

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.<sup>1</sup> 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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in the process by engaging in an exercise of creative listening and spiritual discernment in relation to the feedback received, the processes employed are regarded as consistent with those usually employed in the early stages of practical theology methodology.<sup>2</sup>

I offer working definitions of the key concepts and then provide a brief overview and discussion of the main processes and outcomes of the pilot project. Then I review how the concepts of accountability and professional supervision are understood and applied in particular contexts, including the ministry of pastoral supervision, business organizations, and the professions. Finally, some conclusions and recommendations are presented relating to accountability measures and the practice of professional supervision with pastoral ministry leaders.

#### DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

In common usage, the concept of accountability refers to any process whereby individuals and groups are answerable to others, i.e., “responsible to someone or for some action.”<sup>3</sup> In some contexts, the concept may carry the meaning of “liability,” having legal or moral responsibility for some person or action, such as teachers in an educational system.<sup>4</sup> Accountability is understood in this essay to be multifaceted, complex, varying somewhat in respect to different cultural contexts. It does not readily submit to simplification. Accountability is implicated in relationships at the personal, interpersonal, group, and community levels and usually involves mutual or complementary expectations, roles, and responsibilities. Evaluative processes of accountability are integral to particular partnerships or covenants and have implications for ethical and moral decision-making as well as for setting standards for expected performance levels and behavior. In Christian ministry and pastoral supervision contexts, these may be expressed as a code of ethics for the practice of ministry. There is also a theological dimension of accountability that may include actually doing theology<sup>5</sup> as well as experiencing and responding to the judgment and grace of God.<sup>6</sup>

The term professional supervision (also referred to as pastoral supervision) is used here to refer to processes involving an intentional relationship of a supervisee with at least one other person for the specific purpose of engaging in theological reflection on experiences of ministry. The aim of this process is the development of professional identity as a ministry agent along with the acquisition of ministry skills or competencies in accord with per-

sonal learning goals. The adjective professional is preferred over pastoral in this context because it makes clear that the following discussion on supervision is primarily (but not exclusively) focused on the professional roles and responsibilities that ministers undertake, recognizing that these have much in common with those of some other professionals serving the specific needs of particular groups of people. The broad working definition adopted here of a professional is “a knowledge based worker in a defined domain.”<sup>7</sup> Another reason for favoring “professional” over “pastoral” is that in some contexts the term “professional supervision” can indicate a narrow focus in terms of purpose that implies a close relationship with the concept of accountability. For example, the definition given of professional supervision in the Constitution and Regulations of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) is “the relationship a Minister has with another professional or group whereby the Minister is assisted to maintain the boundaries of the pastoral relationship and the quality of ministry.”<sup>8</sup> Both purposes mentioned here have important accountability connotations.

Although the term *pastoral ministry leaders* refers to women and men serving in a specified ministry (commissioned or ordained) of the Uniting Church of Australia (UCA) and working mainly in congregational or chaplaincy ministry contexts, a much broader application is assumed throughout the paper.

#### SUPERVISION PILOT PROJECT: OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

The pilot project that provides the primary data for this essay involved people serving in ministry roles in a Presbytery of the Uniting Church of Australia (UCA) located in South East Queensland. It was undertaken to follow up on some of the findings of a Presbytery-wide survey on the professional supervision of its ministry leaders.<sup>9</sup> The survey had found that over half of those in active ministry positions (placements) had no specific arrangement in place for receiving regular supervision. Not unexpectedly, the data did confirm anecdotal evidence of a lack of participation in regular supervision by a large proportion of ministers serving in the Presbytery despite knowing that regular supervision was mandatory for people serving in ministry.

Once the decision to implement the supervision pilot project was made, personal letters were distributed, setting out basic details of the three small-group supervision options and inviting prospective participants meeting specific criteria to register interest and, if appropriate, to nominate their group

preference. Out of the twenty-six ministry leaders that were contacted, fifteen indicated a desire to participate; on the basis of the information provided, each was assigned to one of the following groups: a supervisor-led group, a peer supervision group, or one of two triad groups.

The participants received documents relating to the functioning and administration of the supervision program along with other relevant resources prior to commencement. Although a questionnaire inviting feedback was distributed two months into the program, it was necessary to exclude that data from the assessment process because the two triad groups had met only once or twice by then. There was also a low response rate from the members of the other two groups. The supervision program operated over a six-month period and evaluation involved analysis of the written feedback received from all participants in the form of questionnaire responses toward the end of the program. The data included information that was used for statistical analysis as well as evaluative comments concerning various aspects of participants' experiences of the program.

