spirituality is “the human spirit fully in act’ [and] means the core dimension of the human person radically engaged with reality (both contingent and transcendent). (71)” A method then for the study of spirituality must be cognizant of one’s own lived spirituality even as one investigates spirituality. Frolich appropriates the Bernard Lonergan’s insight into “interiority” to discuss

method. Lonergan retains the medieval understanding of interiority as communion with God and adds to it a profound engagement with ones context. Spirituality then is “not simply an introspective activity; rather, it is a matter of full presence with oneself, with others, with the world, with God. (75)”

What is of additional interest for the theological field educator is the personal journey she documents. Frolich models an action/reflection model as she revises her courses to engage her students on multiple levels. “[The goal] was twofold: first to get students to connect to and articulate what ‘spiritual experience’ was for them; and second, to push them...in personal discovery of the effects of factors such as tradition, personal history, culture, life stage, genre, and immediate setting on how the experience is named and presented. (67)” She concludes, “I have become convinced that ‘lived spirituality’ is, and must remain, the key point of engagement...(68)” And, “essential to the self-implicating character of spirituality, then, is a certain ineradicable messiness and uncontrollability. (68)”

[*Spiritus* is published two times a year by the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality and the Johns Hopkins University Press]

-Matthew Floding

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