

Priests in Secular Employment

by

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Abstract

This study addresses the ministries of priests in secular employment, defined as *persons who hold a current bishop's licence to a function reserved to the priesthood, and are in full-time paid employment within organizations in whose organizational mission statement, there appears no explicit reference to God or Christ*. It considers two basic theses. One, that the ministry of a priest in secular employment possesses characteristics which make it distinctive among other ministries; two, that PSE ministry can be helped or hindered by the appropriate or inappropriate application of resources.

The paper clarifies some of the specific contributions that PSEs can offer in their ministries, and particular features which make them unique and different both from priests in full-time paid ministry and priests who are retired, unwaged or self-employed. Seven topics are given detailed consideration: *Theological Underpinnings, Ecclesial Issues, Workplace Issues, Formation, Deployment, Oversight & Support and Spiritual Direction*. A substantial body of relevant literature is discovered, much of it from theological sources and much from secular writing.

Attempts to integrate priestly ministry with workplace ministry call for theological reflection upon the spirituality of the secular workplace, and the holistic theological position emerges as the one that validates a PSE's ministry. Volunteerism is considered for its major implications, as are the constraints of regular employment, organisational culture and work ethics as they relate to ministry. Ways are sought to leverage the PSE's unique contribution in the kinds of communities for which such a contribution might be most effective.

Introduction

Around the country, around the world, there is a band of Anglican priests who are also something else than priests. Monday to Saturday, they do some other kind of work to meet their material needs and those of their families. These priests, as well as being priests, are also bakers and biochemists, teachers and technologists, mechanics and managers. They are the Anglican *priests in secular employment*, ordained to the priesthood yet dependent upon the capitalist world to provide their daily bread. Some PSEs¹ are glad to have secular jobs and to practise the skills they are employed for; to others, their work in the secular world is a chore, a bore and little more than a grubby means to a holier end.

PSEs are *bi-vocational* — it is that aspect of their ministry by which they are here defined. A general expectation may be that the PSE will look wholly to their secular employment for economic support, nevertheless the literature reviewed here includes bi-vocational models which provide for the church to provide some measure of financial backing. Accordingly, how much church funding is committed to the priest's material sustenance or exactly whence it comes, are matters of no crucial importance in the PSE debate. Indeed, it will become apparent that no PSE's ministry is cost-free², even where the church offers no stipend. What counts is that the PSE is doing ministry in parallel with another occupation which is not of the church, an occupation which presumably is part of God's plan for their life, an occupation which offers vocational, social and spiritual interaction beyond the confines of the church's organisation. In such a context the issue of stipendiary versus non-stipendiary is of minor significance. What really counts is uni-vocational versus bi-vocational.

This paper reflects upon the ministries of priests of the bivocational kind. It explores an extensive body of material and attempts to map out the conceptual territory that needs to be covered in such reflection. In so doing the study offers a schema for formulating theological, ecclesiological, managerial, educational and spiritual questions for research

¹ In some judicatories, the term *bi-vocational minister* is abbreviated to BVM. Anglicans may be divided on whether this acronym can be appropriated from its present application.

² A quick back-of-an envelope calculation identifies the monetary cost of supporting a PSE in the field to be in the order of two thousand NZ dollars per year.

and policy relating to PSEs. The discourse gropes some way down each of those paths without claiming the acute insights that come with specialised knowledge in those fields. Inevitably such a study must overlook some points and misrepresent others; the conceptual map will include some entries in the character of 'heere be dragons'. For such oversights and misrepresentations, the author claims full responsibility and would encourage those better informed than himself to write the papers that will supply the deficiencies.

The notion of priests earning a living by secular means has a long history, occasionally glorious. It reached something of a pinnacle with the *prêtres-ouvriers* (worker priests) who became a cause célèbre in France during the 1940s and early 1950s. Over the last fifty years the movement has grown and spread across denominational boundaries so that most Protestant denominations now include among their ordained clergy a certain number who earn the larger part of their income outside their church. There are major organisations with international memberships: the ones most relevant to our purpose are the British-based, ecumenical *Christians in Secular Ministry* (CHRISM) and the American Episcopalian organisation NASSAM (*National Association of Self Supporting Active Ministers*).

Another series of issues currently active in New Zealand are those associated with the limited-licensing of priests. Those issues have their own theology and praxis which are distinct from the ones driving the PSE concept. A particular individual may find themselves ordained as a PSE and possessed of a limited-licence. But the debates are different and therefore licensing is an issue which this paper does not address.

What this study does aim to clarify is the specific contribution that PSEs can make in their ministries, and to emphasise particular features which make that contribution unique. Important differences will be found between the character of PSE ministry and the ministries of priests in full-time paid ministry. Equally important differences will be found between PSE ministry and the ministries of priests who run their own businesses, also those who subsist on a pension or the income from accumulated savings.

Records are not currently kept of bi-vocational ministries. The term, *non-stipendiary minister*, gets applied indiscriminately to any ordained person whose ministry makes

little or no call on the finances of diocese and parish. *Self-supporting clergy*³ is an equivalent label sometimes used to soften the language. But many non-stipendiary ministers are self-employed, privately wealthy or beneficiaries; valuable though their ministries may be, they are not the subject of this investigation.

The study addresses two basic theses. One, that the ministry of a priest in secular employment possesses characteristics which make it distinctive among other ministries; two, that PSE ministry can be helped or hindered by the appropriate or inappropriate application of resources.

Seven topics have been selected for detailed consideration. They fall into three categories -

1. ***Theological Underpinnings***. The theological basis, if any can be found, for ministry in the PSE mould,

2. ***Ecclesial Issues***, and

3. ***Workplace Issues***. Particular opportunities and challenges encountered by PSEs' colleagues in ministry, by their colleagues in employment, and by PSEs themselves in these contexts,

4. ***Formation***,

5. ***Deployment***,

6. ***Oversight & Support***, and

7. ***Spiritual Direction***. Four aspects critical to the shape and success of a PSE ministry.

³ A term which has its own sad irony. It invites comparison with those military exercises in which a soldier is parachuted into hostile territory with neither food nor equipment, and left to survive as best he may.

There are some areas pertinent to the field of priesthood in secular employment which this study does not address. No space, for example, is devoted to the stories of individual PSEs — there is plenty to learn from them, but they need to be better told than can be done here. Equally, no consideration is given to matters of discernment in the call to PSE, although some of the material included here will provide the perceptive reader with some pretty strong hints.

Another important limitation is that this document addresses specifically Tikanga Pakeha⁴ issues and opportunities. It has nothing to say concerning PSEs in Tikanga Maori or Tikanga Pasifika. Each culture owns particular understandings about work, and particular understandings about God. While some of the insights incorporated in this document have their origins in Maori thought, it is not claimed that the conclusions can be applied to ministry among Maori.

Because so little attention has been directed to PSE style ministry, existing literature which is relevant to the PSE's situation seldom appears under such a label. Yet there does exist a substantial amount if you seek it, as the bibliography reveals. To find pertinent material, one must search works on sociology, politics, labour relations in addition to theology and ecclesiology — what would normally serve as a literature review is more appropriately a literature survey.

A word on writing style. The criteria spelled out in *The New Zealand Style Book* have been scrupulously applied. What may however slightly surprise some Anglican readers, is the sparing use of capital letters — a measure enabling the reader's eye to glide effortlessly along the printed line, as modern practice encourages. Proper nouns have been given capitals, but priests, vicars, bishops and churches all appear in these pages with lower-case initial letters except where a particular one is being identified by title.

Finally, the bibliography prepared for this paper is seen as a research outcome in its own right. Accompanying the bibliography itself is the collection *Notes & Quotes*: a one-page commentary on each of the sources, with my observations and a bunch of

⁴ Since 1989 the Anglican Church in New Zealand has organised itself around its cultural streams, or *tikanga*. 'Tikanga' is a multi-valued Maori word with associations similar to the English word 'way'. Anglicans who align themselves with the indigenous Polynesian culture are *Tikanga Maori*; immigrants from the Pacific island nations form *Tikanga Pasifika*; those who pursue Anglo-Saxon traditions are known as *Tikanga Pakeha*.

quotations, some of which have found their way into the text. In this document's electronic manifestation, the little blue arrow  alongside each reference is hyperlinked to the Notes & Quotes on the CD thus making them more accessible than paper documents allow. And to allow for continued growth in the Notes & Quotes, a website has been placed on the Web at www.tekauri.com/fishing/fishrefs.asp as a service to other researchers in the field.

An advanced feature of the electronic version of this document is provided for readers who peruse the text while connected to the internet. Clicking on the button below connects this document's endnotes to the web-based database instead of the CD, exchanging the  icon for . Doing so has a number of advantages, chief of which is that the online database will continue to develop through time, while the contents of the CD remain static as at time of submission.

Literature Survey

The beginnings of this study lie in the literature that appeared to have a bearing upon the life, ministry and relationships of the priest in secular employment. This literature survey — not a literature review in the academic sense — has a broad aim: to identify potentially relevant authors and the texts they have left us. The survey is wide ranging, rather than tightly focused.

In the hope that the reader will feel encouraged toward a broad reading of that useful literature, in this chapter citations are made at the title level and page references mostly avoided. Later chapters provide the fine detail of specific quotations upon which this study's argument rests. And, as remarked in the introduction, a good proportion of the useful publications are secular in origin.

Theological Underpinnings

Modern writers on the theology of Christian ministry are unanimous that ministry finds its origin in the salvic ministry of Jesus himself. Authentic Christian ministry involves a participation in Christ's own ministerial mission and power, and the risen Jesus remains actively present in and through the whole people of God which is a holy priesthood⁵. That Jesus himself left the church a conception of ministry is asserted by Oden⁶ who observes that Jesus addressed and called individuals into discipleship, taught and nurtured them toward apostolicity and then sent them out with the promise of his own continuing presence. While Booth⁷ sees a distinction between mission and ministry, there is general consensus that participation in the ministry of Christ means an ongoing cooperation between Christ and the community in establishing the kingdom of God⁸. That all Christian ministry takes its source from Christ our one high priest has been articulated in official documents both Anglican and ecumenical^{9,10}.

⁵ [↗](#) Hebrews 6: 1 - 20

⁶ [↗](#) Oden, Thomas C.: *Pastoral Theology - Essentials of Ministry* (New York, HarperCollins, 1983)

⁷ [↗](#) Booth, Ken: *Anyone for Ordination ?* (Christchurch, Author, 1979)

⁸ [↗](#) Richardson, Alan & Bowden, John (eds): *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology* (London, SCM Press, 1983)

⁹ [↗](#) Webster, John R: "Ministry and priesthood", in Sykes, Stephen & Booty, John (eds): *The Study of Anglicanism* (London, SPCK, 1988) pp 285 - 296

Schillebeeckx¹¹ and Cooke¹² are just two of the commentators who remind us that historically, and according to the New Testament, Christ and the Christian community alone were priestly; the whole of the believing community concelebrated. Those views are reflected in modern ordinals: in the New Zealand Ordinal¹³ great emphasis is placed upon the communal and societal nature of ministry. All who believe and are baptised receive from the Holy Spirit a ministry to proclaim Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

Today there is general recognition that the church not only contains but needs many roles and functions in its administration, witness, and service as well as in its liturgy¹⁴. The particular character of the ordained is set against the background of many different, non-ministerial services in the church. Much of what the ordained actually do, belongs properly to any Christian — though not all Christians claim the dedication or freedom to undertake it¹⁵. The ordained do not monopolise all ministerial gifts, authority and responsibility, nor do they merely function to preserve the external order of the community^{16,17}.

Individuals called clergy plainly do exist and function however, in three varieties according to Berkhof¹⁸: a Catholic, or high-church type, a classical Reformed type, and a free-church or low-church type. Berkhof finds it ‘remarkable’ that all three types can appeal to the New Testament for their authority, and provides the references¹⁹.

¹⁰ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ (Pelly et al): Commission Report: *A Theology of priesthood for New Zealand* (Wellington, General Synod, 1982)

¹¹ [↗](#) Schillebeeckx, Edward: *Ministry: A case for change* (London, SCM, 1981)

¹² [↗](#) Cooke, Bernard: *Ministry to Word and Sacraments: History and Theology* (Philadelphia, OA, Fortress Press, 1976)

¹³ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ: *A New Zealand Prayer Book/He Karakia Mihinare mo Aotearoa* (London, Collins, 1989)

¹⁴ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Canada: *Book of Alternative Services* (1985)

¹⁵ [↗](#) Cooke, op. cit.

¹⁶ [↗](#) Schillebeeckx, op. cit.

¹⁷ [↗](#) Richardson, & Bowden, op. cit

¹⁸ [↗](#) Berkhof, Henrikus: *Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1986)

¹⁹ [↗](#) Berkhof, op. cit.

Cooke, Schillebeeckx and Booth all emphasise that ordination does not confer any personal status or privilege^{20,21,22,23}. In Presbyterian ecclesiology the Ministry of the Word is given particular emphasis²⁴.

According the ordinal in our *A New Zealand Prayer Book*, clergy in our church do have a ministry of leadership: a ministry of service; a sacral ministry; a ministry to proclaim God's word and take their part in Christ's prophetic work²⁵. As well as individual call, ministry is a publicly acknowledged office that carries corporate responsibilities and corporate acknowledgement²⁶. An ordained person presides over the sacraments because the sacraments are expressions of the corporate life of the church, and therefore the presidency rests in the person who oversees the corporate life and ministry of the church²⁷. In *Te Reo o te Komiti Tumuaki*²⁸ George Connor created the metaphor of the clergy as a skeleton, providing the framework within which the body can function as a body.

While pre-Reformation clergy were ordained to an 'office', often unconnected with parochial duties and late medieval clergy were engaged in all kinds of 'clerical' activity, Reformed concepts of the clergy emphasised the pastoral function of the minister to a particular community²⁹. Anglican rules in New Zealand today are to ordain a person only when there is a licence to be issued; the bishop is expected not to ordain someone unless there is a position for them that s/he is going to issue them a licence for.³⁰

Presbyterianism too is particularly strong on this point: Presbyterian practice is to ordain

²⁰ [↗](#) Presbyterian Church of New Zealand : *Book of Order - Statement on Ordination* (February 2003)

²¹ [↗](#) Cooke, op. cit.

²² [↗](#) Kennedy, Philip: *Schillebeeckx* (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1993)

²³ [↗](#) Booth, op. cit.

²⁴ [↗](#) Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, op. cit.

²⁵ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ op. cit. (1989)

²⁶ [↗](#) Gilmour, Calum: *Sacraments, Sacramental Life, Sacramental Ministry* (Auckland, Polygraphia, 2000)

²⁷ [↗](#) Booth, op. cit.

²⁸ [↗](#) quoted in Booth, op.cit.

²⁹ [↗](#) Fuller, John & Vaughan, Patrick (eds): *Working for the Kingdom - The Story of Ministers in Secular Employment* (London, SPCK, 1986)

³⁰ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia: *Canons and Statutes* (1986 1987 1989 1992) Title G Canon XIII - Of Holy Orders in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

a person only when the church is ready to induct them into a settled charge or defined sphere of work³¹.

Alexander revives consideration of the role of deacon, which may be a particularly suitable ministry for clergy in secular employment³². He goes so far as to propose a change in the canons that would relieve the prerequisite for persons ordained priest to be ordained deacon beforehand.

Turning to the world we call secular, it has its own beliefs and ethics. Secularism is 'the explicit denial of the sacred' in Niebuhr's definition,³³ and we see ample evidence of that in it in public life and government^{34,35,36}. Its origins, suggests Luckmann, lie not in the church's retreat before a historical wave of hostile ideologies and value-systems (such as 'faith in science') but rather in

... the shrinking relevance of the values, institutionalised in church religion, for the integration and legitimation of everyday life in modern society.³⁷

Luckman explores and to some extent explains, how this phenomenon developed within an industrialising Europe in the post-medieval period, and shows that it was not inevitable but the consequence of social and political dynamics.^{38,39}

Reactions to rampant technocratic materialism have themselves taken various forms of counter-culture, spiritual though not necessarily Christian⁴⁰. A form whose character is

³¹ [↵](#) Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, op. cit.

³² [↵](#) Alexander, Neil J: "A Call to Adventure - seven propositions on ministry" in Armentrout (ed): *The Sacred History - Anglican Reflections for John Booty* (Cambridge, Mass, Cowley, 1990) pp 21-30

³³ [↵](#) Brown, R.M.(ed): *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr* (New Haven, Yale, 1986)

³⁴ [↵](#) Kerr, Fergus G.: "The Latent Spirituality of the Counter Culture", in *Concilium*, vol 9 no 7 (London, Burns & Oates, 1971), pp.63-73

³⁵ [↵](#) Brash, Don: State of the Nation speech (Orewa Rotary Club) TV3 Transcript 27 Jan 2004

³⁶ [↵](#) Haines, Leah: "Mallard red-faced on mosque", in *The Dominion Post* (Wellington, 5 March 2004)

³⁷ [↵](#) Luckmann, Thomas: *The Invisible Religion* (London, Heinemann, 1967) p. 39

³⁸ [↵](#) Luckman, op.cit

³⁹ [↵](#) Luckmann, Thomas: *Life-world and Social Realities* (London, Heinemann, 1983)

⁴⁰ [↵](#) Kerr, op. cit.

uniquely New Zealand's, has been a superficial acquiescence to Maori spiritual elements^{41,42} in situations where Pakeha Christian spirituality is vigorously suppressed.

Behind secularism lies the protestant work ethic. That ethic does not deny God, rather it builds a Christian framework into which work for money may comfortably fit.

Furnham⁴³, quoting Barclay⁴⁴ has no doubt of the centrality of work in the Christian ethic. Barclay says that Christian ethics stress the right of a person to work, to a living wage, and to reasonable working conditions. Oates⁴⁵ and Cherrington⁴⁶ go further: a universal taboo is placed on idleness, and industriousness is considered a religious ideal; waste is a vice, and frugality a virtue; complacency and failure are outlawed, and ambition and success are taken as sure signs of God's favour. Poverty is seen as the universal sign of sin, and the crowning sign of God's favour is wealth. Yet the connection between work and wealth is recent, a connection far younger than the connection between Christ and his people — as any labour historian will attest⁴⁷.

Appeal is commonly made to biblical precedent as a way to make 'work' respectable^{48,49}. That Saint Paul continued his tentmaking trade into his apostleship has been much quoted as a justification for bi-vocational ministries. Many supporters of the PSE concept also derive from *Genesis*⁵⁰ an affirmation of the value of 'work' because God did it in creating the world. The World Council of Churches⁵¹ and Pope John

⁴¹ [↗](#) Brash, op. ct.

⁴² [↗](#) Devreux, Monique / NZPA : "Student quits school over necklace ruling" in *NZ Herald* (Auckland, 27 February 2004)

⁴³ [↗](#) Furnham, Adrian: *The Protestant Work Ethic* (London, Routledge, 1990)

⁴⁴ [↗](#) Barclay, W: *Ethics in a Permissive Society* (London, Fontana, 1972)

⁴⁵ [↗](#) Oates, W: *Confessions of a Workaholic: The Facts about Work Addiction* (NY, World Publishing, 1971)

⁴⁶ [↗](#) Cherrington, D: *The Work Ethic: Working Values and Values that Work* (New York, AMACOM, 1980)

⁴⁷ [↗](#) Engels, Frederick (trans. Paul Sweezy): *Selected Works* (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969) Vol 1, pp. 81-97

⁴⁸ [↗](#) I Corinthians 12

⁴⁹ [↗](#) Ecclesiasticus 38

⁵⁰ [↗](#) Genesis 1

⁵¹ [↗](#) quoted in Beder, Sharon: *Selling the Work Ethic: From Puritan Pulpit to Corporate PR* (New York, Zed, 2000)

Paul II⁵² have published opinions supporting the Protestant Work Ethic, though in softer and more general terms.

In dualistic theologies, the secular world is not where God is, and it is not the Christian's business to have any truck with it⁵³. As Jesus is stranger in the world⁵⁴, so will the apostles be strangers; the apostolic mission being sent from God into the world is therefore not finally explainable in term of the world's criteria⁵⁵. Such theology clearly underlay the 1559 Ordinal⁵⁶. Dualism also persists in modern times, not only as a yearning for a spirituality that still works for some people, but as Hind observes⁵⁷ in inverted 'neo-dualistic' forms which see the destiny of the world as something inherent in the world itself.

Against the dualistic theologies stand the holistic theologies articulated by such as Kirkland⁵⁸, Mackenzie⁵⁹ and Rayner⁶⁰. Quoting Joseph, Nehemiah, Daniel and Esther as leading figures in the bible story who were nevertheless 'not professional religious', Mackenzie and Kirkland commit themselves to the holistic theology⁶¹. Rayner explains how it is holistic theology which drives ministry combined with secular employment. In order to acquire a new, post-modern view of human beings and the earth, culture and nature, the reader is urged to integrate human culture into the nature of the earth, the human spirit into the nature of the body, and modern instrumental reason into wider

⁵² [↗](#) Pope John Paul II: *Laborem Exercens*, Encyclical Letter 1981, encyclicals of 1987 and 1981

⁵³ [↗](#) McFague, Sallie: *Models of God* (Philadelphia, Fortress, 1987)

⁵⁴ [↗](#) John 17: 6 - 14

⁵⁵ [↗](#) Oden, op. cit.

⁵⁶ [↗](#) Church of England: *Book of Common Prayer* - Ordinals 1550, 1552, 1559

⁵⁷ [↗](#) Hind, John: "Varieties of priesthood", in Fuller & Vaughan, op. cit. pp 88-92

⁵⁸ [↗](#) Kirkland, Wayne: "God's Co-Workers", *Reality Magazine*, iss 38 (May 2003)

⁵⁹ [↗](#) Walker, Chris: "An Interview with Alistair MacKenzie", *Reality Magazine* iss 38

⁶⁰ [↗](#) Rayner, Keith: "Reflection on the theology of ordained ministry in secular employment", in Francis & Francis op. cit pp 287-295

⁶¹ [↗](#) Mackenzie, A & Kirkland, W: *Where's God on Monday ?* (Christchurch NZ, NavPress, 2002)

cohesions of wisdom^{62,63}. The notion of humanity's dominion over nature as expressed in *Genesis*⁶⁴ is seen as a mistake, and in need of revision.

Some secular writers dismiss the switch of viewpoint from dualism to holism as philosophical opportunism whose aim is clerical self-preservation through 'relevance'⁶⁵. That may be too harsh a judgement. Nevertheless Mantle⁶⁶ and others who claim that PSEs have failed to articulate any theology as a rationale for their own ministries may have a point. Holism appears to provide the core of that missing theology.

Duquoq's critique of public and private spirituality⁶⁷ suggests that the relationship between sacred and secular is complex, and that discovering that relationship is our theological task. A former archbishop of Canterbury has said⁶⁸ that Christianity can claim to be both sacred and secular, while denying that this conclusion represents a facile compromise. The church is not seen to be in a position where risk lies in one direction and safety in another⁶⁹ but is called to engage in a costly, dangerous interrelation.

Ecclesial Issues

That the priesthood of all believers has never meant the priesthood of each independent believer but rather of the whole community unified in Christ the high priest, is a view asserted by Oden⁷⁰ among many others. Acknowledging the whole people of God as a priesthood, Alexander⁷¹ asserts that priests exist in relationship to the whole church from within and have no life of their own apart from the church. How this works is

⁶² [↗](#) Pollard, T. Evan: *The Fulness of Humanity* (Almond Press, Sheffield, 1982)

⁶³ [↗](#) Moltmann, Jürgen: *God for a secular Society* (Trans Margaret Kohl)(Fortress, Minneapolis, 1999)

⁶⁴ [↗](#) Genesis 1

⁶⁵ [↗](#) Anthony, P.D.: *The Ideology of Work* (London, Tavistock, 1977)

⁶⁶ [↗](#) Skinner, Michael: "Priest Workers Vs Worker Priests", in *Rochester Link* (Rochester,anglicanjournal.com July/August 2002)

⁶⁷ [↗](#) Duquoq, Christian (trans John Griffiths): "Spirituality: A Private or a Public Phenomenon ?", in *Concilium*, vol 9 no 7 (London, Burns & Oates, 1971), pp.13-28

⁶⁸ [↗](#) Ramsey, Archbishop Arthur Michael: *Sacred and Secular* (London, Longmans, 1965)

⁶⁹ [↗](#) Chadwick, Owen: "Tentmakers", in Francis & Francis op. cit. pp 81-90

⁷⁰ [↗](#) Oden, op. cit.

⁷¹ [↗](#) Alexander, Neil J: "A Call to Adventure - seven propositions on ministry" in Armentrout (ed): *The Sacred History - Anglican Reflections for John Booty* (Cambridge, Mass, Cowley, 1990) pp 21-30

something that various authors have explored^{72,73} in an attempt at clarification. Priests do have their own integrity, but such integrity is based upon a clarity of function from within the church. Clericalism — confusion between the status of individuals and a theological understanding of their calling — is condemned by Thompsett⁷⁴ for disabling relationships by devaluing laity, exaggerating clerical status and encouraging withdrawal into a narrowly defined parochial context. Nevertheless, a priestly role and a suitably circumscribed ordained ministry is valid, says Oden, and ordination does separate the priest from the faithful layperson. Oden's view however is challenged by Stevens⁷⁵ who calls it eloquent but substantially unbiblical.

The concept of priest is elusive however. Ordination as sacramental intensification of the baptismal character⁷⁶ doesn't distinguish a priestly ministry from other ministries. And the New Testament knows nothing of individuals in the church called priests, as Booth⁷⁷ and others remind us. In Harvey's view⁷⁸ the presbyterial role is a theological vacuum into which have fallen the ministries of sacramental president, pastor, minister of the word, authority figure. According to both Booth and Oden⁷⁹, the historical church's conception of ordination has changed in history and should continue to change — the church's conflicts, sufferings, and limitations have provided it with a variety of experience as it has struggled through the different stages of its historical development.

The New Zealand ordinal of 1989⁸⁰ is uncompromising in its commitment to the ministry of all the baptised, great emphasis being placed upon the communal and societal nature of that ministry. The ministry of all Christians is asserted by virtue of their baptism; some members of the baptised community are seen as being called and

⁷² [↗](#) Sykes, Stephen & Booty, John (eds): *The Study of Anglicanism* (London, SPCK, 1988)

⁷³ [↗](#) Beguerie, Phillippe & Duchesneau, Claude (trans John Bowden): *How to Understand the Sacraments* (London, SCM Press, 1991)

⁷⁴ [↗](#) Thompsett, Fredrica Harris: "The Laity", in Sykes & Booty, op. cit. pp 245 - 260

⁷⁵ [↗](#) Stevens, R. Paul: *The Other Six Days - vocation, work, ministry in biblical perspective* (Carlisle, Paternoster, 1999)

⁷⁶ [↗](#) Alexander, op. cit.

⁷⁷ [↗](#) Booth, Ken: "Dog collar Confusion", in *Anglican Taonga*, Christmas '02 (Christchurch, 2002)

⁷⁸ [↗](#) Harvey, E.A: *Priest or President ?* (London, SPCK, 1975)

⁷⁹ [↗](#) Oden, op. cit.

