

CHRIST THE KING SEMINARY
GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION CASES

1. Choose a ministry situation in which you have been involved directly. This should be a specific recent, significant, challenging, thought-provoking occasion. This should not be a theological reflection submitted for another occasion.
2. Prepare a brief case study of this situation according to the following outline:

BACKGROUND: (Purpose: to give sufficient information to set the event in context)

- a. A brief general statement of the area of ministry (e.g., parish, hospital, personal situation, etc.) and your role (i.e, catechist, friend, youth minister).
- b. Make note of any personal, social or cultural factors that have a bearing upon your study of the case. Factors that may be relevant include age, gender, health, ethnicity, profession, domestic environment, income level, religious affiliation, degree of religious fervor, political attitudes, life experiences.

DESCRIPTION:

- a. Describe all that is necessary for the reader to know *what specifically occurred* in the ministerial situation. Particulars are important but distinguish between relevant and irrelevant. *Leave out unnecessary identifying information such as names, or anything that might violate the privacy of persons involved. Note how you felt during the encounter.* Use of visual/oral media can also convey the experience effectively.

ANALYSIS:

- a. Review *the impact of culture, experience, and theology on those involved.* Identify the relationships and ministerial issues by trying to answer the question, **“WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE?”**
- b. *Identify **ONE ministerial issue** for analysis in the present case.*

THE MINISTERIAL ISSUE: (ex. **The ministerial issue/question I wish to address is..**)

Please underline and bold this whole question, for it states the core reason why the parts above will be addressed by the theological section below. You want to keep that focus, and you want your audience to do the same.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

Reflect on the ministerial issue by identifying relevant theological sources. Compare your ministerial experience and that of the others involved in the case, with the Christian tradition. Cite applicable texts of both Scripture and Church texts, such as Vatican II, The Bishops, and other documents. The point is to articulate the theological meaning that you have discovered in the events and the interaction.

EVALUATION:

What did you learn about theology from reflecting theologically on this ministry situation? About yourself? How will your theological reflection influence your decisions for action in the present situation? If your case was in the past and the situation is completed, how do you view your decision and action having done this reflection? In future ministerial situations, how might what you've learned affect your responses?