The Trinity

As Pastoral Model in the Face of Trauma

Terce

Clear early morning, checking email, voicemail,
making a list for the day on call.
The news of the first, then the second.
Forget staff meeting and go across First Avenue
to see with my own eyes the smoke from the towers
and then to the Emergency Room.

Mood of adrenaline and positive testosterone:
determination and resolve that everything will be done.
Shock, particulate inhalation, reliving of trauma,
hearing thuds as the bodies hit the ground; the blackness
that descended for five minutes and
left all present searching for air.
Trauma freshly lived, noise, concern
tears from the survivors; sobs and fear of being
left alone in a place where the lights went out
before the building fell, retriggered by a power surge.
The uncertainty of the living, families' terror
and prayers that all might be safe.
Calling one's loves, hoping to hear their voice
and dreading their not answering.

The white parietal bone of the skull
innocently visible against the black bag
and the black of charring
naked, vulnerable,

A surge of people, ash caked and wet
Disaster, V., and a number, on their chart
noise intensifying, chaos controlled and diverted

> Operating rooms cleared for survivors, beds
> Opened up for them, plans made, teams mobilized—
> at 12:30 the flow of admissions trickles to an end.
>
> It takes a while to realize that these are the survivors.
> There aren't any more.[1]

Much It was 8 P.M. on a New York Friday night, ten days after September 11, 2001. I had just arrived at "D. Mort," the Medical Examiners Morgue, to do my first shift there as a chaplain. There I was—an experienced Episcopal priest and fledgling disaster chaplain. I had been a hospital psychiatric chaplain for eight years, working with suicidal and homicidal persons for six of those years. I had trained about fifty seminarians as a Clinical Pastoral Education (C.P.E.) supervisor, and had just started my second year of psychoanalytic training for my doctoral program. Now, for five of the last ten days I had been serving families and working on multidisciplinary death notification teams at the 9/11 Family Assistance Centers at the Armory (then Pier 94). Five days before I had preached to a cathedral congregation of over five hundred persons about Jesus standing with Mary and Martha after Lazarus had died, wondering aloud with them, "How close do we let ourselves come to the tomb?" So here I was, standing at the face of the tomb, realizing I did not know what to do. It was not that I did not know how to engage in pastoral crisis intervention, but I did not know what to do to process this event in myself.

It is in the face of such situations that our pastoral training and professional development either holds us or deserts us. It is in the most difficult moments of ministry we see what it is that holds us, sustains us, and enables us to be with others in their deep trauma. What is it that enables a forensic chaplain to sit and listen to a man who has murdered his wife and children without being overwhelmed by horror in hearing the gruesome details that he shares in his dissociated state? How does a pastor not get caught up in her own anger in hearing the suicidal woman who secretly believes God has cursed her because a Sunday school teacher told her that God would do so if she left the church? How did the chaplains minister at Ground Zero, the smell of death pungent in their nostrils and fires continuing to burn underground, as they were called onto "the Pile" or into "the Pit" to bless a body or body part that may have belonged to a loved one of the person standing next to them, while hundreds of firefighters, police, and construction workers stood silent, helmets off, waiting to hear their prayers ring out over the site?

All these are graphic examples of the kind of suffering humans experience throughout their lives and that pastors, hospital and prison chaplains, pastoral psychotherapists, and disaster response chaplains encounter in their work every day. What does it mean to love in these instances? How do we minister in these contexts? The answer goes beyond an application of listening skills, spiritual and religious interventions, to creating a fabric of meaning and a way of being with another. It is

not that these questions are unique to situations of trauma in pastoral work; rather, it is that trauma highlights most clearly what the questions are and what spiritual resources we draw on in pastoral ministry every day. Over the days and months of 9/11 chaplaincy that followed, I realized that the pastoral model which I had reflected upon for a number of years was in fact my strongest resource in the face of such trauma. It was a model of the Trinity.

The Trinity as Pastoral Model

This book offers a trinitarian pastoral theology, grounded in the God of love, who is both Trinity and Unity. This trinitarian image of God is reflected in humans when lived out in relationship with others as the three movements described as *Earth-making*, *Pain-bearing*, and *Life-giving*. By engaging the psychoanalytic thought of D. W. Winnicott, this model of pastoral engagement is also expounded upon and reflected as relational functions or movements of *Holding*, *Suffering*, and *Transforming*. These three movements in pastoral care and crisis intervention allow persons to work through trauma in a subjective intrapsychic and interpersonal way to get to a place of transformation. They are present in those pastoral caregivers who have found a way to hold, bear, and transform their experience so as to manifest resilience, post-traumatic growth, and connection to meaning and community, rather than the arousal and avoidance those with "secondary traumatic stress" (STS) experience or the sense of hopelessness and disillusionment of those with "compassion fatigue." To explore this we will examine the experience of a selective group of pastoral caregivers in the context of a particular trauma: the chaplains who worked at the Temporary Mortuary (T. Mort.) at Ground Zero in New York City after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