⁸⁰ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ op. cit. (1989) pp. 898-909

empowered to fulfil an ordained ministry, and to enable the total mission of the church. All clergy at ordination make the commitment to work in partnership with their sisters and brothers in Christ's service, but Davis suggests⁸¹ that there is still some way to go before these understandings become general throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

There is ample evidence of PSEs at all stages of the church's development according to Vaughan⁸², and in this he is supported by a former archbishop of Canterbury⁸³. The characteristic task of the PSE's ministry within the church is delineated by Johnson⁸⁴ while Bickers contends that⁸⁵ since a pastor's primary role is to challenge, encourage, and train church members, the bi-vocational pastor has a unique opportunity to model that type of ministry to his church. Roland Allen, that passionate critic of the professional full-time model for clergy, characterises full-timers as

cut off by training and life from that common experience [and] constantly struggling to get close to the laity by wearing lay clothing, sharing in lay amusements, and organizing lay clubs; but they never quite succeed. To get close to men [*sic*], it is necessary really to share their experience, and to share their experience is to share it by being in it, not merely to come as near to it as possible without being in it.⁸⁶

PSEs, by virtue of their situation, identify with fellow employees⁸⁷ every bit as much as with the Christian community which has called them to be ordained ministers.

In relation to other ministries within the Christian community, Alexander proposes⁸⁸ some guidelines that would enable a PSE to find a proper role and praxis, particularly in relation to the laity and the diaconate. The PSE's role is that of any priest — in Booth's

⁸¹ [↗](#) Davis, Archbishop Brian: *The Way Ahead - Anglican change and prospect in New Zealand* (Christchurch, Caxton, 1995)

⁸² [↗](#) Fuller & Vaughan, op. cit.

⁸³ [↗](#) Ramsay, Archbishop Arthur Michael: Undocumented quote

⁸⁴ [↗](#) Johnson, Dorrie: "Ordained Ministers in Secular Employment", *Theology* vol 101 no 799 (Jan/Feb 1998) pp.22-28

⁸⁵ [↗](#) Bickers, Dennis W: *The Tentmaking Pastor - The joy of bi-vocational ministry* (Baker, Grand Rapids MI, 2000)

⁸⁶ [↗](#) Allen, Roland *Non-professional Missionaries* (Amenbury, Eng., 1929)

⁸⁷ [↗](#) Alexander, op. cit.

⁸⁸ [↗](#) Alexander, op. cit.

account⁸⁹ to know the story and be a wise counselor, gathering the church and keeping it true to its calling. How a PSE's ministry differs from that of a deacon in secular employment is something that Alexander explores while he vigorously attacks the proposition that orders of ministry are rungs on a ladder. Some see the crisis of identity of the priesthood as a crisis of identity for the Christian community⁹⁰, and a fear has been expressed that the presence of PSEs may have the effect of reducing lay ministries within the local church^{91,92}, though it is not laypeople who are articulating that fear. The fear among priests that what they do could be done better by a man or woman in the pews, has been attributed⁹³ to undue emphasis on rules and functions and misunderstanding of priestly vocation and lay vocation.

In a chapter entitled 'Bi-vocational ministry may be for your church', Bickers⁹⁴ lists advantages and disadvantages of having a bi-vocational pastor. A telling critique, however, is that of Keizer, himself a PSE⁹⁵. Defending the 'old model' of ministry on the grounds that it does achieve some good things in an imperfect world, Keizer observes that a small church 'liberated' from the burden of paying a full-time minister can become liberated from any financial motivation to reach out to youth, to children, to the elderly, and come to think that they need only minister to the members of their own clique.

The research undertaken by Brushwyler⁹⁶ led him to conclude that bi-vocational clergy wanted to be connected with their denominational structures and personnel, particularly at the associational and middle judicatory levels. PSEs themselves agree: they point

⁸⁹ [Booth](#), op. cit. (2002)

⁹⁰ [Schillebeeckx](#), Edward & Metz, Johann-Baptist (eds): *Concilium: The Right of the Community to a priest* (Edinburgh, Clark, 1980)

⁹¹ [Schillebeeckx & Metz](#), op. cit.

⁹² [Gilberd](#), Bruce C: "Community priests in the New Zealand Anglican church" in Francis & Francis, op. cit. pp 127-135

⁹³ [Williams](#), Cardinal Tom: Sermon at annual Chrism Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Wgton, reported in *Wel-com*, 196, (Wellington, 12 May 2003)

⁹⁴ [Bickers](#), Dennis W: *The Tentmaking Pastor: The joy of bivocational ministry* (Baker, Grand Rapids MI, 2000)

⁹⁵ [Keizer](#), Garret: "Career ministry. (Two cheers for professional clergy)" *The Christian Century*, v119 i9 (April 24, 2002) p30 (4)

⁹⁶ [Brushwyler](#), L. Ronald: *Bi-Vocational Pastors: A Research Report* (Chicago, Midwest Ministry Development Service, 1992)

out⁹⁷ that many of them are highly regarded in their communities and congregations, yet are viewed by their colleagues in the clerical order as suspect or of questionable value. Lack of support by judicatory leaders was, in Brushwyler's contention, not intentional but rather the result of their failure to think bi-vocationally. His opinion was that greater care needs to be taken to ensure that bi-vocational ministries were fully included in the search and call process, and that successful bi-vocational models needed to be visibly celebrated.

Reports may be found of tension between PSEs and the parochial system⁹⁸ which underpins the locally referenced ministries explored in a Tikanga Pakeha publication⁹⁹, while Lobinger and Zulehner offer a scheme of Pauline and Corinthian priests¹⁰⁰. However we need to acknowledge that writings out of England exhibit a fundamental underlying proposition: a national church for all the people of the nation. Such a proposition limits the usefulness of English experience for the New Zealand context, where from the 1840s citizens have had a free choice of religions — or of no religion at all. Here, active participation in a church is a private option of the individual¹⁰¹.

A study of the French experiment with worker-priests from 1943 to 1954 from an ecclesial viewpoint^{102,103,104,105,106,107} showed up the radical effects a worker-priesthood can have on the concept of church, priest and ministry. Traditional French theology that seeks to 'interest' people into the sacraments and the life of the church gave place to

⁹⁷ [↗](#) Short, James R.: *Outer Fringe Or Cutting Edge?: Worker-priests in the Episcopal Church*

⁹⁸ [↗](#) Mantle, John: *Britain's First Worker-priests: radical ministry in a post-war setting* (London, SCM 2000)

⁹⁹ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand: *Mutual Ministry Guidelines - Tikanga Pakeha* (1996)

¹⁰⁰ [↗](#) Lobinger, Fritz and Zulehner, Paul: "Priests for tomorrow", *The Tablet* (London, February 15, 2003)

¹⁰¹ [↗](#) Booth, op. cit. (1979)

¹⁰² [↗](#) Fuller & Vaughan, op. cit.

¹⁰³ [↗](#) Petrie, John (trans): *The Worker Priests* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1956)

¹⁰⁴ [↗](#) Arnal, Oscar L: *Priests in Working-Class Blue- the history of the worker-priests (1943-1954)* (NY, Paulist Press, 1986)

¹⁰⁵ [↗](#) Collins, Peter: *The Demise of the Worker Priests* (Uniya Newsletter: Autumn 1995, p 12)

¹⁰⁶ [↗](#) Corley, Felix : "Fr. Jacques Loew: Spawned the Worker-priest Movement", *The Catholic-Labor Network*, February 27, 1999

¹⁰⁷ [↗](#) Perrin, Henri - trans Wall, Bernard: *Priest and Worker - the autobiography of Henri Perrin* (London, Macmillan, 1965)

worker-priests who found themselves being ‘evangelised by the poor’. In this, the scheme was at odds with the propositions underlying a global papacy which was waging its own war against world communism — it was Rome, not Paris, that shut them down. On the other hand, Anglicanism’s significantly decentralised governance should be better placed to encourage the growth of a priesthood in secular employment.

For PSEs in the New Zealand context, Gilbert¹⁰⁸ identifies several relationship issues that need to be resolved: the representative and missionary nature of presbyterate vs. its sacramental/pastoral nature; the relationship of priests to natural human communities; priests working in partnership with many others. In Gilbert’s opinion, NZ church structures need to be more flexible, if models of ministry like PSE are to flourish.

Workplace Issues

Johnson¹⁰⁹ sees the PSE releasing him/herself with compassion as well as the institution, organisation or system. Nevertheless that institution, organisation or system may operate in a harshly competitive environment¹¹⁰ which inhibits Christian contact at the particular point of need and acts to disconnect people from God while they are performing the functions of their employment. A sensitive reading of the Dilbert cartoon¹¹¹ reveals a great deal about the environment in which our service-industry workers (two-thirds of us) spend their 40 hours a week. For them Dilbert is not comedy but documentary.

Here is the bite of being a priest *in secular employment*. PSEs, as employees, work at the employer's premises or a place the employer specifies, are paid a set rate and work set hours¹¹². They are constrained to accept limiting conditions of time, venue, duration and work intensity¹¹³ that may not be conducive to their Christian ministry. They are not free to choose these intruding aspects of their work since they are under contract to perform certain things and their work is instrumental to some other goal.

¹⁰⁸ [↗](#) Gilbert, op. cit.

¹⁰⁹ [↗](#) Johnson, op. ct.

¹¹⁰ [↗](#) Walker, op. cit.

¹¹¹ [↗](#) Adams, Scott: *Dilbert* (various daily newspapers, 1996-2004)

¹¹² [↗](#) Inland Revenue (New Zealand) *Employers' Glossary* (online at www.ird.govt.nz, 2003)

¹¹³ [↗](#) Corson, David: "The Meaning and Place of Work", in Corson (ed): *Education for Work* (Palm Nth, Dunmore, 1988)

It is no accident that in CHRISM's list¹¹⁴ of 50 theological questions the PSE needs to address, 37 of them directly reference the workplace constraints within which the secularly employed person exercises their ministry. In Marxist terms PSEs are proletarian by definition¹¹⁵. What sets PSEs apart from the self-employed — defined by the Inland Revenue Department¹¹⁶ as workers whose routine and timeframe are usually not controlled by others and who may hire others to do the work — is the constraints of their employment.

The most positive aspect of all this is emphasised by John Davis¹¹⁷: that exemplary performance on the job is a prerequisite for a ministry in secular employment. Bickers¹¹⁸ agrees and provides scriptural support for his contention.^{119,120,121}

Adrian Furnham¹²² addresses the role of the work ethic in economic development, the importance of work values in non-work activities, and the morality of attempting to manipulate work values. Claiming the centrality of work in the Christian ethic, Furnham quotes Barclay (1972) in identifying four themes:

1. our work is what we are and where we are
2. there is no better test of a person than the way they work
3. the test of a person is whether they deserve their pay
4. work should be seen as a contribution to the community as a whole.

In this Barclay is articulating the principles of the Protestant Work Ethic^{123,124}, and the proposition — deeply embedded in the value-systems of our day — that in our society

¹¹⁴ [↗](#) CHRISM: *Theology Resource Book* (Bedford, CHRISM, 1999)

¹¹⁵ [↗](#) Engels, Frederick (trans. Paul Sweezy): *Selected Works* (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969) Vol 1, pp. 81-97

¹¹⁶ [↗](#) Inland Revenue, op. cit.

¹¹⁷ [↗](#) Davis, John: "Lay and Ordained in the Workplace", in Fuller & Vaughan, op.cit pp 74-9

¹¹⁸ [↗](#) Bickers, op. cit.

¹¹⁹ [↗](#) 2 Thess 3:6-8

¹²⁰ [↗](#) Col 3: 22 - 24

¹²¹ [↗](#) Eph 6:5-8

¹²² [↗](#) Furnham, op. cit.

¹²³ [↗](#) Oates, op. cit.

¹²⁴ [↗](#) Cherrington, op. cit.

and for the majority of people, people work is the most highly valued activity¹²⁵. Work brings not only economic benefits to the worker but also important non-economic benefits — the latent functions of work, as Jahoda¹²⁶ identifies them. The obverse of this is that Christian ethics stress the right of a person to work, a living wage, and reasonable working conditions¹²⁷.

Nevertheless, the PSE inhabits a different reality from that of secular discourse, as Fox¹²⁸ reminds us. Robson echoes this¹²⁹ when she sees a need for the PSE on occasion to resist workplace authority, to act out their belief and conviction by getting alongside those who are involved and speaking in terms that the hearers can understand. The prophetic role belongs to all the baptized; being a prophet is therefore essential in the tradition of what it is to be an ordained minister.

John Davis grounds the PSE's ministry in the local congregation¹³⁰, forming part of that congregation's missionary endeavour. Mackenzie agrees, calling Christian workers 'the largest mission force that the church has'¹³¹ and bemoaning that churches do so little to equip and support Christians for their life in the workplace. This he sees as a major deterrent to church involvement, for New Zealanders now find church irrelevant to their faith and life. Going to church does not connect with their work, family, world concerns or even their personal spiritual walk¹³². Johnson concurs in this view, seeing a particular place for the PSE as an ordained person¹³³, claiming that the PSE's ministry shows the people that their workplace has within it an authorised presence of the church. Johnson even suggests that liturgies may arise within the structure and organisation of the institution, around rituals of promotion, retirement, celebration.

¹²⁵ [↗](#) Anthony, op. cit.

¹²⁶ [↗](#) Jahoda, M: *Employment and Unemployment: A Social-Psychological Analysis* (Cambridge, C.U.P. 1982)

¹²⁷ [↗](#) Beder, op. ct.

¹²⁸ [↗](#) Fox, Rob: "Rumours, Reality and Angels", in *Ministers-At-Work* 87 (Stalybridge, Cheshire, CHRISM, October 2003) pp 19-26

¹²⁹ [↗](#) Robson, Jill, "How to Make a Prophet at Work", in Fuller & Vaughan, op. cit pp 79-87

¹³⁰ [↗](#) Davis, J, op. cit.

¹³¹ [↗](#) Walker, op. cit.

¹³² [↗](#) Doorey, Julian : Faith in the Work Place, in *Reality* magazine iss 38

¹³³ [↗](#) Johnson, op. cit.

Such authorisation will prove critical if secular spirituality — which does not leave room for authority to exercise supervision of faith¹³⁴ — is to influence the church's theology and be seen as no enemy of the church.

The famous experiment with worker-priests in France^{135,136,137,138,139} aimed to 're-christianise the working class'. Vaughan¹⁴⁰ says that social context and pastoral necessities there were unique enough that the model cannot be exported, even to England. Reading their history from a kiwi viewpoint leads to similar conclusions for New Zealand. For many decades we cherished the myth of a classless society, which made it difficult to identify any 'working class' who might be 're-christianised'. In any case, conditions here make it difficult for a stable proletariat¹⁴¹ to emerge and be recognised as a target for mission. Our workplaces are considered small by international standards with a high proportion of self-employed¹⁴². Our unions are small and weak, and the last two decades have seen the rise of the 'portfolio worker'¹⁴³ for whom the workplace is just a skills market and offers no solidarity of any kind, much less membership of a social class.

A framework for the post-foundational chapters

In considering clergy formation and sustenance, the Maori concept of *mana* is apposite¹⁴⁴. *Mana atua* is the very sacred power of the gods, *mana tupuna*, the power or authority handed down through chiefly lineage, *mana whenua*, the power associated

¹³⁴ [↗](#) Erlander, Lillemor: *Faith in the World of Work* (Univ. of Uppsala, Stockholm, 1991)

¹³⁵ [↗](#) Petrie, op. cit.

¹³⁶ [↗](#) Arnal, op. cit.

¹³⁷ [↗](#) Collins, op. cit.

¹³⁸ [↗](#) Corley, op. cit.

¹³⁹ [↗](#) Perrin, op. cit.

¹⁴⁰ [↗](#) Fuller & Vaughan, op. cit.

¹⁴¹ [↗](#) Marx, Karl (trans. Samuel Moore): *Marx/Engels Selected Works*, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969) Vol 1, pp. 98 - 137 (originally published 1848)

¹⁴² [↗](#) Brosnan, Peter, Smith, David F, Walsh, Pat: *The Dynamics of New Zealand Industrial Relations* (Auckland, Jacaranda, 1990)

¹⁴³ [↗](#) Tolich, Martin, "Current Work Issues", in Bell, Claudia (ed): *Sociology of Everyday Life in New Zealand* (Palmerston North, Dunmore, 2001) pp.113-126

¹⁴⁴ [↗](#) Barlow, Cleve: *Tikanga Whakaaro - key concepts in Maori culture* (Melbourne, Oxford, 2002)

with the possession of lands, *mana tangata*, the power acquired by an individual according to his or her ability and effort.

In the Pakeha domain, the components *mana atua* and *mana tangata* do indeed apply. But two other elements enter the picture: *mana mahi* and *mana kura*.¹⁴⁵ Those two terms refer to the credentialing that an associational culture (see p. 36) values in lieu of *mana tupuna* and *mana whenua*. The remainder of this study addresses each of these in turn as they affect PSEs, beginning with *mana kura*.

Formation

The biblical warrant for clergy formation comes from *2 Timothy*¹⁴⁶. Within the formation process, the distinction between education and training could have a bearing on the formation of PSEs, as Wringe observes¹⁴⁷. Brushwyler's mid-American study¹⁴⁸ reports high educational attainment as a pre-existing characteristic of bi-vocational pastors, suggesting that the education of PSEs may not prove a significant burden for the church.

Trainee PSEs with prior experience of the educative process, will expect their programmes to take explicit account of the purpose of adult education. A generally useful account of adult education for our context is to be found in works like that of Knowles (1980)¹⁴⁹. Knowles' book, however, does reflect its era in that it neglects credentialing or accountability as motives for adult learning. In that it is slightly deficient for the world of the twenty-first century: when the neo-liberalism of the seventies gave place to the contractual-accountability era of the 1990s, the need to credential the individual within the institution and society became a major motive. The magic phrase 'NZQA approved'¹⁵⁰ entered our vocabulary, and clergy formation has

¹⁴⁵ mahi = activity; kura = schooling

¹⁴⁶ [↗](#) 2Tim 2:2

¹⁴⁷ [↗](#) Wringe, Colin: "Education, Schooling and the World of Work", in Corson, op.cit. pp 33-46

¹⁴⁸ [↗](#) Brushwyler, op. cit.

¹⁴⁹ [↗](#) Knowles, Malcolm S: *Modern Practice of Adult Education* (Chicago, Follett, 1980)

¹⁵⁰ New Zealand Qualifications Authority, since 1990 the over-arching government agency for coordination and quality-assurance of publicly available courses.

been caught up in that also. Even the very progressive Education For Ministry (EFM) organization¹⁵¹ records that its course is worth 18 continuing education units per year.

Dawson¹⁵² and Brian Davis¹⁵³ both consider in detail the situation in Aotearoa New Zealand and the trends that affect clergy training in general. Both assert that the church still needs priests joyfully confident in their own calling, but point to emerging changes: supply of ordination candidates exceeding demand, heightened median age of ordinands, tendency to move across diocesan boundaries. They also report gaps between policy and practice in regard to clergy training.

Passing from the purposes of formation to its content, Pratt¹⁵⁴ provides a useful taxonomy, dividing the field into *theological education*: a matter of academic accountability, and *ministerial formation*: a matter of ecclesial expectation. Though Tikanga Maori is developing its own training style and content¹⁵⁵, Anglican seminary programmes reveal their acceptance of a common, traditional core^{156,157,158}.

In the matter of programme delivery, Brushwyler¹⁵⁹ articulates a recurring plea that seminary and denominational leaders consider the needs of bi-vocational clergy when planning continuing education and fellowship events. Buckle¹⁶⁰ quoting John Mullane, provides practical advice on how it may and must be done. There is a strong emphasis here on lifelong learning, and on evaluation. Also on peer support: EFM-style

¹⁵¹ based in the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee

¹⁵² Dawson, Jennifer: *The ordination training mat: Towards a coherent frame of priestly formation*. MMin thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. June 2003

¹⁵³ Davis, B, op. cit.

¹⁵⁴ Pratt, Douglas: "Theological Education and Ministerial Formation - Academic accountability and ecclesial expectation ..." *Colloquium*, v.24no.2, 1992, pp 98-105

¹⁵⁵ Te Whare Wananga o te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa: *Te Taapapa o Te Upoko o Te Ika Course Information* (Otaki 2002)

¹⁵⁶ Education for Ministry: *Academic Contents* (<http://www.sewanee.edu/EFM/Prospfolder/Contents.html>)

¹⁵⁷ Niebuhr, H.R, Williams, D.D & Gustafson, J.M: *The Advancement of Theological Education* (New York, Harper, 1957)

¹⁵⁸ Daniel, JCK: *The ACTE Theological Educational Curricula ...* MTh thesis, 2001

¹⁵⁹ Brushwyler, op. cit.

¹⁶⁰ Buckle, E.G: *Paroika - The House Alongside* (Auckland: Diocese of Auckland, 1978)

communities of learning¹⁶¹ would provide a workable vehicle for PSE formation. It is possible — though by no means yet certain — that the internet will realise its early promise as a means of delivering educational content to PSEs. Internet ventures by some seminaries such as the Church Divinity School of the Pacific¹⁶² have yet to bring clergy formation to every PSE's desktop at a time of his/her choosing.

Interestingly, Brushwyler was the only writer encountered who promoted the idea that seminaries encourage their younger students to reflect on bi-vocational models, to foster a rich variety of ministries and gifts. He saw this as a way to eliminate the notion that bi-vocational ministers are 'second-class' or 'fringe' ministers serving in less desirable roles, but there is an additional value in opening up a range of career options not traditionally offered to seminarians. The idea of clergy switching in and out of secular employment is not too fantastic: as Graeme Nicholas has asked¹⁶³, 'Is vocation always set for life? Is it not possible to have a time as an authentically called PSE and a time as an authentically called stipended priest?' Helen Jacobi¹⁶⁴ provides a vision of how such a career might work in practice.

Deployment

The literature on PSEs reveals an indecision whether PSEs stand within the parochial system or stand over against it. History suggests the latter^{165,166}, but some commentators¹⁶⁷ see the PSE's work as essentially part of the parish missionary effort. This dilemma may be partly resolved by carefully identifying the 'natural human grouping'¹⁶⁸ in which the PSE's ministry is to be worked out. That the workplace is a natural human grouping has never been in doubt, as the chaplaincy movement attests. A bi-vocational ministry will commonly be worked out in two 'natural human groupings':

¹⁶¹ [↗](#) Education for Ministry, op. cit.

¹⁶² [↗](#) Church Divinity School of the Pacific: *Online Courses for Academic Credit* (<http://cdsp.edu/onlinecourseforcredit.html>)

¹⁶³ In a personal communication, 21 April 2005

¹⁶⁴ [↗](#) Jacobi, Helen: Comment on "Gone Fishing", in *Anglican Taonga*, Christmas '02 (Christchurch, 2002)

¹⁶⁵ [↗](#) Fuller & Vaughan, op. cit.

¹⁶⁶ [↗](#) Mantle, op. cit.

¹⁶⁷ [↗](#) Davis, J, op. cit.

¹⁶⁸ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ (Pelly et al 1982)

the ecclesial grouping and the workplace grouping, the ministry to each having its characteristic style. Integrating the two is seen as a challenge for the PSE, just as it is for the faithful layperson¹⁶⁹.

Bickers believes that bi-vocational pastors can play an important part in planting new churches¹⁷⁰ but in doing so he makes a key assumption: that the PSE knows the community and is known to it. His proposition is perhaps more appropriate to his own denomination (Baptist) than to Anglicanism's established parochial tradition, but might be adapted to provide for new worshipping centres within an existing parish. He makes the point that church growth is not numerical growth only, but the growth that occurs in the lives of the members.

Bickers points to the kind of worshipping community that is most likely to welcome a bi-vocational pastor¹⁷¹:

1. a community that wants to make use of resources other than clergy time
2. a community that would like to hire more staff
3. a community that would like its pastor to stay put longer
4. a community whose laypeople are seeking to increase their ministries

On the other hand, Keizer contends¹⁷² that conventional practice puts PSEs into exactly the wrong communities. In Keizer's view, clergy professionalism has been concentrated in congregations with the greatest talent pools of professional expertise, and diluted in those marginal places where an educated generalist would be most prized. Booth¹⁷³ attacks the notion of the 'Sunday priest', a PSE who simply helps fill gaps in service rosters, on the grounds that it has no pastoral component and enshrines a quasi-magical conception of the presbyter's role in the sacraments. Brian Davis' observation¹⁷⁴ that PSEs have a tendency to drift away into stipendiary positions, bespeaks a deprecation of unpaid ministries, something which needs to be taken into account in deploying PSEs.

¹⁶⁹ [↗](#) Johnson, op. cit.

¹⁷⁰ [↗](#) Bickers, op. cit.

¹⁷¹ [↗](#) Bickers, op. cit.

¹⁷² [↗](#) Keizer, op. cit.

¹⁷³ [↗](#) Booth, op. cit. (1979)

¹⁷⁴ [↗](#) Davis, B, op. cit.

Oversight and Support

Some of the issues surrounding the oversight of PSEs are unique to their bi-vocational situation, others are shared by all ordained clergy. Among those which apply across the board are matters of collegiality and discipline in the denomination. Identifying a process of ‘peer identification’, Carroll¹⁷⁵ treats that issue in some detail.

At the same time, a PSE is by definition, a volunteer in the field of ministry. Research on volunteerism¹⁷⁶ shows that ongoing management and support of volunteers is critical for ensuring that volunteer hours are not squandered, that weak skills are strengthened, and that volunteers are used most effectively. Large institutions can present particular challenges in this respect.

No matter how well-intentioned volunteers are, say Grossman and Furano¹⁷⁷, there needs to be an infrastructure in place to support and direct their efforts. Otherwise they will remain at best ineffective or become disenchanted and withdraw. Unfortunately, this infrastructure is not free: staff time and programme resources must be explicitly devoted to these tasks. The programme staff of effective volunteering programmes reside at the intersection of busy administrators, overworked employees, dedicated volunteers, and service recipients.

In Brushwyler’s American research¹⁷⁸ the expressed opinions of Episcopalian bi-vocational clergy regarding their denominational support were more negative than positive. (The United Church of Christ got the best report card in this respect.)

Underlying most of the concerns were

1. feelings of lack of connection and distance from denominational staff people,
2. feelings of being unappreciated and being used simply to fill openings too small for preferred full-time pastors, and
3. too little concern for their schedules in setting meeting times.

¹⁷⁵ [↗](#) Carroll, Jackson W: *Ministry as Reflective Practice* (NY, Alban, 1986)

¹⁷⁶ [↗](#) Grossman, Jean Baldwin & Furano, Kathryn: Making the Most of Volunteers in 62 *Law & Contemp. Problems*. 199 (Autumn 1999)

¹⁷⁷ [↗](#) Grossman & Furano, op. cit.

¹⁷⁸ [↗](#) Brushwyler, op. cit.

Similar sentiments have been expressed by their colleagues in the Church of England.

Musick¹⁷⁹ considers it worthwhile to stand back and reconsider the notion of the benefits of volunteering to the volunteer. These benefits are usually unintended consequences of behavior that is motivated not by extrinsic but intrinsic rewards. This may account for Brushwyler's discovery¹⁸⁰ that the overwhelming majority of bi-vocational clergy are doing what they are doing by choice, and few would choose a full-time pastorate if offered one. They were capable and qualified, and were there because of a firm commitment to this type of ministry. And significant for Anglicanism are Brushwyler's figures¹⁸¹ revealing that out of all the American denominational clergy he studied, Episcopal worker-priests expressed the greatest satisfaction with their lot.

