

Sacred is the Call: Supervisory Accountability and Responsibility in the Formation of Spiritual Directors

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The development of programs and processes for forming spiritual directors is a relatively recent phenomenon. Clinical pastoral education has a much longer history of supervision, as do supervisory structures and expectations for pastoral counselors and educators. The literature related to supervision in spiritual direction is sparse, and supervisory processes have usually been developed by adapting processes from other pastoral ministries. To further complicate the situation, spiritual direction is an ancient practice within the Christian tradition and has primarily been considered to be a charism and the fruit of contemplation. It is seen, therefore, by many to fall outside the purview of external standards, licensing, certification, and various forms of accountability standards for most professions. In a recent leadership insti-

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tute on supervision for spiritual directors and program directors, I found myself naming spiritual direction for the first time as a hybrid ministry that is both charismatic and professional.¹

Those of us who practice spiritual direction and form others as spiritual directors in the first world cannot do so without holding ourselves accountable to the ethical norms and behaviors commonly spelled out in other ministerial professions. At the same time, we want to leave God's Spirit free to animate, inspire, and guide others through the finely spirit-attuned persons who understand and can mediate the ways of God to others. Such individuals may demonstrate a charism for spiritual direction even though they do not have graduate degrees or the formation equivalents. There remains an ongoing tension in spiritual direction between professional competence and charismatic authority rooted in personal experience.

From its origins twenty years ago, Spiritual Directors International (SDI) began to develop minimum standards for formation programs in spiritual direction.² At the time, the organization was an exclusively Christian group that struggled mightily to accommodate denominational and theological differences across these traditions. It has since grown to be an interfaith organization creating even greater complexity.

At that early phase in its history, SDI developed a set of "guiding principles" that all formation programs at that time agreed to accept. It also offered mentoring for program directors who were contemplating starting new programs. These guiding principles were shared with new program staff. In 1992, a group of trainers agreed to hold themselves collegially accountable to one another to maintain these minimum standards and to continue to reflect together and present to one another new developments in their programs. This decision resulted in a "trainers' symposium" preceding the annual SDI conference. Later, this conference was called "the annual leadership institute."

Because of the growth of spiritual direction programs (more than 300 in the United States alone) and the inability of program directors to regularly attend a SDI conference in another part of the country or world, the "annual leadership institute" could not fulfill the function of maintaining formation standards. SDI, as an organization, has not assumed responsibility for finding new ways to address the issue of minimum standards for spiritual direction formation programs. Standards of accountability for SDI member spiritual directors are promoted through the aspirational "Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in the Spiritual Direction Relationship," first approved tentatively in March 1996 by the members of the trainer's group present at that meeting,

and then accepted by the membership present at the annual SDI conference in 1999.³ These guidelines spell out the responsibilities to self, the directee, and to others (colleagues, faith communities, and society).

By the 2006 trainer's symposium in Costa Mesa, California, the "guiding principles" had been renamed "program components." This proposal, however, was never communicated to those program leaders who were not represented at that meeting, nor were the reflections on "program components" published to members at large. Rather than a mutually accountable group, this annual meeting has become one opportunity among many for program directors and staffs to reflect on their formation and supervisory processes. It no longer has any collegial binding force among the trainers. In addition, SDI has made no recent effort to develop a new set of minimal collegial standards for programs. If a consensus develops within this group at the meeting, there is neither a mechanism for communicating it to other formators in the organization nor for facilitating common norms.

GUIDELINES FOR THE ETHICAL CONDUCT OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

Because of concerns that initially arose about insurance and liability in 1993, SDI commissioned a group of its members with special expertise (a moral theologian, a lawyer, and others) to develop a set of guidelines for ethical conduct for spiritual directors. This process was completed by 1999. More recently, in 2005, Bill Creed, SJ, who was part of the task force that worked on the ethical guidelines for spiritual directors, has called for new standards for spiritual directors and for programs forming them.⁵ He stated in summary: "at a minimum, the guidelines named and brought to awareness various areas of right conduct in the spiritual direction relationship."⁶ But in the face of the complete lack of any ability to disqualify a spiritual director from practicing the art of spiritual direction because of failure to observe these guidelines, he asserts that we need more:

We now need minimal standards below which it is clear that a spiritual director is acting unjustly. These standards must address issues of confidentiality, community and collegial responsibilities, and other important issues. Mechanisms for reporting and responding to unjust behavior need to be created as well as forums for defending against unfounded accusations. Articulating these minimum standards and developing appropriate mechanisms to ensure that they are maintained will protect both vulnerable directees and the integrity of the gift of spiritual direction.⁷

In addition, to minimal enforceable ethical standards, Creed also recommends that "accreditation standards need to be developed for formation programs" themselves and that "those involved in the formation of spiritual directors need to communicate about and collaborate in determining basic criteria for formation programs that move beyond the 'invitations' of 'The Guidelines for Ethical Conduct.'"⁸ To date, I am not aware of any body working on addressing these concerns within the spiritual direction formation community.

BECOMING A SUPERVISOR FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

Currently, just as there is no recognized certification process for spiritual directors or minimum standards for their formation, there are as yet no objectives, standards, or criteria for becoming a supervisor or a spiritual direction formation program faculty member. Typically, programs and their directors have adapted the guidelines for spiritual direction and applied them to the parallel process of the supervision of spiritual directors. Most supervisors are mentored into this role after several years of experience as a spiritual director. Some follow a criterion of five years as a spiritual director. Some spiritual direction supervisors bring mentoring skills from having worked with beginning teachers. Others have clinical competence in some form of therapy and the supervisory experience related to the therapeutic context, and they also have become spiritual directors themselves. Models of both individual supervision and group supervision are typically used. If the direction experience includes directing the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius in the nineteenth annotation thirty-week experience, the thirty-day enclosed retreat, or a silent six- to eight-day directed retreat, the supervisor needs to have special expertise and experience in directing the Spiritual Exercises. Programs in spiritual direction, in which the practicum element and its supervision take place away from the site of the program (in other words, in another part of the United States or another country), have surfaced the need for developing some training in supervision for already experienced spiritual directors.

Supervisors have more frequently been mentored into this ministry by working on a formation team with others for a while before assuming responsibility for one-on-one supervision. This may have been done by co-supervising in a small group or by participating for some time in a peer supervision group. As a result, there has been less reflection on the expectations and re-

sponsibilities of supervisors of spiritual directors than in other pastoral ministries. In addition, the emphasis on the experience of the spiritual director, rather than on issues brought up by the directee, has at times led to an artificial division between “supervision” and “consultation” and a preference for seeking out the expertise of a psychologist or some other specialist about something happening in the spiritual direction relationship⁹.

Programs in spiritual direction recognize the need for clinical psychological competence among the supervisors or for a consulting role to assist with recognizing and interpreting resistance, transference, and counter transference in spiritual direction. There is also a need to assist inexperienced spiritual directors to work competently with a directee who, for instance, may be seriously depressed or suffering from some other psychological phenomenon. Recent developments in pastoral counseling advocate particularly the use of the self in the pastoral relationship that requires an ability to recognize and make use of the unconscious material emerging in the pastoral relationship appropriately.¹⁰ In all supervision, there is much learning from the experience of supervising and the experience of one’s own practice of spiritual direction. This depth and breadth of experience is placed at the service of the supervisee by a skilled supervisor who has learned from both successes and mistakes in her own practice in both ministries under the reflective gaze and support of one’s own supervisor.

Despite a lack of norms and standards for supervision and for the formation of spiritual directors, most supervisors take their responsibilities very seriously and usually adopt the approach by which they themselves were initiated into the ministry. To whom then are supervisors and formators of spiritual directors accountable? The ministry of supervision, like that of spiritual direction, is rooted in pastoral competency and a call to mentor others for the sake of “the absent other.” I believe that supervision is a charisma just as much as spiritual direction itself is. It is rooted in the particular gifts of persons who delight in assisting the growth of others, who take as much joy in another’s development as in one’s own, and who have developed a capacity to mentor others in a practice in which they excel. Supervisors communicate their trust in God’s ways with directees and with those they supervise and draw their supervisees into this trust. They approach their vulnerable supervisees with carefully calibrated empathy—accepting beginner’s mistakes, recognizing personal challenge, and creating an environment in which it is safe to learn