The September 11 WTC Disaster

On September 11, 2001, the United States of America suffered a disaster, the like of which had not been seen on these shores before. On that Tuesday morning, four passenger airplanes were hijacked by foreign terrorists and used as weapons of mass destruction inside the borders of the continental United States. First one airplane, then another was flown into the separate towers of the 112-story World Trade Center (WTC) in New York City, exploding on impact, killing all on board and many in the towers. Another plane was flown into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The fourth plane, also bound for Washington, was crashed into a Pennsylvania field through the intervention of passengers who sought to overpower the terrorists before that plane, too could be used as a weapon.[2] Despite the intervention of first responders and mass evacuation of thousands from the WTC

Ground Zero, seen from above. (Used courtesy of FDNY Photo Unit.)

the disaster grew to greater proportions than the initial impact when the two WTC towers collapsed, killing 2,490 civilians and 418 first responders[3] who sought to rescue them. Such a disaster had a traumatic impact not only on the individuals and families directly concerned, but an impact on the city, country, and arguably many parts of the world.

In the face of such a trauma, how does transformation happen? Under such circumstances, transformation is most often seen as "a return to normative and adaptive functioning." But what happens when a disaster is of such a magnitude that there is no possibility of a return to "normal"? For many the disaster of 9/11 was of such a magnitude. Beyond the immediate impact of the day of the terrorist attacks was the effect of the short-lived rescue period, and the long period of the recovery of bodies and body parts. For those outside New York and Washington, unaffected by personal relationships to those who had died, it may have been seen as a discrete event, largely localized to one day. In New York, for those involved in the recovery effort, 9/11 was not a day but a time-space that encompassed nine months. One chaplain noted this very fact when asked what was the worst thing about the experience: "One of the things that bothers me is the vast number of people who when they use the expression 9/11, think of an event that happened on one day or maybe two or three. The story of 9/11 that I am much more committed to tell . . . is the recovery effort. The aspects of nobility, commitment, and competence that went with that [are] not often told."

Even for those not involved in the recovery effort in New York, however, the impact of the day of the disaster was exacerbated by the potential trauma of the

ongoing threat of terrorism, reinforced by the chemical terrorism of anthrax and the effect of the crash of Flight 587 due to a mechanical malfunction almost two months to the day after the terrorist attacks. "In a traumatized city, there were thousands of traumatized [responders] reacting just like everyone else, needing to give whatever they could."[4] It is in the context of a disaster where many felt traumatized—not only individuals directly involved but the whole city itself—that the chaplaincy response to 9/11 arose, where clergy sought to "give whatever they could" in the midst of their own possible trauma in the face of the disaster.

The T. Mort. Chaplains

The main role of the group of chaplains at the Temporary Mortuary (T. Mort.) at "Ground Zero" was "a ministry of presence and prayer." Although pastoral crisis intervention and pastoral care of those involved in recovery were important tasks, the T. Mort. chaplains' prime task was to be there to bless the bodies and body parts that were recovered on the site. In relation to the question of how one might move from a space of trauma to a space of transformation, I chose the example of these chaplains, not only because of their experience with pastoral care in crisis but due to their proximity to what can be described as "the horror" of Ground Zero—the recovery of often multiple body parts for each person killed—in the context of ministering to first responders recovering parts of people they may well have known.

Much of the time the chaplain on duty would be walking the perimeter of the site or sitting in the covered trailer of the T. Mort. and then, when called, would be taken to "the Pile" or, later, down in "the Pit" to bless the body, or part thereof, that had been recovered. If "the remains" were that of a member of service—a firefighter, a police officer, FBI agent, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), or paramedic—then the whole recovery crew would stop and participate in this ritual. Then the body or body part would be taken to the T. Mort. trailer and a medical examiner would make a preliminary examination. After being prayed over again, it would then be transferred to an ambulance, escorted by an honor guard if a member-of-service, and taken to the medical examiner's morgue. The chaplain would return to the trailer.

Over the nine months that the recovery site at Ground Zero was open, over sixty clergy worked as chaplains at the T. Mort. This represents approximately 6 percent of the 962 chaplains who volunteered for the American Red Cross (ARC) in some aspect of the disaster response, most working in the family assistance centers and respite centers. Almost three-quarters of these chaplains worked during both 2001 and 2002, many taking at least one shift a week for the entire nine months that the Ground Zero site was open. There is much that can be learned from these chaplains as to the ministry of pastoral response to disaster and how they were able to respond in the way they did. Of the clergy who worked the whole nine months, almost half came from the five boroughs of New York City, with 35

percent living in Manhattan. All of these persons would have been affected in some way by the 9/11 disaster, and those New York City residents were affected by the ongoing mentality of living in a city still under the threat of terrorism and a city and country engaged in public mourning (or, one could argue, the refusal to mourn). How does one minister to the traumatized when one may be somewhat traumatized oneself? What helps? What hinders? What are the particular spiritual resources that enable clergy to continue in such a ministry? And what is the trauma really about?