An opportunity for clarifying roles exists in the covenant document which many Anglican clergy negotiate as part of the licensing process. PSEs expect their secular employment to provide a job description and a process of performance appraisal¹⁸². The covenants examined in this research¹⁸³ vary between extremes of generality on one hand, and specificity on the other, some confusing the attributes of a person description¹⁸⁴ with those of a job description.

Spiritual Direction

In Dorrie Johnson's search for a satisfactory spirituality¹⁸⁵, he is in good company. The quest for secular spirituality by the original French *prêtres-ouvriers* (worker-priests) is recorded by Erdlander¹⁸⁶ who chronicles 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

¹⁷⁹ [↗](#) Wilson, John & Musick, Mark: "The Effects of Volunteering on the Volunteer", in *Law & Contemp. Problems* vol 62 pp141-168 (Autumn 1999)

¹⁸⁰ [↗](#) Brushwyler, op. cit.

¹⁸¹ [↗](#) Brushwyler, op. cit.

¹⁸² [↗](#) Rudman, Richard: *Human Resources Management in New Zealand*, 3 ed (Auckland, Longman, 1999)

¹⁸³ they are private documents so cannot be cited

¹⁸⁴ [↗](#) Rudman, op. cit.

¹⁸⁵ [↗](#) Johnson, op. cit.

¹⁸⁶ [↗](#) Erdlander, op. cit.

faith. The *prêtres-ouvriers* like the English industrial chaplains spoke 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 of which Duquoc writes¹⁸⁷.

For the business world does have its own spirituality. Its spiritual values include integrity, honesty, accountability, quality, cooperation, service, intuition, trustworthiness, respect, justice, and service.¹⁸⁸ Laura Nash identifies tensions¹⁸⁹ between personal faith and seven basic elements of capitalism -

1. Love for God/the pursuit of profit (the need to serve two masters)
2. Concern for people/the competitive drive
3. Care for employees/profit obligations
4. Humility/the self-importance of success
5. Family/work
6. Charity/wealth
7. Being God's agents in the secular city

She observes three different responses to these tensions -

1. The generalist - who never gets down to specific examples, so denies there's any real tension here.
2. The justifier - who generally assumes that the business side of the equation is supported by the faith side anyway, so there is no real ethical conflict.
3. The seeker - who is acutely aware that there are points where the concerns of faith and business conflict, so expects to struggle with difficult choices in order to do what is right.

¹⁸⁷ [↗](#) Duquoc, op. cit.

¹⁸⁸ [↗](#) McLaughlin, Corinne: "Spirituality at Work", *The Bridging Tree* Summer, Vol 1 Iss 2 (Lifebridge, New York, 1998)

¹⁸⁹ [↗](#) Nash, Laura: *Believers in Business* (Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson, 1994)

Pitt¹⁹⁰ 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 the situation. This he calls 'secular contemplation in the secular desert'. McLaughlin, a secular writer, asserts¹⁹¹ that the workplace is far from being a spiritual desert. It is her observation that people at all levels in the corporate hierarchies increasingly want to nourish their spirituality and bring more meaning and purpose into their occupational life. And, she says, they want their spirituality to be practical and applied — to bring heaven down to earth.

Johnson comments that Christians who are trying to reconcile science and religion often ascribe different functions to the two fields, for example, science may answer the *how?* questions, while religion responds to the *why?* Teilhard de Chardin¹⁹² and Polkinghorne¹⁹³ have their own ways of addressing these issues. The nub of the matter is, as Johnson says in another paper¹⁹⁴ that the PSE will truly be a person in secular employment, one for whom accountability to God should invigorate a spirituality of the community at work. While traditional spirituality may separate itself from the ordinary working world, the PSE must find a spirituality that not only takes account non-Christian spiritualities¹⁹⁵ but also affirms the working environment as part of God's creation.

According to Peterson¹⁹⁶ priests especially need spiritual direction. Spiritual direction is based in the belief that an active grace is shaping this life into a mature salvation; that the Christian community has acquired guiding wisdom through the centuries; that to apply that wisdom it is necessary to discern the particulars of this life, this situation. As the *prêtres-ouvriers* themselves¹⁹⁷ needed to communicate with God in the midst of assembly-line toil, and in so doing found that their work and its orientations nourished

¹⁹⁰ [↗](#) Pitt, Trevor: "Spirituality and the minister in secular employment", in Francis & Francis, op. cit. pp 296-8

¹⁹¹ [↗](#) McLaughlin, op. cit.

¹⁹² [↗](#) Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre: *L'Avenir de l'Homme* (Paris, éditions du Seuil, 1957)

¹⁹³ [↗](#) Polkinghorne, D. E.: "Postmodern epistemology of practice", in S. Kvale (Ed.), *Psychology and postmodernism* (pp. 146-165). (Newbury Park: CA, Sage, 1992)

¹⁹⁴ [↗](#) Johnson, op. cit.

¹⁹⁵ [↗](#) Devreux, op. cit.

¹⁹⁶ [↗](#) Peterson, Eugene H: *Working the Angles - the shape of pastoral integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans 1998)

¹⁹⁷ [↗](#) Arnal, op. cit.

their interior life, so the spiritual issues that a modern PSE engages with their spiritual director are likely to be what Anne Hadfield¹⁹⁸ locates in -

1. Identity and identities: what of the fellow traveler ?
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

Kenneth Leech, a strong Anglican voice on spiritual direction, describes a specifically Anglican programme in the context of the traditions of direction and its significance for the prayer life of the individual¹⁹⁹. Insights from the provisions of the EFM programme group encounters might provide a fruitful model in which the spirituality of PSEs could be nurtured.

This literature review provides the wellspring for the entire study. The references cited in this chapter, providing as they do the sources for the whole argument, will re-surface again and again in the chapters that follow.

¹⁹⁸ [↗](#) Hadfield, Anne: Personal conversation with the writer, 1 June 2004

¹⁹⁹ [↗](#) See, for example, Leech, Kenneth: *Soul Friend - an invitation to spiritual direction* (San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1992)

Theological Underpinnings

Christ in our context

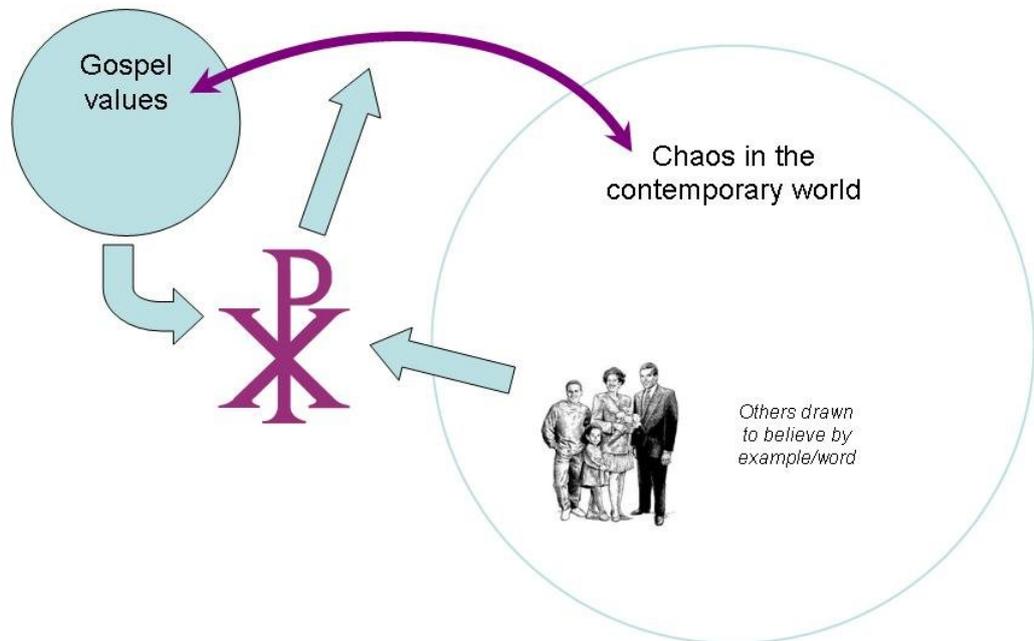
As we leave the twentieth century behind and engage with the twenty-first, the Body of Christ is relating to its human context in ways that are characteristic of our time. The following observation, made in 1990 by leading New Zealand theologian and anthropologist Gerald Arbuckle, encapsulates a widespread attitude —

... we Christians are now looking outwards, to a degree unimagined thirty years ago, to the world and its evangelical needs. From being ghetto churches, jealously guarding our separate frontiers and fearful of the world, we are to be churches *for* others, for the world of cultures. Previous spiritualities, helpful though they be, are insufficient to sustain us in this uncharted faith journey into a world of cultures that are receptive or unreceptive to the Good News.²⁰⁰

Applying the insights of social anthropology to the parishes of the home front, he urges his readers to ‘do anything, in imitation of Christ, that will help to relate the Gospel to cultures’²⁰¹ — specifically including our own. Arbuckle’s diagram for *refounding the church* (his term) presents Christ as building the bridge — perhaps being the bridge itself — between Gospel values and chaos in the contemporary world.

²⁰⁰  Arbuckle, G.A: *Earthing the Gospel* (St Paul Publications, Homebush NSW, 1990) p.208

²⁰¹  Arbuckle, op. cit. p. 219



Expanding the same theme into gospel strategy, Niebuhr suggests that the relationship between Christ and any particular culture may be expressed as one or more of four basic types.

- The first of these is the one that emphasises the opposition of Christ ‘against’ culture ... Here the responsibility of the church would be to stand in opposition to any lifestyle.
- The second type is that of the Christ ‘of’ culture, a view that holds to a basic agreement between Christ and culture where Jesus is regarded as a cultural hero ... where the values of a culture find their consummate expression in him.
- Christ ‘above’ culture is a third type detailed by Niebuhr. Here Christ comes into culture from above, offering values and meaning not otherwise available to human pursuits. In this view Christ is the fulfilment and the completion of culture ...
- The fourth type, Christ and culture ‘in paradox’, maintains that a Christian must live, really, in two worlds: one, a world of ultimate obedience to Christ and the other of penultimate obedience to the culture ... the paradoxical relation between

being a socially conditioned, historically located creature and at the same time, responsible to Christ.²⁰²

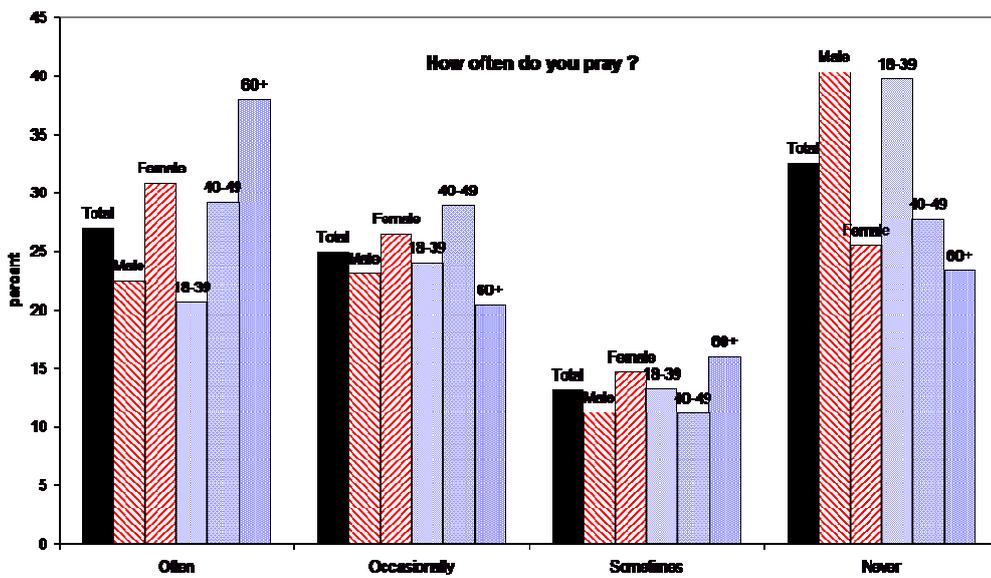
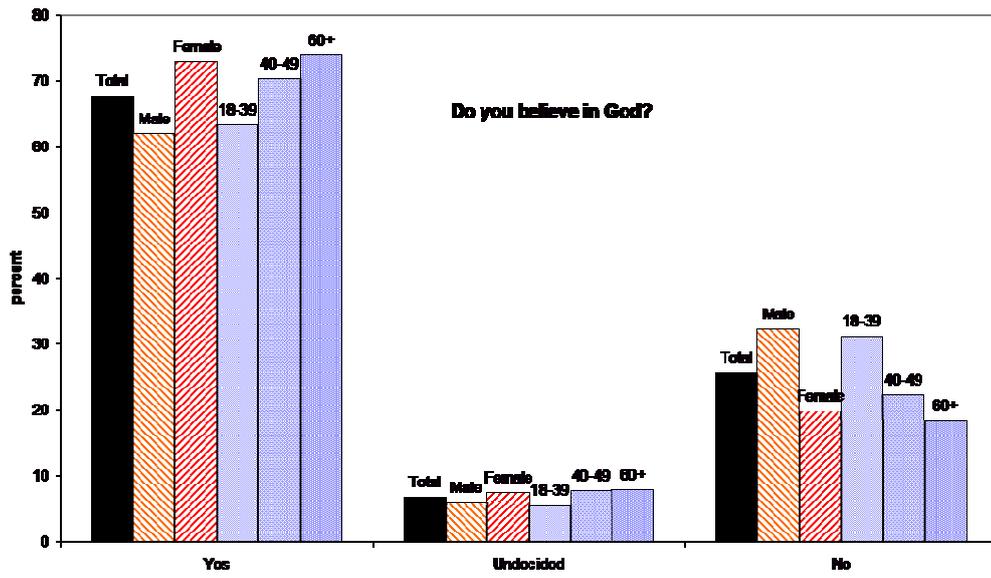
Niebuhr makes a case for a fifth type (though it really belongs outside this list) for a conversionist approach in which Christ is the ‘transformer’ of culture. It combines type 1 with a view of Christ changing and transforming humanity within culture. Sample, commenting on Niebuhr’s typology, prefers the view of Christ in culture transforming culture²⁰³ but wants both 1 and 2 in there together. Be that as it may, it is the fourth kind of relationship, ‘in paradox’, that resonates most strongly with the PSE’s experience of ministry.

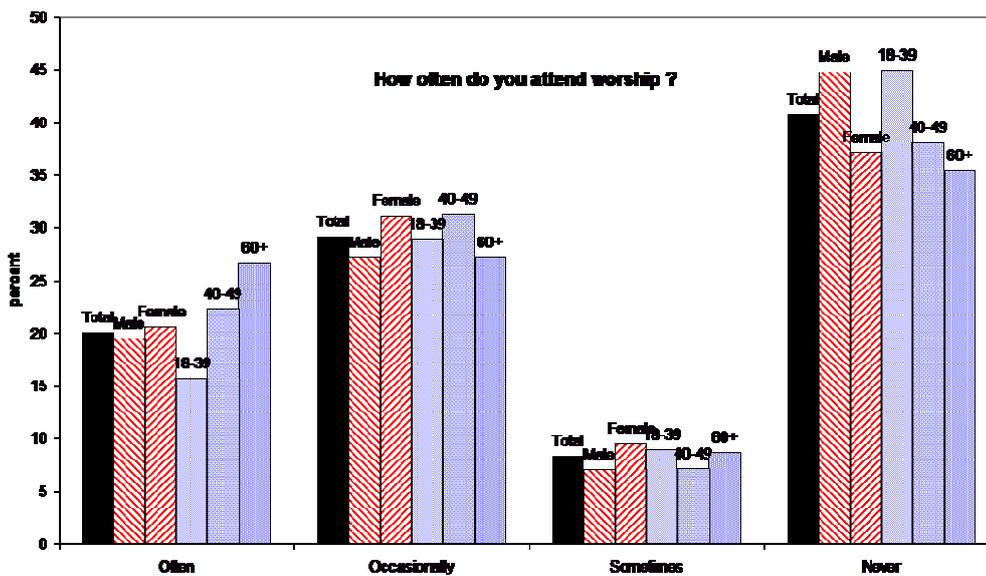
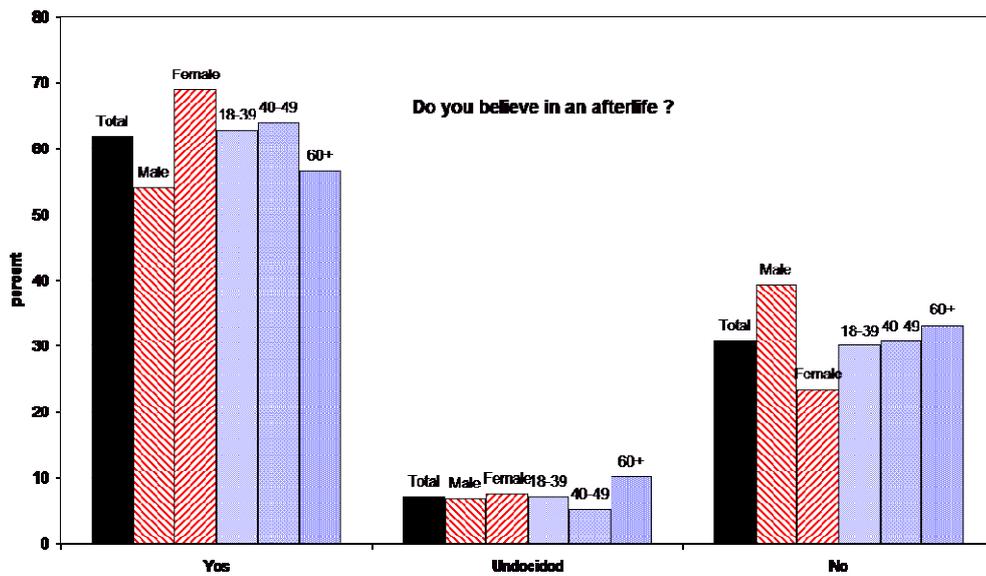
The readiness of contemporary New Zealand culture to be, in Arbuckle’s words, ‘drawn by example and word’, is revealed in the fact that most believe in God but keep their distance from organized religion. The newspaper *The New Zealand Herald* tested the proposition in a survey of 1000 New Zealanders undertaken in late 2004²⁰⁴. Despite the fact that over forty percent never attend any kind of worship service in church, temple or mosque, more than two-thirds say they believe in God and almost as many pray at least sometimes. As the article’s headline has it, ‘most avoid church but still believe.’ Reduced to bar-graph form, the data tell a clear story –

²⁰² [↗](#) Niebuhr, H. Richard: *Church and Culture*, quoted in Sample, Tex: U.S. *Lifestyles and mainline churches - a key to reaching people in the 90's* (Louisville, KY, Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990) p.151

²⁰³ [↗](#) Sample, op. cit. p.151

²⁰⁴ [↗](#) Boyes, Nicola “Most avoid church but still believe”, in *The New Zealand Herald*, Friday January 7, 2005, p. A4





While the figures from the survey cannot be regarded as authoritative, they are probably free of any intentional bias. *The New Zealand Herald* is the country’s most-read newspaper and its policy on reporting matters of religion is as near to neutral as one could hope to find. Qualitatively, the survey bespeaks a culture that may be susceptible to the Christian gospel but is intolerant of overly structured religious expressions of it. In fact, these data seem to support Luckmann’s critique of what he calls the ‘contemporary myth’ of secularism —

The social structure is secularised - but the myth of secularisation fails to account for the fact that the individual is not secularised.²⁰⁵

Of course ours, like many other modern populations, is a multicultural society, and it is reasonable to enquire whether cultural differences exist within these general trends. The character of the majority subculture (Pakeha) finds a place in the typological continuum proposed by Redfield²⁰⁶, that place being closer to the *associational* end than to the *folk* end —

²⁰⁵  Luckmann, Thomas: *Life-world and Social Realities* (London, Heinemann, 1983) p. 132

²⁰⁶  Referred to in Arbuckle, op. cit. p.45

	Associational culture	...	Folk culture
Self-image	From one's own efforts	...	From social relationships
Role of tradition	No influence	...	Guide to present/future
Language	Abstract concise technical	...	Concrete dynamic story-telling
Social organisation / relationships	Impersonal Superficial Nuclear family Contractual	...	Personal Group-oriented Extended family Credit/debt
Land	Economic unit	...	Personal ties
Time	Impersonal Punctuality important	...	Person / event Punctuality unimportant
Investment	In future economic growth	...	In social relationships
Social control	Justice before relationships Formal sanctions: law	...	Group loyalty before justice Informal sanctions
Sex status	Equality	...	Male domination
Religion	Sacred ≠ profane Science controls life Sin: individual	...	Sacred = profane Fatalism Sin: social

The *New Zealand Herald* survey was sensitive to inter-cultural differences and did detect some. But the numerical preponderance of Pakeha in the overall population meant that separating out the figures for Pakeha as an ethnic cluster told us nothing new since it produced data closely resembling those reported for the population as a whole. The value of the cross-cultural element lay rather in the clearer view it provides of pakeha-dom as a culture with which the gospel may engage.

Ministry of Christ

It is in the salvic ministry of Jesus himself that Christian ministry finds its origin. Christ's ministry 'inspired by faith, hope, love, imaginatively builds bridges between Gospel and chaos at all levels of the church.'²⁰⁷ The biblical record bears witness to the characteristic features of Jesus' ministry: prayer, empathy, listening and respect, creative imagination, commitment to community, apostolic adaptability, sense of humour, ability to grieve.²⁰⁸

All authentic Christian ministry involves a participation in Christ's own ministerial mission and power, and exhibits the same characteristics. The risen Jesus remains actively present in and through the whole people of God which is a holy priesthood.²⁰⁹ Participation in the ministry of Christ means an ongoing cooperation between Christ and the community in establishing the kingdom of God. Three principles emerge:

- All ministry exists for the benefit of the church and the world.
- All the baptised have received their gift from the Spirit for the common good.
- The church is a communion of those who live in Christ, fashioned by the Spirit after the life of the Trinity in which unity and multiplicity are bound together in a dynamic union of divine love.²¹⁰

Deriving ministry of the ordained from the ministry of Christ

All Christians have a ministry by virtue of their baptism ... and some members of the baptised community are called and empowered to fulfil an ordained ministry, and to enable the total mission of the church. ...²¹¹

By contrast with this clear call to corporate ministry, the theology of the ordination of individuals is considerably more ambiguous. Historians of the church remind us that the

²⁰⁷ [↗](#) Arbuckle, op. cit. p.218

²⁰⁸ [↗](#) Arbuckle, op. cit pp 216-7

²⁰⁹ [↗](#) Hebrews 6: 1 - 20

²¹⁰ [↗](#) Richardson, Alan & Bowden, John (eds): *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology* (London, SCM Press, 1983) p 370

²¹¹ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ: *A New Zealand Prayer Book/He Karakia Mihinare mo Aotearoa* (London, Collins, 1989) p 887

New Testament mentions no distinction between ‘laity’ and ‘clergy’. Emerging patterns in late New Testament times — as evidenced, for example in the pastoral epistles — suggest that the Holy Spirit may be conferred on individuals by rites such as laying on of hands.

Nevertheless, down through history the laity has continued to support permanent presidency in the rites of the local church, so the ministry of the sacraments emerges as a Christian symbiosis. In the early church, distinctions between ministries was a question of function rather than status. When the clergy acquired the right to dispense the rite of ordination as well as to receive it, they became a defined, stable and self-perpetuating class, a class which for thirteen hundred years exercised an equally well defined ministry. It was in those medieval times that a sharp line was drawn between the leadership role of the clergy and the relative passivity of the laity, a line which Oden describes as being ‘thin as hair but hard as a diamond’.²¹²

Theological developments, with decline in the sacrificial conception of the eucharist, eventually destabilised the exclusive character of the clergy’s ministry. By Reformation times, social change had influenced the world outside, and the attitude of laity and clergy to each other’s role. Through synods and other councils, power shifted back and forth between clergy and laity, the monarch in parliament being a major focus of lay power. To carry out its own ministry to an increasingly well-informed laity, even in the face of lay clericalism, the clergy let go some functions it had hitherto reserved to itself. Today there is recognition that the church not only contains but needs many roles and functions in its administration, witness, and service as well as in its liturgy.

All that considered, it is difficult to see how the concept of ordination came into existence or managed to survive. Yet clergy plainly do exist and function, in three varieties according to Berkhof:

- the Catholic, or high-church type, which regards ordination as a sacrament by which the bearer, in virtue of a special promise of the Spirit, is prominently placed not only opposite but also above the congregation

²¹²  Oden, Thomas C.: *Pastoral Theology - Essentials of Ministry* (New York, HarperCollins, 1983) p.88

- the classical Reformed type, which positions the minister not only opposite but also in the congregation, and circumscribes their authority by the general office of all believers. Ordination is emphatically not seen as conferring any personal status or privilege^{213,214,215,216}, and the Ministry of the Word is given particular emphasis.²¹⁷
- the free-church or low-church type, which sees in the office-bearer no more than a functional specialization of the office of all believers, in principle no different from that of the custodian or administrator.²¹⁸

Berkhof finds it ‘remarkable’ that all three types can appeal to the New Testament for their authority, and provides the references.²¹⁹

New Zealand Anglicanism appears to see its clergy around the middle of the Berkhof scale, with leanings toward both extremes. According to our ordinal, clergy in our church do have a ministry of leadership: to build up Christ’s congregation, to strengthen the baptised, and to lead them as witnesses to Christ in the world. They have a ministry of service: to share people's joys and sorrows, encourage the faithful, recall those who fall away, heal and help the sick. They have a ministry to proclaim God's word and take their part in Christ’s prophetic action. They have a sacral ministry: to declare forgiveness through Jesus Christ, to baptise, to preside at the eucharist, to administer Christ’s holy sacraments.²²⁰

Behind the words of the ordination rite, there lies an understanding of the need to be subject to the discipline of the church. As well as individual call, ministry is a publicly acknowledged office that carries corporate responsibilities and corporate acknowledgement. This is only applied in connection with the wider body, the actual

²¹³ [🔗](#) Presbyterian Church of New Zealand : *Book of Order - Statement on Ordination*

²¹⁴ [🔗](#) Cooke, Bernard: *Ministry to Word and Sacraments: History and Theology* (Philadelphia, OA, Fortress Press, 1976)

²¹⁵ [🔗](#) Kennedy, Philip: *Schillebeeckx* (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1993)

²¹⁶ [🔗](#) Booth, Ken: *Anyone for Ordination ?* (Christchurch, Author, 1979)

²¹⁷ [🔗](#) Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, op. cit.

²¹⁸ [🔗](#) Berkhof, Henrikus: *Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids MI, Eerdmans, 1986) pp.383-4

²¹⁹ [🔗](#) Berkhof,, op. cit.

²²⁰ [🔗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa NZ op. cit. (1989) p.901

corporate body of believers — the ordained cannot somehow be the church in themselves. An ordained person presides over the sacraments because the sacraments are expressions of the corporate life of the church, and therefore the presidency rests in the person who oversees the corporate life and ministry of the church. Since the church exists to be the body of Christ, the function of the ordained is to help the church be precisely that.

