

CHRISM

CHRistians In Secular Ministry

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Spiritual Direction for Ministers in Secular Employment

Foreword

The writer, Richard Spence, is a Minister in Secular Employment in Napier, New Zealand. A pioneer of computer education in his country, he has since the mid-sixties exercised a varied range of functions within the IT industry. These functions have taken him into a variety of commercial and government settings, from the parliamentary debating chamber to the manufacture of apple juice concentrate.

Ordained in 1995 as Priest in Secular Employment within the Anglican Church of New Zealand, he ministers these days as chaplain to the Mission to Seafarers at the Port of Napier. Richard has himself recently completed two years of formation as a Spiritual Director and offers his services in that role to clergy and laypeople in his region.

Richard hopes that this publication will encourage MSEs to obtain the benefits of spiritual direction for their own ministry, and also serve as a roadmap for any Spiritual Director who may number an MSE among their clients. His email address is dr.dick@xtra.co.nz and his website is www.tekauri.com.

The original title, Spiritual Direction for Bi-Vocational Ministers, affirms that the findings are applicable to all ministers with one or more foci to ministry, whatever their title. Indeed, references are made to the experience

of bi-vocational ministers in New Zealand, the USA and the UK. Wherever we may minister, this paper has much to offer.

"Our position requires that we act with authority; our faith requires that we live in submission. ... Our already healthy propensity for pride is goaded a dozen times a day with no one in sight to check it. It is not merely nice for pastors to have a spiritual director; it is indispensable.
- Eugene Peterson¹

"Bi-vocational ministers need to make sure they do not view their ministry as a godly calling and their second job as merely a means to paying the bills."
- Dennis Bickers²

Persons engaged in Christian ministry commonly seek spiritual direction or are encouraged to do so. Surely Petersen is correct in asserting that spiritual direction is a necessity for all ministers, but the proposition takes on a special flavour when the minister is juggling the demands of their ministry together with those of a secular job. Such a person, a *Minister in Secular Employment* (MSE) is trying to live out the principle of *bi-vocationalism*. They value both their call to ministry and their call to a secular occupation: the ministerial role is more than just a hobby, and the secular employment is more than just a way to survive and pay the rent.

To discover whether the spiritual direction of MSEs exhibits particular attributes and opportunities, I interviewed three practising ministers in fulltime secular employment. This paper presents their responses against the background of a survey of the literature relevant to the spiritual direction of MSEs. From these considerations I also make some suggestions about ways

¹ Peterson Eugene H: *Working the Angles - the shape of pastoral integrity* (Grand Rapids MI Eerdmans 1998) p.167

² Bickers Dennis W: *The Tentmaking Pastor: The joy of bivocational ministry* (Baker, Grand Rapids MI 2000) p.38

that spiritual direction can help the life and ministry of Ministers in Secular Employment.

Introduction

Whether a particular Christian identifies as a MSE depends on the extent to which they perceive such a bi-vocational character in their spiritual life. It's an interior thing. It is not our task here to enunciate an operational definition of who may be identified as an MSE.

Were we to do so, it would be something along the lines of: *holds current authorisation to a function reserved to ministers, and works full-time for an employer in whose organizational mission statement there appears no explicit reference to God or Christ*. Wording the above description so that the ministerial licence is current and the secular employment full-time, exposes both divisions of the MSE's life as true professions, as Bickers (*op.cit.*) reminds us. In each, a Christian vocation is discerned, and a Christian duty delineated. The same criteria apply to a person in secular employment who is also engaged in extensive lay ministry. The *authorisation* criterion in the proposed definition does have significance, because some form of credentialling makes explicit that person's responsibility not only to God but also to the Christian community.