Trauma and Resilience

Trauma theory has had two major trajectories: the *symptomatic*, which has focused on the symptoms of trauma, and the *analytic*, which has often focused on the mechanisms or meaning of trauma. Together these have come to outline the two strands of the current theories.

Much of the research on trauma, since the introduction twenty-five years ago of the diagnosis "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder" (PTSD) into the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders III* (DSM-III), has centered around the effects of trauma in terms of its symptomology—arousal, avoidance, and intrusion—with little attention to the cause. However, PTSD is one of the few diagnoses in the DSM-III that posited a causative agent in its definition of a psychological disorder: a "stressor that would evoke significant symptoms of distress in almost anyone . . . that is generally outside the usual range of experience."[5] Beyond cause and effect, however, is another factor. In the assessment of trauma we need to take three factors into account. Psychologist Bonnie Green notes the variables of (1) an objectively defined event, (2) the person's subjective interpretation of its meaning, and (3) the person's emotional reaction to it.[6] Many people may experience the same external event; however, diagnosis in the DSM-IV fourteen years later recognized that only some may become traumatized to the extent that they exhibit PTSD, due to whether "the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness or horror."[7]

One can see these factors in the chaplains' experiences. One of the more experienced chaplains, a former military person, describes this cognitive process when first on site:

> **Part of the way I deal with the stuff is the way the other first responders do. It's a cognitive mission orientation. What's the perimeter? What are the security issues? What are the jobs? What are the things going on? Where's this? Where's that? Where's help if you need it? Where are you able to help? What are the methods of egress? Where do the things end? What is the stability? Where is the equipment? Are we good to go? Who's where? What am I wearing? What does that match with? What's traffic? What IDs are necessary?**

Another chaplain's first response shows a very different cognitive and affective process. "All I can say is that, for whatever reason, my inner sense was of devastation [on the one hand]. . . . But on the other hand, actually being able to do ministry."

Here one can see that if the event is interpreted as traumatic, the trauma is secondarily held up against the extant worldview of the individual (or culture). If one has a worldview that is inclusive of traumatic events, one is less likely to be traumatized by them. Religiously, a person's worldview that sees disaster as part of the karmic cycle or the reality of life in a "sinful and broken world,"[8] may be able to mitigate trauma in a way that a worldview that says "God will protect me from all harm" may not. This can be seen in one chaplain's accounts about his relationship with God after 9/11:

> **Oh, we had a tough time. We had a struggle. Yes, we did. I know I was the problem. I didn't let [God] get too close. It's because of the anger in me I think at that time too, taking on the anger of the area and the situation . . . the chaos and all of that. For me, I saw anger in all of that. There were no nice buildings there anymore. It was just twisted steel and rubble and all of that stuff. It was an anger scene for me in that sense, the destruction; it's not what it should be. Yes, I blamed God, yes, I cursed at God, I called Him names, apart from "God." He probably sat back and waited until I came to my senses. People brought me to my senses, people I was with. . . . And after a while, too, in the praying over the remains, I came to see that I'm wasting a lot of energy on that side. I've had my shouting match at Him, let go, moved on.**

In exploring trauma, it is therefore not enough to focus simply on the event but also on the interpretation of the event and the meaning it has to a person. Some events for most people may be of such a magnitude that they may overwhelm regardless; others, however, may bear them in a way that is surprisingly resilient. It is helpful therefore to discern what really is traumatic in a "traumatic event"' Later we will see that Object Relations theory contributes to this discussion in its own understanding of what traumatizes.

Current theory about traumatic stress reflects this tension or balance of focus between internal and external, between environmental and personal, between impact, affect, and interpretation. In exploring the experience of the T. Mort. chaplains, it is the *subjective interpretation* of and *emotional reaction* to the external event to which we are attending. In exploring the subjective interpretation and affective life of clergy we need to look beyond a simple psychological exploration of coping skills, identity, purpose, values, and tools in ministry, to the spiritual resources and responses of the clergy. Even more so with clergy we must look to theology as well as psychology to frame our field of inquiry and interpretations.

