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CHARACTER AND NARRATIVE
VIRTUE ETHICS AND FORMATION FOR LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY

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Introduction

At the forum, “Realities, Opportunities and Challenges of Lay Ministry Today,”¹ four well-placed speakers each addressed the topic from her or his own perspective. A theme that kept arising was the spiritual lives of lay ministers. Their concerns reflected a growing recognition that a resolution to the nagging issue of the still poorly defined identity of lay ecclesial ministers in the Catholic Church in the U.S. was somehow connected to a sense of place. In their view, this is forged through a faith perspective of the minister as personally called to a transforming encounter with Jesus Christ for the sake of the Reign of God. On this encounter alone is founded one’s rightful place in the mission given to the Church by Christ. Not only does this encounter animate and nurture the decision to serve in this capacity, but it also provides the dynamic process through which the character of the lay ecclesial minister is shaped. This encounter, continued through the ongoing relationship with Christ that it initiates, becomes the integrating factor for the formation of the lay ecclesial minister, and the ultimate source of his or her identity as a minister.

The phenomenon of lay ecclesial ministry is a relatively new one in the Catholic Church. Its contemporary character can be traced back to Vatican II, only 40 years, while the Church has been in the process of forming priests and religious for almost two millennia. Yet, even in these 40 years, the phenomenon has been in rapid development. The experience has far outpaced reflection, and continues to evolve. It is further confused by the simultaneous decline in the number of priests and religious at a time of Catholic population growth.

Virtue ethics provides an opportunity to look at this phenomenon in terms of character development. The assumption is that lay ecclesial ministry has a character that is distinct from ordained and vowed religious ministry. This paper asks, What is the distinctive character of the lay ecclesial minister, and what distinctive practices, therefore, must be involved in the formation of character necessary for lay persons to become ministers? My intention is simply to demonstrate the usefulness of virtue ethics as a lens through which to explore this.

Virtue Ethics on the Formation of Character

In his book, *Go and Do Likewise*, William Spohn pursues the concerns of virtue ethics in the formation of Christian character, identifying specific practices and contexts that foster it. He identifies three interacting aspects of the person that determine our actions in response to various situations: moral perceptions, moral dispositions, and identity. How we interpret reality in order to respond to it (moral perception) is shaped by our identity (who we are and seek to become) and by moral dispositions (inclinations to act).²

Spohn sees Christian moral formation as a process whose framework is provided by virtue ethics, whose content is found in the New Testament, and whose methodology is that of Christian spiritual practices. The framework of virtue ethics focuses on the virtues and vices that flow out of and shape the character. The character is at the center of concern here: it is the persons’ habits of acting and relating that express his or her character and gradually, continually

¹Allan Deck and others, "Realities, Opportunities and Challenges of Lay Ministry Today," in *National Association for Lay Ministry Annual Conference* (San Jose, CA: Unpublished, 2000), 59-60.

²William C. Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise: Jesus and Ethics* (New York: Continuum, 1999), 2.

form it. The conviction in virtue ethics is that good moral decisions flow out of good character that seeks the *telos* of human flourishing. Those habits of character that lead to and also participate in the fulfillment of this *telos* are considered virtues.³ Virtue ethics, therefore, generally parallels the Christian life and is indeed suited to it.⁴ Thus, both are concerned with character formation, and character formation is concerned with every practice in life because every practice forms character.⁵

Human Flourishing and the Reign of God. For the Christian, the *telos* of human flourishing is the Reign of God, out of which the various spiritual practices of the Christian community flow. They form Christian character whose virtues are the values of the Reign of God. As such, the Christian enters into the process of ongoing conversion. Thus, spiritual practices create habits of Christian living that both participate in and simultaneously contribute to the realization of its *telos*, flowing out of and shaping Christian character.⁶ Through regular practice, one's heart is disposed to identify with, interpret, and be disposed to act in the world according to God⁷

Once the Christian identifies the Story of Jesus as paradigmatic for her life, the fundamental dynamic identified by virtue theory begins. She considers who she is, who she is

³Ibid., 13, 28.