The spiritual director will be concerned not with definitions but with the spiritual tensions and insights which stem from the director's perceptions of the bi-vocational nature of their life and ministry. People whose 'other' employment may be in a Christian bookshop, or say as teacher in a Christian school, may perceive themselves to be bi-vocational, or they may not. And there is little to be gained by unpacking whether the phrase *works full-time for an employer* can only imply paid work: what counts is the personal ties of responsibility to a set of values that are not explicitly Christian. It is those ties that characterise the MSE and present their Spiritual Director with particular opportunities to advance their spiritual growth.

The literature of spiritual direction has not concerned itself much with secular work. Nevertheless since early days during World War Two, a

history and a literature of MSE have arisen, much of it addressing spiritual issues. The story of the quest for secular spirituality by the original worker-priests³ is a chronicle of their efforts to discover ways of understanding faith as being present in real life and not merely an intellectual structure. Their experiences pointed to new ways of religious experience expanding and deepening faith. The worker-priests and industrial chaplains had spoken of their closeness to God in the activity in the world of work cooperating with workers and combating oppression; some worker-priests said they felt more close to God in such types of activity than in church. They were caught in the dichotomy of inwardness and outwardness.⁴ And since those early days, MSE-related literature has offered insights into the spiritual world of MSE's and the ways in which they might be most helpfully directed.

The Interviews

There are three bi-vocational clergy known to me who agreed to be interviewed for this investigation. We'll call them A, B and C. All three are male, for MSE tends to be a male vocation. (In the membership of CHRISM, the English organization for Christians in Secular Ministry, male MSE's outnumber their female counterparts by two to one.⁵) Furthermore each is an ordained minister, each is in fulltime secular employment and each is the father of school-aged children.

A, B and C have each experienced three years of spiritual direction, dating from well before their ordinations. Two of them share the same Spiritual Director (whom we'll call X); the other Spiritual Director is labeled – guess what – Y.

³ Recorded in Erlander, Lillemor: *Faith in the World of Work* (Univ. of Uppsala Stockholm 1991)

⁴ Of which Christian Duquoc writes (trans John Griffiths) in "Spirituality: A Private or a Public Phenomenon?" in *Concilium* vol 9 no 7 (London Burns & Oates 1971) pp.13-28

⁵ CHRISM membership list November 2002

A - Economist: Spiritual direction was helpful in dealing with the issues around becoming ordained. X's style is particularly helpful: attentiveness to the unstated: e.g. to the body language, pauses, sighs, unfinished sentences His approach is to start with 'How are you?' Where it goes from there may be unprepared-for.

B - Scientist: Now I am walking toward both priesthood and, possibly, associateship with a Cistercian monastery. My past includes elements of mainstream, charismatic and evangelical faith expression and I am currently part of a middle-of-the-road Anglican church. I also have a depressive character and have suffered a period of clinical depression. My Spiritual Director (Y) is a career priest and a Benedictine, which influences what we discuss and how we do it.

C - Marketing Executive: My spiritual background is eclectic: Anglican to AoG (Assembly of God) and now back to Anglican. I'm in a team ministry with my wife; that teamwork is essential to what I'm doing. My primary collegiality is with Urban Vision, which is partnering with the Diocese. My Spiritual Director is X, who also directs A.

Six spiritual issues

Four of the spiritual issues that engage an MSE with their spiritual director were described by Anne Hadfield⁶ to be –

1. Identity and Identities: what of the fellow traveller?
2. Motivation and Motivations: what of Call?
3. Values: clashes - integrity
4. Recollection: how to centre oneself with God other than in a religious place - how to access one's spirituality while in the secular setting

⁶ In a conversation in July 2004. Anne is a renowned spiritual director who has directed at least one MSE.

To this list the MSE's who participated in the interview process were keen to add two others which were of equal importance to them:

5. Relationships
6. Supervision and Pastoral Care

They expressed that importance with such intensity that they persuaded me that these two categories should indeed be included.

Identity and Identities: what of the fellow traveller?