Anecdotal evidence from the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal building in Oklahoma City, cited in all pastoral crisis intervention training[9] and now

promulgated widely in the disaster community, "indicated that two-thirds of the local clergy [who worked in the recovery efforts] left Oklahoma City after the relief effort, and one-third of those left the ministry entirely."[10] The reality in New York appears to be very different, as this chaplain from the T. Mort. at Ground Zero relates:

> **If I hear one more time statistics about Oklahoma City and how five years later, every religious leader is now running a candy store, or something. . . . I can't stand that statistic because my feeling is you have to examine that further. What kind of religious leader were they? What kind of leadership positions were they in? What kind of religious communities were they? Because I don't see that happening here at all! I'm not aware of anybody who has given up being a religious leader, not that I'm polling all of New York. But I for one am not somebody who walks away. I remember PBS had a show, something like, "Where's God in September 11th?" or something or other. And they had this one guy who was an Episcopal priest and (I've never heard of him before, I never saw him before, I don't even think he was from this diocese) and I felt sorry for him, because I thought, "This is somebody who's not going to be a priest." You know I hope he is, I hope he's doing fine. But in that story, he didn't know God anymore. And I thought, "God, I know God." I felt like I didn't know God before this. This just took me to a deeper level.**

A survey conducted in a conference in New York on June 17, 2002, found—contrary to the often hypothesized opinion that intense exposure to a disaster experience increases risk of PTSD or, in the case of first and secondary responders, what is now being named as STS, "compassion fatigue," or "vicarious traumatization"—that clergy and other religious volunteers who worked at the high-exposure sites of ARC, which would have included the T. Mort. chaplains, showed lower levels of compassion fatigue and burnout than non-ARC religious volunteers who worked at other sites (such as St. Paul's Chapel).[11] In fact, those who worked for ARC only showed even lower levels of compassion fatigue than nonresponders! Why is that? What has enabled these clergy at T. Mort. to work and then, perhaps, in some way "work through" the disaster of 9/11?

Later findings from the above research[12] indicate that those chaplains who worked for ARC alone, with its holding frame of limited shift work and postshift "defusings" (approximately twenty-minute structured reflections on the shift) suffered less burnout. However, the chaplains at T. Mort. did not have the same resources for defusing as did the other ARC chaplains and alternative explanations need to be explored. Another significant contribution to health, rather than burnout and compassion fatigue, seems to be the effect of C.P.E. training. Interestingly, while those responders who were hospital chaplains as well as T. Mort. chaplains suffered compassion fatigue, this appeared to be mitigated by significant compassion satisfaction.

In the disaster care environment, there is an increasing movement from a focus on pathology to a focus on health. A lot of attention has been paid to PTSD, and in the first two years after 9/11, also to STS, vicarious traumatization, and compassion fatigue. However, many organizations training for disaster care as well as the American Psychological Association are exploring "resiliency" to examine those factors that in the face of trauma enable persons to survive and even to grow.

What are the spiritual resources that enabled these clergy "to hold" the experience of being at Ground Zero with its sights, sounds, and smells, "to bear" the suffering of those first responders and others working in recovery and their own suffering, and to find something life giving in this experience that enabled them to be less compassionately fatigued even than those who had not volunteered? We will see in the latter chapters of this book that those chaplains who showed an ability to (1) hold the experience, (2) to bear their own pain and that of those they ministered to, and (3) who found in the face of the disaster that which was life giving were those who reported coming through the experience not traumatized but transformed. The 9/11 disaster is an extreme example, but I think it simply highlights the challenge of pastoral ministry in relation to human suffering that hospital and prison chaplains, pastoral psychotherapists and social workers, lay ministers and parish pastors face every day. What does it mean to love in these instances of crisis? How do we minister in these contexts? Through the work of the chaplains at the T. Mort. and the lens of a trinitarian theology we will begin to explore these questions.

One Spiritual Care Aviation Incident Response (SAIR) team member who functioned as a coordinator at the ARC Family Assistance Center during October, 2001, reported at the end of his ministry there, "What an experience. It was the most sustained emotionally challenging event of my life." He went on to say, "I like the response a chaplain gave when asked, 'How are you doing?' He said, "Ask me in five years."' The reflections of the chaplains you will find in this book were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and the offering of the chaplains' own sermons, journals, and published comments approximately five years after the disaster. On a theoretical level one could question whether such research is too late after the disaster. However, several of those who had been chaplains commented that they do not think they could have participated any earlier. A couple said that they had not looked at their 9/11 material since 2002 and were not sure whether they were ready. One chaplain said, although it was almost five years later, that he could remember it clearly, because for him the experiences were contained in "*kairos* time—sacred time," not chronological time, so he could go back to it as if it were yesterday.

Through the generosity of Julie Taylor, executive director of Disaster Chaplaincy Services—New York, I had a list of sixty-seven chaplains who had been scheduled by ARC to work as chaplains at the T. Mort. between November 13, 2001, and June 10, 2002.[13] Of these, the records indicated that thirteen had only spent one shift at the T-Mort. They may of course have spent shifts previous to this as part of the significant ministry of the Archdiocese of New York who staffed the T. Mort. before

that time, the Episcopal Church's ministry at Ground Zero from St. Paul's Chapel, or through another avenue. Of the 75 percent of the chaplains I was able to contact, although many more indicated a wish to do so, a little over half the total number of chaplains filled in the questionnaire and almost a third were interviewed. Those interviewed spanned the country from Massachusetts to Florida, and from as far away as Papua New Guinea.