A church that kneels to pray, sings praises to a ‘King enthroned on high’²²¹ and insists that Jesus Christ ‘came down from heaven’²²² is a church that implicitly supports dualistic theology. In dualistic theologies, the secular world is not where God is, and it is not the Christian’s business to have any truck with it. Saint James is particularly strong on he point: ‘Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.’²²³ As Jesus is stranger in the world, so are the apostles strangers: the apostolic mission is sent from God into the world and is therefore cannot be finally explained in terms of the world’s criteria. Such theology clearly underlay the 1559 Ordinal in which the new clergyman vowed not only to ‘lay aside the study of the world and the fleshe’ but also to seek for Christ’s children who were lost ‘in the myddest of thys naughtye worlde’.²²⁴

Dualistic theologies underwrote the feudal culture, and supported the authoritarian social structure of both medieval times and post-feudal slavery. It provided a helpful world-view for people whose daily lives were pretty rotten and who longed to escape into a happier existence. Throughout the twentieth century, changes in the socioeconomic order were accompanied by changes in the official church’s statements about God, but new (and old) forms of dualism persist in modern times, if only as a yearning for an other-worldly spirituality which still functions for some people. We note that the logic of dualistic theologies drives the monastic ideal — and that taken

²²¹ [🔗](#) *Hymns Ancient and Modern Revised*, (1950) no. 237. Other examples include no. 400, Lord Enthroned in Heavenly Splendour and 63, God from on High Hath Heard. These old favourites survived into the 1983 book *Hymns Ancient and Modern New Standard* as nos. 158, 263 and 38 respectively.

²²² Nicene Creed

²²³ [🔗](#) James 4:4

²²⁴ [🔗](#) Cranmer, T et al.: *Book of Common Prayer - Ordinals 1550, 1552, 1559*

together with the injunction to commit to just one master, that same logic is inimical to the concept of PSE.

Deriving workplace ministry from the ministry of Christ

Such is the church's view of its ministry and that of its ordained clergy. But there is another world out there, the world we call secular, and it has its own beliefs and ethics. The most aggressive form of secularism is that which actively denies any place to religion in public life.

An influential trend in the theological revaluation of secular society has ... spawned an expansive rhetoric in celebration of the achievement of neo-capitalist man, a rhetoric which is obtrusive and insensitive enough to make those who can see what is really happening to the 'nature' of human nature in our culture, dismiss Christianity out of hand as unavailing and irrelevant.²²⁵

Such views are held by our present prime minister, supported by her government and acquiesced to by many New Zealanders. It is no new thing. Secularism, Niebuhr said in the years before World War II, is a phenomenon at least two hundred years old. Critiquing the secularism of his day he observed —

The avowedly secular culture of today turns out upon close examination to be either a pantheistic religion which identifies existence in its totality with holiness, or a rationalistic humanism for which human reason is essentially god, or a vitalistic humanism which worships some unique or vital force in the individual or the community. ... The civilisation and culture in which we are called upon to preach the Christian gospel is, in other words, not irreligious, but a devotee of a very old religion, dressed in a new form. It is the old religion of self-glorification.²²⁶

He would nevertheless conclude —

²²⁵ [↗](#) Kerr, Fergus G.: "The Latent Spirituality of the Counter Culture", in *Concilium*, vol 9 no 7 (London, Burns & Oates, 1971) p 63

²²⁶ [↗](#) Brown, R.M(Ed): *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr* (New Haven, Yale, 1986) p.80

The secularism of our modern bourgeois civilisation and of the more proletarian civilisations which threaten to replace it, is therefore something more than the religion of self-glorification. It combines sin with a passion for justice which frequently puts the historic church to shame.²²⁷

Since Niebuhr wrote that, rampant technocratic materialism has produced various forms of counter-culture, spiritual though not necessarily Christian. In Aotearoa New Zealand, the phenomenon of political correctness has engendered a superficial acquiescence to Maori spirituality in situations where Pakeha Christian spirituality is vigorously suppressed. That cultural cringe which used to put a halo around anything of British origin is now directed toward everything Maori, specifically including maoridom's spiritual elements. Political correctness is a psychological phenomenon worth investigating in its own right; it has produced such paradoxes as state schools in which the Lord's Prayer cannot be said in English but where its Maori version is in regular use. It has also produced a generation of Pakeha who have conned themselves out of a spiritual tradition that is their own, and which they could draw upon if only they recognised its value.

One step behind secularism lies the *protestant work ethic*. That ethic does not deny God, rather it builds a Christian concept into which paid employment may comfortably fit. The entry in the Shorter Oxford Dictionary's 2002 edition says the protestant work ethic is 'success through hard work seen as a person's duty and responsibility, attributed by Max Weber to the teachings of Calvin'. Oates unpacks the meaning a little further -

A universal taboo is placed on idleness, and industriousness is considered a religious ideal; waste is a vice, and frugality a virtue. Complacency and failure are outlawed, and ambition and success are taken as sure signs of God's favour; the universal sign of sin is poverty, and the crowning sign of God's favour is wealth.²²⁸

Yet the connection between work and wealth is recent, a connection far younger than the connection between Christ and his people — as any labour historian will attest.

²²⁷ [↗](#) Brown, op. cit. p.91

²²⁸ [↗](#) Oates, W: *Confessions of a Workaholic: The Facts about Work Addiction* (NY, World Publishing, 1971) p.84

Ranged against assertive secularism and at the same time against the dualistic theologies stand the holistic theologies articulated by such as Kirkland²²⁹, Mackenzie²³⁰ and Rayner,²³¹ following Teilhard de Chardin who said: 'By virtue of the creation and still more, of the incarnation, nothing here below is profane for those know how to see; work therefore, is of God.' Though some secular writers view such changes of viewpoint as philosophical opportunism aimed at clerical self-preservation through 'relevance'²³², these writers urge us toward a post-modern view of human beings and the earth, culture and nature. They would have us integrate human culture into the nature of the earth, the human spirit into the nature of the body, and modern instrumental reason into wider cohesions of wisdom.^{233,234} They offer their own viewpoint as normative -

secular – here's one word that we think we should make every effort to ban from our vocabulary ... The images it conjures up almost entirely support a dualistic view of life.²³⁵

In private conversation, Alistair Mackenzie explained his point of view in terms of an understanding of 'good work' which in his submission covers all meaningful activity. Thus 'good work', defined as participation in God's activity, covers the totality of Christian life, of which employment may form a part, though not necessarily. His view on holism acknowledges the danger of descent into pantheism and the need to distinguish between Creator and Creation. He sees it as being our task to hold the two in tense balance, and points to our understandings surrounding the persons of the Trinity — which we also hold in dynamic tension. Stevens expresses the same idea, invoking the *creation mandate*²³⁶ which calls us to have dominion over the earth as

²²⁹ [↗](#) Kirkland, Wayne: "God's Co-Workers", *Reality Magazine*, iss 38 (May 2003)

²³⁰ [↗](#) Walker, Chris: "An Interview with Alistair MacKenzie", *Reality Magazine* iss 38

²³¹ [↗](#) Rayner, Keith: "Reflection on the theology of ordained ministry in secular employment", in Francis & Francis op. cit pp 287-295

²³² [↗](#) Anthony, P.D.: *The Ideology of Work* (London, Tavistock, 1977)

²³³ [↗](#) Pollard, T. Evan: *The Fulness of Humanity* (Almond Press, Sheffield, 1982)

²³⁴ [↗](#) Moltmann, Jürgen: *God for a Secular Society* (Trans Margaret Kohl)(Fortress, Minneapolis, 1999)

²³⁵ [↗](#) Mackenzie, A & Kirkland, W: *Where's God on Monday ?* (Christchurch NZ, NavPress, 2002) p.82

²³⁶ [↗](#) Genesis 1: 27-30

expressed in our civic responsibilities and the other mandate implicit in the *great commission*²³⁷ which calls us to witness to Christ to the ends of the earth.

One concerns creation and the other salvation ... Separating the two mandates has been tragic. When so separated mission becomes separated from life and becomes a 'discretionary-time' activity. Further, social action and evangelism become separated and prioritised. The Christian life is essentially unbalanced and fragmented when God intends it to be unified.²³⁸

It is holistic theology which validates combining ministry with secular employment. It is also the theology that Mantle²³⁹ and others claim PSEs have failed to articulate as a rationale for their own ministries.

Prospects for integrating ordained ministry with workplace ministry

The work ethic has broken loose from its Protestant roots. Research evidence²⁴⁰ points to the conclusion that most people find their employment important and derive satisfaction from it. Employment has emerged as the dominant idea in our life in modern society. Into such a world we place our theology, and ask the question, can there be an accommodation between the secular world's view of itself and the church's view of its ministry? The two classic answers are *yes* (holistic theologies) and *no* (dualistic theologies).

Somehow, grassroots Anglicanism tries to express a corporate theology that finds room for both the other-worldly and the this-worldly. It has long history of seeking ways to hold the transcendence of Christ in creative tension with Christ's immanence, thus avoiding the descent into pantheism. The relationship between immanence and transcendence is complex; discovering that relationship is our ongoing theological task. As the life of a monk bears witness to God's transcendence, so the life of a PSE bears

²³⁷ Matthew 28: 18-20

²³⁸ [Stevens, R. Paul: The Other Six Days - vocation, work, ministry in biblical perspective \(Carlisle, Paternoster, 1999\) p.89](#)

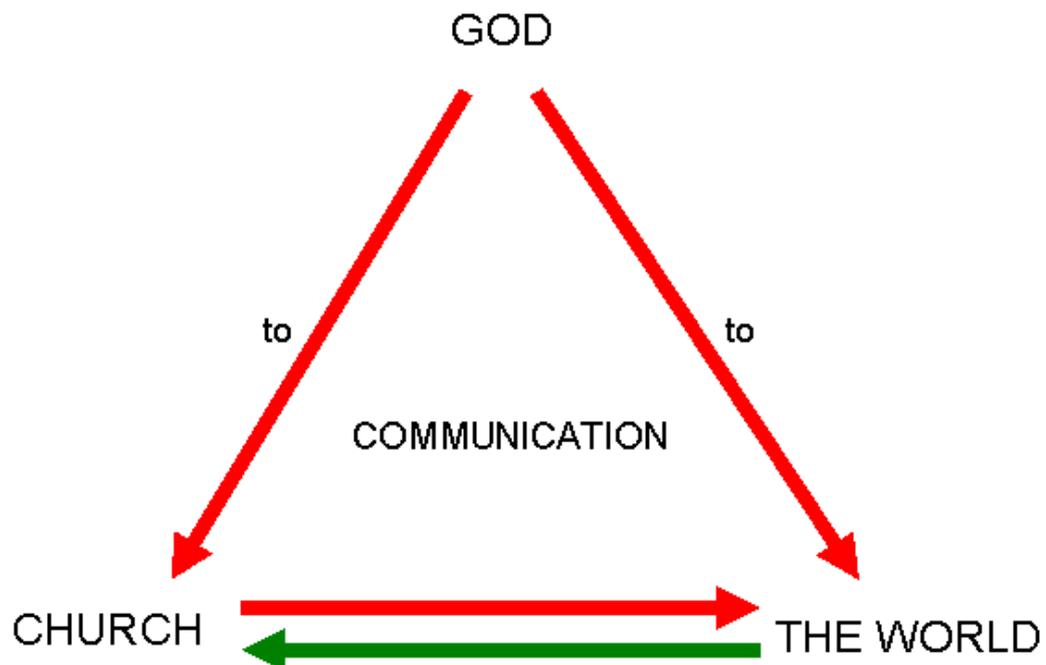
²³⁹ [Skinner, Michael: "priest Workers Vs Worker priests", in Rochester Link \(Rochester, anglicanjournal.com July/August 2002\). Downloaded 13 May 2003](#)

²⁴⁰ [Summarised in Anthony P.D.: The Ideology of Work \(London, Tavistock 1977\) p.274](#)

witness to God's immanence. That both types of witness are in tension and cooperation with each other is recognised, e.g. by Stevens —

The key to understanding [the] tension of whether God works primarily through the church or the world is to grasp the relation of the kingdom of God to the mission of the church. The church's mission is not to 'bring in' the church or even to extend it. The church's mission is to 'bring in' the kingdom. In this way the People of God participates in, embodies and serves what God is accomplishing by creation, salvation, sanctification and consummation. But the church does not circumscribe God's work. The church is God's primary agency in fulfilling his sending. But it also recognises and welcomes the irruption of the kingdom of God everywhere.²⁴¹

Stevens offers a triangular diagram by way of illustration —



— though he leaves out the bottom (green) arrow, which any PSE would see as a significant omission. Completed as above, the diagram also illustrates the interface which the church has preserved with public (now public *secular*) society — an interface which the church finds now somewhat ambiguous and uncertain.

²⁴¹  Stevens, op. cit. p.206

The private or public spheres have neither the same meaning nor the same function in accordance with the relation between the church and the world in which they are integrated. ... We are entering an era in which the ecclesial monopoly has disappeared and each individual, so it would seem, can live the inward and social dimension of faith other than by proxy and without fear of schizophrenia.²⁴²

The church is not seen to be in a position where risk lies in one direction and safety in another but is called to engage in a costly, dangerous interrelation. What the danger is, and whose the cost, this paper attempts to address.

The problem of two masters

The gospel writers Matthew²⁴³, Luke²⁴⁴ and Thomas²⁴⁵ all quote the famous aphorism that no servant can serve two masters, otherwise that slave will honour the one and offend the other. There is every reason to believe that this is an authentic saying from Jesus. Yet serving two masters is exactly what a PSE is asked to do. The question must be confronted, and there are a variety of answers to it. One is, that the PSE concept is fatally flawed and should be abandoned.

Another answer is, that the saying about serving two masters is really about the value we ascribe to money: you can't be enslaved both to God and to a bank account. That leaves the escape route that you can *have* a bank account without being a slave to it, and that's what a PSE should do. Reading Luke and Matthew encourages us to think that way²⁴⁶.

Ultimately, each candidate for PSE needs to wrestle with this problem in their own way. It is unlikely that they will do so all at once, and that the issue of two masters will form part of the agenda for a PSE's spiritual direction.

²⁴² [↗](#) Duquoc, Christian (trans John Griffiths): "Spirituality: A Private or a Public Phenomenon ?", in *Concilium*, vol 9 no 7 (London, Burns & Oates, 1971), pp 27-28

²⁴³ [↗](#) Matthew 6:24

²⁴⁴ [↗](#) Luke 16:13

²⁴⁵ [↗](#) Thomas 47:1-2

²⁴⁶ though the proposition is weakened by Thomas' omission of any reference to money

Employment in first and twenty-first centuries

Down through the lifetime of the Christian faith, the concept of work and its place in human existence has altered dramatically. When appeal is made to biblical precedent as a way of making ‘work’ a respectable Christian activity, we have to remember that ‘work’ and ‘workers’ meant different things then than they do today.

For twenty centuries Christian understandings of the relationship between faith and work have tended to oscillate between two opposite extremes. The first separates faith and daily work and clearly differentiates between ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ work. It elevates the status of ‘spiritual’ ministries compared with ‘secular’ jobs. ... On the other hand, at other times daily work has become idolised, so that a Christian fulfils their Christian calling just by succeeding in their job.²⁴⁷

That Saint Paul continued his tentmaking trade into his apostleship has been much quoted as a justification for bi-vocational ministries. However we need to bear in mind that the tentmaking Paul did, was done within a society where slaves made up the greatest part of the population and constituted the working class of the time. Because Paul did his canvas-wrangling outside the slavery system, his ‘work’ did not make him ‘working-class’ in the understandings of his day. We must be very careful about identifying him as a ‘worker’ in the sense that that word implied in the nineteenth century, or the twentieth, or the twenty-first. As Stevens has observed²⁴⁸, employment is not now an autonomous activity but is structured within the principalities and powers of our complex information society. Similar caution needs to be exercised when considering any carpentry Jesus may have undertaken.

It is intriguing nevertheless to speculate that Saint Peter was as much a bi-vocational apostle as Saint Paul. Careful reading of Peter’s call to ministry^{249,250} reveals that while he and the other apostles ‘left their nets’, the texts themselves do not state that they

²⁴⁷ [↗](#) Mackenzie, Alistair: "The Way Forward", in Mathieson (ed), *Faith at Work* (Auckland, Castle, 2001) p 177

²⁴⁸ [↗](#) Stevens, op. cit. pp.108-9

²⁴⁹ [↗](#) Mark 1:16 - 20

²⁵⁰ [↗](#) Luke 5: 1 - 11

totally 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 Resurrection^{251,252} can be read as evidence that Peter returned to his trade while continuing his apostolic ministry. With such a reading, PSEs can claim not only Saint Paul the bi-vocational tentmaker as patron, but also Saint Peter the bi-vocational fisherman.

Many supporters of the PSE concept also derive from *Genesis* an affirmation of the value of 'work' because work is what God did in creating the world. Such an idea needs to be treated with care though, for

Only God creates ex nihilo, from nothing. The Hebrew word used for what God does when he creates, 'barah', is never used in Scripture to describe what humans do when they make something. Human 'creativity' is within God's foundational and continuing work. It is therefore hazardous to speak of humans as 'co-creators' with God.²⁵³

In any case, how do we know that for God, creation is work and not play? Undertaken from grim necessity (work) or having fun (not-work)? Is some kind of 'protestant work ethic' persuading us that if God did it and God is good, then work is what it must be? Who knows, and does it matter? Well, it only matters if you try to make a case for a worker God and use *Genesis* to support it. Where the difficulty lies is that work can be defined as virtually any activity whatever. Is a creative act automatically work? Ask a weekend painter. Are games automatically not-work? Ask an All-Black. Is breathing work? Ask a deep-sea diver, or an asthmatic. Is a celebrant working when celebrating eucharist? Does a paid celebrant's eucharist constitute work, and an unpaid celebrant's eucharist not-work?

No rigorous definition of work of itself is possible. The definition of work lies not in the nature of the task but in its context. For that reason it is prudent to limit this present discussion: to deal with *employment* rather than *work*. Employment involves the sale of

²⁵¹ Luke disagrees but may be the less reliable of the two [↗](#)

²⁵² [↗](#) Funk, Robert et al. - *The Jesus Seminar: The Five Gospels* (NY, Macmillan, 1993) p. 468

²⁵³ [↗](#) Stuart, Peter: "Work and Worship in a Fallen World", in Mathieson op. cit., p 35

one's labour to another party on a systematic basis in exchange for economic reward. Creation may involve God in work but there is no hiring party around so that activity is not employment. Jesus and Paul, we can't be sure. Employment is work, but not all work is employment.

Functional definition of a PSE

Here it is. For the purposes of this study,

A priest in secular employment is a person who

- 1. holds a current Bishop's licence to a function reserved to the priesthood, and***
- 2. is in full-time paid employment within an organization ...***
- 3. ... in whose organizational mission statement, there appears no explicit reference to God or Christ.***

Fundamental to the idea of priest in secular employment is that of *bi-vocationalism*. Both the call to priesthood and the call to a secular occupation are valued. The priestly role is more than just a hobby, and the secular employment is more than just a way to survive and pay the rent. By requiring the priestly licence to be current and the secular employment full-time,²⁵⁴ the definition ensures that both divisions of the PSE's life are true professions: in each, a Christian vocation is discerned, and a Christian duty delineated.

Double vocation, double discipline and double motive. The PSE is responsible to an organisation (the church) which does acknowledge the lordship of Christ, and responsible to another (the secular employer) which does not. The secular objectives of the latter organization are crucial: as we have seen, it is not what an employee *does* that defines their work as secular, but the objective to which that work is applied.

The definition is operational. Each one of the three points can be tested, they are not a matter of opinion. The bishop's licence either exists or it does not. Whether the secular employment is full-time or not, is defined in current labour legislation. The third point is the only one that can possibly present a difficulty, and the difficulty will only emerge

²⁵⁴ In New Zealand, currently 30 hours plus per week

in respect of those few organizations that do not have a mission statement document. In such cases it may be necessary to exercise a little ingenuity to reverse-engineer what the organisation's mission statement would have been if it had existed.

The point about the mission statement is important. It is the nature of the employer that makes employment secular, not the nature of the tasks performed. For example, this definition makes a distinction between teaching done in a Christian school (one whose mission statement reveals it to be such) and teaching done in a government school, even though the functions performed look the same. Or again, a computer guy working for a manufacturer meets the third term of the definition, while his colleague running information technology for the diocesan administration does not.

The reasons for distinguishing between organizations in this way, is that each organization — including the church — has its own culture and value system, and that these reveal themselves daily in decisions taken at both the macro and the micro level. For example, a PSE may have to beg their secular employer for time out to conduct a parishioner's funeral²⁵⁵. While the PSE may regard such ministry as a top priority in their life, to the secular employer that ministry is no more than a hobby.

A Christian organization would have seen its imperatives differently. Any organization that incorporates Christ into its statement of objectives is ministry-friendly — otherwise it is not true to its mission. That makes it a qualitatively different environment for the PSE from those organizations which do not acknowledge Christ and his kingdom as causes worthy of advancement.

Chaplains are special: some hospital and school chaplains fall within the terms of the definition, some outside it. Fulltime enlisted military chaplains are presumably *in*. This insight was unforeseen, since the main focus, the 'classical' PSE works in an office, shop or factory getting paid for work that is as secular as the employing organization. It would have been possible to tweak the definition to make its second clause read '... full-time paid employment *of a non-ministerial character* within an organization ...' but it seemed more productive to leave the definition intact, making particular observations on chaplaincy as a special case, as and when required.

²⁵⁵ When this happened to me, it was finally agreed that I could take the time and claim it against my sick leave provisions.

Some worthy ministries fall outside the terms of this definition, let us acknowledge that. All lay ministries; clergy who have retired from secular jobs to do sterling work as unpaid vicars; clergy who do a full-time ministry plus a few hours a week at a secular job; farmers and other self-employed persons who couple ordained ministry with their business activities; journalists and accountants and cooks who happen to work for religious agencies. The importance of their work for the kingdom is not in question. But this is an academic investigation: the definition chosen is one that can be made to operate in practice, and to form a basis for the conclusions that this study will advance.

Ecclesial Issues

A priest among the people of God

If we're going to have people called priests, then we need to be clear about their role in the Christian community. Only then can we decide whether the role is one that can be combined with secular employment.

The Protestant tradition has rightly spoken of the whole people of God as a priesthood, following Hebrews chapter 6, but the priesthood of all believers has never meant the priesthood of each independent believer, but rather of the whole community, gathered and unified in Christ the high priest, who ironically is also the lamb slain on our behalf.²⁵⁶

That ground is the justification for the Anglican perception that

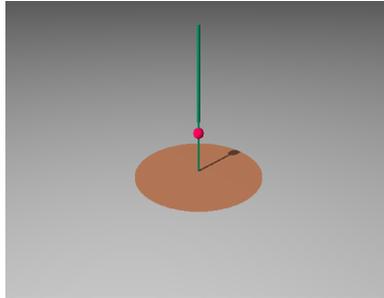
there has always been, and continues to be, an indispensable role for a more formally constituted priesthood. The ordination rites show that this is focused in someone who is especially called, prepared, and ordained to word and sacrament. In Anglican understanding the ordained ministry is seen as foundational to the life and character of the church, and in some way particularly expressive of the life of Christ within the whole people of God.²⁵⁷

In the ordinal these are called to build up Christ's congregation, to strengthen the baptised, and to lead them as witnesses to Christ in the world. The priestly tasks are specified: to share people's joys and sorrows, encourage the faithful, recall those who fall away, heal and help the sick. Above all they are to proclaim God's word and take their part in Christ's prophetic work, to declare forgiveness through Jesus Christ, to baptise, to preside at the Eucharist, and to administer Christ's holy sacraments.

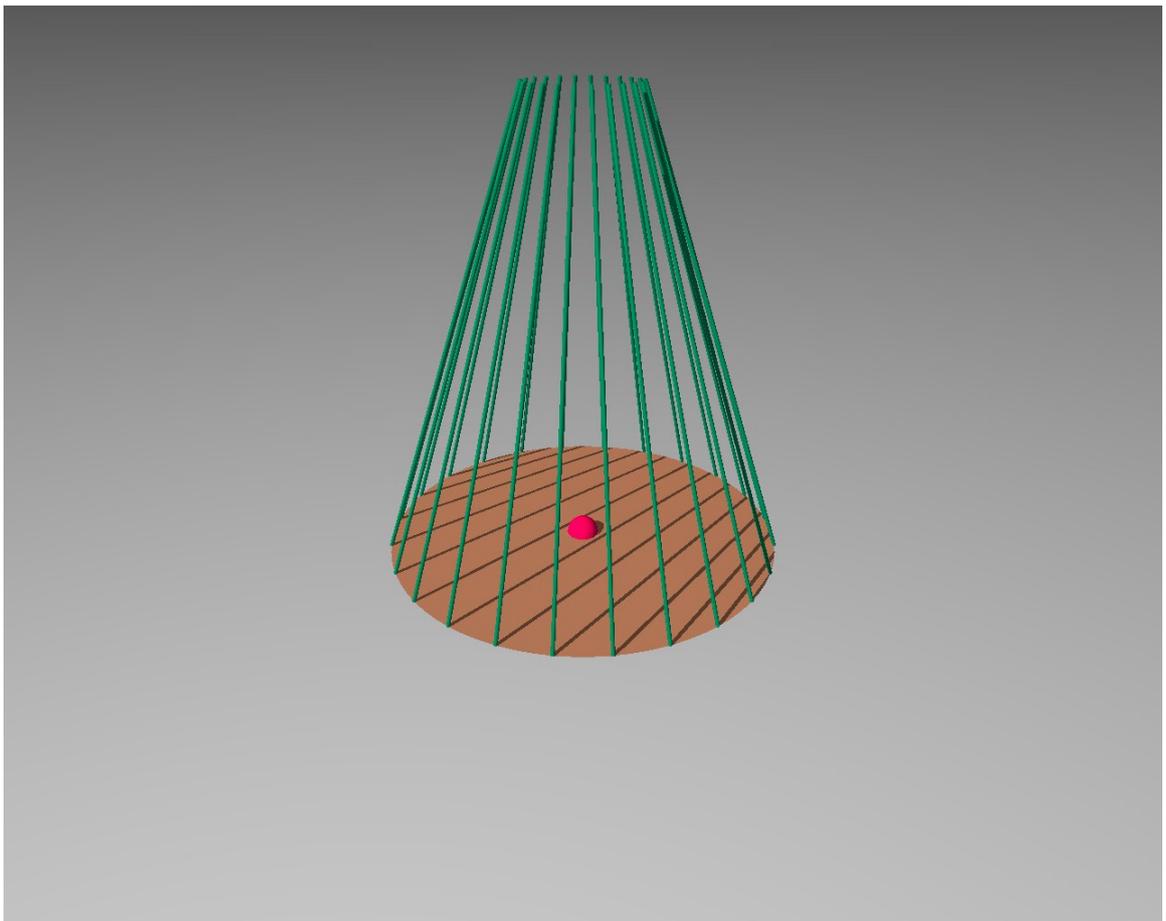
²⁵⁶ [🔗](#) Oden, Thomas C.: *Pastoral Theology - Essentials of Ministry* (New York, HarperCollins, 1983) pp.87-8

²⁵⁷ [🔗](#) Dawson, Jennifer: *The ordination training mat: Towards a coherent frame of priestly formation*. (MMin thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin, NZ. June 2003) p. 9

Modern writers on the priest's role distance themselves from medieval perceptions of priesthood which envisage a vertical drainpipe with God at the top, the believers at the bottom, and the priest as a kind of sphincter-valve in between.



