

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

VOLUME 44

Editors' Introduction

Welcome to Volume 44 of *Reflective Practice*! The Divine has a history of working at the margins. This insight released the creative research and reflections you'll find in this volume.

The people of Israel sojourn in wilderness places for 40 years of formation prior to entering the promised land. At the annunciation, Mary's formation is profoundly expressed in the Magnificat. Soon after Jesus is born, he and his family experience the formation of being vulnerable political refugees. Later it is said of Jesus, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Similarly, Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) retreated to the Cave of Hira near Mecca and there received a revelation that would form a people. Siddhartha Gautama, while meditating under a fig tree, attained enlightenment and the Buddha set in motion the Buddhist faith. Things happen at the margins.

Gaining new perspective through reflective engagement in marginal places happens regularly for our students. Supervisors gain insight when exploring context and student experience from a new angle of vision. We hoped to receive wisdom from our contributors through their experience. The contributors to this volume did not disappoint.

Embodied reflection? Layered, woven reflective stories taking culture seriously? The prayer language of lament produced by a marginal and exiled people? Each of these methods open up and invited us to new dimensions of reflective practice.

Then of course, the place of providing spiritual care can be at the margins. Be encouraged by a Campus chaplain at a major state university that functions in many respects from the periphery yet seeks to surround the whole with a loving, grace-filled, and winsome presence.

Spiritual direction is encouraged by many seminary and divinity schools as important for the soon-to-be-religious leader. Yet, very few offer training in spiritual direction as a vocational pathway in their programs. How about spiritual direction with the incarcerated? How might these people, on the margins of our community, benefit from this ancient practice? Intrigued? Read on!

Every volume benefits not only from the generosity of its contributors in sharing their research, experience, and reflections, but a team behind the scenes (the margins?). We want to publicly thank the supportive board of *Reflective Practice*, and its chair, Carrie Buckner; our managing editor, Rod Seeger, and our copy editor Kathy McKay. We also want to acknowledge the ongoing support of ACPE, ATFE and ARPTE (the Association for Reflective Practice in Theological Field Education, formerly known as ANZATFE), with great gratitude.