The narrative reflections in these pages represent, in the words of one chaplain, "a precious gift." This gift entailed both risk and benefit, both of which can be seen in the response of a chaplain near the end of his interview:

> [When] I first filled out the questionnaire it was difficult. I could feel physical symptoms again. I could feel emotional upset. I'm feeling it in my voice now while I'm talking about it. So I thought about what would be the most healing thing. And I thought the most healing thing would be to go through this whole process. That again, like being at Ground Zero, if I couldn't find my way through this process and complete it, then I'm still holding stuff that I really need some help with. As soon as I came to that realization, it was okay. And I was wondering what was going to happen with the pictures [in the interview] and while they were poignant, and they brought me back to a lot of memories of what it looked like, it wasn't upsetting at all. I think I found a way to put this in its place. You know, it's not "forget it," it's not "be gone," it's not locked up in a room somewhere. But it's in a place, like the place that I reserved for the birth of my first grandchild or the place that I reserve for my father's funeral. It's in a place of my experience and my connections with the divine at that time and how I function and how I feel about it. And I'm pretty much okay with this. And I'm really glad that we did this.

Pastoral Theology

Any foray into pastoral theology has to negotiate the journey attending to at least two focal questions: (1) How do we do pastoral theology and be true to the doctrines that have been formed, received, and debated for at least two millennia now? and (2) How do we do pastoral theology and be true to the complexity that we are discovering more and more every day as we continue to plumb the depths of ourselves as bio-psycho-socio-spiritual beings in the context of the best and worst that humanity can do? Pastoral theology has often been critiqued as either simply *applied theology*—an application of doctrine to human life—or *practical theology*—an application of the skills of the human sciences to the pastoral arena. However, there appears to be an increasing focus in this discipline to move beyond these extremes to an integrated position with as much academic rigor and integrity as systematic theology while grounding it concretely in the real experience of pastoral care.

Clearly, the task of pastoral theology is much more sophisticated than a simple application from theology to pastoral practice or visa versa, but a true engagement between the knowledge and wisdom of theology and sound research grounded in the pastoral field drawing on the resources of other applicable disciplines. Theological reflection in pastoral theology may begin with pastoral experience or with a theological concept and its scriptural grounding. Much "classical" or what Carrie Doehring names as "premodern"[14] pastoral theology simply contains these elements. As such, it is an *intra*disciplinary reflection that, with rigor and sound scholarship, has validity in its own right in terms of its faith tradition.

Chapter 1 of this book is primarily just such an engagement in pastoral theology in attending to the formation of an economic model of the Trinity and exploring why it has relevance for pastoral practice. This chapter explores the thought of Augustine of Hippo in his reflections upon the Trinity and his consequent development of a theological anthropology of the *imago Deiimago Dei* that sees the human mind as a reflection of the Trinity. Rather than seeing this "image" as something fixed, this book will explore it as an active concept, something that is activated by living relationship with an other but interpreted through our own being. I then offer a new model of the economic Trinity, that of English priest Jim Cotter, as one that is useful and applicable in pastoral practice. In addition, I will introduce the *inter*disciplinary elements through psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott's contribution to an understanding of love. This interdisciplinary engagement between theology and the insights and instructive practices of psychoanalysis reflects the continuing development in the field of pastoral theology, which add a "modern" lens to the classic approach.[15]

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are an outworking of this model of the economic Trinity, and each attend to one aspect of this trinitarian model. These chapters reflect this interdisciplinary correlation between theology and psychoanalytic thought, each following a definite structure: (1) theological thought, (2) psychological and psychoanalytic thought, and (3) a model of pastoral practice. Chapter 3 explores "Earth-making," correlating it to "Holding" and relating it to pastoral practice. Similarly, chapter 4 explores "Pain-bearing," correlating it to "Suffering"; and chapter 5 explores "Life-giving" and correlates it to "Transforming." Such correlation is not a simply an equating of Augustinian and trinitarian theology to Winnicott's thought but a reflection on the essence of each "part" of the Trinity and how we may see it manifest in his theory, thereby addressing the questions: How does Winnicott's thought contribute to an understanding of creating? How may pain-bearing be reflected in his theory? What is seen as life giving? It is my hope that both *theologia*ns and more secular practitioners will see that "Holding" is both a reflection of theological "Earth-making" in analytic thought, and also contributes a deeper, more grounded understanding to what is the principle and experience of creation and creativity as it relates to the human person. Likewise, "Suffering" can be seen intrapsychically not just as a pain to be borne but an achievement. "Transforming"

is not simply a resurrection-like reality that happens to us, but also a way of being to which we can open ourselves as we engage in creative and life-giving ways.

