



Let Ministry Teach: A Guide to Theological Reflection (From the Interfaith Sexual Trauma Institute)

Robert L. Kinast

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Relating theology to the practice of ministry is one of the most elusive goals in pastoral training. Drawing upon seventeen years of experience in theology, Doctor Kinast describes a step-by-step approach to help students and experienced ministers learn what their ministry teaches. Through examples, practical suggestions, and principles grounded in process theology, readers of *Let Ministry Teach* explore the full range of resources needed for meaningful theological reflection.

Let Ministry Teach strikes a clear balance between a very broad and detailed presentation of a theological reflection method so that it is neither too simplistic nor too hard to handle. Each chapter describes a fundamental step in the method with the help of an illustration and commentary. Chapters conclude with a list of practical suggestions and a short description of the theoretical background and its main points.

The challenge of theological reflection is to keep theology in the authentic experience of God's presence in our midst. *Let Ministry Teach* places this reflection in context: in a small group - where it works best; as a meaningful experience - one that has an impact, and initiates discussion; as a faith-theological perspective reflecting on experience from many points of view; as a practical outcome where a person is in a better position to guide events according to one's beliefs; and as a continuous process - a skill which must be practiced.

In *Let Ministry Teach*, Doctor Kinast develops a successful way of *doing* theological reflection, which includes: selecting an experience - focusing on the meaningful moments; describing an experience - making it available for reflection; entering an experience - learning what it has to teach; learning from an experience - grasping what it teaches by relating it to what a person already knows and what the experience suggests is yet to be learned, and enacting the learning - incorporating the learning into a pattern of living and theological reflection.

The true basis of theological reflection - a full, deep, meaningful embrace of life - is learned from one's own experience. Respectful of the full range of theological resources available for reflection, and mindful of the primary goal of recognizing God's presence and responding to it, theological reflection weaves experience and theology together into a way of life that continues the journey begun when Jesus first appeared. *Let Ministry Teach* is offered as a companion for those on that journey.

Robert L. Kinast, a pastoral theologian, specializes in the field of theological reflection. Through the publications and services of the Center for Theological Reflection, Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, he contributes to the ministry training programs of many denominations in the United States and Canada. He is the author of the Vatican II: Act II series and Mirror Meditations: Praying with the Images of Vatican II, published by Liturgical Press.

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