Identity is an interior category and an ongoing concern. The MSE will be asking constantly: am I a minister, or am I an architect / process worker / electrician / teacher ...? Which is the real me, or is it both, or maybe neither? Questions of this kind do not only trouble the MSE – they worry every honest Christian who spends most of their week in a secular working environment.

If we follow Nash⁷ there are several dichotomies that have to be held in tension. Based on interviews with about 85 Christian CEOs and executives in some major corporations in America, Nash explored how these executives deal with ethical dilemmas in their business lives. The author summarises their experiences as a series of sustained tensions between personal faith and seven basic elements of capitalism. She identifies these tensions as:

- Love for God versus the pursuit of profit (the need to serve two masters)
- Concern for people versus the competitive drive
- Care for employees versus profit obligations
- Humility versus the self-importance of success
- Family versus work
- Charity versus wealth
- Being God's agents in the secular city

⁷ Nash Laura: *Believers in Business* (Nashville TN, Thomas Nelson,1994)

While these were senior managers and the research environment was American corporate business, Nash's analysis seems to have the ring of truth for MSE's whose secular employment might be classified as 'professional' – though whether it holds true for other cultures or other work groups would be a subject for separate study. Nash observed three different responses to the tensions she observed –

1. Generalising – never getting down to specific examples so denying there's any real tension here.
2. Justifying – assuming that the business side of the equation is supported by the faith side anyway so there is no real ethical conflict.
3. Seeking – acutely aware that there are points where the concerns of faith and business do conflict, so expecting to struggle with difficult choices in order to do what is right.

Nash warns if we want to give expression to a profound connection between faith and economic activity we are in a delicate position. It is not easy to maintain a traditional biblical worldview while participating in the modern culture of the corporation. It means neither constructing an invisible wall between these two nor suggesting – as the generalist and justifier tend to do – that they are wholly complementary.

If faith and economic thinking are too close, then they will collapse on each other, and a secular, wholly-rationalised, mindset will result. If they are too distant – as in a completely privatised faith – faith concerns will no longer impact on the economic world. One may profess to be Christian but no longer venture into the world as Christians; faith becomes just what we do with our leisure time.

The seeker then must attempt to reconcile these two worlds and make them relevant to each other by using the tension between business and faith to create a combination of economic and spiritual activity. The trick, Nash concludes, is to maintain some distance – but not too much distance – between the opposing forces of faith and business.

My interviewees reported a variety of experiences. They all acknowledge the tension between their faith lives and their secular lives, but only A's response was that of a classic seeker; A had been helped to balance the two lives in a single identity –

A: Spiritual direction has helped me to discover what I value about myself. We've explored who I am in the two different contexts, rather than two different me's. Spiritual direction has helped to assure me that there is just one me.

– while B and C had resolved the tension by giving the higher priority to their ministerial vocation:

B: I've shifted from work as focus of life to people as focus of life. I now see my priestly vocation as primary, my vocation as scientist is an extension of my priestly vocation. The key question that Y asks me from time to time is "what of your bi-vocation?" My main concern is how to develop the monastic vocation with life as a husband and father. But that is not the same thing as trying to combine them. Spiritual direction hasn't impacted my perceptions of identity and identities because the subject hasn't come up.

C: Bi-vocational issues are always present, but my paid employment has always been a means to an end. Community ministry is the primary driver. There is a frustration in having to do the secular work to enable the ministry to go on. But we haven't given that much attention in spiritual direction.

It may be that the only person the MSE can turn to for help with this struggle is a spiritual director. S/he is unlikely to find solutions in church, for these dilemmas

“... are seldom addressed in traditional ethics courses nor in church. Church takes faith very seriously but not business. In fact many business people think that church leaders assume an anti-business

stance – perhaps one reason for this is that many church leaders think that business people take business very seriously but not faith.”⁸

An MSE-directee has to seek out creative solutions to these ethical dilemmas while living consciously on the intersection between the worlds of faith and business. Spiritual direction will be helpful if it is alert to those efforts.

Motivation and Motivations: what of Call?