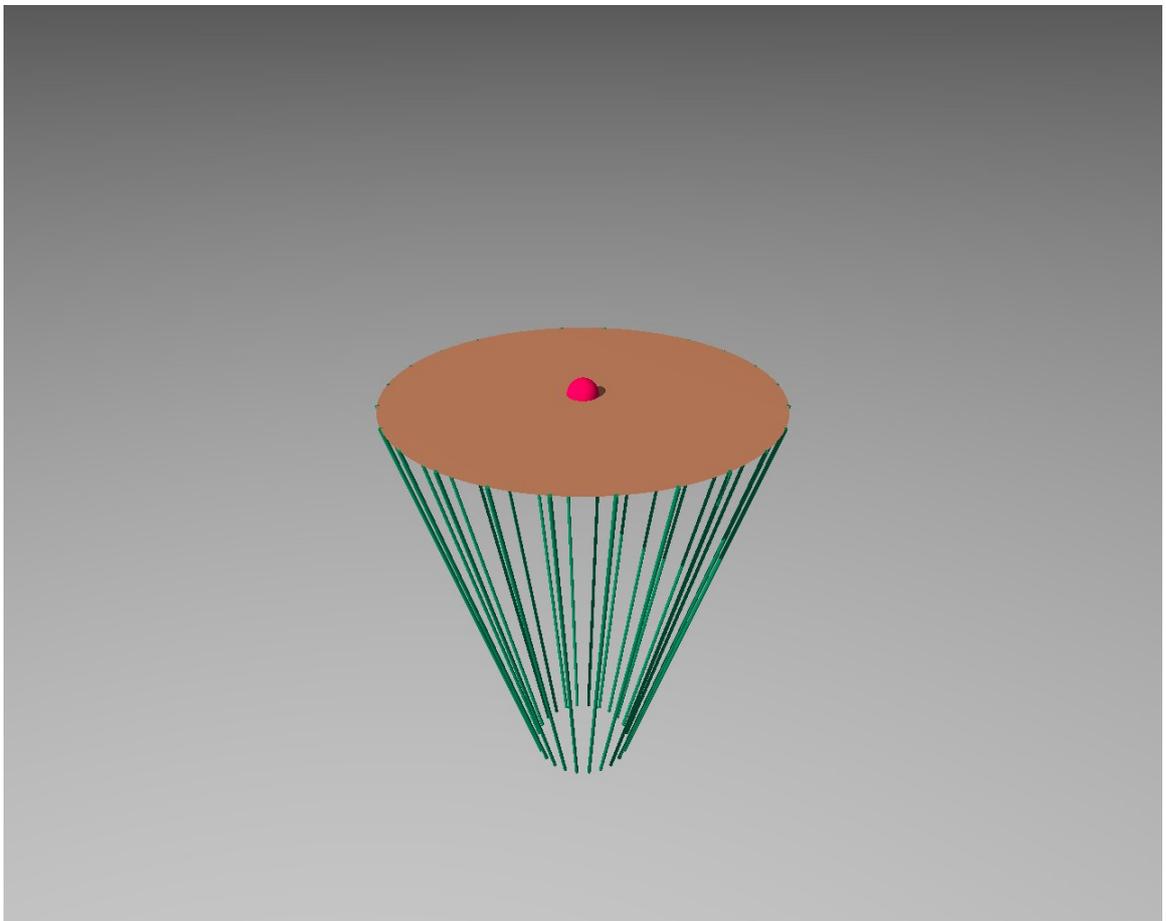
Denying the validity of the drainpipe model, Beguerie & Duchesneau²⁵⁸ offer in its place a conical floodlight beam with God still at the top but now the illuminated target area is the church, and the priest is a dot at its centre.



²⁵⁸  Beguerie, Phillippe & Duchesneau, Claude (trans John Bowden): *How to Understand the Sacraments* (London, SCM Press, 1991)p 69

The floodlight model is a highly suggestive one. It depicts the church as a bounded community, which is the reality of our post-Constantinian world. It places the priest at the centre of the community, as a participant with them, occupying a special place but not a defining one. The flow of God's grace is first to the people, and among them to the priest.

Useful as the floodlight model is, it is capable of being developed further yet. Its emphasis on the down-flowing grace of God can be exchanged for an emphasis on the up-flowing and supportive energy of the Holy Spirit. It therefore seems like a good idea to turn the funnel up the other way ...



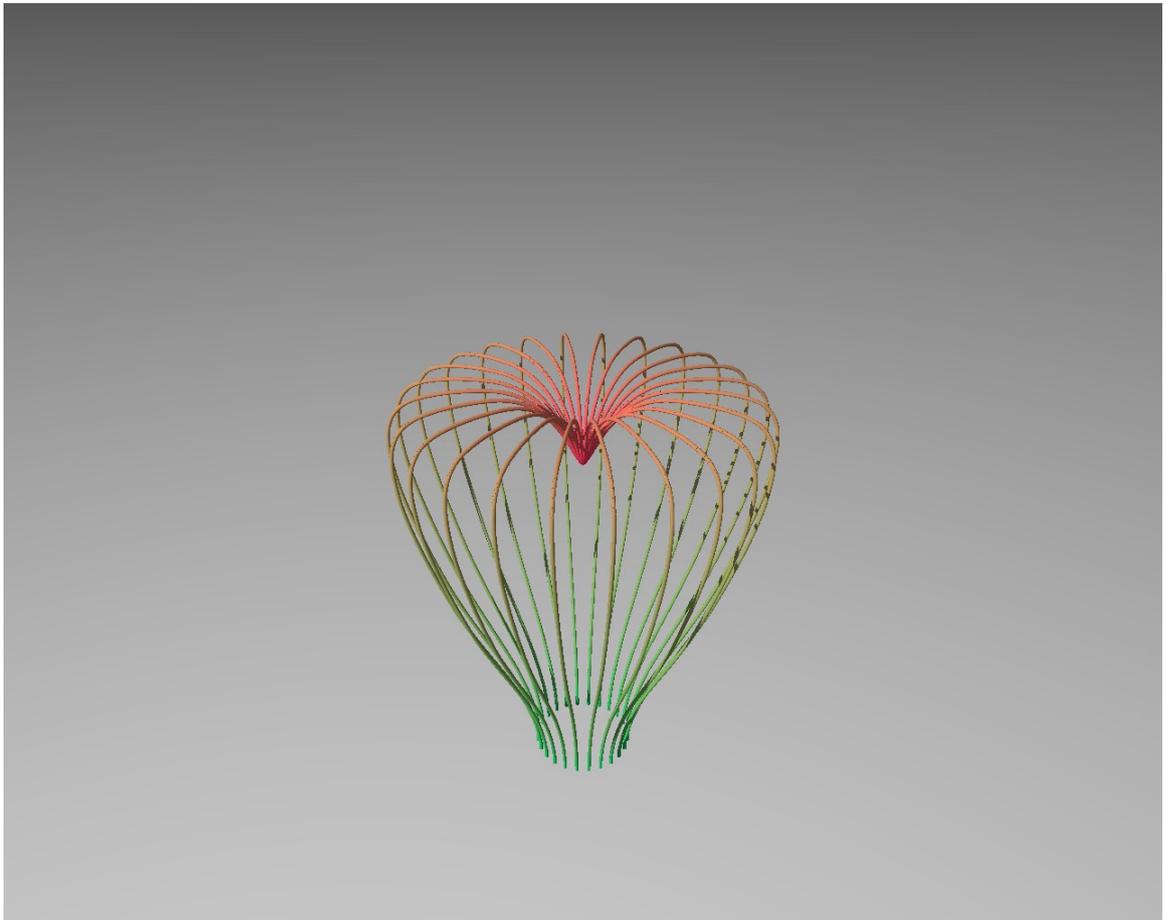
Inverting the cone

Doing so reflects the language and thought patterns of Maori Anglicans, who at the Dismissal do not go *in* the name of Christ – they go *on* the name of Christ²⁵⁹. That is to

²⁵⁹ Ka haere matou *i runga* i te ingoa a te Karaiti.

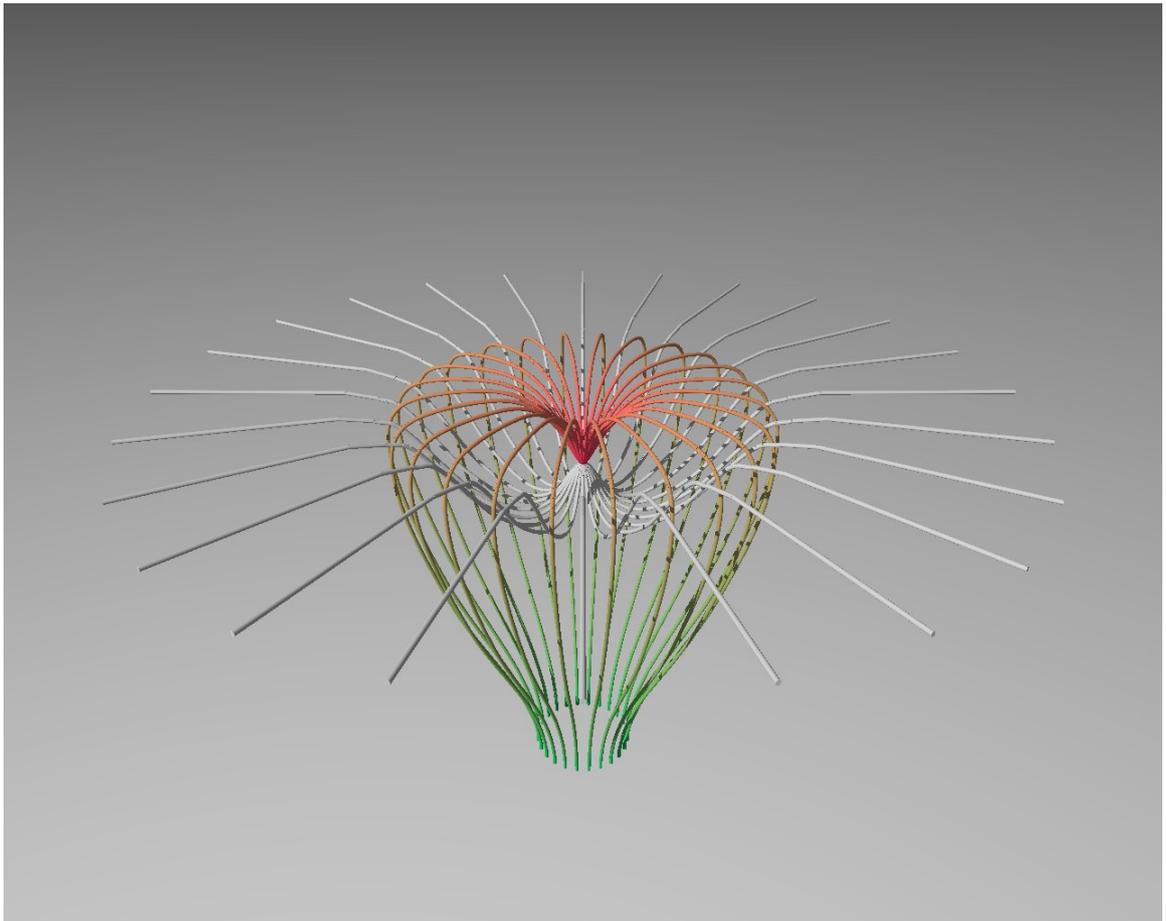
say, the name of Christ is the vehicle of their going, like going *on* the train, going *on* a bus, going *on* a plane.

Softening the sharp corners and drawing the priest down improves the model further. This flowerbud model emphasises God's supportive activity, transmitted through the community to the priest. It emphasises continuity of the priestly role with that of the community, which receives its charism from God and focuses that charism upon its eucharist and its president. The flowerbud model is pretty good to describe the way a Christian community focuses itself in its eucharist.



Flowerbud model of priesthood

We might imagine a garden in which large numbers of such flowerbuds would grow, each drawing sustenance from the ground of its being. Or, since it is easy to see each bud as a structure made of wire we might go further and imagine each as a peculiar kind of fountain in which the streams come upward, then outward, then inward. (True, it would call for some mighty special laws of physics.) Then we would be faced with the question: where would all that focussed charism finish up ?



Protea model of priesthood

By showing charism escaping the confines of the church, this picture provides a model for ministry to the world at large.

The protea model itself is capable of further development. Stevens suggests that animation might be an advantage -

The church, like the gathering and dispersion of blood in the body, is a rhythm of gathering (ekklesia) and dispersion (diaspora). The only true picture of the church is a motion picture, perhaps an angiogram. ... Gathered, the blood is cleaned and oxygenated. Sent out, it fights diseases and energises.²⁶⁰

²⁶⁰  Stevens, R. Paul: *The Other Six Days - vocation, work, ministry in biblical perspective* (Carlisle, Paternoster, 1999) p 211

The radiating petals spring from the common centre in the eucharist, and each petal heads off in a different direction. We may choose to interpret these as separate and specialist ministries growing outward from a single focal point in the community's eucharist. We may pick on certain radii and track them through to their endpoints in contexts outside of the church. And one of those radii may represent the ministry of a priest in secular employment.

Balancing pastoral duty with liturgical

Harvey has a four-way analysis²⁶¹ of the priestly role: part sacramental president, part minister of the word, part pastor, part authority figure. Accepting that analysis, we may consider how these aspects are realised in the PSE's ministry. To meet the liturgical needs of bereft parishes, there is a strong motivation for ecclesiastical administrations to make use of PSEs primarily as celebrants and preachers — that is, to address just the first two of the Harvey categories.

Pastoral ministry, the third of the Harvey categories, is apt to be given *laissez-faire* treatment. Or worse, the PSE is enjoined to 'do what you can' — a recipe for burnout if there ever was one. Yet a properly articulated pastoral ministry is needed to validate any priestly role. As an ideal, the PSE will find in their place of employment, an avenue for their pastoral ministry. Such was the aim of the French *prêtres-ouvriers*. But as Davis²⁶² has noted — who ought to know if anyone did — it is an aim not often achieved by PSEs in New Zealand.

Maintaining continuity of eucharistic worship is a worthy objective, but as Harvey observes -

It is of course disclaimed that men should be ordained only or mainly for this purpose: the notion of the 'mass-priest' is vigorously rejected and guarded against by demanding a training comparable with that of a full-time minister.²⁶³

²⁶¹  In another context (page 20) these are referenced to Mana Atua, Mana Kura, Mana Mahi, Mana Tangata respectively.

²⁶²  Davis, Archbishop Brian: *The Way Ahead - Anglican change and prospect in New Zealand* (Christchurch, Caxton, 1995) p 71

²⁶³  Harvey, E.A: *Priest or President ?* (London, SPCK, 1975) p 63

To balance the liturgical and the pastoral ministries of PSEs is a matter of importance, for the spectre of the medieval mass-priest lurks at every PSE's shoulder. The church rightly celebrates its long experience with pastoral ministry in the parish context, but other contexts have been neglected: in particular it has achieved little penetration into the context of secular employment. Indeed, the ten years of the *prêtre-ouvrier* experiment in France showed that the church's traditional mechanisms are poorly equipped to support pastoral ministries in places of secular employment.

The parish worshipping community, then, is only one of the environments wherein a PSE exercises ministry. The church can support that ministry in either of two ways: either a parish can provide a base for PSE activity and regard that as part of their missionary effort, or some extra-parochial agency can actively support pastorality in the places where PSEs are employed. In principle both options come to the same thing, since the 'extra-parochial agency' is apt to be diocesan and it simply means that the PSE is doing mission on behalf of the diocese rather than the parish. If the diocesan community truly *is* community, then the only difference is the scale of the worshipping community that supports the PSE's ministry.

But in either case it will not do for that worshipping community to stand back and leave the PSE to figure out how to practise pastorally in their place of employment. The church needs to involve itself, both for its own sake and for the PSE's. For its own sake because the church is in a crisis of relevance; it needs to be seen to be engaging with people's perceived needs, so many of which are employment related. For its own sake because the church stands in danger of losing contact with the unchurched. For its own sake because the church needs explorers to dive into the world of everyday and bring back news of spiritualities 'out there' which will benefit us all. And for the PSE's sake because a priest without a community is no priest at all.

Here are some practical ways that church leaders can support the pastoral ministry of the PSE who serves it. They are all employer-facing initiatives which the PSE would find difficult to make on their own behalf -

- Supporting the PSE in requests to their employer for special leave to conduct funerals, attend training events, undertake retreats, practise Holy Week disciplines and so forth.²⁶⁴
- Offering to reimburse the PSE's employer for office materials consumed while duplicating bulletins, printing notices, preparing sermons etc.
- Negotiating with the employer an acceptable means whereby the presence of an Anglican priest in their midst, might be made known to the Anglican employees in that organisation.
- Reassuring the employer that the PSE exercises a clearly-defined ministry. Determining whether (and within what limits) any chaplaincy role is sought or offered.

It has been suggested that the above initiatives presuppose a faith-positive employment environment. Reportedly, the experience of some PSEs has been that the workplace becomes hostile after ordination, maybe because of a perceived split allegiance. More needs to be known about that. But timidity on the church's part is no answer. If the church's leadership (including its lay leaders) even attempted these initiatives, PSEs would have a better chance of achieving that balance between liturgy and pastorality so necessary to any priestly ministry.

Volunteerism and ministry

PSE ministries would be more effective if the church got better at volunteer management. Volunteerism is a feature of all of unpaid ministry, lay and ordained. PSEs are volunteers, for they do without economic reward what others get paid for. The church might be considered a leader in the field of volunteerism, yet little enough effort has been devoted to examining the features of volunteerism in ecclesial terms²⁶⁵. One of the few writers to address the issues is Woods who in a general text on managing volunteers commits a chapter to the topic, 'Volunteers in the Church'.

²⁶⁴ If a precedent is needed, consider the case of reservists in the armed forces. The military has well-established procedures for negotiating with employers on behalf of its weekend soldiers and sailors.

²⁶⁵ Psychological issues that volunteerism raises — a particularly critical matter — are addressed in the chapter on supervision for PSEs.

Churches use volunteers as a major workforce, but they often see themselves as somehow different from other users of volunteers. ... Church use of volunteers is not just an easy way out for a group that is short of money, rather it is fundamental to their philosophy. ... If the church is to realise a vision of congregations living out their Christianity in the community, it must inevitably have a large volunteer workforce.²⁶⁶

Woods offers Jesus as an exemplar of volunteer management. In her submission,²⁶⁷ -

- Jesus instructed them what they were to do and how they were to do it²⁶⁸
- He affirmed them with his own authority²⁶⁹
- Jesus calmed both the storm and the apostles²⁷⁰
- cooking breakfast for them when they were tired after a night's fishing²⁷¹
- we hear of the feast Jesus had with his apostles the night before he died²⁷²
- encouraging them to take time out to rest and eat after a busy period²⁷³
- we see Jesus empowering his workers²⁷⁴
- and later affirming them²⁷⁵

In seeking to follow that example, we would greatly benefit from psychosocial research that addressed the ecclesial matrix in which volunteers do what they do. In a society that values paid-professional status as a source of authority, an 'amateur' needs some means to influence outcomes, and to function as a leader. Mechanisms that PSEs have used to get things done include exploiting sentimentality and personal dominance, not to mention leveraging local pride, celebrity status and the dynamics of guilt. Such

²⁶⁶ [↗](#) Woods, Mary: *Volunteers - a guide for volunteers and their organisations* (Christchurch NZ, Hazard, 1998) p.156

²⁶⁷ [↗](#) Woods, op. cit. p.159

²⁶⁸ [↗](#) Matthew 10

²⁶⁹ [↗](#) Matthew 10

²⁷⁰ [↗](#) Mark 4:37-41

²⁷¹ [↗](#) John 21

²⁷² [↗](#) Luke 22

²⁷³ [↗](#) Mark 6:30-32

²⁷⁴ [↗](#) Luke 10:9

²⁷⁵ [↗](#) Luke 10:23-24

methods provide an unacknowledged toolkit of persuasive techniques which substitute for the coercive methods which function in the environment of paid professionalism.

We are not unique in that. Secular volunteerism has developed a folk wisdom of its own, and even a literature. The church might benefit by looking there for insights, and we may find some surprises. For example the proposition that most volunteers are people who have time on their hands because they are not in paid employment: when we examine the figures that Woods quotes²⁷⁶ it proves illusory. The census found 211,000 volunteers in full-time paid employment - 44% of the total – compared with 170,000 who had no paid employment and were not seeking any. Folk wisdom, it would appear, is an unreliable guide in these matters.

A healthy organisation that uses volunteers will be characterized, according to Woods²⁷⁷, by the way it —

- Encourages the early sharing of problems
- Acknowledges and encourages the expression of feelings by all members of the group
- Encourages communication to be as direct as possible and decision-making to be as open as possible
- Accepts that people sometimes make mistakes and ensures that there will be someone to pick up the pieces when they do
- Deals with difficult issues honestly
- Encourages its volunteers to set reasonable boundaries and then respects those boundaries
- Tries to keep its actions consistent with its words, and acts with integrity
- Takes seriously the responsibility to have fun
- Welcomes the opportunity to look at and respond to change.

Nothing in this list is news to Christians. Every one of these points is made by Jesus and/or Paul and recorded in gospels^{278,279,280} and epistles^{281,282,283,284,285,286}. Some go

²⁷⁶ [↗](#) Woods, op. cit. p.24. Concentrating on the 1991 census, because it focused on the organisations that consume volunteer effort.

²⁷⁷ [↗](#) Woods, op. cit. p.125

²⁷⁸ [↗](#) Jn 20:19-29

back to the wisdom literature of the First Testament^{287,288}. A church unit that has addressed the above list is then in a position to address the three basic questions any volunteer-dependent organisation should ask itself -

- What do we want volunteers to do ?
- What will they need to do it well ?
- How can we provide that ?²⁸⁹

This process can be taken further into a further series of questions whose answers should provide a recipe for good volunteering in that context by that group.

Given reflective consideration, the points listed above suggest profitable directions for enhancing our church through development and policy. For example, could we better achieve those aims in smaller-sized church units ? Concerns expressed by secular bodies²⁹⁰ bear witness to the dangers to volunteer-dependent organisations of failure in the areas listed above. At their best, the same reports also suggest a range of locally effective strategies useful which units of the Anglican church could adopt in their task of building up the Body of Christ.

Professionalism, and our attitudes toward it, lie close to the heart of how we perceive volunteers of all kinds, including lay ministers and PSEs. As has been noted, our society is accustomed to valuing people's skill, experience and talent on the basis of whether they can persuade somebody else to pay for them. The word *amateur*, for all

²⁷⁹ [↗](#) Mt 7:21

²⁸⁰ [↗](#) Mt 19:28-30

²⁸¹ [↗](#) Gal 6:1-5

²⁸² [↗](#) Eph 4:25-32

²⁸³ [↗](#) Titus 3:9-11

²⁸⁴ [↗](#) 1 Thess 5:12-15

²⁸⁵ [↗](#) 1 Cor 12:7-31

²⁸⁶ [↗](#) 1 Thess 5:16

²⁸⁷ [↗](#) Prov 15:31-33

²⁸⁸ [↗](#) Eccles 3:9-13

²⁸⁹ [↗](#) Woods, op. cit. pp.46-7

²⁹⁰ The International Year of Volunteers in 2001 gave rise to a rash of reports, of which a typical example is [↗](#) Feeny, B: *Volunteering in Wellington - Issues and Trends* (Wellington City Council and others, 2001 at www.volunteerwellington.org.nz/iyyvwccrep.htm)

its association with something you do out of love, has come to mean *second-rate*. It also has connotations of *uncommitted*, for a volunteer is able to withdraw their services without economic disadvantage. For most of our fellow citizens, full-time, stipended priests are seen as proper clergy, unpaid ones being inadequate and/or unreliable substitutes. We argue in vain that the idea of clergy stipends came from different considerations: the mindset is abroad that value equals financial cost coupled with financial power.

In such a context, the PSE occupies a peculiar position. As an employed person in a secular enterprise, everybody knows that their skill, experience and talent have commercial value. But the skills, experience and talent that they exercise within the church have anti-commercial value: no reward of money is offered (or asked) to sanctify those self-same attributes.

A number of serious ambiguities immediately arise. Serious ambiguity exists concerning the PSE's priorities in terms of availability for church and secular commitments. For example, if the PSE is asked by management about their availability for a company project over the Easter weekend, would the congregation expect to be consulted before the question is answered, or automatically take second place? Volunteers have an unspoken charter that volunteer activity is a third-order priority, after paid employment and after family commitments; so will this do for a PSE? We do not know. What PSEs need is a Rule — a kind of 'rule of life' in the religious, monastic sense. That kind of rule will provide direction in a chaotic, ambiguous life and ministry. That kind of rule will help other Christians to understand what styles of ministry they might expect from their PSEs. In the absence of such a rule (yet), PSEs need proactive oversight and support if they are to be faithful to that community which validates their ministry.

PSEs and the Laity

The proper relationship between PSEs and laypeople is one of companionship.

If the laity of the church, dispersed in and through the world, are really what they are called to be, the real uninterrupted dialogue between church and world

happens through them. They form the daily repeated projection of the church into the world. They embody the meeting of the church and world.²⁹¹

Companionship allays the fear surrounding PSEs that their presence tends to restrict the range of things that the laity has space to do, and may produce a helpful answer to a question that many are asking -

How many priests do we need in relation to our vision for the church and actual work needing to be done ? ... In a church with a significant increase in the number of priests, do laity feel undermined and undervalued in their ministry ?²⁹²

The church asserts the competence of laypeople for ministry of the word, for pastoral ministries and as authority figures in the worshipping community. Asserting those competencies while at the same time reserving presidency at eucharist to priests — including PSEs — by virtue of their priestly ordination, makes that fear reasonable. The root of the problem lies in an inadequate theology of lay spirituality:

An adequate lay spirituality has hardly ever been taught and promoted. While the Reformation rejected the two-level spirituality of the monastery and the common Christian, with few exceptions Protestant spirituality has mostly focused either on charismatic and ‘mystical’ experiences or the deeper life of outstanding Christian leaders, rather than exploring the holiness of the ordinary Christian in the totality of his or her life: eating, sleeping, working, buying and selling, having sexual relations and dying. The church has never, in the West, become free of Greek dualism which relegates bodily life to a lower level.²⁹³

So if we recognise that PSEs should exercise pastoral and leadership functions then we must recognise that doing so runs a risk of compounding the clergy/laity issue. It is considered faulty to ordain men and women exclusively to preside at eucharist. A precondition, then, for PSEs to make a legitimate contribution to the worship of the

²⁹¹ Hendrik Kraemer in his *A Theology of the Laity* (Philadelphia, Westminster press, 1958) p.170, quoted in [Stevens](#), op. cit. p.211

²⁹² [Gilberd](#), Bruce C: "Community priests in the New Zealand Anglican Church" in Francis, James M.M. & Francis, Leslie J:(eds) *Tentmaking: perspectives on self-supporting ministry* (Leominster, Herefordshire, pub: Gracewing, 1998) pp 127-135 p 127

²⁹³ [Stevens](#) op. cit. p.48

community, is to puncture the wall that divides lay from ordained ministerial functions. It is a chicken-and-egg proposition: the more PSEs we have, the more that wall becomes perforated, and the more it is perforated, the more natural will the PSEs' situation become.

