

**SWMTC Reader Training  
Reader Development Module III**

**4 Pastoral contacts – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2009 – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2010**

**Theological Reflection. 1.500 words – hand-in 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

This theological reflection is an opportunity for you to reflect upon the 4 pastoral contacts which you will have undertaken and recorded in your journal during the first few months of your third year of training. This work will be concerned with developing good and reflective practice as licensed ministers of God's Church. It is hoped that you have been able to engage in areas of ministry where you may expect to find yourself in the future, or indeed where you are already ministering.

It is important to reflect upon WHY you have become pastorally engaged rather than simply HOW.

**Choose one of the following settings for a pastoral visit:**

*1) Baptism 2) school 3) funeral 4) hospital 5) home 6) work-place 7) prison*

**How might a theological understanding of either**

*1) baptism 2) education 3) death 4) illness 5) loneliness 6) ministry-at-work 7) prison environment add to your sense of God's activity in the world and affect your pastoral practice? Illustrate with examples from your notes.*

This essay serves as a reflection and integration exercise. In short, it is to show your ability to engage with a situation pastorally, work with and within it, reflect on it and draw conclusions and patterns of ministry from it. **You are expected to use the pastoral cycle of EXPERIENCE – EXPLORATION – REFLECTION – ACTION.** You may choose to demonstrate how you used the process in a situation, or how an encounter has led you retrospectively to apply it.

**Possible Structure:**

1. Introduction to the situation under discussion (200 words)

2. Apply the Pastoral Cycle (1.000 words): *Describe* the situation and circumstance of the pastoral 'experience'/encounter (visit/funeral/baptism/school/etc) and a first reaction. *Explore* the situation further by analysing 'What is going on?' What has to be taken into account? What may be reasons for the situation and what is the background? Which parts of the situation are the result of the environment (i.e. hospital/school/baptism and new life/death etc.)? *Reflect* now upon the situation and your experience, taking into account personal and communal belief (i.e. perceptions, shared Christian faith?, values, purpose). Form a plan of 'action', i.e. how to be alongside a person/how to share and help in their situation/how to witness and teach/what not to do or say again.

3. Conclusion (300 words) which reflects on the 'learning experience', your own reactions (What has been affirming? What has been challenging? Where are you able to discern God in the fullness of your experience?)

**Please remember your pastoral encounters are personal and confidential. As you reflect on them, change names and situations as necessary to retain that confidentiality.**

**Literature:**

Paul Ballard and John Pritchard: Practical Theology in Action. Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society. London: SPCK 1996.

Laurie Green: Let's do Theology. A Pastoral Cycle Resource Book. London: Mowbray 1990.

Derek Tidball: Skilful Shepherds. Explorations in pastoral theology. Ebbw Vale: Apollos 1997 (Second Edition)

James Woodward and Stephen Pattison (Ed.) The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd 2000.

**A reminder of some general points for essay writing:**

For every RDM essay you write, i.e. essays which are set through the Reader Training Team, please produce a **coversheet** including the following information:

SWMTC Reader Training

RDM year 1/2/3

title of the essay/assignment/report

hand-in date

total word count

name and address.

Please could you also include **page numbers** in your piece of work and use the font **Arial 12** and **double line spacing**.

Every essay/assignment/report needs a **bibliography**, i.e. the **books** from which you might want to quote or from which you might want to paraphrase an idea or thought, books you have consulted in wider reading of the subject matter, **websites** or **newspaper articles** you have used.

Please do not forget to reference '**The Bible**' (and the **version** you have used) and **your journal**, where appropriate.

JT 2009