Call is a matter of discernment, pure and simple. It’s the biggie of biggies. The spiritual director does well to rehearse with the MSE-directee what was the nature of their twin calls: the call to ministry and the call to the secular profession which lays claim on them. There will be deep motivations here, and returning to them will provide helpful insights and self understanding. How do they know that they were called to be a barista/mechanic/lawyer ? How do they know they were called to be a minister, and what kind ? As always, the question is: *Where is God in this ?*

That satisfying answers can be found, is evidenced by Brushweiler’s report on bi-vocational pastors in the American Mid-West:

"An overwhelming majority (68 percent) of these bi-vocational clergy are doing what they are doing by choice. Even more importantly 75 percent indicated that their preference now that they were doing bi-vocational ministry was for bi-vocational over a full-time pastorate. They were not there merely because they were not capable or qualified but because of a firm commitment to this type of ministry."⁹

⁸ Mackenzie Alistair: "Compatibility or Conflict?: Christian faith in the marketplace" *Reality magazine* iss 38.

⁹ Brushwyler L. Ronald: *Bi-Vocational Pastors: A Research Report* (Chicago Midwest Ministry Development Service 1992) p.7. When Tim Key replicated the exercise in northern England he got an even more unequivocal response

For one of my interviewees, call was beyond question and had been validated elsewhere than in spiritual direction:

C: Validating my ministry has been a tangential issue rather than central; sustainability has been the more pressing matter. I have a burning desire to advance the ministry. My call emerged in the context of Urban Vision, and that was before I was getting any formal spiritual direction. I took the initiative in finding myself a spiritual director; the church accommodated my wish rather than vice versa. In fact, it was the developing ministry that led me to a church at all.

– whereas for the other two spiritual direction had proved useful in helping to discern their call to ministry and to sustain their awareness of it –

A: Spiritual direction helped me to test and validate my experience in relation to my call. X and I worked on exploring the impediments to my ordination.

B: Spiritual direction has helped to define the Anglican priesthood toward priestly formation. By repeated questioning, it has strongly reinforced the validation of my call. Y asks: what were the important bits; where is God in this, exactly ?

With an MSE who is insecure in their bi-vocational call, the spiritual director may – in my opinion – find it worthwhile to draw the directee’s attention to biblical precedents. That Saint Paul continued his tentmaking trade into his apostleship has been much quoted as a justification for bi-vocational ministries. It is also intriguing to speculate that Saint Peter was as much a bi-vocational apostle as Saint Paul. Careful reading of Peter’s call to ministry¹⁰ reveals that while he and the other apostles ‘left their nets’,

– 92% of MSE’s preferred their situation over that of the fulltime, stipended clergy. See Key, T: “A Reflection on the Non-Stipendiary Ministry”, in *Ministers at Work* 96 (Jan 2006) p.10

¹⁰ Mark 1:16 – 20, Luke 5: 1 - 11

the texts themselves do not state that they abandoned fishing as a livelihood. On the contrary: the incident of the miraculous draught of fishes, which by John's account took place after the Resurrection¹¹ can be read as evidence that Peter returned to his trade while continuing his apostolic ministry. With such a reading, MSE's can claim not only Saint Paul the bi-vocational tentmaker as patron, but also Saint Peter the bi-vocational fisherman.

Even if the MSE-directee is familiar with the precedents described in the previous paragraph, they may be carrying burdens of doubt about how God views their secular employment. The conventional exegesis – as typically understood in mainline churches – is that the apostles abandoned their former occupations in favour of full-time preaching, healing and evangelism as that was a more Godly way of life. Furthermore the gospel writers Matthew¹², Luke¹³ and Thomas¹⁴ all quote the famous aphorism that no servant can serve two masters, otherwise that slave will honour the one and offend the other. Yet serving two masters is exactly what a MSE is asked to do.