⁴For both, nothing can be considered apart from life's intended end, or *telos*. That is, the ultimate goal or fulfillment of one's life. For the Christian, this is complete union with God, which we experience to some degree in this life and fully in the next life. See Joseph J. Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, Moral Traditions & Moral Arguments (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1996), 37-38.

⁵One notes that such an interest goes beyond the specific concerns of ethics and spills into the area of religious formation or education. The use of the word "formation" here indicates that religious education, also, has spilled out of its own narrow concerns with a schooling model of education to a concern for the development of the whole person. In fact, these two concerns—the development of the whole person and the development of character—can be said to be equivalent, for they involve all aspects of the person, and seek to foster a holistic integration in the person consistent with his or her Christian faith commitment. See the seminal works of Thomas Groome for this perspective: Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision*, 1st ed. ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980); Thomas H. Groome, *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry: The Way of Shared Praxis*, 1st ed. ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991).

⁶Spohn, 3.

⁷Spohn postulates that the analogical imagination helps the Christian to move between the paradigmatic Story of Jesus found and the particular story of the person's own life. Spohn makes use here of David Tracy's concept. See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981). He identifies the primary patterns in the New Testament that ground the Christian analogical imagination: the Reign of God as the overall metaphorical framework, the parables and various stories of encounters with Jesus, and the overall narrative pattern of the paschal mystery. See Spohn, 4.

called to become as a follower of Christ, and how she might get from where she is now to where she feels called to be.⁸

Moral Perception. Spohn helpfully maps this process. How we perceive reality determines how we respond to it. Our dispositions and identity determine perception because we must intentionally attend to our experience in order to make sense of it. Otherwise we are dealing with chaos. Thus, our attention to experience is always shaped by choices, and these choices are determined by our dispositions and character.

Character thus plays a key role prior to decision. Even as one goes through life sifting through the sensory and other data that comprise experience, the shape of one's character is already determining what will be evaluated as relevant to decision-making. Virtue ethics, therefore, is concerned with character development because one's character not only shapes

⁸Craig Dykstra speaks about this in a somewhat different fashion, coming as he does out of the discipline of religious education, but inspired by virtue ethics. He says that Scripture renders to us God's presence, God's promise, and a world. Dykstra goes on in a vein very similar to the perspective taken by Spohn: "As we hear, tell, think about, interpret, use, and appropriate this story, its world more and more becomes our world. Our thinking, believing, and behaving become shaped by it, so that we come to think, believe, and behave by means of it. It is no longer a world outside of us, which we look at, but that world from which and by means of which we see at all. Furthermore, [it] is not a provincial world.... Rather, it is understood to be the world itself, as it is, the world seen for itself rather than refracted through vision disfigured and distorted through deceit and alienation. Craig R. Dykstra, *Growing in the Life of Faith: Education and Christian Practices*, 1st ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Geneva Press, 1999), 59-60. On the same page, Dykstra also quotes Hauerwas in this regard: "...the claim of the Christian is that [this] language actually envisages the world as it is." Finally, Dykstra says, the Word renders for those who faithfully encounter it a way of living in that world made possible by the God who is also rendered there and the promises made by that God, also rendered to the faithful reader. This way of living is the proper response to the truth of the world rendered in that faithful encounter. It makes sense according to that truth and perhaps not according to other worlds rendered through other means.

Stanley Hauerwas makes the same point in terms of entering into the story of Scripture, but he is characteristically uncompromising in its implications. To Hauerwas, "[g]rowth in the Christian life may well involve encouraging a greater conflict between the self and wider society than is generally approved." Because such conflict may well separate especially young Christians from the supports needed for the development of the self, Christians must create "an alternative story and society."⁸ His final point is most important: "Such a society can never be satisfied with external compliance with the story. *For the story itself demands that only those who are willing to be the story are capable of following it.* That is why it has been the brunt of Christian spirituality through the ages to provide exercises and examples through which Christians might better be what they are. *What is crucial is not that Christians know the truth, but that they be the truth.*" Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 150. Emphasis added.

one's response to reality; it also shapes reality itself.