from mistakes. They are responsible and accountable both to the institution in which they serve and to their supervisees.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Supervisors in spiritual direction and formators have been hired or appointed to this task by an educational institution, such as a college, graduate school, retreat house, a diocesan spirituality center, or a program director of an independent program. They are responsible for working at the appropriate professional level expected by that institution or setting, including having the necessary credentials in addition to experience and competence in spiritual direction. In a university setting and in many retreat houses, the faculty and supervisors are often covered by the liability insurance of the institution. At Fordham University, for example, the supervisees are also insured; legal counsel reviewed the document, “Understandings and Expectations of Spiritual Direction,” that delineates what spiritual direction is and is not and describes the supervisory oversight of the interns. Although the document was revised according to the lawyer’s recommendations, this document also serves as an “engagement agreement” that the directee signs. It helps clarify for the directee what the directee can expect in terms of service from the director, so it also protects the directee. Included in this document are norms about confidentiality—its promise, how it is maintained within a supervisory process, and the legal obligations for mandatory reporting.

Faculty and supervisors are responsible to insure their supervisees do no harm, that they resource them appropriately in relationship to the individual challenges each faces in the directees, and that both the directee and supervisee learn and grow as a result of the practicum experience. Thus, a supervisor is “on call” as needed. Rarely have supervisees needed help after hours. But a neophyte spiritual director with a suicidal directee, for instance, needs to know who to call and needs to feel free to do so for his own sake as well as the directee’s sake. In relationship to the hiring institution, decisions made by supervisors and faculty affect the institution and the reputation of the program. Program participants need to trust they will be treated fairly and that decisions will be made with sufficient transparency to make sense to them.

DISCERNING THE CALL TO SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Most programs approach training in spiritual direction as a testing of a call to do this ministry. This approach brings into play the staff’s and the pro-

gram director's own skills and gifts in discernment of spirits. This means that students/interns are apprised about who will make determine whether or not they proceed to the practicum phase of the program and on what basis. This frequently includes pre-admission conversations, interviews, narratives, and assessment of progress throughout the preparatory course work or seminars, such as the pastoral counseling skills class leading to the practicum. Some do more rigorous screening prior to beginning the program. Others do the more rigorous screening in the course of the program. It is most helpful for the potential spiritual director to receive feedback from more than one person if at all possible. In the evaluation process leading to participating in the practicum, potential supervisees need to have demonstrated their ability to receive feedback without being excessively defensive about their work, have the capacity to reflect on their feelings and responses to a directee, and demonstrate a developmental readiness that I call "supervisability." Are they reflective about their own experience? Can they connect their reactions to material in their directee's narratives? Can they put this awareness into words?

In some programs, a decision to proceed to practicum or internship occurs after two years of work. In academic programs, if a student is denied admission to the practicum, it is important as a justice issue to allow the student to apply credits to another program concentration. Finally, the institution needs to be clear in its promotional materials when classes are expected to be taken and that progression to the practicum is not automatic.

In relationship to the supervisee, the supervisor needs to set clear expectations about what the practicum experience will entail: readings, class discussion, number of sessions with directees, verbatims, process notes, case conferences, and individual supervision sessions. The supervisor is responsible for tracking a supervisee's work with each directee regardless of whether or not every directee is the focus of a verbatim. This might be done through a combination of process notes and one-on-one supervision. Supervisees should leave a practicum experience with a clear, mutually arrived at understanding of strengths and weaknesses of the supervisees, areas for further growth and potential ways of addressing those areas, and a clear recommendation about whether or not to continue to see directees after the practicum, as well as how to secure post-practicum supervision.