In any case, if Bickers' experience²⁹⁴ is indicative, the presence of a PSE expands, rather than contracts, the range of activities that the laity are expected to exercise. He suggests that because the pastor is 'one of them' a PSE is able to challenge laypeople in a particularly effective way. The range of personal experiences and relationships with unchurched people that the PSE brings to their task, can encourage laypeople to accept challenges that would otherwise be left to the professional clergy. Simply substituting laypeople for clergy is not a panacea, though. Substitution carries its own dangers, as Keizer reminds us:

Most of us would be appalled by a pastor who failed to show up for the Sunday service so she could go shopping or find a bar that opened early. But no one seems to be appalled if a working mother takes an entire Saturday away from her kids to write a church mission statement — the words of the Gospels no longer sufficing for that purpose. If this is what it means to be a lay minister, then lay ministry will never be more than a counterfeit of ordained ministry, and a rather paltry one at that ...

we run a great risk of creating a very esoteric association — emancipated and empowered and all the rest, but also a bit boring and more than a bit smug.²⁹⁵

The advantages that accrue to a community which takes on a PSE are, to quote Bickers²⁹⁶, that resources human and financial may be employed more flexibly than is possible within the professional-clergy blueprint. He also lists 'a pastor who can relax' as an advantage, and we may indeed hope that relaxation might be a keynote of PSE ministry. But it will fall to laypeople to meet traditional expectations in respect of immediate availability and denominational ties.

²⁹⁴ [Bickers, Dennis W:](#) *The Tentmaking Pastor: The joy of bivocational ministry* (Grand Rapids MI, Baker, 2000) p 69

²⁹⁵ [Keizer, Garret:](#) "Career ministry. (Two cheers for professional clergy)", in *The Christian Century*, v119 i9 (April 24, 2002) p30

²⁹⁶ [Bickers, op. cit.](#)

The PSEs' function in relation to laypeople then becomes clear: to act as companion-exemplar for the Christian ministry of others — most particularly Christians who, like themselves, get their living through secular employment. It is in the nature of things that nearly all those people will be laypeople. It will be apparent to all that from lay minister to PSE is a small step, not a giant leap. And it will be the PSE's privilege and duty to act as encourager and enhancer to the ministry of lay people. In particular, those laypeople who are themselves in secular employment and for whom the PSE can express special affinity.

PSEs and other Clergy

PSEs need to be team players, both for their congregations' wellbeing and their own. PSEs align themselves with Paul and his associates and the rabbis who all made work the location where mental and spiritual endeavours encountered the material world in fruitful exchange. In this they distinguish themselves from the monks who used work as a means of separating themselves from the world.

Brushwyler's research shows what the PSE has to gain from improved collegiality with other clergy. Yet that's a one-way street; Brushwyler neglects to describe any specific contribution that the PSE can bring to such a collegium. Other writers reviewed for this study similarly omitted to specify the particular gift/s that the PSEs can offer their clergy colleagues. It is an important omission, for the PSE will not be welcomed if s/he comes to the group with empty hands.²⁹⁷

Fulltime clergy possess a freedom of action that is denied to the PSE. They are at liberty to pursue not only the major but also the minor disciplines of the church. They can attend synods and the bishop's birthday party. That freedom simplifies matters for the church, and a PSE's lack of it can cause their ministry to be regarded as one handicapped²⁹⁸ by circumstances. One response to that handicap is to assign PSEs to permanent assistantships in existing parishes.

²⁹⁷ The matter will be further developed in the chapter on Deployment.

²⁹⁸ It is politically correct to substitute the term 'differently abled'. In our context, that substitution might be even more appropriate than usual.

Yet to follow Harvey is to deny any justification for creating priests to perform auxiliary duties on a permanent basis. He points out that there isn't any emergency a duly appointed lay person cannot cover. Thus, the term, 'auxiliary ministry' may be a contradiction in terms. Harvey sees three legitimate cases for PSE involvement:

- very small congregations
- specialised ministries
- team ministry

Any of the three propositions listed above, takes care of questions of leadership. There are however, some communities where the presence of a PSE can have a destabilising effect. These are the parishes where laypeople have limited their ministries by adopting a clericalist position: the vicar is in charge, and the parish is viewed as the vicar's personal fief. Thus the vicar is expected to be the one focus of authority, the sole source of inspiration, the professional in the parish who by virtue of being paid for it, takes responsibility for the religion that gets done there. It creates a clubby kind of parish culture in which laypeople take on just those aspects of ministry that they find convenient, leaving the more demanding activities to parish clergy.

The destabilising effect emerges where an ordained but unpaid priest (a PSE for example) appears who is clearly competent in fields which have been seen as the vicar's preserve. If the parish culture cannot accommodate a pattern in which leadership is shared among several clergy, then divided loyalties may emerge which damage the unity of the parish community. If placed in such a situation, the PSE may do better to offer a diaconal ministry²⁹⁹. In other parishes, where teamwork, mutual respect and authority are valued, all these point to the collaborative-synergetic model as the correct one for PSE ministry.

²⁹⁹ As Bishop Tom Brown has said on the matter of priestly and diaconal ministries, a diaconal ministry is community facing; a priest's ministry is to gather the worshipping People of Christ.

Workplace Issues

Work ethics, protestant and otherwise

It is Sirach who provides us with the most beautiful authentication of employment as sacred activity -

Each is skilled in his own craft ...
They maintain the fabric of this world,
And their prayers are about their daily work.³⁰⁰

while the most unequivocal comes from Paul -

Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters.³⁰¹

and again -

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women, knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free.³⁰²

The role of the work ethic in economic development and the importance of the values of paid employment for activities outside paid employment, are themes that recur again and again in Christian writing in the latter half of the twentieth century. Here we see the principles of the protestant work ethic and the proposition — deeply embedded in the value-systems of our day — that for most people their employment is their most highly valued activity. Claiming the centrality of employment in the Christian ethic, no less an

³⁰⁰ [↗](#) Ecclesiasticus 38 vv31, 34

³⁰¹ [↗](#) Col 3:23

³⁰² [↗](#) Eph. 6:5-8

authority than Barclay was able to say that the test of a person is whether they deserve their pay.³⁰³

The obverse of this is that Christian ethics stress the right of a person to employment, a living wage, and reasonable conditions of employment. Employment confers important benefits beyond the purely economic, and many employees agree that these non-economic benefits of employment are nearly as important as the money. Jahoda spells out the detail -

- employment structures time.
- employment provides regularly shared experiences.
- employment provides experience of creativity, mastery, and a sense of purpose.
- employment is a source of personal status and identity.
- employment is a source of activity.³⁰⁴

An influential commentator in the field of Faith at Work, Alistair Mackenzie, describes ours as a society where identity and wellbeing are still usually associated with employment. Few would disagree. (Where do you work ?; I'm off to work now; I can't come, I have to work that weekend ...) In a plea for a new theology of work, Mackenzie makes these observations -

- For some people employment is very enjoyable and a source of satisfying stimulation. For others employment is harsh or boring and oppressive. For many it is a mixture of both these experiences. ...
- Many people are attempting to establish 'portfolio' careers doing a variety of different sorts of work for different clients involving a mix of different roles ...

³⁰³ [↗](#) Barclay (1972) quoted in Furnham, Adrian: *The Protestant Work Ethic* (London, Routledge, 1990) p.190

³⁰⁴ [↗](#) Jahoda, M: *Employment and Unemployment: A Social-Psychological Analysis* (Cambridge, C.U.P. 1982)

- The old expectation of following a predictable career path has become the exception rather than the rule. Many people have been forced to change careers through the experience of redundancy. Other people have chosen to make changes in a context in which people have become markedly more mobile and willing to move. ...
- Ethical problems ... are often increasingly complex and far removed from the simple biblical principles that we once hoped would provide neat and tidy answers to most of our moral dilemmas. ...³⁰⁵

According to Mackenzie, there is a wide-spread spiritual hunger being expressed, but seldom in a way that connects easily with traditional Christian categories.

That is not where Mackenzie wants to stay though: he would prefer to spread his net wider, to incorporate what many people would refer to as ‘unpaid work’, work-at-home and ‘working in the garden’ and so on. Commentators are usually at pains to define work as broadly as possible — doing so provides them with a theological base from which to argue themes such as co-creation and God’s work in the world. Mackenzie would have us rediscover the relevance of vocation and says that to fit our modern world it would need to include at least the following elements:

- A view of vocation that grants meaning to the life of every Christian and rediscovers the priesthood of all believers.
- A view of vocation that overcomes the dualism of separate sacred and secular spheres.
- A view of vocation that relates to a person’s everyday work and helps to integrate the life of faith with that work.
- A view of vocation that makes sense even when work is experienced as a negative and alienating reality.
- A view of vocation which does not just accept unjust and oppressive circumstances but works to challenge injustices and redeem bad circumstances.

³⁰⁵  Mackenzie, Alistair: *Faith at Work - Vocation, the Theology of Work and the Pastoral Implications*. Otago MTh thesis (Dunedin, 1997) pp 89-90

- A view of vocation which is not static but can apply in a dynamic way to a world in which work patterns are constantly changing.
- A view of vocation which includes an understanding of the place of leisure and the contemplative dimensions of life.³⁰⁶

True and valuable as those insights are, they are broader than what we need in order to talk about ministry in secular employment. In any case, while work is not the same thing as paid employment, paid employment is indubitably work. Therefore, because this paper *is* about paid employment it will avoid the w-word and, where possible, use the e-word instead.

John Bluck sees PSE as the great neglected strand of the church's mission in the twentieth century and regrets that in the U.K. PSE got 'domesticated' and thereby neutralised. His theological view is one of the kingdom unfolding in the secular world, which returns 'tantalising' images to the church. PSE represents a translation of priestly role — as primary gatherer — within the often fragile and divided community of the workplace, preaching and teaching in the language of that community. He alludes to the symbol-bearing role of the clergy in the workplace and says for them any ecclesial role is secondary.³⁰⁷

The world of employment

Commitment to dualistic theology would encourage the church to keep the world of employment at arms' length. Richardson identifies ways the New Testament encourages Christians to approach their employment -

Our secular occupations are to be regarded not as ends in themselves but as means to the service of the Kingdom of God. They have Christian value only in so far as they can be made means to the end of the Gospel.³⁰⁸

Richardson nevertheless also concludes,

³⁰⁶ [↗](#) Mackenzie, op. cit. p 30

³⁰⁷ [↗](#) Notes from an Interview with Bishop John Bluck, Diocesan Bishop of Waiapu, 2 March 2005

³⁰⁸ Richardson 1952: 37, quoted in Mackenzie, op. cit.

Though there is no parallel in the New Testament to the idea of vocation in the modern sense, it is assumed throughout the New Testament that daily work, so far from being a hindrance to Christian living, is a necessary ingredient of it.³⁰⁹

As we read the New Testament, we need constantly to bear in mind that the context of employment was very different from the one that we experience today. In Jesus' time, most employees were slaves, or as many translations have it, *servants*.

For the Roman ruling class in the first century AD, when up to ninety percent of the population of Italy were either slaves or their descendants, occupational work of any kind, apart from warfare or statecraft, was despised.³¹⁰

The institution of slavery was a two-way street: The master was expected to provide the necessities of life for the servants and their families — master and slaves either prospered together or they starved together. On both sides it was a lifetime commitment, more or less.³¹¹ Stevens comments that in the ancient Greek world slaves were sometimes like tenured employees. They were treated with respect and included as members of the family, Joseph in Potiphar's house being a First Testament example³¹². Compared with the portfolio workers of today the slaves of Jesus' day enjoyed more security and often better standards of care.

For these reasons, perhaps, St Paul was able to write to the slave Christians of his day:

Make use of your present condition now more than ever ... In whatever condition you were called, brothers and sisters, there remain with God.³¹³

³⁰⁹ Richardson 1952: 39, quoted in Mackenzie, *op. cit.*

³¹⁰ [↗](#) "The Meaning and Place of Work", in Corson, D (ed): *Education for Work* (Palmerston Nth, Dunmore, 1988) p.17

³¹¹ though not invariably so, as Luke 15: 1-9 reveals

³¹² [↗](#) Stevens, R. Paul: *The Other Six Days - vocation, work, ministry in biblical perspective* (Carlisle, Paternoster, 1999) pp 116-7

³¹³ [↗](#) 1 Corinthians 7: 21-24

— words which can be read as an exhortation for employed persons to continue in their secular employment when called to Christian ministry.

The rise of capitalism, the industrial revolution and the post-industrial revolution changed all that. By contrast with slaves who may be sold as a whole and become the property of someone else, modern employees sell themselves ‘piecemeal’ as Marx would have it.

[Since they] have no means of support other than selling their labour power, their position makes them dependent upon capital. It is the expansion of capital, as opposed to servicing the personal or administrative needs of capitalists, which is the defining role of the proletariat.³¹⁴

British and French initiatives along the lines of PSE have had an agenda of ‘re-christianising the proletariat’. Things are different in New Zealand where it’s difficult for a stable proletariat to emerge and be recognised as a target for mission. Our places of employment are small by international standards — fewer than fifty employees in the main — and a high proportion of those who actually engage in productive activity are self-employed. Our unions are small and weak, and the last two decades have seen the rise of the ‘portfolio worker’ for whom the workplace is just a skills market and offers no solidarity of any kind, much less membership of a social class.

For many decades New Zealanders cherished the myth of a classless society. As egalitarianism fades from New Zealand consciousness, New Zealand Anglicanism needs to re-assess its ties to the hundred families who, through interlocking directorships, effectively control a substantial proportion of this country’s capitalist enterprise.³¹⁵ Largely through their attendance at prestigious Anglican schools, this stratum of society is encouraged to sleep-walk its way through a form of Anglicanism that belongs in another place and another time. Rightly, its members reject such

³¹⁴ [🔗](#) Karl Marx (trans. Samuel Moore): *Marx/Engels Selected Works*, (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969) Vol 1, pp. 98 - 137 (originally published 1848) p 98

³¹⁵ [🔗](#) Brosnan, Peter, Smith, David F, Walsh, Pat: *The Dynamics of New Zealand Industrial Relations* (Auckland, Jacaranda, 1990) p.17

religion as a guide for living, but sadly they carry the association with them into their lives and their business practice.

So when the faith-at-work people ask, 'Where's God on Monday?', our church needs to know whether it even cares about the answer. To concur with Mackenzie's assertion that

The largest mission force that the church has is mobilised by God every day of the week meeting the world in the workplace, but the church does very little deliberately to equip and support Christians for their life in the workplace. This understanding is not new. The concept of the whole people of God being engaged in mission, rather than select groups within churches, has been theological orthodoxy for some time now.³¹⁶

is to abandon dualism in favour of holism. Monday's world? We should love it or leave it alone.

Constraints of regular employment

Sensitive understandings are called for where ministers are not free to control the time, the venue, the duration or the intensity of their employment activity. Persons in employment are usually under contract to perform at least some tasks that are not to their liking. Employees generally are not in a position to modify or exclude these constraints from their interpretation of what they do. As the Inland Revenue Department has it,

An employee normally works at the employer's premises or a place the employer specifies, is paid by a set rate (hourly, weekly, monthly or by unit of production) and works set hours or a given number of hours (weekly or monthly). An employee is paid sick pay and holiday pay, and may be eligible for overtime or penal rates³¹⁷

These constraints mark the PSE out from recreational workers and retired persons. They also mark them out from those persons who, though paid by an employer are free

³¹⁶ Walker, Chris: "An Interview with Alistair MacKenzie", *Reality Magazine* iss 38

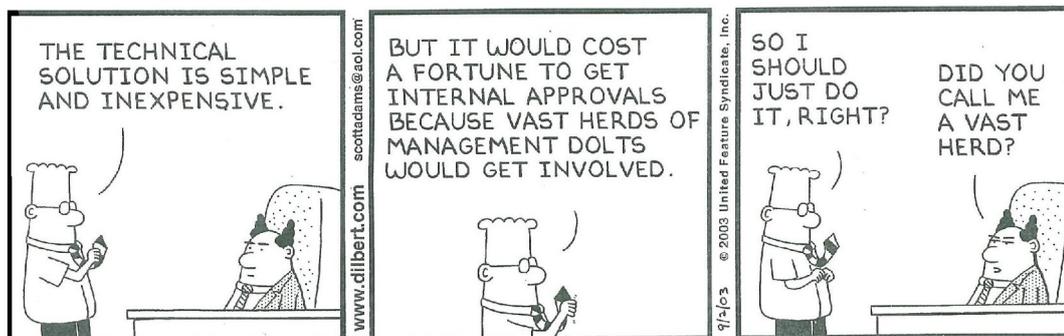
³¹⁷ Inland Revenue Department website, <http://www.ird.govt.nz>, downloaded 15 August 2003

of the requirement to keep set hours at a place of the employer's choosing. Priests in secular *self-employment*³¹⁸ comprise a special category: lacking any identifiable secular boss they are nevertheless compelled by that equally demanding and irrational master, 'the market'. Precisely for that reason, they are prone to try to cover all bases and lapse into self-destructive workaholism. The care of priests in secular self-employment poses a serious challenge for the church, and this writer counts himself fortunate that their situation falls outside the terms of this study.

So it is the constraints of their employee status which place PSEs squarely in a context where they have to submit to the rigours of alienation —



— micro-management —

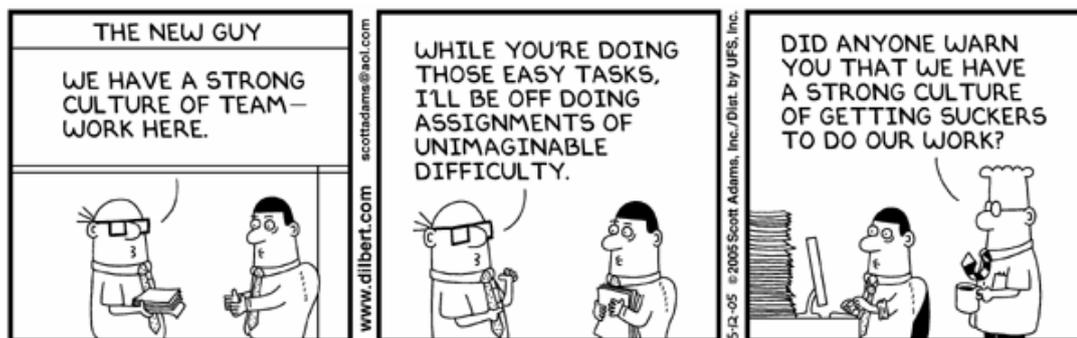


³¹⁸ PSSEs ?

— disempowerment —



— and bloody-mindedness —



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which are the daily lot of the regular employee. Dilbert cartoons have been chosen to make this point not because of the wit they contain, but because their popularity is based on their aptness to corporate life throughout the developed English-speaking world³¹⁹.

By improving its understanding of the constraints under which PSEs exercise their ministry, the church not only enhances that ministry but also enhances the ministries of laypeople.

Organisational culture and ministry

The PSE has to deal daily with the organisation that puts the groceries on the table.

Most usually, that involves dealing with the 'culture' of the organisation, in large part represented by its management attitudes and policies.

³¹⁹ One Wellington employee group follows Dilbert's adventures systematically and awards a gold star to any strip which they judge exactly mimics their company environment and for which they can identify the strip's protagonists with named members of their own organisation.

In this respect, each organisation presents a different face to the PSE who is employed within it. Experience shows that management attitudes range from mild encouragement of the PSE's attempts to exercise a workplace ministry, through neutral disengagement to vigorous disapproval. Much depends on the kind of employer, on the personality of the PSE themselves, and the way they handle the interface between their secular employment and their commitment to Christian service.

The business world does have its own spirituality. Its spiritual values include integrity, honesty, accountability, quality, cooperation, service, intuition, trustworthiness, respect, justice, and service. Corporate culture may recognise these values in PSEs and value them for it. Or, corporate culture may regard its own value system as complete in itself, and resist any avowedly Christian contribution to them.

PSEs do inhabit a different reality from that of secular discourse. They will need on occasion to resist workplace authority, to act out their belief and conviction, for being a prophet is very much part of the tradition of what it is to be an ordained minister. Jill Robson identifies two features of a PSE's ministry which make it prophetic in a minor way -

The first is the resistance to the pressure of authority, being prepared to be 'disobedient' in even minor ways and not do what is expected of you. The second feature is acting-out the belief and conviction by getting alongside those who were involved ... if a prophetic witness is to be effective it must speak in terms that the hearers can understand.³²⁰

By ordaining PSEs, the church, the body of Christ, involves itself in their attempts to deal with these issues. The church correctly identifies PSEs as pioneers in the movement toward integrating Sunday's world with Monday's and strengthens them to their task by credentialing their ministry in an explicit way. While remaining critical of the inadequate levels of ongoing support that the same church offers its PSEs, we must acknowledge that their ordination does place them squarely in an organisational

³²⁰ [🔗](#) Robson, Jill, "How to Make a Prophet at Work", in Fuller & Vaughan, (eds): *Working for the Kingdom* (London, SPCK, 1986) p 86

structure as large and weighty as the one in which their secular employment is located. The Anglican church is an entity known and recognised in the secular world, and to be its acknowledged servant gives each PSE (for good or ill) a recognisable character for their workplace ministry.

The bi-vocational character of their ministry places most PSEs at the intersection of two dissimilar cultures. That the two cultures should achieve some comprehension of each other's vision, is a highly desirable outcome of the PSE's ministry.

A ministry among portfolio workers ?

Where the church may have a new opportunity for ministry, is among the abovementioned portfolio workers. They defy classification in the Marxist manner and will slip through any demographic trawl. Yet the comment has been offered by one who should know that in these times in which uncertainty of employment is endemic, portfolio workers may seek the consolations of religion as a stabilising influence in their chaotic lives. Anglicans have an opportunity here, and the PSE may prove to be helpful, or harmful, to that ministry.

Helpful or harmful, which ? Our definition requires the PSE to be in fulltime secular employment, and in practice there is probably a subtext to this: fulltime *regular* employment. In order for them to exercise their priestly function in a recognisable way, it may be seen that their secular employment needs to be relatively stable. If so, that very fact could create an impediment to effective ministry toward portfolio workers who have been sufficiently alienated from regular employment.

Should the definition of a PSE be modified to allow PSEs periods in and out of employment — to become portfolio workers themselves ? Not to bewail the chaos and uncertainty associated with temporary, casualised, and part-time employment which is endemic to the New Zealand workforce, but to embrace it ?

Embedded in the growth of executive temps in the late 1990s has been the increase in the number of New Zealanders classed as self-employed, now twelve per cent of the workforce. ...Often the title 'self employed' can be a euphemism for middle-class male unemployment or

underemployment. ...Self employment is not a passing phase but a trend likely to be prolonged.³²¹

Martin Tolich, who wrote the above, interviewed a number of portfolio workers including a former accountant who had been unemployed for eight years. He adopted the same format that newspapers commonly use when asking a successful businessperson to describe a typical day.

Who is the most important mentor in your current situation ?

Well, I guess a personal faith would be what I would be thinking of -

Yes, a religious faith, if you can think of a biblical teaching as a mentor

...³²²

Some portfolio workers are motivated by a genuine spirit of entrepreneurship, others by fierce individualism and creativity. Such persons have found their niche in the economic system. But in large measure, portfolio workers are persons who would like to be in regular employment but cannot find an employer who is willing to hire them on a long-term basis. They are alienated not only as all employees are by the nature of the modern workplace, but additionally by their inability to get into one. For those people, a PSE is likely to appear as a person to be envied — hardly a fruitful basis for ministry.

It is apparent that there is potential for a ministry among portfolio workers. Can the Anglican church with its strong commitment to stability and order, respond to this call ? At least until the ministry of PSEs has become a recognised part of its fabric and the church is ready to move on to more challenging areas of ministry, better ministry might be offered to them by a priest who represents values outside those of secular employment: a retiree, a religious or (who knows) even a good old-fashioned vicar.

³²¹  Tolich, Martin, "Current Work Issues", in Bell, Claudia (ed): *Sociology of Everyday Life in New Zealand* (Palmerston North, Dunmore, 2001) pp.119-120

³²²  Tolich, op. cit. p.122

Formation

The necessary content

The PSE has a need for — and right to — the same theological education as any other priest. A former Vicar of Taradale³²³ used to argue forcibly for his PSE to get the same book allowance that he himself received. ‘There’s no reason,’ he would say, ‘why Richard’s theology should be any worse than mine.’ In this he was articulating the principle that PSEs need to be fully formed spiritually and theologically. There is no case for lowering standards on the grounds that their ministry makes little demand on the finances of parish and diocese. On the contrary: for the foreseeable future the PSE, being an unfamiliar animal, needs the accreditation of the most conventional training available.

Theological education represents an overarching concern for continuity with the risen Christ³²⁴. Such education originates with Jesus, Paul and the apostles who provided careful instruction for deliberately chosen persons so as to receive the Word entrusted to them and pass it on without undue distortion. The theological curriculum is an act of faith, giving order and substance to the Word of God for humanity. It expresses faith in the community of worship and scholarship as the nurturing body for the church's continuing ministry. It takes into account the needs and goals of the individual, the needs and goals of the institutional church and the needs and goals of secular society³²⁵.

There is a quite uniform expectation in the church that before a priest gets up to preach, s/he will have become informed on the biblical and traditional sources which illuminate the topic, reviewed the positions that corporate Anglicanism takes in relation to it, reflected upon the significance of the theme for the life of the community and in their own life, and selected the communication methods and resources most effective for the message. In other words, to quote John Bluck³²⁶, the sermon will preach the Gospel; it will be a communication, a work of art, and a personal faith journey. The congregation

³²³ Revd Wayne Thornton

³²⁴ [↗](#) Oden, Thomas C.: *Pastoral Theology - Essentials of Ministry* (New York, HarperCollins, 1983) p.33

³²⁵ [↗](#) Knowles, Malcolm S: *Modern Practice of Adult Education* (Chicago, Follett, 1980) p.27

³²⁶ [↗](#) Bluck, John: *Christian Communication Reconsidered* (WCC Publications, Geneva, 1989) p.39

may expect these things, and the preacher may expect to be equipped for the job. So long as preaching remains a priestly task, no PSE can sidestep that duty.

Similar considerations apply to how the priest prays, celebrates, sings and leads the liturgy. They apply no less in the pastoral sphere. The congregation's spirituality will not be well served if there are glaring deficiencies in their celebrant's priestly skills.

Tikanga Pakeha possesses long established curricula for developing these skills. They are discussed and described in great detail in sources such as those cited in the literature survey. Key knowledge areas are the biblical text, church history, ethics, liturgics and systematic theology. Key skills are theological reflection, biblical exegesis, ascetical theology, homiletics and leadership. We must recognize that the list is Eurocentric — just as the attributes of Mana Maori are not the same attributes that Pakeha value, neither is Maori Anglican theology identical with Pakeha Anglican theology. It would therefore be surprising if Maori clergy training closely matched what is offered to Pakeha. The formation of a Pakeha priest has its own particular look, appropriate to the culture in which it is embedded.