Spohn discusses perceptions in terms of metaphorical frames. The issue is not *whether* all aspects of experience will be considered, but always *which* aspects, determined by the metaphorical frames we bring to the interpretation. These are pre-conscious and taken for granted, primarily the result of socialization.

Moral Dispositions. It is out of these frames that actions in response to reality flow because they determine what we see and what will be considered possible responses. The challenge is not merely replacing one metaphorical frame of reference with one more adequate, but of transforming our basic dispositions so that more of reality becomes visible to us.⁹ It is the spiritual practices that enable us to do this, especially the practice of regular common worship.

Through various spiritual practices, biblical images and stories become paradigmatic for our dispositions and give shape to our metaphorical frames. They thus make it more likely that the Christian will respond to an experience in a way analogous to the way Christ would.¹⁰

Spohn analyzes the way this process occurs through brain function. Experience is stored in the brain as images charged with emotion determined by our assessment of the experience. Because of this association, evoking the images gives rise to certain emotions. These can be as strongly experienced as those to which the original experience gave rise.¹¹

Spiritual practices tend to strengthen the dynamic relationship between mental images and dispositions. Key to this dynamic is the role of stories or narrative. Serving as prototypes, stories and images help to construct the particular emotional framework upon which the dispositions of character are built. Scriptural stories and images help to reconstitute this structure and hence to redirect the dispositions. In this way, particular narratives become paradigms that shape moral life.

Furthermore, religious faith is ultimately a conviction about what is real. Therefore, since the power of what moves us depends on its coherence with reality, faith commitments give credence to what is most significant in our perception and experience. Spohn states: "These traditional images, which resonate with our individual and communal experience, are conceptually supported by the convictions of faith and pragmatically validated by the quality of life they lead to."¹² In this way spiritual practices "tutor the emotions."¹³ Out of this practice,

⁹Spohn, 102-107. This process is considered from an adult education perspective in the important educational theory of Jack Mezirow. See Jack Mezirow, *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: A Guide to Transformative and Emancipatory Learning*, 1st ed., The Jossey-Bass Higher Education Series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1990); Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*, 1st ed., The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991); Jack Mezirow, *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress*, 1st ed., The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000).

¹⁰This is what Hauerwas means about becoming the story and the truth of Christianity. It is what Dykstra refers to as the rendering of a world and a way of life.

¹¹Spohn, 127.

¹²Ibid., 135.

¹³They become the "classrooms where emotions are schooled by the scriptures." Ibid.,

through which the Story of Christ becomes the fundamental ground of the Christian character and the template for interpreting all experience, daily discernment takes place so that one's story is increasingly reflective of Christ's Story.

Identity Formation. Another dynamic of character formation is the formation of identity. Comprised of the conscious contours of character, identity is accomplished through intentional commitments to values and relationships. It “refers to the amalgam of interpreted memories, aspirations, relationships and commitments that we have embraced as the core of who we are” and it “gives a sense of personal continuity that holds a life together,” though it is an ongoing process.¹⁴ Therefore, identity has to do with identification with particular persons, with the roles we choose or that choose us, with our conscious commitments, and with the significant narratives that guide our lives. The significant persons in our lives are central to identity formation. We are motivated to develop those relations by living up to certain intuitively grasped standards embraced by them.

Significant relationships are always part of important roles we take on; commitment to a role is associated with commitment to those persons. This requires giving oneself freely to the ways in which those relationships in community delimit one's personal identity through the narrative the community has embraced as a part of its own identity. Significant persons within those communities become mentors and models for living according to that narrative, even more directly impacting personal identity. As such, “a vital community of faith,” according to Spohn, “is indispensable in shaping Christian identity.”¹⁵

Community identity coalesces around a common cause to which each involved in these shared relationships commits. The commitments we make to this common cause also significantly shape identity, clarifying with what we will identify and what we reject. Such a common cause is best articulated through a narrative around which a community coalesces in identity and action. Common cause becomes the community's participation in a common story.¹⁶ “Spiritual practices,” says Spohn, “depend on this imaginative identification with the narratives and deepen the experience of participating in them.”¹⁷

Character and Lay Ecclesial Ministers. Lay ecclesial ministry is one of the ways in which committed Christians can participate in the narrative of Jesus Christ.¹⁸ The Church since

136.