Occasionally, the practicum ends without clarity about the director's call or ability. This is sometimes the result of an insufficient number of sessions or the level of difficulty posed by some directees for a beginning spiritual direc-

tor. Again, a supervisor needs to be clear about an inability to make a recommendation. This outcome may demonstrate careful discernment skills—leaving the question open until necessary information becomes available to the supervisee.¹¹

TRANSPARENCY IN SUPERVISION

In order to best serve supervisees and their directees, some programs make their own supervisory process transparent. The supervisor who works with the program supervisors to reflect on their work with their supervisees also rotates through the group supervision sessions, providing the interns with a second experienced supervisor in the group and psychological resources for at least half the sessions. Further, the supervisors process their group and individual supervision with each other as well as with the outside supervisor. This is a collegial process in which the supervisee benefits from more than one personality style, supervisory style, and understanding of the dynamics of spiritual direction and spiritual growth. The supervisee usually finds the support needed by at least one or more persons on the team. This collegiality and transparency make it easier for supervisors to discriminate between their own issues and their supervisees' issues, as well as examine cultural differences that may impede or affect communication.

Supervisors also often model learning from their own mistakes. In this way, supervisees can understand that everyone makes mistakes, that one can learn from them, and that mistakes should be addressed before they create obstacles in the spiritual direction process. Finally, supervisors need to be clear with their supervisees about how the program director maintains the confidentiality of information about them in the files and how long those materials will be kept should they be needed for recommendations for ministry openings that involve spiritual direction.

This mutuality in the process of evaluation and discernment of the director's call to continue spiritual direction and with what kind of directees (younger directees or persons in recovery, for example) is complemented by the supervisee's evaluation of the supervisor. It is important to spend some time in the final supervision session talking about how the process of supervision has gone for both the supervisor and supervisee. It allows some reflection about the entire process of supervision—the challenges, the learning, the joys, and the ups and the downs. Supervisees often give supervisors openings to reflect more deeply on some of the dynamics of this relationship—whether it

has been difficult or easier. In the termination phase, amazing breakthroughs can occur that may lead to greater mutual transparency and recommendations for personal work that can be of great benefit. It is also important to give an opportunity for a written evaluation of the supervisor's work for the supervisor's benefit as well.

SUPERVISORS AND SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS DO NOT WORK IN ISOLATION

For both directors and supervisors, it is important to remember that we should never be completely alone in this intimate work of supervision or spiritual direction. Directors and supervisors maintain the integrity of their work by continuing to engage in spiritual direction themselves and in other spiritual practices that keep them attuned to the contemplative dimension of life and available to partnering with God's spirit in these ministries of intimate accompaniment.

Both directors and supervisors engage in supervision on a regular basis with peers or with a mentor and also seek consultation as needed with other qualified persons.¹² This external supervision is in addition to keeping personal supervision notes of sessions with directees or supervisees and reflecting on what happened for the directee or supervisee and what might have been going on with one self.

In addition to confidential supervision, it is important in the formation of spiritual directors that supervisors and faculty work as a team. This builds in a mutual accountability to one another. When possible, a gender balance on the team is also highly desirable because it creates a better chance of interns receiving what they need from faculty and supervisors. It is important for supervisees to have some choice in the supervisor—to get a fresh start if needed or to get the more comfortable gender accompaniment to support the challenging work of supervision. Supervisees thrive as do supervisors when there is some freedom in the relationship. Some teams work out the supervision groups with input both from the participants and from the team members.

Supervisors and supervisees address their personal issues in therapy if supervision and spiritual direction are not enough to restore equilibrium if unexpected personal issues are triggered by one's supervisees or directees. It is a truism that we get the directees and supervisees we need to deepen our own self-knowledge and resolve once again at a deeper level long-standing or long-buried personal issues triggered by our work with others. Knowledge

inadequacies also need to be identified and addressed in course work, in-service workshops, and professional reading.

IN THE SERVICE OF THE "ABSENT OTHER"

Mary Rose Bumpus defines supervision as "a conversation between peers that ultimately fosters the well-being of an absent other."¹³ I am particularly taken by the image of an "absent other." Supervisors and formators of spiritual directors do not "direct" the absent other through the supervisee; rather they help the director discover how best to help the directee through his own gifts of grace and personality. At the same time, supervisors are ethically responsible to help sessions unfold in the best interest of the directee's spiritual well-being. The director's directee is a looming presence in supervisory sessions, although clearly physically absent.

