

A Note from the Editors

Thank God we do not know the trials, obstacles, and travails that await us when we embark on a journey, otherwise we might think of easier excursions or simply set up our tent on the beach. Of course, when we begin packing for the trek we may have inklings, but these are only specters of what waits. Four years ago, James Hyde and I chatted about the need for a journal that specifically addressed pastoral counseling, as well as a journal that would take advantage of 21st century technologies in making connections to other national and international groups. A week later we had a conference call with Doug Ronsheim, who loved the idea. The first step, he suggested, was to write up a proposal for the Action Council. We developed a draft proposal that was sent to various folks (e.g., Joretta Marshall, Andy Lester, Emmanuel Lartey, Bill Harkins, and Kathleen Greider) in AAPC for comments. After some months of labor, we submitted the proposal to the Action Council and they enthusiastically accepted it, including it in AAPC's strategic plan.

The next step involved roping people in to be part of the implementation team. Sam Lee, Bill Schmidt, Evon Flessberg, and Elizabeth Walker volunteered. This team came up with creative ideas about how to structure the journal and invite people to participate in contributing their work. Sam Lee's wonderful idea of asking elders in AAPC to share their history and wisdom became one of the changes we made to the journal. [Carol Saussey's reflection and Rob Henderson's interview with Orlo Strunk fall under this genre.] The implementation team also had to deal with numerous issues regarding publication, as well as developing a web platform for the journal. After receiving grant money, David Haight answered many of our questions and constructed a platform for the

journal. We thought this would be our biggest challenge, but we soon discovered that it is very difficult for a new journal to develop a submission base. We continue to find ways to encourage contributions.

As we entered the final year, we asked the implementation team to serve as the first editorial board. Unfortunately Sam Lee had numerous other commitments. With Sam leaving, we invited three other scholars and clinicians—Kathleen Greider, Horace Griffin, and Bill Harkins. We are deeply grateful for the time and energy these folks have given to realize the goal of an AAPC e-journal.

One may set out on a journey, not knowing of the obstacles and challenges ahead, but one never reaches the summit alone or without a map. There are many people one meets on the way who offer needed companionship, help, humor, and hospitality. Of course, we know that the journey is not finished and, in many ways, has just begun. The journal's first issue is the initial phase of the journey. In fact, James and I know that the journal must become a possession of the members of AAPC if it is to continue and flourish. Your support, interest, encouragement, feedback, and contributions are needed as we set out to establish an e-journal that reaches out to pastoral counselors in the United States and throughout the world. We hope that the journal becomes a platform for learning and connecting—connecting with other members and members from cognate groups.

The map that led us to this first summit is the mission statement that was collaboratively constructed.

Sacred Spaces is a journal that endeavors to include a variety of theological and human science perspectives as well as quantitative and qualitative research in

addressing issues and topics relating to the theory and practice of pastoral counseling. It is our hope to encourage students, clinicians, supervisors, and teachers to write scholarly and reflective articles on topics that address clinical and theoretical issues in pastoral counseling. Sacred Spaces also seeks to partner with other organizations in developing creative educational, conversational, and writing opportunities for its members.

You will read in this inaugural issue articles that address diverse clinical and theoretical issues. In addition, we have included the voices of two prominent contributors to the field of pastoral care, counseling, and theology. Our hope is to have elders in the field share their wisdom and history so that the present generation and future generations of pastoral counselors deepen their appreciation of their history and increase their compassion and wisdom. We hope that you will join us on this journey and contribute to the life of this new journal. Please let us know if you have any thoughts and suggestions about the journal articles or the journal itself (rlamothe@saintmeinrad.edu).

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