¹⁴Ibid., 169.

¹⁵Ibid., 171.; see also Dykstra, 40-41.

¹⁶For Christians, to use Dykstra's perspective, this is what enables God's presence, God's promises, the world according to God and the way of living in that world to be rendered for the one encountering God's Word or revelation, which is Jesus Christ. His Story becomes their story.

¹⁷Spohn, 174.; see also Dykstra, 41-42. and Hauerwas, 132-45.

¹⁸A recent U.S. episcopal document defined the lay ecclesial minister as a fully initiated lay member of the Christian faithful, empowered by the Holy Spirit in baptism and confirmation, who has prayerfully discerned a response to a call or invitation to bring intentionally his or her

Vatican II recognizes in a new way that Jesus' commission to the Twelve (Mt. 28:29-20) was for all the baptized. The transformation by the Holy Spirit received at Baptism is not for the sake of the individual, but of the world. Lay ecclesial ministry is one expression of a mature Christian response to that challenge. As such, formation for lay ecclesial ministry is not discontinuous with formation for adult Christians but should organically grow out of and continue it.

Spohn's analysis identifies significant aspects of lay ecclesial ministers' formation from the perspective of character development, and therefore where such formation is lacking. It suggests at least three areas to pursue: the place of lay ecclesial ministers in the common narrative of the community, the guiding images for the shaping of their dispositions, and the way in which lay ecclesial ministers are assisted in exploring their part in the common cause of the community.

Formation for Lay Ecclesial Ministry

Finding a Place. The episcopal report cited above states that all ministry is founded on the Church's mission: "The Church, as sign and instrument, continues the mission of Christ...directed toward the salvation of humanity and the transformation of the world."¹⁹ This provides a powerful narrative for ministers to join.

Because of a lack of history with lay ministry, however, and hence a lack of tradition and experience, there is a dearth of identifiable intermediaries that provide accessible sub-plots for the entry of lay Christians into the story. We must attend carefully to this question and identify heroes, mentors, and models and tell those stories in inspiring, transformative ways for those seeking to enter the Story of Jesus Christ through lay ecclesial ministry. We must listen to lay ecclesial ministers to learn who their heroes are and to develop a repertory of heroes and heroic qualities for their role. Some of these can be found in the Scriptures, such as the Twelve and the stories of the ways in which Jesus formed them in an intentional manner.

Guiding Images. The Holy Spirit as a guiding image is foundational to lay ecclesial minister identity. Through the Holy Spirit we become members of the Body of Christ (1 Cor.

personal competencies and gifts to serve the Church's mission through a specific ministry of ecclesial leadership with community support and recognition. He or she has received the necessary preparation for ministerial competence and has been installed in a formal and public ministerial role or office by the competent ecclesiastical authority, providing the responsibility and necessary authority to commit to performing this ministry effectively and in a stable manner. See National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Subcommittee on Lay Ministry, *Lay Ecclesial Ministry: The State of the Questions* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1999), 8. The 2005 document, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, which is the latest statement on lay ecclesial ministry from the Bishops of the United States, adds little to this description, though it significantly emphasizes four aspects: authorization, leadership, close mutual collaboration with the hierarchy, and preparation and formation. See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005), 10.

¹⁹Bishops and Ministry, *State of the Questions*, 14.

12:4-7), with our unique function in Christ's mission. We are gifted by the Holy Spirit and empowered to use our gifts for the mission. For priests, this reality is brought home powerfully by the ordination ritual and the laying on of hands. How is it rendered for the lay minister?