Both models can be seen separately. Earth-making/Pain-bearing/Life-giving may speak primarily to Christian practitioners, while Holding/Suffering/Transforming speak to those involved in other fields. Each can stand alone in its own right. However, the insights of analytic theory can contribute much to theological understanding. Likewise, theology can often reflect on existential and religious questions that psychoanalytic psychology believes to be beyond the realm of the social sciences. Theology has no such constraint, yet it must be grounded in the reality of what humanity faces in the world every day. What this theological model offers to analytic thought is a coherence and cohesion that may not be evident otherwise. This model of the Trinity—Earth-making/Pain-bearing/Life-giving—includes both unity and multiplicity, grounded as a model of God's activity in the world. Holding/Suffering/Transforming has no such inherent overarching unity. Winnicott's thought is not trinitarian, despite his focus on the "third space" of illusion as a transitional space where person, culture, and religion connect and create. Theology, therefore, can contribute both this sense of unity and the understanding of the mutual indwelling of each of the model's three parts within the others.

For those of us working as pastoral caregivers these two models can be held in tension and mutually inform practice. As such, methodologically my pastoral theology is *theological reflection* on pastoral practice reframed as a relational model with an *interdisciplinary correlation* to the psychoanalytic Object Relations theory. The focus of interdisciplinary engagement between theology and Winnicott's psychoanalytic theory that this book takes is that of a *reflective* correlation grounded in *relationality*. This takes some further explanation as the terms can have multiple meanings.

Relationality

In my understanding, theology, in essence, is a reflection upon humanity's *relationship* with the divine, with God. Likewise, the human sciences reflect upon the human person's relation to him/herself and to the other, both intrapsychic and interpersonal.

My understanding of relationality is grounded upon an "I-Thou" understanding of the human person. Beyond creaturely instincts we are formed by and oriented toward our relations with others. One could say that for humanity there is no I without a Thou. Although humans may choose or be forced to live alone for a variety of reasons, our formation as humans is dependent upon being in relation with others and our psyches are constituted in terms of both inner and outer relationships. As such, from a psychoanalytic perspective I draw upon the British Object

Relations school, primarily upon the work of D. W. Winnicott. Winnicott denotes the formation of being as in and through our primary relationships, which becomes an internalized way of being (inner object relations) and is lived out externally in our relationship with objective others.[16] The "other" can relate to any object, from an objectively perceived other person, to a part of that relationship, to one's dog, to the universe, to the subjective "objects" that populate our inner world which may only have a partial relationship to the external other. Thus, relationality needs to be read as both intrapsychic and interpersonal, our relationship with those in both our inner and outer worlds. This psychoanalytic understanding both prefigures and exemplifies much that is becoming popular in postmodern theory about knowledge and what we perceive as truth.

Theologically, an understanding of relationality is grounded in the relations between God and humanity, in the incarnation, in creation, and in the ongoing ethic of love that points us toward the hope of our final destiny. It is grounded in the understanding of God as a being-in-relation, the three-in-one; the one who loves within the freedom of God's own interrelatedness. This understanding of relationality takes us beyond discussion of a ontology of being as static substance to a sense of a dynamic being as being-in-relationship, a being as constantly becoming. Increasingly contemporary *theologia*ns such as Leonardo Boff, Stanley Grenz, and Pamela Cooper-White are focusing on relationality in both the doctrine of God and of theological anthropology. Grenz suggests that

> The most innovative result of this conversation . . . has been the coalescing of theology with the widely accepted philosophical conclusion that "person" has more to do with relationality than with substantiality and that the term stands closer to their idea of communion or community than to the conception of the individual in isolation or abstracted from communal embeddedness. So widespread is the unease towards substantialist categories and so thorough has been the ascendency of relationality as central to the understanding of personhood that Ted Peters can conclude . . . "the idea of person-in-relationship seems to be universally assumed."[17]

Grenz indicates that in philosophy, anthropology, and both Protestant and Roman Catholic theology there has been a shift to conceive of "person" not as an individual but as a being-in-relationship. For Grenz this is applicable both to God and the human person. Likewise, Boff claims, "*Person* is indeed a being-in-oneself and hence means irreducible individuality, but this individuality is characterized by the fact of being always open to others. Person is thus a node of relationships facing all directions. Person is a being of relationships."[18]

In theology there have traditionally been two entry points into this understanding of personhood as being-in-communion. One is the incarnation, where in Jesus the relation of divine and human can be explored in the one "person." However, we can-

not stop at the incarnation as a model of imitation, for in the Spirit we, too, get drawn into this relation with the divine, which manifests as three-in-one, and are impelled to live out of this in relation to the world. The other theological concept that draws both of these together is that of the *imago Deiimago Dei*, the "image of God" in humanity. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's epistemology is one that integrates both these conceptions. In expounding upon Bonhoeffer's early theology in *Sanctorum Communio*, John Godsey writes,

