**CHRIST THE KING SEMINARY**
**DIOCESE OF BUFFALO**
**GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION SEMINARS**

Members of the Theological Reflection Seminar:

**MODERATOR** (Faculty Member)
Informs students of procedures for preparation, if the procedures differ from the following, otherwise: Collects the cases to be presented from the group participants on the date designated. After reviewing the cases the moderator duplicates copies for all members of the group. (If cases need further work or refinement the moderator asks the student to rework the case.) Several days before the first group meeting the moderator distributes all the cases to each member for the upcoming sessions. Ideally, the moderator takes a turn presenting a ministerial situation for theological reflection in turn with other group members.

**FACILITATOR** The participant who serves in this capacity for the presenter. Each member takes a turn facilitating for another. Role of the facilitator is explained below.

**PRESENTER** Person presenting a case for theological reflection in a particular week.

**ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR**

1. Meet with the presenter before the scheduled meeting date to discuss the nature of the case, i.e., what goal does the presenter have in mind for the discussion. The facilitator and presenter might discuss how best to present the issue for discussion in a creative and thought-provoking way so as to encourage a more holistic approach to the integration of theology, ministry and spirituality.
2. Be responsible for bringing prayer into the session in the most appropriate way.
3. Facilitate the process outlined below.

**FORMAT FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION SEMINAR (10 minutes)**

1. Facilitator introduces the presenter to the group, asking him/her to speak to what led to the choice of this issue and what s/he hopes to learn from the discussion, i.e., what is the proposed goal for this TR.
2. Facilitator and presenter introduce the case by expanding the description, as needed. Members may address questions to the presenter for clarification. Facilitator monitors questions for clarity and detail and moves the group to discussion as soon as all are ready.

**(35 minutes)**

3. Facilitator asks the presenter to remain quiet and engage in active listening while the group shares discussion on the “Case Description,” “Theological Reflection” and “Evaluation”.

The purposes of this discussion are:

To provide <u>feedback</u> to the presenter regarding the clarity and adequacy of the case study.
To help clarify the <u>operative theology</u> in the case study and to expand/nuance this theology vis a vis the Christian Tradition.

a. "Description": How adequately distinguished are the ministerial issues? Theological issues? Is <u>the</u> issue for discussion clear?
b. "Theological Reflection": Does it contribute the theological meaning to the <u>issue</u> for discussion? How? Is the theology well grounded and coherent? What are the important dimensions to the question? Are there other theological bases for this issue?
c. "Evaluation": How adequate is it? Is it to the point, honest, astute?

**(15 minutes)**

4. Facilitator asks the presenter to respond to the discussion and share insights gained through it. The insight may bring to light <u>alternatives</u> in relationship to <u>ministerial response</u> as well as to his/her <u>theology</u>. The group may <u>broaden</u> the <u>perspective</u> of the case to some further <u>ramifications</u>.

   Occasionally it may be helpful to review the process used in the group.