Cardinal Mahoney's pastoral letter states, "...baptism [is] the foundational sacrament of ministry...."²⁰ Most Catholics are baptized as infants when someone else made their faith commitment. How is this first experience of the Spirit going to be rendered in the present for lay ecclesial ministers? What will fund the analogical imagination of these lay persons so that they might grasp their empowerment by the Holy Spirit?²¹ How can lay ecclesial ministers claim this power while remaining within the structure of Church ministry?

The same letter discusses, like many other documents, the participation of lay people in the priestly ministry of Jesus with its own integrity not derived from ordained priesthood.²² While this image fully realized can be powerful, what analogies and metaphors does the Catholic Church have for it? In fact, it is an image so gutted by an overemphasis on ordained priesthood that few lay persons find any meaning or power in it. How can these be restored to this image? What does it mean to be a priestly people?

Common Cause and Identity. Perhaps even more confounding to lay ecclesial ministers is the concept that the lay vocation is characteristically secular.²³ Yet, not only did

²⁰Roger Cardinal Mahoney and of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Priests, *As I Have Done for You: A Pastoral Letter on Ministry* (April 20, 2000, accessed July 25 2003); available from <http://cardinal.la-archdiocese.org/000420.htm>. This perspective is also found in Bishops, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry*, 19 and passim.

²¹In the latter part of the Twentieth Century, the Catholic Charismatic movement served this function for many Catholics. The Spirit was, by many accounts and appearances, manifest in people's lives, radically transforming and empowering them in a new way. Often, the experience clashed with a Church reality unprepared for the new claim for widespread power and initiative the Charismatic Movement afforded many lay people. Still, the Movement changed the Church and made it more open to the Spirit. For an excellent sociological analysis, see Meredith B. McGuire, *Pentecostal Catholics: Power, Charisma, and Order in a Religious Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982).

²²Mahoney and Priests, (accessed).

²³The NCCB Subcommittee on Lay Ministry states, in keeping with Vatican II and John Paul II: "All of the laity are called to work toward the transformation of the secular world. Some do this by working in the secular realm; others do this by working in the Church and focusing on the building of ecclesial communion, which has as its ultimate purpose the transformation of the world. Lay ecclesial ministry should not be seen as a retreat from their role in the secular realm." *Bishops and Ministry, State of the Questions*, 15. When John Paul talks in *Christifidelis Laici* about the secular character of the lay faithful, he is referring to the nature of the Church's mission in general, for which the lay faithful, by virtue of their contact with the broader world, have primary responsibility. This is made clearer when he refers to Paul VI who said that the Church "has an authentic secular dimension, inherent in her inner nature and mission, which is deeply rooted in the mystery of the Word Incarnate..." Quoted in Pope John Paul II, *Post-Synodal*

Jesus' character and mission have a secular dimension, but this characteristic is also primary, ordering all others. The same must be said of the Church, which carries on the mission of Christ. The Church is the sanctified people of God called to proclaim Good News and to transform the world through the Holy Spirit. Its so-called secular dimension, therefore, is primary, and its other aspects are ordered toward that dimension.²⁴

The Church must first better understand and embrace this self-understanding, which makes evangelization its primary reason for being, before the kind of relationship of lay ecclesial ministers to the mission of the Church described in recent ecclesial statements can have any power to help lay persons to gain a sense of identity as ministers in their own right.²⁵ At least in the United States, while there is much talk by leadership about the Church's responsibility for evangelization, there is little reality to support it. The process of identification that Spohn describes as constitutive of identity therefore is threatened by a weak common narrative. Either the common cause has to be redefined or it needs to be embraced anew by the community. Otherwise, the way lay ecclesial ministry is written into the narrative of the community will continue to be marginal.²⁶

A facet of formation for ministry that most discussions of lay ministry and many formation programs do not address explicitly is that of identity formation. Zeni Fox views this question through the lens of professional socialization, the process through which a person in training is slowly formed in the character necessary for a profession. According to Fox, given the route that many lay persons take to arrive at a ministerial position²⁷ and given the state of programs of preparation available to lay people, this normative process of socialization is more

Apostolic Exhortation Christifideles Laici of His Holiness John Paul II on the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1989), # 15. That is to say, because there was a secular dimension to the character and mission of the Incarnation, then that same secular dimension belongs to the character and mission of the Church. What Paul VI seems to be getting at is that in Jesus Christ, God was present to the world; that is, the secular realm.