> Every human Thou is an image of the divine Thou, and it is God that comes and makes the other a Thou for me. Since behind every human Thou is the divine Thou, whose will is love, the I-Thou relation is the basic social category, and the person, God, and social being are intrinsically related. . . . the problem one faces in knowing another human is parallel to that of knowing God: the other must reveal itself. In this way, through an act of self-revealing love, the one who confronts us as a Thou becomes known as an I.[19]

Revelation both on a human and divine level is intensely relational. As pastoral caregivers we are called into this relationship so that "the other must reveal itself." Such revelation can only happen in a relationship, pastoral or otherwise, where we are prepared not only to know the other as an objective Thou but, through empathic attunement, know the other as an I, that they may know themselves through an act of "self-revealing love" in a safe and trusted pastoral relationship. When we know the other as an I, we cease to judge their worst, which enables through this self-revelation their best—the image of the "divine Thou, whose will is love"—to lead them to love themselves, others, and even the divine Other in ways not previously experienced. However we describe this movement, the journey is often one of suffering as we shine light on our psyches, allowing the reality of trauma and pain to be held in relationship rather than denied, repressed, or acted out in our own bodies and upon others. It is an understanding that "a post-modern approach"[20] to pastoral ministry is transformed by the unique story and contextual relationality of *each* of the participants, and their relation to God.

In this way relationality, as explored in this book, is translated into active, dynamic terms, such that God as Creator is not seen as a being that once created but as also creating—one who is continually in creative relation to all that is, was, and will be. Christian Scripture refers to this eternal perspective in the dialogue between Jesus and the Sadducees concerning the resurrection: "And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:31-32; see also Mark 12:26-27; Luke 20:37-38).

A focus on the relationality of God and its connection to our relational selves calls for a dynamic active ethical relation to the world, a relationality as not just being but as becoming, where being and doing are caught up in active relation-

ship, where in a relation of love we become what we are, the image of God. This relational reframing is a shift from a seemingly static and perhaps historical role to a relational function of being and doing in relationship. Hence, Earth-maker becomes earth-making, and so forth. In the following pages we will explore these relational functions in the context of active actual relationships both interpersonally and intrapsychically through the pastoral experience of the chaplains at Ground Zero. Focusing on relational *functions* has the advantage of retaining the distinctiveness of role in pastoral ministry while leaving open the possibility of mutuality between the persons. While we could argue that the chaplain *acted* as the Life-giver, theologically we can argue only God *is* such. As we will see, the reality was most often that in life-giving pastoral relationships the chaplains also found themselves transformed. In pain-bearing relationships with those involved in recovery they also found themselves cared for and their own pain held. As they made space for others they were moved by how others made space for them to be and do what they were called to do.

In the human sciences, it is the psychoanalytic theorists who have most profoundly reflected on the formation of self in relationship. Winnicott is, I believe, the psychoanalyst who more than any other focuses on the formative power of *primary* relationship, that which enables the developing formation of a "True Self," primarily through the "holding relationship"[21] of a primary caregiver to "her" child. This relationship is characterized by empathic attunement, a mirroring back to the infant what is interpreted of their personal reality, suffering the aggressive and libidinal impulses and providing a transformative space where the developing self may respond to the other (be it mother, other, or world) creatively and spontaneously. The thought of Winnicott can offer us both an interdisciplinary critique of the self-containedness of what has been termed Augustine's "theo-psychology"[22] and a complement to it, grounding it in interpersonal relations while attending to the intrapsychic dimensions.

Reflection

It is in this light that *reflection* is also seen. Reflection has two bases. First, it has to do with reflecting upon something, a conscious, sustained focus in relation to a particular topic, to see through to a deeper and broader understanding. Second, on a concrete level, reflection is about mirroring an image. At depth, however, in the psychoanalytic world "mirroring" is seen as a *relational* connection between the affective life of one to another. This is not simply a parroting or mimicking, but an affective holding, handling, and representing of the experience of the other. For Winnicott this is grounded in our first relationship of care, which shows, in contrast to the likeness in the mirror, that a relational image can still be held in an unequal relationship if one takes the role of care for another. This deepens our understanding

of "reflection," a word that I will use to denote mirroring. It, too, becomes less of a fixed concept and more of a relational one.