Directees, however, are not the only "absent others" who impinge on the supervisory conversation. Our supervisees are also always members of communities in which they practice. Frequently directees match their director's ethnic and denominational identifications. These may or may not be entirely familiar to a supervisor who has some responsibility to understand the world of the director and the directee. Supervisors do not have a right to impose their own cultural and denominational assumptions on others. Yet neither do directors have a right to impose their cultural and theological views on their directees. As the ethical guidelines for directors asserts, "spiritual directors honor the dignity of the directee by respecting the directee's values, conscience, spirituality, and theology." In addition, the guidelines address the director's relationship to faith communities. Directors are to "appropriately draw on the teachings and practices of faith communities and to respect the directee's relationship to his or her own community of faith." Supervisors and formators bear the responsibility of concretely assisting their supervisees on a case-by-case basis to discover what this means with their particular directees.

If our supervisees are international participants or missionaries who have lived a long time in another country, there will be more than one culture in the room as well as ways of being religious. Will this supervisee be doing spiritual direction in the United States context with all of its diversity, or will the supervisee be returning to her country of origin or to the same mission area? In both of these cases of ethnic and cultural difference, the absent other may be entire worlds that we will know only through our supervisees. Our responsibility as supervisors is to help these international supervisees reflect on

the applicability of our model of spiritual direction to their own cultures and communities and help them reflect on how they are changing in the supervisory/training process and how they might facilitate similar change, if judged desirable, in the contexts in which they are the cultural experts.

Society, in general, constitutes yet another “absent other” in the supervisory/formation process. Supervisors, particularly, in the absence of any credentialing body become the “gatekeepers” by determining who continues to practice as a spiritual director after the internship or practicum experience. Statistics from formation programs in spiritual direction indicate that only forty percent of those who complete these programs in all settings continue to practice spiritual direction after the completion of the program. In my own experience, the few intern directors I have tried to dissuade from continuing to offer spiritual direction are likely to receive and act on my recommendation. In some cases, the director may need to successfully address personal growth issues—stabilize in recovery from drug or alcohol addiction or complete a messy life-transition—before resuming a spiritual direction practice. In more serious cases, directors who have struggled to provide a safe holding environment by maintaining appropriate boundaries, who have been excessively stressed by the work, or who have demonstrated other long-standing personality issues that are unlikely to change are the least likely to act on a recommendation not to continue. On the other hand, frequently the most successful interns are appropriately more hesitant to continue offering spiritual direction and recognize the need for on-going education and supervision. This experience suggests that preventing the second group especially from proceeding to an internship or practicum is a critical responsibility for the sake of society in general. As a supervisor, I can only hope and pray that directees will discontinue spiritual direction with such directors.

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SUPERVISORY PROCESS

As stated above, toward the end of the practicum, supervisees participate both orally and in writing offering their reflection on the effectiveness of the supervisory process from their perspective. This includes comment on the group process, the didactic component, the contribution of their peers in the small groups, as well as feedback to the supervisor on both their individual and group supervision style. They also comment on the contribution of the psychological consult (the supervisors’ supervisor).

There are many signals throughout the process of whether directors are able to make use of the supervisory process in their work with directees. Supervision, like other helping relationships, requires time to develop the working alliance and time for the supervisee to welcome the supervisor into the experience of spiritual direction as an ally who offers support, empathy, and challenge and who also requires accountability. Supervisees have access to everyone on the team, and all team members develop. This has the effect of supporting the supervisee even if the supervisor or the supervisee is experiencing “disturbances” or challenges in their relationship. The immediacy of supervisor-supervision (a session each week that focuses on either work with individuals or the group) helps address challenges before they become problems.