²⁴When the secular character and mission of the laity are seen in this light, it becomes clear what John Paul means when he said, "In the context of Church mission, then, the Lord entrusts a great part of the responsibility to the lay faithful, in communion with all other members of the People of God." *John Paul II*, # 32.

²⁵This is not to deny the value of such statements, or indeed the role they play in helping the Church to do just that.

²⁶For example, the text, "Lay Ecclesial Ministry: The State of the Questions," recognizes that while lay ecclesial ministry is experienced as a call and a vocation by those who seek to take part in it, it is not seen this way by the church's magisterium. In their pastoral letter on ministry, Mahoney and Priests state, "Beyond the words of 'Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium,' the church has not spoken in this way." See Mahoney and Priests, (accessed).

²⁷See Philip J. Murnion and David DeLambo, *Parishes and Parish Ministers: A Study of Parish Lay Ministry* (New York: National Pastoral Life Center, 1999), 39-40. See also David DeLambo, *Lay Parish Ministers: A Study of Emerging Leadership* (New York: National Pastoral Life Center, 2005).

or less absent.²⁸

Fox identifies four primary areas where socialization takes place: (1) initiation into a role; (2) the social matrix in which the process takes place and into which the process immerses one more deeply; (3) a shared professional horizon with its own language, etiquette, customs, rituals, etc.; (4) a sense of solidarity usually elicited through a shared ordeal.²⁹ Because the reality of ministry carried out by lay persons is so new in the history of the church, there are few precedents for so many aspects of socialization.³⁰

Conclusion

The view of the Catholic community in mission discussed above reflects a desirable reality yet to come into being. In fact, as the panelists in the introduction reflect, it is precisely the lack of some of these qualities that causes the identity problems that lay ecclesial ministers face. Spohn's virtue ethics perspective equally demonstrates specific deficiencies.

Lay ecclesial ministers find it very difficult to enter into the story of the Catholic community precisely because the community itself has not found the narrative of mission in which lay ecclesial ministers might grasp roles that inspire them to common cause. We are not committed as a community, as panelist Alan Deck pointed out, to the narrative that has been proposed to us as the way to live the Christian story today. Even, and perhaps especially, those who have proposed it—the Bishops and other ecclesial leaders—are not committed to it, insisted Deck. This anemic commitment causes guiding images, such as call and vocation, reception of the Holy Spirit, and priesthood of the baptized, to be equally anemic. They do not inspire because there is no clear analogy for them in the narrative.

Finally, if Spohn is right, then the lack of common cause leads to a poorly developed sense of identity. The dynamics that give shape to identity are lacking and do not perform as they should for the lay ecclesial minister. There is no clearly defined (and so defining) role, no obvious heroes or mentors, no life-giving sense of the meaning of such terms as “secular character.” In a word, there is no vital sense to the role or identity of the lay ecclesial minister, and so no power within the community to form the characters of lay ecclesial ministers. Until there are, it will continue to be a confusing and often hurtful place for Christians to live out their participation in the story of Jesus Christ.

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²⁸Zeni Fox, *New Ecclesial Ministry: Lay Professionals Serving the Church* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1997), 31-36. She points out that the professional socialization process is normative not only in secular professions, but also for priests and vowed religious; yet, it is at best inconsistently present for lay ecclesial ministry.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 32. See also her monograph, Zeni Fox, *Forging a Ministerial Identity* (Chicago: National Association for Lay Ministry, 1999).

³⁰There are clear parallels to the practices and realities of identity formation discussed by Spohn, such as powerful symbols, paradigmatic narratives, mentors and models, companions on the journey, a clear place within the common narrative of the community, and the community's recognition of the role and of the person's call to take on that role.

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