The question must be confronted, and there are a variety of answers to it.¹⁵ The director does well to expend significant time and energy encouraging the MSE to deal with this matter.

By working over this material – perhaps repeatedly – the spiritual director serves the directee well, helping them to value the two sides of their call and to engage with the creative tensions that inevitably result.

¹¹ John 21: 1 - 11

¹² Matthew 6:24

¹³ Luke 16:13

¹⁴ Thomas 47:1-2

¹⁵ One is that the MSE concept is fatally flawed and should be abandoned; such is the implied message from those churches that make little use of MSEs in their ministry strategies.

Values: clashes - integrity

What we are – who we are – reflects the core value system that underpins our spirituality. MSE's do well to reflect upon their core values and spiritual directors do well to encourage and support that process. For a MSE, core values will come from both their Christian and their secular life.

Dorrie Johnson, a frequent writer in the journal *Ministers At Work*, addresses such issues as she searches for a satisfactory spirituality for MSE's.¹⁶ The nub of the matter is, as Johnson expresses in another paper¹⁷, that the MSE will truly be a person in secular employment one who -

... will identify with the work people experience the same contention - take part of the blame - carry the anxieties - be among those needing forgiveness, and release him/herself with compassion as well as the institution, organisation or system.

There, says Johnson, is the rub. Accountability to God should invigorate a spirituality of the community at work, but conventional approaches to seeking a spirituality may prove too simplistic for MSE's, as for other Christians at work. While traditional spirituality may separate itself from the ordinary working world, the MSE must find a spirituality that not only takes account of non-Christian spiritualities,¹⁸ but also affirms the working environment as part of God's creation.

¹⁶ Johnson Dorrie: CHRISM (Christians in Secular Ministry) *Paper 3 - Spirituality for Work* (1997)

¹⁷ Johnson Dorrie: "Ordained Ministers in Secular Employment" in *Theology* vol 101 no 799 (Jan/Feb 1998) pp.22-28

¹⁸ Surfacing in New Zealand in such incidents as reported in *NZ Herald* (Auckland 27 February 2004) Devreux Monique / NZPA : "Student quits school over necklace ruling"

In many respects the quest for integrity is no different from the quest for identity. Interviewee A expressed that in as many words –

A: Yes, integrity is for me an important value: this relates to the item above about the same me in the different contexts.

C, the proactive spiritual seeker, had identified the problem and sought and found his own solution –

C: When I worked at [large corporate] I had immense difficulties with the political-policy-commercial values that the company culture expressed. Attractive job offers based in those values made it all the more difficult. It was hard, and a major issue for me. But I found a friend in the company and we did some ‘mutual spiritual direction’ as a survival strategy.

That he had done so independently of formal spiritual direction means that for C, as has been noted above, sustainability is now the more pressing matter.

In B’s case, the character and background of his spiritual director has added an extra dimension, perhaps an unexpected one. For them, the differences in their backgrounds has been used creatively, in a manner that any spiritual director might admire and seek to emulate:

B: Y’s stature as a priest has introduced some tension, but comparing our two different world-views has been productive. Y has handled that skilfully and that’s why it’s been productive. The quality of our interaction has been crucial. Y keeps digging away to get at real basic values [and] often gets below the surface to drag these out.

There are parallel examples of dualistic discourse – the creation / evolution debate is one – and they suggest how the spiritual director might helpfully draw the MSE’s attention to the issues-behind-the-issues. Consider the value systems of evolutionism and creationism: without the confrontation between them we might not have discovered (re-discovered?) the important contribution that *story* makes to our faith experience.

Riddles can be productive: Samson's famous one ('Out of the eater came something to eat; out of the strong came something sweet.' Judges 14:14) comes to mind. From these precedents, the thoughtful spiritual director may be able to encourage the MSE's confidence that while his/her pursuit of integrity offers no present resolution, nevertheless, the quest itself may be what we are called to, and that quest is truly of God.