Supervisors might ask themselves some of the following questions when reflecting on their personal effectiveness as a supervisor:

- From my perspective, does my supervisee trust me and feel free enough to bring successes and mistakes to the process?
- Have I developed a strong enough connection with this supervisee to challenge her more deeply?
- Do I adjust my supervisory concerns to the developmental level of the supervisee? Some bring many years of prior experience as spiritual directors.
- Am I comfortable working with diverse supervisees (for instance, cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, denomination, lay, religious, clergy)?
- Is the supervisee increasingly free to make use of the supervisory process?
- Does the complexity and depth of the supervisee’s process notes increase over the course of the practicum?
- Is the supervisee responsive to my interventions? For example, does the supervisee try out suggestions, report back on subsequent experience, become increasingly transparent, seem to be less invested in “fixing” problem areas, and so forth?
- Do I arrive at insights and potential new behavioral suggestion collaboratively with my supervisee?
- Do I model the skills of exploration, insight, and the promotion of behavior changes the director needs to use with directees?
- Does my supervisee demonstrate empathic connection with directees?
- Do I continue to deepen my empathic attunement with the supervisee?
- Are we both surprised as what we discover together about the director’s experience of the directee and of spiritual direction?
- Is my supervisee appropriately being challenged—neither too much challenge nor too little?

This set of questions focuses primarily on the development of the supervisory relationship itself.

The following questions, however, suggest much more significant criteria about the supervisee's potentials. For instance, is the supervisee's work with directees demonstrating an interior freedom on the part of the supervisee to be himself and to be attuned to the presence and guidance of God in the session? Does the supervisee trust God more and trust the directee's relationship with God? Is the supervisee growing in compassion and empathy? Should these qualities be absent, the intern may be incapable of serving as a spiritual director because his personal and interpersonal unfreedom is so deep or because the intern is so narcissistically self-absorbed that he cannot be hospitable to a directee.

IMPEDIMENTS TO RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN FORMATION AND SUPERVISION

The final topic I wish to address is the impediments to developing patterns of enduring responsibility and accountability in formation and supervision. One such impediment is our own habit that makes us inattentive to new experiences and changed conditions in our supervisory practice. The lack of agreed upon external standards, either for program components or supervisory adequacy in the formation of spiritual directors, is an impediment. Working essentially exclusively on an "honor" system related to supervision and training is an impediment. Increasingly, interns presenting for training in spiritual direction are not connected to any particular faith community or identified group of persons they envision themselves serving as spiritual directors. Such interns may, indeed, have a call to offer spiritual direction based on their spiritual experience, but with no community affiliations of any kind, there can be no credible form of accountability.

The quality of supervisor supervision is yet another factor. Do programs or the hiring institution provide the necessary supervision for the supervisors to whom they entrust the practicum/intern stage of the program? Placing a supervisor on the team with clinical credentials protects everyone in the process—the directees, the directors, the supervisors, and the institution. All supervisory teams do not have this expertise, and there may be team issues that prevent the transparency needed to secure the necessary supervision in a group. I have only recently come to understand at greater depth the narcissistic vulnerability of supervisees in the process of supervision. Supervisors, just

like directors in training, may be deeply threatened by their own self-esteem issues and may be reluctant or unable to participate in supervision as deeply as needed in order to grow and learn from the supervisory process. Finally, because supervision of neophyte spiritual directors is very much a spiritual process, supervisors also need to attend to their own self-care and the depth of their own contemplative lives and spiritual growth. Supervisees just like directors need to pray their way through sessions as well as before and after. If this is, indeed, a charismatic ministry, then so too is its supervision.

CONCLUSION

Despite the challenges and concerns elaborated in this article, nevertheless, those of us who form spiritual directors and supervise them typically share a passion and love for the ministry of spiritual direction and supervision. We care deeply about supporting the hundreds of "absent others" whose spiritual lives their supervisees will accompany and serve. We care about the churches and the institutions that support this ministry. And we care about co-laboring with the Spirit in the transformation of the world through the inspired actions of our supervisees and our directees. Nevertheless, collectively we need to move to the next level of accountability and responsibility for our programs and our supervisory processes.