#### SUPERVISION PILOT PROJECT: OUTCOMES

The main outcomes of the pilot project are as follows:

- All groups produced positive outcomes for their respective participants, and all participants indicated enthusiasm for pastoral supervision.
- No one form of group supervision was perceived to be more effective than another.
- The need was identified for appointed group conveners who were trained and experienced in group supervision and familiar with the organization and functioning of such groups.
- Conveners need to have in place arrangements for receiving supervision of their work with their respective group.
- Effective communication links are vital to enable administrative issues to be dealt with in a timely manner.
- Provision of adequate funding of group supervision programs needed to be seriously addressed by the appropriate resourcing body.
- Small-group supervision programs were perceived to have the potential to enhance the quality of pastoral supervision, as well as increase the proportion of ministers regularly participating.
- Such programs are able to increase levels of pastoral support and enhance professional development for ministry leaders through group supervisory relationships and interaction.

Several of these points will be discussed in more detail in considering the issues of accountability and the professional supervision of ministry leaders, although accountability issues were far less overt. Nevertheless, their significance should not be underestimated since accountability measures and processes were imbedded in the project from the beginning. One of the reasons that the project was initiated was that all active ministry leaders were accountable to the Presbytery to participate in professional supervision. The survey results indicated that for some ministers the cost of professional supervision was a disincentive and others mentioned the difficulty experienced in accessing appropriately trained and available people for the role of supervisor. Yet even though the Presbytery regarded professional supervision as mandatory, it seems that members of the Presbytery talked minimally at formal meetings about the most effective means of involving pastoral ministry leaders in professional supervision.

#### ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS ELEMENTS

Accountability is multifaceted and complex, varying somewhat in respect to cultural contexts. Three key elements in the process of accountability appear to have wide application. Writing out of a social welfare organizational context, Harold Weissman identified these three elements in this way:

1. Establishing a set of role relationships that detail who is accountable to whom, for what, both within and without an organization;
2. Utilizing methods and procedures through which an accounting is given to the responsible parties that standards of effort, effectiveness, and efficiency have been met; and
3. Redistribution of rewards and costs that accrue during the accounting process.<sup>10</sup>

The first element is particularly relevant in the context of the supervision of pastoral ministry leaders. It is vital that when role relationships are established, the details of the terms of agreement or covenantal partnership are also clearly defined and mutually agreed upon by the parties concerned. In the case of the pilot project, guidelines were provided for establishing learning contracts and protocols for the functioning of the supervision groups. However, a lack of clarity about who was to initiate contact with the program coordinator when a group failed to convene, as happened in the case of both triad groups, led to an inordinate and unnecessary delay in those groups commencing on the program.

The second element of providing feedback to the relevant stakeholders that appropriate standards have been met has only partially been undertaken in respect to the pilot project. As important stakeholders, participants in the supervision program received only general information about the functioning and outcomes of their respective groups.

The third element in the model outlined above regarding the redistribution of rewards and costs that accrue due to the accounting process should also receive consideration in a professional supervision context. One of the outcomes of the supervision pilot project was the need for appropriate levels of funding to support professional supervision programs. In Weissman's approach to accountability, there must be appropriate rewards to organizations and their staff for demonstrating the openness and flexibility required to enable accountability processes to achieve desired outcomes. In church and other not-for-profit organizations, the reference to the redistribution of rewards may need to be reinterpreted in other than monetary terms for volunteers so that these initiatives may serve as positive reinforcement of behavior, such as engaging in professional supervision.

A decade ago, John Patton observed that supervision in ministry involving supervisees and patients usually deals with a mix of depth psychological and spiritual experiences that are challenging contextual issues. He described these as "holy complexity."<sup>11</sup> Some of the accountability issues that professional supervisors and supervisees confront are certainly no less complex. If, as Patton suggests, there are risks that pastoral supervisors may be paralyzed by contextual issues that deplete their confidence and impair their ability to work with supervisees, then perhaps one of those most challenging contextual issues is dealing with accountability related matters.

#### ACCOUNTABILITY: A COMPLEX CONTEXTUAL ISSUE

Accountability is complex in part because of the variety of meanings attached to the concept in different settings. For example, words such as *accountability*, *liability*, and *responsibility* are often used interchangeably in everyday conversation and by some conference speakers or authors.<sup>12</sup> The concept undergoes changes in meaning when used in different cultural contexts. A study of perceptions of accountability involving educators in Ethiopia found that, while respondents had a strong grasp of the concept of responsibility, there was little understanding of accountability as it is currently understood by most people in the Western world.<sup>13</sup> For instance, while the

appropriateness of accountability to government was recognized, these respondents preferred to speak of having responsibility "for" such stakeholders as students, parents, and members of the wider community, rather than being accountable "to" them.