The theological thought of Augustine offers a similar reflection on mirroring in its distinction between image and likeness. When we think of one's *image* reflected in a mirror, what we are more accurately thinking of is one's *likeness*, the outward appearance only. *Theologia*ns from Irenaus and Augustine, to Luther and Calvin, to Barth and Bonhoeffer have made a distinction between image and likeness, the general argument being that in "the fall of Adam and Eve" humanity lost the created *likeness* to God, although the divine *image* in some sense remained. Augustine makes much of the use of the word *speculum*, from Paul's comment in 1 Corinthians 13:12 that "we see through a *glass* darkly, but then we will see face to face." Augustine notes that the word *speculum* denotes a mirror, rather than transparent glass. His understanding is that *we* are that which is reflected in the mirror through which we imperfectly see God. Here we can see that mirroring for Augustine is also a relational term, rather than simply a pictorial analogy.[23]

In seeking to reframe the concepts and images of both theology and psychoanalytic thought in a joint relational model, however, we move beyond what may be seen as analogous. Yet this falls short of what may be conceived of as substantial. In correlating theological and psychological concepts, we are not saying, "Here, this (e.g., holding) is like that (e.g., Earth-making)," but more, "Here, holding is *reflected* in Earth-making." When taken further to describe the relationship between God and humanity, this becomes not "Here, humanity is like God," but "Here, humanity *may be* participating in God participating in us." Such an integrative model can distinctly honor both disciplines and both humanity and divinity without limiting God's activity to what is perceived of as "theological" or "spiritual." Hence, what is described is in the realms of theological anthropology rather than simply pastoral practice. It would have been easy simply to say that the Trinity is a useful model for pastoral care and to explore it in practice. Yet, in the task of pastoral theology we are called to say why it is useful in the pastoral field, how it comes to be useful, and where it comes from.

Theologically, therefore, we move from simply *analogia trinitatis* to *imago trinitatis*, from analogy to living image. When looking for theological concepts reflected in psychological understanding, we are not looking for a simple likeness, but an image that has a life of its own that informs and extends the theological image. We can see how this gets lived out in the pastoral field in the reflections of one chaplain who was asked about the essence of his ministry at Ground Zero.

> **The essence of my ministry? To use a word that we don't often use in Judaism, to "witness." For all the people that were doing the work down there, I and my colleagues were the witness for them. We were the ones that recorded their deeds, if only in our minds and our hearts. And we held them up when they began to get fragile and we were the ones that listened. And that's the one**

> **skill and the one effort, listening. That was the heart of the ministry, listening, even if it was to listen to one word or no words. To just listen to the energy of the person. And they knew that they were being seen, that they were being heard, that they were being felt.** ***That whatever they were expressing was real because somebody else could mirror it back to them and that somebody was there willing to take some of their pain.*** **That was the ministry. . . . And so I began to understand the Christian concept of witnessing to really validate the presence of the person who was doing what the person was doing. And to validate the presence of soul that was represented by the toe bone that somebody found; to validate the work; to validate the heroism of people who could stay there day after day and do that.** ***To, in a very quiet way, sing their praises.*** **Not a big deal, but just to thank people for what they were doing, even if they said, "Don't thank me, we have to do this." But they got it. Somebody saw them and somebody was there to say, "Yeah, yeah, yeah.** ***We're here to hold you.*** **We're here to help. In any way that you can use us we're here to help you."**

One can see even from this chaplain's description a reflection of the pastoral model I will come to describe:

1. *Earth-making/Holding*: The holding and handling of the other and their story, what this rabbi names in his tradition as "recording their deeds," the space created by the relationship characterized by a listening and reflecting back (representing) that is not only a sensory and verbal skill but an affective and energetic engagement;
2. *Pain-bearing/Suffering*: The chaplain notes the willingness to "take" or bear some of the pain of the other;
3. *Life-giving/Transforming*: The implied effect of the chaplain validating, thanking, and even singing the praises of the workers.

This can easily sound like a theology of works, and we do not know in pastoral care whether it is our own efforts or the Spirit of God in us, yet we know that the call to love God in the other—naked, hungry, imprisoned, sick, and sinning—is that to which all believers have been called. So let us then turn to those who engaged in such a ministry of love to explore how this theology is reflected in the pastoral field. I choose here to examine a group of pastoral caregivers whose experiences exemplify the foundations of pastoral practice, the breadth of what pastoral ministry is in this post–9/11 world, and the challenge of holding oneself together in ministry in the face of trauma, be it that of others or our own.

* * * *

The theological reflections in these following pages are my own and may or may not reflect the theology of the chaplains themselves. Indeed, the chaplaincy at Ground Zero was rich and diverse, as were the interviewees, who were self-selecting. Those who wished to be interviewed were both male and female,[24] of a variety of Christian denominations, as well as Jewish rabbis and interfaith ministers. They ranged from those who had ministered at the T. Mort. for only a few days to those who had ministered for approximately forty days over nine months. I hope that this research may help prepare clergy for response to later disasters in a way that will help mitigate some of the adverse affects of the disaster by training and support, preparing clergy for a ministry that has heretofore not been a part of seminary curricula. I was profoundly moved by the chaplains who were generous enough to share their experiences of Ground Zero that others might gain from what touched them so deeply. Such an offering as part of the wider contribution to 9/11 oral history is gift in itself. So let us begin to unwrap such a gift as we begin to reflect on the pastoral ministry of love in the face of trauma.