NOTES

1. Janet K. Ruffing, "The Supervision and Practicum Element of Spiritual Director Formation: Uncovering Inherent Mutuality," with Vivienne Joyce (Spiritual Directors International Leadership Institute, Litchfield, CN, 25 October 2007).
2. SDI serves about 5,000 members worldwide. Their membership does not include all spiritual directors since there are other networks, especially among Jesuit Retreat Houses who also form spiritual directors in the process of directing the Spiritual Exercises, and a network of spiritual directors who work in seminaries. Various Jesuit groups have also developed national and/or regional norms in the United States for formation of spiritual directors within this network.
3. Spiritual Directors International, "Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in the Spiritual Direction Relationship" (SDI, Bellevue, WA). For a short account of this history, see Carol Ludwig, "A Brief History of Spiritual Directors International Part II," *Presence* 8, no. 2 (June 2002): 21–28.
4. Initially, the "guiding principles," agreed to in 1991, included theological foundations, psychological and developmental foundations, instruction in the discernment of spirits, a practicum that included actual experience with directees, and supervision in this practicum experience. When the focus shifted to program leadership, the following "program components" were added: program team, program participants, contem-

plative dimension, required texts, recommended readings and bibliography, cultural dimensions, and communication and methods. Participants themselves added ethics, boundaries, and professional ethics.

5. Bill Creed, "From Compassionate Listening to Compassionate Justice: A Call for New Standards" in *Sacred is the Call: Formation and Transformation in Spiritual Direction Programs*, ed. Suzanne M. Buckley (New York: Crossroad, 2005), 152–157. Bill Creed was also kind enough to discuss with me some of the other issues addressed in this article.
6. Ibid, 155.
7. Ibid., 155–156.
8. Ibid., 156.
9. See my essay, "An Integrated Model of Supervision and Training Spiritual Directors" *Presence* 9, no. 1 (February 2003): 24–30. See Maureen Conroy, *Looking into the Well: Supervision of Spiritual Directors* (Chicago, IL: Loyola University Press, 1995), for the first book-length treatment of spiritual direction supervision based on the model developed by Center for Religious Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which worked with only already experienced spiritual directors. This approach helpfully focused spiritual direction on the directee's experience of God and on supervision as a parallel contemplative process.
10. See Pamela Cooper-White, *Shared Wisdom: The Use of the Self in Pastoral Counseling* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2004).
11. In some cases, an indeterminate outcome might suggest the failure of an internship or practicum. When such internships are longer than an academic semester, that might well be the case. Within an academic setting, when directees are volunteers who do not offer any stipend or payment for spiritual direction sessions, occasionally some of these directees fail to complete the number of promised sessions or may have serious psychological issues that may make spiritual direction difficult if not impossible for even a very experienced director. Thus, if through no fault of their own, an intern's experience remains ambiguous at end of the internship, acknowledging the lack of information needed for discernment about continuing actually models the fact that discernment does not always happen on our preferred time schedule.
12. Supervision ordinarily focuses on the experience of the director or supervisor with her directees or supervisees. In the integrated model discussed above, this may well include a supervisor resourcing a director with needed clinical information or other information necessary for effective work with a particular directee. Consultation usually entails a director or supervisor seeking specialized help from another appropriate professional other than one's supervisor. For instance, the director meets with a psychologist to focus on a depressed directee and assess suicidal potential and an appropriate intervention. Or if legal issues are involved, a director or a supervisor may consult with legal counsel. Consultation focuses more on the directees or supervisees than on the interaction transpiring between them and their clients.
13. Mary Rose Bumpus, "Supervision: the Assistance of an Absent Other" in *Supervision of Spiritual Directors: Engaging in Holy Mystery*, ed. Mary Rose Bumpus and Rebecca Bradburn Langer (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 2005), 5.

Accountability and Professional Supervision of Pastoral Ministry Leaders

Raymond A. Reddicliffe

A recent pastoral supervision pilot project, undertaken on behalf of a Presbytery of the Uniting Church of Australia in South East Queensland, involved comparisons of different types of group supervision.¹ The project's results reflect the issues of accountability and the supervision of pastoral ministry leaders. The main objective of the study was to test the viability of three modes of group supervision, and to assess the extent to which these could function as alternatives to the well-established one-on-one model of pastoral supervision. In this essay, I revisit the processes and outcomes of the supervision pilot project with the purpose of reflecting on the issues of accountability and the professional supervision of pastoral ministry leaders as well as the relationship between these issues. Reference will be made to details of the report on the supervision pilot project since it makes accessible relevant case study material for major issues to be explored. Also, because the project involved attending to the lived experiences of the participants

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