Recollection: how to centre oneself with God other than in a religious place - how to access one's spirituality while in the secular setting.

Pitt¹⁹ emphasises that the minister in secular employment needs to be secure enough in God simply to wait for God to disclose God's purposes in given situations. According to Pitt the spiritual disciplines appropriate to the MSE's employment situation are: not to be constantly talking about God or sharing Christian things; not to be anxious about being successful; not to have unrealistic goals about making converts; they are the disciplines of self-control. This he calls 'secular contemplation in the secular desert'.

The *secular desert* is a disturbing image for it paints the MSE as a pilgrim in a barren land – the secular employment is to be endured not celebrated. It's an image that Dennis Bickers would disagree with, pointing to the secular workplace as a spiritual oasis at certain times:

"During [low] times the advantage that I had as a bi-vocational pastor was that my self-worth was not tied to my pastoral role. Monday morning I was back in the factory running my machine or working on the assembly line or responding to a customer in another country who had a problem with one of our products. Perhaps I had failed at a ministry task the day before but that did not make me a failure as a person. My work that day at my other job proved that I was a

¹⁹ Pitt Trevor: "Spirituality and the minister in secular employment" in Francis James M.M. & Francis Leslie J:(eds) *Tentmaking: perspectives on self-supporting ministry* (Leominster Herefordshire pub: Gracewing 1998) pp 296-8

competent person. ... I have [also] had bad days at my factory job when everything that could go wrong did. That evening however I may have had a wonderful experience during a hospital visit in which I was able to bring comfort to someone."²⁰

Bickers' experience might not be universal however, even among MSE's. Brushweiler found significant differences from one MSE to another in related matters such as that of personal stress:

"When asked to compare the level of stress found in bi-vocational ministry with that of a full-time pastorate the response was quite mixed. Thirty-five percent regarded bi-vocational as more stressful. On the opposite side about the same number (37 percent) saw it as less stressful. Close to the same amount saw no real difference (28 percent)."²¹

My interviewees were asked whether spiritual direction might help in accessing one's spirituality in the secular setting. Here as elsewhere, C had identified the issue and dealt with it in his own way –

C: Yes, this is an issue though spiritual direction hasn't impacted it much – I have taken my own initiatives with it. I follow a personal Rule, using my cellphone's reminder feature to set times for prayer during the day. I use the Jesus prayer, and beads and the gift of tongues.

– whereas A and B found the physical environment to be not an impediment. B, like C, wants to distance himself from the secular environment and uses a Rule to achieve that. Occasionally he withdraws himself physically to a retreat house –

²⁰ Bickers, *op. cit* pp.31-2

²¹ Brushwyler *op. cit.* p.12

B: Physical surroundings are not important. What does make a difference is lack of interruptions. Y introduced me to the idea of a Rule of Life. I use that by stopping at times during the day (which I set). Mentally I step out of the secular world for a bit ... getting away on retreat not the same thing but for me it is important. It allows more of chance to spend significant time with God. I value the Benedictine virtues of stability and obedience.

The value that B obtains from Benedictine spirituality is significant. The topic has been developed in an article²² for *Ministers-At-Work* by Chris Knights, responding to the Affirmation by the Church of England's General Synod that 'daily work, be it paid or unpaid is affirmed as essentially a spiritual activity'. Knights quotes Okholm's dictum that 'because Benedictine spirituality wants no sectors of life to be isolated from God's presence, work becomes a means through which we can know and love God more deeply'.

A agrees with B in finding the physical environment to present no problem. (Since A and B both have private offices at their workplace their circumstances are more favourable in this regard than some workers experience.)

A: This concerns the spiritual environment; the physical environment is not really an issue.