Continuing education

In the nature of things, the PSE's theological education will need to be long-term and continuous. Fortunately, it is a diminishing problem to provide PSEs with theological learning opportunities at times outside their hours of secular employment and in places they have access to. Our cause is helped not only by the advent every year of newer and smarter technologies for delivering the material. It's also helpful that the education environment has become market driven, and institutions are falling over each other to offer courses that are more relevant, attractive and accessible than ever before. In respect of access to theological education, PSEs have never had it so good.

Short, focussed seminars on specific topics can also make a substantial contribution to a PSE's formation. A PSE can attend a seminar of one or two days by taking annual leave from their secular employment; provided certain conditions are met, the investment of their precious days-off will be worthwhile. The conditions are these:

- the seminar needs to have clearly stated objectives and be faithful to them
- to enable PSEs to negotiate time away from their secular job, dates need to be fixed well in advance and adhered to. Postponements are too hard for PSEs to accommodate.
- the level of professionalism the instruction provides, needs to be commensurate with what the PSE experiences in industry training events.

Even when delivery and content is well provided for, however, the PSE's situation raises special challenges in respect of the time-span over which their theological education will run. If, as suggested, it is to cover the same ground as a four-year full-time degree course, then it will need to be spread over ten or fifteen years. With numbers of this order, by the time the PSE 'completes' a degree-level course, some of the early material will be obsolete, and need to be revisited. The obvious conclusion is that the span of years for a PSE's theological education will be as many as the ministry itself. While the figure of perpetual student may not be much admired in our society, that is what the PSE needs to become. The concept of continuing theological education may be an ideal for all clergy, but in the PSE it is of the essence.

There are consequences. A parish that is stuck with the idea of vicar-as-professional-godman, will see its PSE as theologically half-baked — and in that they will be forever correct. Equally, the PSEs who cherish an image of themselves as professional-god(wo)man in the making, have a different prospect in view. Davis has alluded to PSE as providing a back door to a paid job in full-time ministry³²⁷; where that is the case, we may doubt whether the call to PSE was ever authentic. While full-time paid ministry is perceived as a goal and unpaid ministries as a route thereto, any switch from PSE to full-time must arouse such a suspicion. The community that envisions itself as something other than a pilgrim band³²⁸, and the PSE whose self-image is other than that of a fellow-pilgrim in a funny shirt, are doomed to disappoint each other.

³²⁷ [🔗](#) Davis, Archbishop Brian: *The Way Ahead - Anglican change and prospect in New Zealand* (Christchurch, Caxton, 1995) p.72. Davis clearly imagines a hierarchy of doors to paid ministry, the front door presumably being by way of full-time theological college.

³²⁸ [🔗](#) Anglican Church in NZ: *A New Zealand Prayer Book/He Karakia Mihinare mo Aotearoa* (London, Collins, 1989) p.389 (the baptismal rite)

PSEs themselves may be receptive to the notion of perpetual learning, for all its unfortunate associations. The mature-age PSE doesn't require a job ticket, they have a secular job already and no theological qualification is needed to keep money flowing into their household. The times are right as well; lifelong learning is now a public concept, espoused by governments and institutions. For those PSEs whose secular employment is skills-based, the round of training, re-training and re-re-training is a permanent feature of that job and they know it well. PSEs are relaxed about 'meeting degree requirements' and are motivated more by the intrinsic value of the curriculum they receive, than which hoops they need to jump through to gain some necessary gong.

There are significant advantages to continuous learning as a model for clergy formation. Because the best teacher is the one who is concurrently a student, that priest who keeps on doing theological coursework is good for their congregation. If the coursework is chosen from the church's approved list, then that priest who keeps on doing approved courses is good for Anglicanism. At a stroke, commitment to ongoing theological coursework averts both staleness and isolation from theological trends in the church to which we belong. The PSE is kept intellectually on the move, and kept in touch with mainstream Anglican thinking.

Good intentions will not be enough to make it happen. There need to be processes in place, otherwise in the church as elsewhere, training will be pushed into the background when calls for 'busy work' become strident. All parties need to understand that there are times when exegesis of *Galatians Three* takes higher priority than a cake stall or even a hospital visit. One mechanism that might be used where fixed-term licensing is the norm, would be to have a catch-up on the expired licence's training provisions as a condition of renewal.

An area that deserves to be explored is that of church authorities getting into dialogue with the secular employer over the PSE's ministry training. Is the employer willing to make some concessions in this area? To ask the question may be scary for the church, which has traditionally left the PSE to do that task unaided. But if the church really means to value the PSE's workplace ministry, then the church needs to engage with it in an explicit way, and this could be the exact place to start the dialogue. Who knows, there may be some pleasant surprises in store for us all. Where the challenge lies, is in

convincing diocesan policy-makers that continuing theological education of a formal kind is not just a desirable adjunct to a PSE's ministry, it's a *sine qua non*.

Formation and ordination

A consideration that needs to be confronted is: at what point to ordain? Ordination has always been intrinsically connected with theological education. So, if the church abandons the idea that a PSE's theological education can ever be 'completed', then what becomes of the idea that a candidate should have it all behind them before they are ready for ordination?

Let me interpose a personal experience that may suggest a way forward. I was enrolled in a course of study with Te Rau Kahikatea, the Maori theological institution, for their Licentiate of Theology, and I was getting on with the programmes. To my great surprise, when I was about half way through the curriculum, the bishop presented me with the licentiate's handsome certificate³²⁹. When I asked why, when I had not completed all the courses, the bishop replied, 'Maybe not, but we know that you will.' Events were to prove him right, and I suppose he knew his man, but it was an unexpected move at the time.

The answer then lies squarely in the territory of discernment. The connection between date of completion of a theological course of study on the one hand, and date of ordination on the other, would be a matter for prayer and negotiation. There are implications for oversight, because the PSE will always be in a state of theological incompleteness (one might prefer to say of theological emergence) and need signals about what boundaries to observe in preaching, for example. Candidate and congregation alike need to be reminded that ordination is not an achievement to be grasped at but a call — to which study is part of the response.

³²⁹ In those days before the advent of NZQA, such things were possible.

Late calls of the already employed

Where the new priest is already halfway through their life's journey, equipped with

a high level of secular professional experience, involving not only the acquisition of skills but also a significant course of education and expectations of training processes³³⁰

— in such a case, the personal background of the candidate will be of pivotal importance. Hitherto, this chapter has dealt with to what Pratt calls *theological education as a matter of academic accountability*³³¹. Let us now consider the second half of his taxonomy: *ministerial formation as a matter of ecclesial expectation*. By this he means

- a broad-ranging life-shaping process directed toward a specific life-style goal ...
- a process of personal and existential grounding ...
- the acquisition of both practical skills and guiding essentials ...³³²

The broad-ranging life-shaping process, the specific life-style goal, the personal and existential grounding to which Pratt refers, have been traditionally catered for by an assistantship (what we used to call a curacy) which still has much merit. The institution of curacy as formerly practised, provided an opportunity not only for the vicar to acquire a cheap assistant and the curate cheap lodgings, but also gave the youngster time to grow up a bit before taking on the responsibilities of their 'own' parish.

Any candidate whose potential is discerned in a late call, is likely to exhibit already that life-style, personal and existential grounding which will make their ministry effective. Or else they never will. Putting it bluntly, among the over-40's the church can expect to get these personal life-skills by recruiting them rather than by developing them.

³³⁰ [↗](#) Dawson, Jennifer: *The ordination training mat: Towards a coherent frame of priestly formation*. (MMin thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin, NZ, 2003) p. 7

³³¹ [↗](#) Pratt, Douglas: "Theological Education and Ministerial Formation - Academic accountability and ecclesial expectation ..." *Colloquium*, v.24no.2, 1992, pp 98-105

³³² [↗](#) Pratt, op. cit. pp 104-5 Pratt also lists spiritual formation, which is the subject of its own chapter and will be discussed there.

The PSE who has spent the greater part of a lifetime pursuing a worthy secular occupation is likely to believe that that occupation represents a significant part of God's plan for their life. This conviction may have guided them to prefer PSE over other forms of ministry. Some occupations have particularly obvious connections to PSE — the 'helping' professions for example. But how to explain the numbers of secularly employed bankers, police officers and computer personnel offering themselves for ministry? In helping such people acquire 'practical skills and guiding essentials', the church will do well to re-evaluate those skill-sets it has traditionally sought for its ministers. Some of what they need, mature candidates may already possess in abundant measure.

Intentional bi-vocational training for seminarians

A distinction needs to be made between younger candidates for a PSE ministry and their mature-age colleagues. The diocese of Auckland positively encourages its theology students to do conjoint degrees, and to maintain those skills that would equip them for concurrent secular employment. In doing so it is moving along similar lines to Brushwyler's notion of bi-vocationalism as a sensible option for younger people.

There is still a compelling case for providing them with strong programmes encouraging personal growth. Almost certainly such programmes need to be residential; almost certainly they need to last months rather than weeks. With the progressive fragmentation of employment possibilities for young people and the effective disappearance of the notion of an employment career, programmes of this kind are probably more feasible now than they have been in recent generations.

To sum up this reflection on formation for priests in secular employment, we may conclude that formation forms an ongoing, permanent and integral part of any PSE's ministry. The content requires the same characteristics as a seminary-based programme; curriculum delivery to PSEs will prove challenging but we know how to do it. The period of formation will be greatly extended in time, with strong implications for the congregation the PSE serves, for the PSEs themselves, and for the bishop who manages their ordination.

Deployment

Putting a PSE in the right place is not a trivial task. Just as elsewhere, reports of tension between PSEs and the parochial system³³³ sound a warning for us. Anglican commitment to the territorial-parochial system is strong in this country, doubtless a legacy of the settlers' wish to transplant the Church of England into their new home. Commitment to the parochial system gives rise to the concept of locally referenced ministries, in which the primary question is that of a person's local credibility. 'Local ministry' and 'locally referenced' are explored in their own Tikanga Pakeha publication³³⁴, and the arguments will not be rehearsed here. It is worth noting however that in Lobinger and Zulehner's somewhat equivalent scheme of Pauline and Corinthian priests³³⁵ there is no place for the centrally referenced PSE.

Nevertheless a PSE might indeed acquire — through particular experience, talent or training — recognisably central reference and thereby a degree of mobility not accorded to the locally referenced person. In a PSE's case such central referencing may be of particular value since the requirements of their secular employment may well shift them into a different context. Centrally referenced, the PSE could then present his/her credentials to the bishop; if thought suitable and a PSE ministry exists could then expect to be licensed. A locally referenced person would not entertain the same expectation.

Given the fragmentation of the modern labour market, the mobility of the workforce and the disappearance of the notion of career, it would seem that central referencing is a more realistic objective for PSEs' formation than local referencing would prove.

Problems of clergy over-supply

The parochial system and its ministry are themselves undergoing rapid change, as Mead³³⁶ and others observe. Christendom has already disappeared, and a new paradigm is emerging in which formation for the laity, catechumenates and turning-point

³³³ [↗](#) Mantle, John: *Britain's First Worker-priests: radical ministry in a post-war setting* (London, SCM 2000)

³³⁴ [↗](#) Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand: *Mutual Ministry Guidelines - Tikanga Pakeha* (1996)

³³⁵ [↗](#) Lobinger, Fritz and Zulehner, Paul: "Priests for tomorrow", *The Tablet* (London, February 15, 2003)

³³⁶ [↗](#) Mead, Loren B: *The Once and Future Church* (New York, Alban, 1992)

ministries will prove critical. American researchers Chang & Bompadre³³⁷ paint a picture in which the number of persons aspiring to clergy employment remain at traditional levels, while fewer parishioners support their parish financially. (They actually predict a near future in which numbers of Anglican clergy reach parity with the number of worshippers.) Professional clergy, as a result, shift to ministries outside the parish context, a shift which New Zealand Anglicanism appears ready to accommodate³³⁸. Whether such a future should be viewed with horror or enthusiasm depends on whether one views clergy and laity as ‘chiefs’ and ‘indians’ or in some other relationship.

Leveraging the PSE’s unique contribution

Neither Brushwyler nor any other writer encountered, described any specific contributions that the PSE can bring to collegiality with other clergy. How then can PSEs contribute to the individual and corporate ministries of their partners in ordained ministry ?

By way of an answer, we may consider the characteristic task of the PSE’s ministry within the church. It is described by Johnson as being ‘to go out from the church, explore, return to tell the church about it.’³³⁹ A kind of pipeline to that world in which most laypeople — and most unchurched adults — spend most of their time. What better sermon subject than ‘Christ in the daily grind’, and who better than a PSE to present it ? In a church preoccupied with ‘relevance’, the PSE has a unique contribution to make, a contribution of greater value than filling gaps in service rosters.

Furthermore, if as Bickers contends³⁴⁰, a pastor’s primary role is to challenge, encourage, and train church members to carry out the ministry for which God has gifted them, then the bi-vocational pastor has a unique opportunity to model that type of ministry to laypeople who seek to interpret their own ministry in relation to their own

³³⁷ [↗](#) Chang, Patricia M Y & Bompadre, Viviana: "Crowded Pulpits: Observations and Explanations of the Clergy Oversupply in the Protestant Churches, 1950-1993", in *J for Scientific Study of Religion*, Sep 99, vol 38 Issue 3 pp 398-410

³³⁸ [↗](#) Thurian, Max (ed): *Churches respond to BEM vol II* (Geneva, WCC, 1986)

³³⁹ [↗](#) Johnson, Dorrie: "Ordained Ministers in Secular Employment", *Theology* vol 101 no 799 (Jan/Feb 1998) pp.22-28

³⁴⁰ [↗](#) Bickers, Dennis W: *The Tentmaking Pastor: The joy of bi-vocational ministry* (Baker, Grand Rapids MI, 2000) p.69

employment. The PSE identifies with employed persons, showing them that their workplace has within it an authorised presence of the church. PSEs expect to find God active in those affairs, judging, redeeming, reconciling³⁴¹ — every bit as much as they know God to be active within the Christian community which has called them to be ordained ministers. Clergy groups that can come to terms with that proposition, will find the PSE a useful contributor to their own ministries.

The views of three bishops on deployment

For insights into the proper deployment of PSEs within the frameworks of church order, I interviewed three bishops: [Bishop John Paterson, diocesan bishop of Auckland](#)³⁴², [Bishop Tom Brown, diocesan bishop of Wellington](#)³⁴³, and [Bishop John Bluck, diocesan bishop of Waiapu](#)³⁴⁴.

It became immediately apparent that there were degrees of both unanimity and diversity in episcopal opinion concerning PSEs. My perception was that this had to do with the different visions that the bishops had of ministry within their dioceses. One bishop was strongly committed to the parochial unit as a base for ministry, another saw the workplace as the great neglected strand of the church's mission, and the third was committed to diversity in forms of ministry.

To do better justice to some of the views the bishops expressed, portions of those interviews have been incorporated into other chapters than this one. But it was valuable to obtain responses to a set list of questions, and those are reported below. Each proposition is derived from a documented assertion that someone, somewhere, has made about PSEs.

The first set concentrated on the kind of ministries that might best be exercised by a priest in secular employment.

- Whether PSEs best used in specialised ministries ?

³⁴¹ [↗](#) Fuller, John & Vaughan, Patrick (eds): *Working for the Kingdom - The Story of Ministers in Secular Employment* (London, SPCK, 1986) p 206

³⁴² [↗](#) Notes from an Interview - Bishop John Paterson, Diocesan Bishop of Auckland, 16 Feb 2005

³⁴³ [↗](#) Notes from an Interview with Bishop Tom Brown, Diocesan Bishop of Wellington, 5 October 2004

³⁴⁴ [↗](#) Notes from an Interview with Bishop John Bluck, Diocesan Bishop of Waiapu, 2 March 2005

Yes. For example we have priests working in mental health, and the nature of their work is shaped by their ordination as priest. That's their special ministry.

In ministry we should always play to our strengths. Therefore I favour specialization in ministry. Location is critical. There are two over-arching considerations to bear in mind, (a) the workplace as location of priestly vocation, (b) the ministry unit as location of priestly vocation.

No, this doesn't fit the parish framework. The PSE stands alongside local shared ministry but the dynamic is different.

- Whether PSEs best used in team ministry ?

Consistent with the principle of playing to our strengths, I try to involve a team concept wherever possible. This involves a sharing of authority, of responsibility and of support. Mutual Ministry is a case in point

Workplace ministry could be part of a parish's mission.

A structure is possible in which PSEs interact directly with the bishop. It does mean that each PSE's ministry is worked out in isolation, but that is okay. Some PSEs (not all) are wanting to increase their collegiality, but it is among the deacons that collegiality is most strongly sought.

- Whether PSEs best used with very small congregations ?

There's some truth in that. The community call is the important thing. We look for a team call; the sacramental task is (only) one of those the team will undertake.

As a kind of spiritual GP to a few families ? I tend to disagree, and would favour the Mutual Ministry as a better model. We have to be careful, though, about merging parishes into larger territorial units. Mergers have proved counter-productive in a number of cases here.

No. That's a cop-out. For a viable congregation (1) it needs to be something more than a club (2) what defines it as a congregation is its ability to welcome newcomers (3) there is a certain minimum size for viability.

- Whether PSEs best used as permanent auxiliaries ?

‘To help the vicar out’ is not a good enough motive for ordination. It perpetuates old models of ministry at time when we need to be moving on.

I tend to disagree [that PSEs should be used as permanent auxiliaries]. A team ministry should work better than this.

[Using PSEs as permanent auxiliaries] is a total contradiction to the essence of PSE. It’s what killed non stipendiary ministry.

Shifting the focus to the community into which a PSE may be deployed, I sought opinions on whether

- A PSE is most productively deployed into a community which is not over a financial barrel

PSEs should not be used as a cheap option to help a parish survive. The role of rescuer is inappropriate to PSE ministry.

The starting point should be the spiritual needs of the community rather than its finances. A vicar’s role in a parish is that of chaplain to the community.

Yes, that makes a lot of sense. We have to resist the ‘vortex to vicardom’.

- A PSE is most productively deployed into a community that would like to hire more staff

There are pluses and minuses here. What of the needs of newly graduated seminarians for field experience ?

All unpaid ministries free up financial resources for use elsewhere.

- A PSE is most productively deployed into a community that would like its clergy to stay put longer

It depends on where the community is at. The presence of a PSE can serve to reduce anxiety in times of change. PSE presence can also be a stabilising factor if the vicar is on the move. In times of necessary change, the PSE may be

vulnerable. In this diocese we have priests identified as ‘transitional priests’ who help parishes achieve change where it is needed. That could be a role for a PSE.

Not at all. New Zealanders are a mobile people; families stay in one community only three years on average.

This can be addressed in a variety of ways. it may be necessary to rethink the ministry of the parish.

- A PSE is most productively deployed into a community whose laypeople are seeking to increase their ministries

Experiences vary. Different communities have different needs, and at different times. Consequently the PSE’s presence may be a positive or a negative factor in that situation. We have had some success in turning that around, making negatives into positives.

Yes. In the Mary-Martha story, the figure of Martha suggests that worthy do-ers are not necessarily the people called to priestly ministry. A PSE might be seen as more of a Mary than a Martha, ‘keeping the rumour of God alive’.

Yes, if ministry is properly understood as empowerment of the laos.

It will be seen from these responses that episcopal opinion varies considerably on most points. The questions that elicited unanimity were two:

- the bishops were clear that PSEs should not be placed in permanent assistantships,
- nor should they be deployed into communities that needed to be rescued financially.

On every other point, there was some divergence of response. Careful reading of what the bishops said, reveals that to some extent they were talking past each other, the same question evoking different perceptions in each of them. But the impression remains that in different dioceses, different policies and different understandings of a PSE’s contribution can be expected to apply. The PSE whose pursuit of secular employment

leads them to shift out of one diocese and into another, may have to be prepared for a few surprises.

Oversight and Support

Pastoral care

In the corporate world, ‘supervision’ — translating from its Latin origins as ‘oversight’ — has connotations of management, support and accountability. Such is not however the universal understanding in the church, for ‘supervision’ also has a more technical meaning, drawing on the practice of clinical supervision from the fields of social work, counselling and therapy. In that environment supervision is a form of non-mutual, contractual peer engagement to enhance reflective practice. However that may be, in this chapter where the word ‘supervision’ is used it will be with the first significance, as a convenient one-word synonym for ‘oversight and support’.

There is a particular need for that kind of supervision in the PSEs’ case because of their standing as volunteers.

Regular supervision or monitoring is crucial to ensure the effective use of volunteers. ... In general, the research shows that mentoring programs that provide regular supervision were the most likely to meet most frequently for the longest periods — and regular meetings over an extended period of time are essential if the relationship is going to be a success ...

The institutionally based programs we studied that did not devote specialized resources to supervising volunteers were for the most part unsuccessful ...³⁴⁵

The ministry of oversight to a PSE might with great profit be filled by a Christian layperson. Since PSEs are supposed to be equally at home in two worlds, there is as much reason for their supervisor to be drawn from the one world as the other. An *Anglican* layperson seems the obvious choice, if their oversight is to be effective. The costs incurred might be funded by the church or borne by the PSE personally.

Supervising a PSE is not an intuitive task; still less is it one for which good intentions are sufficient qualification. In a paper subtitled “The Kindness of Strangers” Marc Freeman has said that without proper supervision

³⁴⁵  Grossman, Jean Baldwin & Furano, Kathryn: “Making the Most of Volunteers” in *62 Law & Contemporary Problems*. 199 (Autumn 1999)

all that remains is fervour. And fervour alone is not only evanescent and insufficient, but potentially treacherous.³⁴⁶

There need to be systems and policies in place, and their effectiveness needs to be monitored. PSEs make time and energy available to the church, at a cost to themselves. With proper oversight and support, that time and energy can be converted into effective ministry.

Necessary documents

The starting point for satisfactory oversight of a PSE's ministry is an initial set of documents setting out the expectations of the parties to that ministry. Taken together, the documents spell out the covenant into which each PSE enters with others of the People of God — laypeople, other clergy and the bishop — when establishing a ministry among them. They also provide the foundation for the PSE's supervision as that ministry unfolds.

Fortunately, the disciplines of human resource management are well documented³⁴⁷ in the world of secular employment, and more fortunately still, a PSE is accustomed to their use. In their secular employment, PSEs expect to have a job description document that provides a statement of what is expected of them, to have an opportunity to participate in setting performance standards and objectives, and to have an opportunity to discuss and resolve problems outside their direct control.

There is another document: the person profile. The person profile is a statement of the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed for the effective performance in the job, together with any specific qualifications, experience or other job-related attributes which a person might reasonably be expected to have. The person profile also identifies training and development needs and priorities. A typical person profile covers -

- impact on others
- acquired knowledge or qualifications

³⁴⁶ Marc Freedman, *Public/Private Ventures, The Kindness Of Strangers: Reflections On The Mentoring Movement* (1992), Quoted in Grossman, & Furano, above [↗](#).

³⁴⁷ [↗](#) of which a single well-known example is Rudman, Richard: *Human Resources Management in New Zealand*, 3 ed (Auckland, Longman, 1999)

- innate abilities
- motivation
- adjustment³⁴⁸

In the secular context, the person profile flows from the job description and assists in matching people to positions. In ministry however, it's the other way round: the shape of the job will more likely be determined by the gifts the person brings to their task. Just as in their secular job, the PSE still needs both documents, only the dynamic relationship between those two documents functions in the opposite direction.

Separating person-profile matters from job-description issues is not so easy. But it is important –

Job descriptions should not be confused with person profiles ... Job descriptions which contain a mixture of information about the job and the ideal job holder are, very often, confused and confusing.³⁴⁹

Yet even human resources professionals manage to get the two kinds of document mixed up, and it would be an exceptional parish vestry that would do much better. There is therefore a case for making use of specialist consulting services to draw up the two documents. Acquiring the best possible expertise in this area is good economy, and it may be that in the interests of satisfactory relationships and expectations the costs incurred might have to be borne by the PSE personally. Better that, than try to build a ministry on mismatched expectations.

Vibes positive and negative

There is no doubt that PSEs are positive about their bi-vocational calling. Brushwyler, who researched a range of denominations in the American Midwest reported —

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

³⁴⁸ [🔗](#) Rudman, op. cit., pp 266-7

³⁴⁹ (ref 130) Rudman , op. cit. p.261

were not capable or qualified, but because of a firm commitment to this type of ministry.³⁵⁰

This sure doesn't look like evidence of a widespread victim mentality. Sustaining morale among PSEs may not be a too great a problem. Especially since we're Anglicans —

Episcopal worker-priests had the highest levels of satisfaction: 78 percent indicated a 5 or 6 level of satisfaction [on the overall 1-6 satisfaction scale] with only 11 percent at a rating of 3 or lower.³⁵¹

Brushwyler offers no explanation for this phenomenon, but there seems to be some qualitative aspect which makes our denomination particularly hospitable to clergy in secular employment. Anglicanism's PSE-friendly character may lie in the Anglican genius for clarifying ministerial roles. It is a tradition in which the clergy are bishops, priests and deacons, and there is a long held understanding of the church's expectations of each. Those expectations will at times prove frustrating, unreasonable and impossible to reconcile; the influence of priests on grassroots Anglicanism may be excessive compared with the biblically validated roles of deacon and bishop; the danger of clericalism is intense. But while a priest may be an intellectual priest or an organisational priest or a radical priest or a musical priest or an inspirational priest, *everyone knows* there are certain attributes that may be expected of any priest, and the PSE participates in that. People — including the clergy themselves — find support in such a structure of expectation, and that seems to be an important social and individual need.

Informal or unofficial peer relationships with other clergy are likewise important in providing a degree of social control and support, if not leverage, which supplements what is provided more formally at denominational level. For lawyers or physicians, there are bar or medical associations which impose a degree of formal social control through their role in licensing; the nearest formal equivalent to such associations for clergy is the denomination. It is the denomination — at diocesan or archdeaconry

³⁵⁰  Brushwyler, L. Ronald: *Bi-Vocational Pastors: A Research Report* (Chicago, Midwest Ministry Development Service, 1992) p.7

³⁵¹  Brushwyler, op. cit. p.10

level — which in most polities provides some degree of social control and support to clergy.

Most bi-vocational clergy do want to be connected with their denominational structures and personnel, particularly at the associational and middle judicatory levels. There is a good deal of bitching and moaning in PSE ranks when these connections are not made, or are not effective. Yet as Brushwyler remarks —

No doubt, any lack of support is not intentional by judicatory leaders; rather, it appears to be basically a failure to think sufficiently bi-vocationally.³⁵²

PSEs are a widely misunderstood bunch, but they are generally in good heart.

Volunteerism and the individual

Some people are willing to do for no pay, what others do for economic reward. Why is that? We cannot be sure. Perhaps it's true that

Self-discovery is not the effect of volunteering; it is volunteering itself.³⁵³

That social motives are particularly strong, is shown in the political agendas of the volunteer movement.³⁵⁴ There's little doubt that church-based activities provide an outlet for repressed creativity. There's even some evidence³⁵⁵ that volunteering makes you live longer, though no proof that volunteers even know this fact, much less use it in deciding to offer their services.