On the other hand, there is evidence that in some new religious groups or movements in the West, the term "responsibility" is defined or used in such a way that accountability to moral standards, the expectations of others, or one's own principles, are often excluded!<sup>14</sup> This is in stark contrast to the approach adopted by mainline groups within the Judaeo-Christian tradition and other world religions, where a strong link is consistently maintained between the concept of accountability and the notion of moral responsibility. When attempts are made to simplify its essential meaning, there is a risk of both distorting the meaning of accountability and producing negative outcomes. In holding workers accountable in the information environment of corporate business organizations, Lance McMahon asserts that in its simplest form accountability safeguards the right to scrutinize or pursue a suspicion.<sup>15</sup> If the culture of the organization is already characterized by a lack of trust and fragmented relationships, such an understanding of accountability is likely to generate even more suspicion and distrust.

A second reason for its complexity is that the notion of accountability and its application may be much more subtle than how it is popularly perceived. In business and the professions as well as in the context of mainline religious and church groups, it is widely held that there is a direct positive relationship between strong measures of accountability and more effective service outcomes. It is an unquestioned assumption is that if accountability is given a high level of priority whether the context is the operation of a business, a not-for-profit service organization, a religious body, or community group, then it can be confidently expected that there will be corresponding beneficial outcomes as a consequence.

Lee Forschheiser has written an article strongly advocating that accountability measures have a positive and linear relationship with success in business.<sup>16</sup> He begins by suggesting that one way to understand the positive effects of accountability in the business world is to note the features of a workplace where accountability is lacking or given low priority. Top performers often leave because they desire and deserve accountability measures and leave out of frustration when their positive contribution is not recognized. Ironically, so the argument runs, the company seems to reward poor or mediocre performers, while struggling to retain or replace talented workers. Standards

tend to slip as workplace complacency and mediocrity become accepted as norms within the group culture. More and more responsibilities fall to the key leader as others in the organization become less accountable for decision making. One inference of this approach is that when ensuring accountability structures is a high priority, an organization is more effective both in achieving its strategic goals and in retaining its most competent and productive workers. Despite the appeal of this approach to accountability, one question needs to be raised: Does this perspective present an accurate assessment of the process and affects of accountability measures as they are experienced in the world of business and in other contexts, including that of professional supervision?

#### ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES AND SERVICE OUTCOMES

The relationship between measures of accountability and more effective service, according to Harold Weissman, is better described as curvilinear rather than linear.<sup>17</sup> Accountability measures usually have positive effects in improving the quality of service, but only to a certain extent. In many instances, a decline in the quality of service occurs, even though accountability measures may have been improved. At various points and for different reasons in an organization's attempt to have more control over procedures and outcomes, accountability initiatives may lead to less rather than to more effective service because of political, social, technical, and economic constraints. Political constraint occurs when power struggles develop within an organization, or one or two key user groups impose their priorities. The changed dynamics invariably divert attention and scarce resources away from the organization's main agenda. The negotiated order that results from such change inevitably means accountability is essentially a political process and not an objective administrative one.<sup>18</sup>

*Pseudo-accountability* is the term used to describe the outcomes of adversarial relationships between agents and the organizations that hold them accountable. In some instances, both parties protect themselves against criticism, but the quality of the service does not improve.<sup>19</sup> This is an unhealthy form of collusion that undermines the goal of mutual accountability because it eschews the kind of honesty and transparency in communication that promotes the development of mutual trust necessary for strong effective partnerships within and between organizational units. Even organizations perceived as very successful may only become aware of their strengths and weaknesses after a thorough review. It was only after an ethics and values audit that the

University of Central Lancaster began a process through which its members are reported to have grown in respect to accountability and openness, and "developed their understanding of the paramount importance of good interpersonal relationships, clear communication, professional behavior and ethical standards."<sup>20</sup>

It should not be surprising that although the relationship between accountability measures and production outcomes in service-oriented organizations has usually been represented as a positive linear one, such a viewpoint has been challenged by Weissman and others. Other empirical studies suggest that accountability positively affects dependent variables, such as performance, satisfaction, conformity, goals, and attentiveness; but they also cite contrary research results indicating that accountability measures have resulted in creating dysfunctional behavior in some contexts.<sup>21</sup> The theory is being called into question not only because observing behavior within organizations provides anecdotal evidence of glaring incongruities, but more importantly, because there is mounting empirical research to the contrary.