But A identifies a recollection issue which might otherwise be seen as one of integrity –

A: For example prayer around workplace 'enemies', competitors and rivals. The analogy that struck me was prayer used by Sevens teams and other sports teams – particularly noticeable when the players are Pacific Islanders. I wonder whether they all pray for a win, and would like to think that as much as anything they are praying for the

²² Knights, C: "Work as a spiritual activity and the Rule of St Benedict", in *Ministers-At Work* 109 (April 2009) pp 24-28

conduct of the game and for the opposing team members as people. It has been helpful to bounce these dilemmas off X.

These MSE's attested to the fact that for them, physical environment does not impede spirituality. Beyond that, the subject of recollection evokes a wide range of responses both among interviewees and within the literature. The great variety of opinions revealed here suggests that spiritual directors should be prepared for responses over the recollection issue to vary greatly from individual to individual.

Human Relationships

While acknowledging human relationships as being an exterior rather than an interior category, A was very clear that he thought it fair to include them in the purview of spiritual direction. In his opinion

... there are relationship issues that are issues for spiritual direction rather than supervision. Supervision addresses the exterior aspects of the relationships: spiritual direction addresses the interior issues that arise through operating in the sphere of relationships.

A provided some examples of what he was talking about – the recognition, raised in direction, that

... my reticence in raising certain issues with loved ones is a result of the fear of losing what is precious due to vulnerability in the most intimate of relationships;

... lack of courage might be addressed by caring for the small boy within who fears making a mistake and incurring the anger of his father.

... [my wife] says that spiritual direction has helped me reflect on, get in touch with, and express my feelings.

The boundary between spiritual direction and counselling is never entirely clear and it would be a bold director who held out against A's contention

that these matters are appropriate to spiritual direction. In my opinion, the fact that A raises these matters as affecting his relationship with God, validates them as proper concerns for the spiritual direction activity. Another commentator, more concerned to preserve the purity of definitions, might disagree.

Supervision and Pastoral Care

Although spiritual direction, supervision and pastoral care are different fields, the danger exists that an MSE would miss out on some of them. That may be a matter of circumstance, or perhaps a gap in ecclesiastical practice. It was important enough as an issue for B to opine:

An MSE may be short on pastoral care. And also on supervision: I don't have a supervisor. So some of both creeps into spiritual direction. Y knows that and we have explored the differences, which has been productive.

Clarity about the differences is helpful but does not fix the root problem, and the conscientious director will be placed in a quandary: whether to follow Y's example and supply what's missing, or to cast the problem back on the directee. Two other answers would be (a) to bring the deficiency to the attention of the directee's ecclesiastical judicatory and invite them to repair it, (b) to nominate particular sessions as being not for spiritual direction at all, but committed rather to one of the other support areas. Transparency is the key: protracted ambiguity confuses the issues and leaves the directee worse off than before.

Conclusion

This paper describes the Minister in Secular Employment (MSE) as a Christian who is trying to live out the principles of bi-vocationalism. Both the call to ministry and the call to a secular occupation are valued: the ministerial role is more than just a hobby, and the secular profession is more than just a way to pay the rent. It delineates the character of the spiritual landscape they inhabit, and their need for spiritual direction. Six spiritual issues are identified for particular consideration.

1. **Identity:** The MSE must attempt to use the tension between business and faith to create a combination of economic and spiritual activity. Various strategies come into play, and spiritual direction may help that process.
2. **Motivation:** Some interviewees found that spiritual direction helped them to validate their call to ministry.
3. **Integrity:** The quest for integrity was perceived as a facet of the quest for identity.
4. **Recollection:** Accessing one's spirituality while in the secular setting was seen as important, but not a difficulty for these interviewees.
5. **Relationships:** For one interviewee, relationship issues were a valued aspect of spiritual direction.
6. **Supervision and Pastoral Care:** The risk was considered of pressure for spiritual direction to cover fields not properly its own.

MSE's are in the secular workforce and benefit from the same skilful spiritual direction as a director might offer to any other secularly employed Christian, giving attention to the matters exposed in this paper. And since MSE's are *ministers*, their ministry will benefit from their director's understanding of the spiritual issues encountered here.

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