There are a great number of human needs and reasons that cause people to volunteer in the community at large. People who volunteer to work in the church do so for many of these same reasons as well as religious ones, just as church people who volunteer in the community sometimes do so for religious reasons.

³⁵² [↗](#) Brushwyler, op.cit. pp.15-16

³⁵³ [↗](#) Wilson, John & Musick, Mark: "The Effects of Volunteering on the Volunteer", in *Law & Contemporary Problems* vol 62 pp141-168 (Autumn 1999) pp.167-168

³⁵⁴ See, for example, the programme of the IAVE congress, Barcelona 2004. Diana Atkinson, a NZ delegate at the congress, comments: 'What was interesting was the absence of any mention of the religious or spiritual aspect of volunteering'

³⁵⁵ [↗](#) reviewed in Wilson & Musick op. cit.

Fundamental to understanding the needs of volunteers is the understanding of the wholeness of people. ... if the church tries to meet the spiritual needs of people while ignoring the physical, psychological and social, it creates a disconnectedness that is inhuman. ... Sadly at times even the spiritual needs of volunteers are not met by the church. They supposedly leave it all to God ... ³⁵⁶

In the important area of motivation, a variety of studies^{357,358,359} report that volunteers are motivated to action primarily for altruistic reasons. Altruism is defined by Merrill as 'a concern for the welfare of others'³⁶⁰. Among the top reasons for volunteering consistently identified by volunteers are: a personal belief in a cause, and a desire to help other people. Volunteers indicate they are most satisfied with their volunteer experience when it is for an issue of personal importance, when they feel needed and valued, and when what they do is meaningful and interesting.

As long ago as the 1960s, McClelland & Atkinson identified three primary needs that we attempt to fulfill through what we do, and their findings have been accorded wide acceptance in the forty years since then. The three needs are:

- Need for achievement
- Need for affiliation
- Need for power³⁶¹

Merrill offers the following descriptions of three corresponding personality types, while noting nevertheless that most people are a blend of all three and one or another may

³⁵⁶ [Woods, Mary](#) : *Volunteers - a guide for volunteers and their organisations* (Christchurch NZ, Hazard, 1998) p.158

³⁵⁷ [Independent Sector](#): *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (Washington D.C., Independent Sector, 2001)

³⁵⁸ [Safrit, R., King, J. & Buresu, K.](#): *A Study of Volunteerism in Ohio Cities and Surrounding Communities*. (Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University Extension, 1991)

³⁵⁹ [Guseh, J. & Winders, R.](#): "A Profile of Volunteerism in North Carolina" *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, Volume 20, Number 4, 2002)

³⁶⁰ [Merrill, Mary](#): "Understanding Volunteer Motivations", (Merrill Associates, <http://www.merrillassociates.net/> , December 2002)

³⁶¹ [McClelland, D. & Atkinson, J.](#): *Motivation and Organizational Climate* (Boston, Harvard Press, 1968)

predominate according to circumstance. Among PSEs we might expect to find individually or in combination -

- The achiever: This person is committed to accomplishing goals, welcomes a challenge and looks for opportunities to test out new skills and improve performance.
- The affiliator: This person values relations, enjoys working with others and seeks out opportunities to be helpful and supportive.
- The power person: This person seeks to influence people and events so that change is realized.³⁶²

Behind these wants lies Maslow's celebrated Hierarchy of Needs³⁶³ which is widely known and will not be re-expounded here. But as Woods observes, spirituality is itself a motivator, and one which any PSE might be expected to exhibit.

Maslow's level of self-transcendence can be seen as a spiritual motivation. ... Spiritual energy comes from within and without. It is tied to our values and beliefs and yet is beyond them. It is part of the uniqueness of each human person ... Spirituality conjures up a picture of a life-giving energy that goes beyond ordinary commitment. It goes beyond working for gain, even non-financial gain. It goes against the predominant culture of our society. ... To deny the influence of spiritual well-being on [volunteers'] lives is to deny part of themselves. Burn-out develops from such denial.³⁶⁴

The Anglican hierarchical tradition, being somewhat insular, can present particular challenges which need to be recognised and counteracted in a PSE's programme of oversight. There needs to be infrastructure in place to support and direct their efforts, otherwise they will remain at best ineffective or become disenchanting and withdraw.

It is a general observation that ongoing management and support of volunteers is critical for ensuring that volunteer hours are not squandered, that weak skills are strengthened,

³⁶² [↗](#) Merrill, op. cit.

³⁶³ See, for example, [↗](#) Woods, op. cit. pp 32-36

³⁶⁴ [↗](#) Woods, op. cit. pp. 38-40

and that volunteers are used most effectively. Mentoring programmes which provide regular oversight are the most likely to achieve success. Programmes that fail to devote specialized resources to supervising volunteers and to external communication have proved unsuccessful in achieving their aims. Unfortunately, this infrastructure is not free: staff time and programme resources must be explicitly devoted to these tasks.

A strong grip on the specifics of volunteer motivation would benefit the church in general, and PSEs' supervisors in particular. For that to come, we need stronger data than folk wisdom can produce. The church, like secular volunteer organizations, stands in urgent needs of the results of motivational research.

Burnout — a problem ?

Clergy burnout is an acknowledged problem, and on the face of it we might expect PSEs to be particularly vulnerable to this experience. After all, they do a full week in shop, office or factory, come home tired and grumpy, and *then* have to get up the spiritual energy to communicate the gifts of the Spirit to others.

How many pastors have you heard brag about how full their calendars are ? They appear to equate busyness with spirituality. ... Is God now proexhaustion ? Doesn't he lead people beside the still waters anymore ?³⁶⁵

Well it can happen, it does happen, and the key to why it happens is balance.

Balance in ministry requires that a pastor understands he [*sic*] is not responsible for making things happen in a church. He is called to serve, to lead, to pray, and to trust God.³⁶⁶

Dennis Bickers, who was bi-vocational pastor at the Hebron Baptist Church in Madison, Indiana and whose secular employment was with Cummings Engine Company, pretty much says it all –

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

³⁶⁵ [↗](#) Bickers, Dennis W: *The Tentmaking Pastor: The joy of bi-vocational ministry* (Baker, Grand Rapids MI, 2000) p.87

³⁶⁶ [↗](#) Bickers, op.cit. p.80

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 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.³⁶⁷

It is in this matter of balance that PSEs are most to be envied by their colleagues trapped in fulltime, paid ministries. That balance which is a feature of their bi-vocational existence, provides a formidable bulwark against burnout.

³⁶⁷  Bickers, op. cit. pp.31-2

Spiritual Direction³⁶⁸

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.³⁶⁹

Spiritual direction takes place when two people agree to meet to give their full attention to what God is doing in one of their lives and seek to respond in faith. According to Peterson, spiritual direction sessions are based in the belief that

- God is always doing something; an active grace is shaping this life into a mature salvation;
- Responding to God is not sheer guesswork: the Christian community has acquired wisdom through the centuries that provides guidance;
- Each soul is unique: to apply that wisdom it is necessary to discern the particulars of this life, this situation.³⁷⁰

Kenneth Leech describes the traditions of spiritual direction and its significance for the prayer life of the individual. Yet Leech makes no attempt to relate spiritual direction to life in the secular world, rather the reverse –

... the work of spiritual direction has brought us to the point of crisis, or conflict with the world organized apart from God ...³⁷¹

It is clear that such a programme needs to be re-interpreted if it is to relate spiritual direction to a life spent largely in the secular world, and resolve its conflict with a world that denies the holy. Bi-vocational priesthood is a situation where prayer itself, in so many ways the antithesis of activity, has to form an integral part of ordinary existence. The *prêtres-ouvriers* themselves needed to communicate with God in the midst of

³⁶⁸ The section headings for this chapter were suggested by Anne Hadfield, [↗](#)

³⁶⁹ [↗](#), Peterson, Eugene H: *Working the Angles - the shape of pastoral integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans 1998) p 167

³⁷⁰ [↗](#), Peterson, op. cit. p 150

³⁷¹ [↗](#) Leech, Kenneth: *Soul Friend - an invitation to spiritual direction* (San Francisco, HarperCollins, 1992) p 193

assembly-line toil. In so doing found that their employment and its orientations nourished their interior life.³⁷²

The common one-on-one format for spiritual direction does stand in some danger of reinforcing the self-absorption to which an isolated PSE is naturally subject. Awareness of the problem is probably its own corrective. And insights from the provisions of the Education For Ministry programme group encounters (no, this is not a commercial for EFM !) might provide a fruitful model in which the spirituality of PSEs could be nurtured.

Identity and Identities: what of the fellow traveler ?

Preserving spiritual integrity, or identity, is a constant challenge to the PSE and to any who would offer them spiritual support. If we follow Nash, there are several dichotomies to deal with. In her interviews she observed three spiritual strategies for dealing with them: generalising, justifying and seeking. If faith and economic thinking are too close, Nash says, then they will collapse into a secular, wholly rationalised mindset. If they are too distant — as in a completely privatised faith — faith concerns will no longer impact on the economic world.

If we want to give expression to a profound connection between faith and economic activity, we are in a delicate position. Trying to maintain a traditional biblical worldview while participating in the modern culture of the corporation — neither constructing an invisible wall between these two, nor suggesting that they are wholly complementary ... is not easy³⁷³.

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. Conventional approaches to seeking a spirituality can induce considerable ambivalence in the PSE as for other Christians in secular employment.

³⁷²  Arnal, Oscar L: *Priests in Working-Class Blue- the history of the worker-priests* (1943-1954) (NY, Paulist Press, 1986)

³⁷³  Nash, Laura: *Believers in Business* (Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson, 1994)

Accountability to God and the spiritual values of justice, the common good, sustainability and the wholeness of community may be in conflict with the accountability to the corporate institution or the workplace. That conflict has to be understood and should invigorate a spirituality of the community at work. While traditional spirituality may separate itself from the ordinary working world, a spirituality at/for work must be sought which affirms the working environment as part of God's world.³⁷⁴

Dualities abound. Duquoc writes of a dichotomy of inwardness and outwardness —

We are entering an era in which the ecclesial monopoly has disappeared and each individual, so it would seem, can live the inward and social dimension of faith other than by proxy and without fear of schizophrenia.³⁷⁵

Another duality PSEs must deal with is science vs. religion, relevant because science underpins business' secular orthodoxy. Christians who are trying to reconcile science and religion often ascribe different functions to the two fields, for example, turning to science to answer the 'how?' questions, while religion responds to the 'why?'. In the secular world, evolution has replaced creationism, and the PSE may need to wrestle like Teilhard de Chardin³⁷⁶ with the idea of an evolving God, while sustaining their mystical faith.

And because the church usually affirms the parish as the context for ministry, taking little account of employment-focused ministry, another tension exists for most PSEs. As almost all have a valued parish base, PSEs try to hold the world of the parish and the world of the workplace together as one so that the experience of employment may become an experience of ministry. It's an ongoing task, made more desperate by the incomprehension each of these worlds exhibits for the other.

³⁷⁴ [↗](#) Johnson, Dorrie: "Ordained Ministers in Secular Employment", *Theology* vol 101 no 799 (Jan/Feb 1998) p. 26

³⁷⁵ [↗](#) Duquoc, Christian (trans John Griffiths): "Spirituality: A Private or a Public Phenomenon ?", in *Concilium*, vol 9 no 7 (London, Burns & Oates, 1971) p.28

³⁷⁶ [↗](#) Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre: *L'Avenir de l'Homme* (Paris, éditions du Seuil, 1957)

Pitt³⁷⁷ 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 the situation. This he calls 'secular contemplation in the secular desert'. It is a fascinating image, for it paints the PSE as a pilgrim in a barren land — the secular employment is to be endured, not celebrated. According to Pitt, the spiritual disciplines appropriate to the PSE'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 disciplines of self-control.

The quest for spiritual identity is for PSEs likely to be a continuous and enduring activity. Those people who accept the challenge of their spiritual direction need to be more than well-intentioned: they need to be well-informed and above all, robust.

Motivation and Motivations: what of Call ?

While one may hope that the discernment process brings to light the motivations that lead individuals to the calling of priest in secular employment, little attention has been paid to factors that might be found in common among PSEs as group. The following is a partial inventory, probably incomplete and in any case some of the items in the list are incompatible with each other. –

- hope of escape from a meaningless secular job into a fulfilling church role
- hope of using the riches of the secular workplace to relieve the barrenness of church life
- hope of using the riches of church life to relieve the barrenness of the secular workplace
- desire to follow a particular exemplar of the PSE ideal
- belief in the godliness of both secular and the sacred vocations, and a dream of uniting them
- admiration for the vicar model of ministry and a desire to minister as much like that as possible

³⁷⁷ [↗](#) 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, Herts, 1998) pp 296-8

- disgust with the vicar model of ministry and a desire to minister as differently as possible
- vision of a perfected model of lay ministry
- frustration with the limitations of lay ministry

PSEs need to consider which of those motivations lie close to the spiritual heart of their calling, take hold of them and own them. They are the motivations that will energise their spiritual life and give their ministry its character. Those same ones will also enliven their spirituality and their experiences in spiritual direction.

Values: clashes - integrity

It has been repeatedly affirmed that a thirst for spirituality can be detected in the very midst of secularity. Pitt (above) may be reading the situation more pessimistically than is warranted, for McLaughlin, a secular writer, asserts³⁷⁸ that business is far from being a spiritual desert. It is her observation that people at all levels in corporate hierarchies increasingly want to nourish their spirituality and bring more meaning and purpose into their employment life. Spiritual values that are widely embraced in business include integrity, honesty, accountability, quality, cooperation, service, intuition, trustworthiness, respect, justice, and service. And, she says, they want their spirituality to be practical and applied — to bring heaven down to earth.

Niebuhr would agree, and would have us respect that spirituality —

Modern secularism was forced to resist a profanisation of the holiness of God both in the realm of the truth and in the realm of the good, in both culture and ethics. ... No Christian theology, worthy of the name, can therefore be without gratitude to the forces of modern secularism insofar as their passion for truth was a passion for God.³⁷⁹

To bridge the gaps between two worlds, two cultures, is no small challenge, for, as the participants in a Lichfield training course recorded these impressions —

³⁷⁸ [↗](#) McLaughlin, Corinne: "Spirituality at Work", *The Bridging Tree Summer*, Vol 1 Iss 2 (Lifebridge, New York, 1998)

³⁷⁹ [↗](#) Brown, R.M (ed): *The Essential Reinhold Niebuhr* (New Haven, Yale, 1986) pp 88-89

- At work I am called upon to be innovative, creative and participative.
- At work I am required to identify my strengths and seek recognition.
- At work there is often conflict, if not always of the aggressive kind, and this is acknowledged in various ways.
- Work demands intense periods of intellectual and/or physical activity.
- Work puts a high value on logical thought convincingly articulated.
- Work demands performance measures and is concerned with outcomes.
- At church, by contrast, I am expected to be passive, conforming and controlled.
- At church I am expected to confess my weakness and claim forgiveness.
- At church, conflict is denied or suppressed.
- Church places emphasis on being rather than doing, on silence, contemplation and reflection.
- The spiritual life has a point at which logic must cease and words are shown for the dangerous things they are.
- Church puts emphasis on doing one's best and leaving the outcome to God.

The Lichfield group went on to delineate the culture gap between the two worlds and to specify the challenge. They concluded that 'the culture of church and the culture of working life are so different as to create a barrier which few are motivated to

remove.³⁸⁰ Few perhaps, but finding ways to break through the barrier — for themselves and for others — the PSE is called to this specific challenge and opportunity.

The calling to priesthood in secular employment is the call, not to build a bridge between these conflicting elements, but to *be* that bridge. For oneself, in finding a spirituality that will energise one's ministry; for others, to demonstrate to fellow Christians — in the only way that ultimately matters — that faith-at-work *works*.

Recollection: how to centre oneself with God other than in a religious place

PSEs are called to do their religion wherever they find themselves. To exercise their spirituality in places designed for that purpose, is an opportunity rarely accorded to them. The question that faces them daily therefore is: how to access one's spirituality while in the secular setting ?

The search in secular spirituality for ways to understand faith to be present in real life and not to be merely an intellectual structure is not reductionism but points to new ways of religious experience, an expansion of faith, deepening it. The worker-priests and industrial chaplains witnessed to their experiences of being close 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.³⁸¹

The nub of the matter is that the PSE 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.³⁸²

³⁸⁰ [↗](#) Diocese of Lichfield, Local Ministry Training Course: *Christians and the Economic Order* (4ed) (Lichfield 1998) pp 10-11

³⁸¹ [↗](#) Erlander, Lillemor: *Faith in the World of Work* (Univ. of Uppsala, Stockholm, 1991) pp 169-172

³⁸² [↗](#) Johnson, op. cit. p 24

There is the rub. Conventional approaches to the quest for spirituality can prove too simplistic for PSEs as for other Christians in employment. Accountability to God should invigorate a spirituality of one's business community. While traditional spirituality may separate itself from the world of employment, the PSE must find a spirituality that not only takes account of non-Christian spiritualities but also affirms the working environment as part of God's creation. Access to well-judged spiritual direction will be the PSE's greatest single support on that pilgrimage.

Conclusions

This study addressed two basic theses. One, that the ministry of a priest in secular employment possesses characteristics which make it distinctive among other ministries; two, that PSE ministry can be helped or hindered by the appropriate or inappropriate application of resources.

A definition was adopted in which *a priest in secular employment is a person who holds a current Bishop's licence to a function reserved to the priesthood, and is in full-time paid employment within an organization in whose organizational mission statement, there appears no explicit reference to God or Christ.* Such a definition has its limitations, but it is functional and leaves no ambiguities.

The study clarified some of the specific contributions that PSEs can offer in their ministries, and emphasised particular features which make them unique. Significant differences were found between the character of PSE ministry and the ministries of priests in full-time paid ministry. Equally important differences were found between PSE ministry and the ministries of priests who are retired, unwaged or self-employed. PSEs were defined as *bi-vocational* — the issue is not how much the church pays them, but rather whether they are univocational or bi-vocational.

Seven topics were selected for detailed consideration. The first three laid down general principles by which priesthood in secular employment may be investigated.

- ***Theological Underpinnings.*** The basis for ministry of the PSE kind rests upon the holistic theological position. From a contemplation of Christ in our context there developed reflection upon the Ministry of Christ, and thence to the ministry of a priest. Deriving workplace ministry from the ministry of Christ involved consideration of the protestant work ethic's role in modern thought. Attempts to integrate priestly ministry with workplace ministry called for a reflection upon the spirituality of the secular workplace. The problem of two masters was not settled theologically, but rather left as an unresolved conundrum for each individual to deal with in their own life.
- ***Ecclesial Issues.*** So far as these matters were concerned, a major topic was volunteerism and its role in PSE ministry. Special considerations were explored

in relation to a PSE's relationships with the laity and with other clergy. Balancing pastoral duty with liturgical was likely to raise significant issues, and the suggestion was made that a Rule for PSE ministry would help to resolve some of those. These matters aside, the PSE's situation did not introduce any new factor into ministry beyond those that need to be taken into account in considering the ministry of every priest among the people of God.

- **Workplace Issues.** Particular opportunities and challenges are encountered by PSEs' colleagues in ministry, by their colleagues in employment, and by PSEs themselves in these contexts. The world of employment was considered: the constraints of regular employment, organisational culture and work ethics, protestant and otherwise. These were related to ministry. Prospects were considered of a ministry among portfolio workers. Beyond these matters, the PSE's situation did not introduce any new factor into ministry beyond those that need to be taken into account in considering the ministry of the faithful layperson.

Four elements were identified as critical to the shape and success of a PSE's ministry. Particular strategies and methods, if adopted, enable a PSE to make an effective contribution to a ministry team.

- **Formation.** The relationship between formation and ordination was explored. The necessary content was delineated, and continuing education advanced as a permanent feature of a PSE's ministry. Consideration was given to ages and stages as factors in formation, with particular attention to late calls of the already employed and intentional bi-vocational training for seminarians.
- **Deployment.** Consideration was given to problems of clergy over-supply. Ways were sought to leverage the PSE's unique contribution and the kinds of communities in which such a contribution might be most effective. Interviews with three bishops evoked a mixture of unanimity and variety of opinion, suggesting that the kind of diocese in which a PSE serves may make a substantial difference to their ministry.
- **Oversight & Support.** The necessary documents — job description and person profile — were described which form a basis for the pastoral care of a PSE in

the field. Some implications of volunteerism for the individual were outlined; these are as yet insufficiently well researched. Morale was found to be buoyant, and the danger of burnout may be less serious for PSEs than other clergy.

- ***Spiritual Direction***. Though spiritual direction was seen to be a necessity, it was found that an underlying dualistic theology may need to be evaluated to allow direction to reach its full potential as a discipline for PSEs. Four aspects were outlined: identity and identities; motivation and motivations; integrity of values and value clashes; how to centre oneself with God other than in a religious place.

A substantial body of relevant literature was discovered. As befits the subject, much of that literature came from theological sources, and much from secular writing. Biblical precedents were found which could be leveraged to provide a scriptural warrant for the concept of combining ministry with employment, though these were sometimes less than transparent; all were rendered equivocal by changing attitudes to work, servitude and the master-servant relationship across the centuries.

It is my submission that this study supports both the stated theses beyond reasonable doubt.

Suggestions for Further Research

There are some areas pertinent to the field of priesthood in secular employment which this paper barely touched upon.

The stories of individual PSEs

A decision was early made to exclude from this study, the narratives of PSEs in the field. There is plenty to learn from them, but the stories need to be treated with more respect than would have been possible here. Common themes need to be identified and enlarged upon, and insightful conclusions drawn. The material will be subjective in character, and the tools of discourse analysis need to be brought to bear so that useful deductions may be drawn.

Nevertheless this present study provides a conceptual framework within which such research might be undertaken. For example, the seven substantive chapters provide both a structure and some background for interview and questionnaire protocols to be used in the fieldwork. Without such a structure, the experience of PSEs remains fragmented and rather than helpful, merely interesting.

Volunteerism and its implications for PSE

Volunteerism, its psychological and social elements, has been noted as an enormously under-researched field. As the church's commitment increases to lay ministry, Mutual Ministry, Limited Licence Ministry and such initiatives as PSE, she has everything to gain from a more explicit appreciation of what motivates people to do for nothing, what others do for pay. Some of the answers may prove uncomfortable, but both for the sake of the resources that volunteers bring to their task, and for the sake of the volunteers themselves — they are our own people, for goodness' sake — the Christian community needs to understand these dynamics better.

Discernment of the call to PSE

The call to priesthood coupled with employment in a secularly oriented organisation is not a call that resonates for everybody. It is not a back door to ministry for wannabee vicars. Still less is it a panacea for a church that is strapped for cash. The thrust of this paper has been to show how to sustain PSEs who are in the field already, but it says

little enough about helping candidates for ministry to decide whether PSE is for them, whether they are right for PSE, or neither, or both.

Nevertheless, some of the material included here will provide the perceptive reader with a basis — and some strong hints — with which to approach that series of questions. These seven chapters point up seven strands that should be included in a discernment inventory; further research would show what others should be added. It may be that consideration of the stories of individual PSEs will provide the most fruitful basis for that research. But done it must be, else the church will be responsible for creating even more burned-out, disillusioned ex-ministers than it already has.

The special case of Chaplains

Though the definition of priest in secular employment adopted for this study does incorporate some chaplains — and most outstandingly, all fulltime military chaplains — there has been no treatment of the particular joys and challenges associated with their situation. The discourse, rather, has been predicated upon the notion that the PSE not has not only been hired by a secular employer, but has been hired to do something other than ministry.

It would be useful therefore for somebody who understands chaplaincy thoroughly, to test each assertion made in this paper, to see whether the chaplain's situation validates or invalidates it. Such research would not only provide a clearer and more accurate view of chaplains' ministry but also provide more detailed understandings of PSE ministry generally.

PSEs in Tikanga Maori

This paper was careful to avoid reference to ministry in tikanga other than Tikanga Pakeha. Each culture owns particular understandings about work, and particular understandings about God. There is a strong effort being made to develop (discover ?) a characteristically Maori theology; indications are that the surface elements of such theology will differ in major ways from those of the English tradition. Indeed, our theology is more closely bound up with the mindset of our culture than we admit even to ourselves. Consequently the theology expounded in this paper represents Anglicanism English-style, and would be pretty opaque to many Maori.

Similarly, the place that employment occupies in Maori consciousness is far from central. The protestant work ethic has not anchored itself there: few Maori would respond to the question, 'Who are you?' by giving their job title. In Maoridom, the 'who are you' question is expected to draw a genealogical answer rather than an occupational one.

Finally, the relationship between kinship and community is special to Maori society. Considerations of community in this paper have been against the background of a settler mentality, which is markedly different from that of Maori. Consequently the Maori institution of Minita-a-Iwi is a different thing from PSE and should be separately considered. The present investigation might provide a framework (not a model) for a parallel study on Minita-a-Iwi.

PSEs in Tikanga Pasifika

Limited knowledge of ministry in Tikanga Pasifika has ruled out any comment on my part. Occupational and social considerations are as unique to Tikanga Pasifika as they are to Tikanga Maori. Pasifika is distinctive not only in that the Tikanga is already a mix of multiple cultures, but also in that each culture's centre is displaced from its homeland, with consequent theological links to the Diaspora. This study has not addressed Pasifika questions at all and has little to offer there in terms of content. Perhaps the framework may nevertheless prove helpful to some future researcher of PSEs in Tikanga Pasifika.

Further research on Spiritual Direction for PSEs

The chapter on Spiritual Direction raises a number of questions to which answers are not presently available. It may be that more investigation needs to be undertaken by practitioners in this area before better research can be done, but the issues are pivotal. If effective ways cannot be found to support the spirituality of PSEs, then we may as well kiss goodbye to PSE as a viable form of ministry.

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About the author

Called to bi-vocational ministry and ordained into it ten years go, Richard has spent six of those years a PSE as herein defined. Originally that meant combining ministry as priest-assistant in a suburban parish³⁸³ with employment at the Frucor fruit-juice factory. More recently he has been priest-assistant in a different part of the country³⁸⁴, again in a suburban parish — this time employed by the country's largest corporate law firm, Bell Gully.



Between these two spells of conventional employment lies a transitional period of four years as a priest in secular *self*-employment. While continuing the clergy roles to which he had been licensed, he worked as a hired gun in the computer industry, doing contract work for a variety of firms in the Hawkes Bay and Wellington regions. That situation was different enough to show him how the business of being an actual employee (or not) has a substantial influence on the character of a bi-vocational ministry.

Before his call, Richard had been an active churchman, Anglican and Presbyterian, all his life. He had served as chorister, vestryman, churchwarden, Sunday-school teacher and lay reader in more than one parish, and chairman to a diocesan trust board. At the same time he found secular employment first in teaching and then lecturing, eventually committing to a career in information technology. His ministry preparation consisted of on-the-ground training combined with correspondence courses, leading to the LTh he gained in 1999. His interest in theology, however, stems from an early age; as a four-year-old in Sunday school he summed up the teachings of the day with breathtaking precocity:

We lost Jesus, but it didn't matter. He was only made of cardboard.³⁸⁵

³⁸³ Taradale, in the Diocese of Waiapu

³⁸⁴ Miramar, in the Diocese of Wellington

³⁸⁵ Quotation preserved, alas, in the archives of S. John's Cathedral, Napier