#### THE CONCEPT OF PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

In spite of the diversity of views about the nature and function of professional supervision and approaches to its practice, there are vestiges of "overseeing," in the sense of "watching over" the ministry performance and professional development of another, in that process. For that reason, it is important that the traditional function and relationship of supervision is modified by appropriate theological reframing. In a ministry context, Kenneth Pohly has suggested, the supervisor stands *with* us in the sense of being alongside us, rather than over us.<sup>22</sup> When the abuse of power in helping relationships in church or other contexts is widespread, it is vitally important for the fundamental supervisory function of oversight to have a continuing and valid place. The practice of oversight must be held in balance by means of two other essential elements, namely, an effective supervisory working relationship and an agreed upon basis for mutual accountability. All three elements are directed toward the accomplishment of what Pohly identifies as the dual purpose of supervision: the utilization of professional skills to achieve a service outcome and the formation and development of the ministry agent's professional identity.<sup>23</sup>

For most ministry leaders there is the obligation to submit their practice of ministry to review processes of one kind or another on a regular basis. For

example, the preamble to the “Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice” of the Uniting Church in Australia states that the document is to be applied within the context of the *Constitution and Regulations* of the Church which set out the Church’s requirements in relation to the conduct and accountability of its ministers.<sup>24</sup> Clearly the two emphases noted earlier of assisting ministers to maintain appropriate boundaries in their pastoral relationships and the quality of ministry service being offered indicate the close association between this perspective on the purpose of professional supervision and the issue of the accountability of ministers. It should be noted that the relevant regional judicatory authority (e.g. Presbytery) has a responsibility to assist ministers under its pastoral and administrative oversight to fulfill various duties and responsibilities, including that of engaging in professional supervision. However, in another section of the Code the following assertion is made: “Ministers have a responsibility to ensure that they receive regular professional supervision.”<sup>25</sup> These two statements may appear to indicate some confusion about who is ultimately responsible to ensure that ministers receive regular professional supervision. Another way to approach this apparent anomaly is to recognize that there is a qualitative difference between “being held accountable” by an organization and “holding oneself accountable.” As Harold Weissman has observed, “No matter how hard an organization tries to hold another accountable, the ‘bottom line’ is the willingness of the accountable agency to be held accountable. They have innumerable opportunities...to subvert the process.”<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, it can be safely assumed in most supervision contexts that the differential in authority and power between the supervisor and the supervisee has important implications should a complaint be lodged or lawsuit ensue. The party exercising the most power and authority (invariably the supervisor), will also carry the heavier burden of responsibility. In the case of professional supervision and litigation, the principle usually applies: “Responsibility is multiplied, it is never divided.”<sup>27</sup>

So regulating for dual accountability for the professional supervision of ministry leaders would appear to have much to commend it as a measure to strengthen the safety net for ministry leaders and the church authorities to whom they are accountable. A similar point could be made in respect to individual members of a peer supervision group. While each member is accountable for his own learning and growth, at the same time there is the expectation that other peer group members will assume a measure of responsibility for making that learning and growth possible. Brigit Proctor has made the astute

observation: “A peer group demonstrates that ‘in the end we are all self-accountable; (but) we should never be *only* self-accountable.’”<sup>28</sup> Participants in the supervision pilot project indicated that significant elements contributing to the reported high levels of satisfaction and commitment to the program were the quality of their relationships with peers and the sense of being mutually accountable for the functioning and outcomes of their respective groups. From the feedback received, it was clear that, for the majority of participants, the experience of group supervision enhanced their sense of accountability for the manner in which ministry was exercised as well as their ongoing commitment to undertake some form of professional supervision.

The link between professional supervision and accountability issues is further illustrated by Kenneth Pohly’s identification of the six components in a supervisory relationship that need to be adequately addressed. The first of these is the administrative component that encompasses the provision of accountability and involves feedback and evaluation.<sup>29</sup> Pohly also asserts that an essential characteristic of pastoral supervision is what he describes as “covenant making.” This term also encompasses six functions within the supervisory relationship: “It names the participants, states expectations, defines responsibilities, identifies resources, sets forth an accountability structure, and provides for change.”<sup>30</sup> Note again the integral place assigned to having an effective accountability structure as one of the necessary functions in a pastoral supervisory relationship. The pertinent issue for the appropriate church judicatory bodies, therefore, is not whether there should be an accountability structure, but rather what purposes and goals of the structure should be and, therefore, what forms would be most appropriate considering the supervisory context in which it is to operate.

#### CONCLUSION

Having clear expectations and standards for performance of ministry, including professional supervision and other behavior, in accessible forms, such as ethical codes, is vital. But in and of themselves, these strategies are insufficient for several important reasons. The first is that effective means are required to ensure that the relevant information is widely known and that ownership of accountability measures by all relevant stakeholders is actively encouraged. Second, if the most positive outcomes of implementing accountability measures are likely to be achieved through covenantal partnerships involving mutual accountability between pastoral ministry leaders

and their judicatory church authorities, then there is a strong case for incorporating dual accountability measures in professional supervision. Third, if full weight is given to the empirical evidence that the relationship between accountability measures and service outcomes is best expressed as curvilinear rather than linear, there are implications regarding our approach to accountability processes. For example, instead of church judicatory bodies focusing mainly on achieving conformity of their pastoral ministry leaders to regulatory standards of engaging in regular professional supervision, there are compelling reasons to invest more time in and attention to removing the roadblocks to fuller participation and more effective ministry service.

It is, therefore, recommended that authorities holding pastoral ministry leaders accountable for professional supervision consider the merits of implementing the following strategies:

1. Model openness and flexibility within the organization rather than exercising authoritarian control by insisting on conformity to set standards in a legalistic manner and unnecessarily excluding some stakeholders from decision-making processes. Should an individual or group demonstrate an unwillingness to be held accountable, there may be few positive outcomes for the organization and others involved in pursuing the disciplinary pathway, except in exceptional circumstances. It is also essential to implement appropriate ways to reward openness and flexibility within an organization.
2. Promote more effective communication by using multiple means of conveying information and ensuring that important messages are clear and concise and received and accurately understood.
3. Encourage relationship-building exercises as an integral part of agenda planning for formal meetings and as an option for informal gatherings in order to foster more effective teamwork.
4. Adopt a creative problem solving approach to resolving accountability issues. While clear and precise standards of accountability are important for any organization, it is also essential that disagreements or conflicts are addressed in a safe and supportive environment for all parties and that the requisite resources are available to provide satisfactory resolution of issues.

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**Theme for Volume 31 of *Reflective Practice*  
FORMATION AND SUPERVISION IN A DIGITAL AGE**

How we live has already been profoundly affected by digital communication and the rapidly emerging tools of social media are likely to change forever how we solve problems and create social renewal. Patterns of communication, revolutionized access to information, shifted the balance of power between experts and amateurs, expanded collaboration in solving problems, redefined the way that we think about membership, and created new possibilities for social intimacy. Digital technologies and the new media landscape are also transforming the church. This shift will accelerate in the coming years. As *Reflective Practice* begins its own digital era with Volume 31, it is timely that we focus on this theme: **Formation and Supervision in a Digital Age.**

- What needs to be done to form a new generation of pastors and supervisors for whom digital technology is natural?
- What might the success of distance learning teach us about digital supervision?
- Is it necessary to balance electronic meetings in supervision with face-to-face meeting with a supervisee?
- How will the fluidity of personal boundaries in social networks like MySpace affect the willingness to be vulnerable in formation or supervision?
- How will confidentiality be secured if the internet is the vehicle for formation and supervision?
- How will the specter of predators who use the internet to attract victims affect forming learning communities of trust?
- Although sharing may be more intimate online, how might the absence of in-person connections affect the sustainability of relationships limited by distance from the outset?
- How will digital formation/supervision affect people with different levels of skill and adaptability to the technology?

More than ever, it is important that young pastors, supervisors, and leaders in ministerial formation write about this topic at this time. Proposals are welcome any time. Articles should be submitted to Herbert Anderson, Editor, by December 1, 2010, for inclusion in Volume 31.

**The Role of Co-Active Spiritual Coaching  
in Supporting Responsibility and Accountability  
in Formation and Supervision**

**Marianne LaBarre with Karen Frank**

With the commitment of the Lilly-Endowment to support programs on Sustaining Pastoral Excellence (SPE), the Seattle University Pastoral Leadership Program (PLP) was instituted in 2003. Each year, twenty-five proven and promising lay and ordained pastoral leaders from ten to twelve different denominational backgrounds gather for two to three days a month for renewal and revitalization.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROGRAM

In addition to their courses on effective leadership and creating healthy systems in ministry, participants take part in peer groups and spiritual coach-

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*Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*