

PROFILES of Ministry

Casebook

Stage I

Sample

This sample has been provided to help institutions administering the POM better understand the program. It should not be used by students or other individuals to prepare for the POM.

Milo L. Brekke, David S. Schuller, Dorothy Williams

Revised by Daniel O. Aleshire (1985) and Francis A. Lonsway (1998, 2003, 2005)

©2005

The Association of Theological Schools
in the United States and Canada
10 Summit Park Drive
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15275-1110

No part of this *Casebook* may be reproduced or copied without written permission of the copyright holder. Cases are not to be used for discussion or teaching purposes.

This publication is part of the *Profiles of Ministry* Program of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. A list of the principal members of the Program staff and major contributions of each may be found on the final page of the *Interpretive Manual*.

Information About the Casebook

This *Casebook* creates an opportunity for you to identify your attitudes, characteristic approaches, and perceptions of ministry. It is not designed to test your ability to identify good or bad ministry. Most of the responses to the case situations represent what ministers or priests have identified as the response or rationale they would use. Your responses to these items will be summarized by scores that will indicate the tendencies and perceptions you have about ministry.

Please keep the following characteristics in mind as you respond to the cases:

The issues presented in a case are more important than the settings in which they appear. The cases describe a variety of situations a person could easily have experienced. Others deal with problems that are not likely to have been a part of everyone's experience. Try, then, to put yourself in the role suggested by the case and respond to all the cases.

The cases do not suggest immediately apparent, open-and-shut decisions. It may not be clear what you would do for some of the cases. Life presents difficult situations to all of us, situations to which we do not always respond as we might wish. The response possibilities do not require you to be consistent. In one situation you may use one approach, while in a similar case you may use a different one. The important issue is that, given a particular situation, you be as honest about your response as you can.

Traditions and terms vary from one church body to another. This questionnaire has been prepared for use by persons in many denominations. There are instances in which you will need to make some substitutions of terminology that will be more appropriate for your own tradition. For example, the terms "church," "congregation," and "parish" are used interchangeably to refer to the group to which one primarily ministers. A variety of terms is used to refer to ordained clergy and other pastoral ministers. Please translate the word or phrase appropriate to your own situation.

The variety of expressions of Christian ministry are not all represented in these cases. While there is no assumption that persons completing this *Casebook* are going to be parish ministers, parish or congregational contexts predominate in the *Casebook*. Many people have had much of their ministry experiences in churches, and many issues that arise from the parish setting are adaptable to other settings.

Finally, the issues covered in the *Casebook* do not represent every facet of ministry. Some issues germane to ministry are not appropriate for the case study approach. Some are being examined by the interview, and others, in Stage II, by field observation. If the cases seem to omit certain areas of ministry, please keep in mind that this questionnaire is part of a larger program that is designed to cover a majority of the crucial areas in the practice of ministry.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING CASES

Each case consists of a situation, two or three questions about it, and a list of possible responses. Please read the case, consider what you would do, then, beginning on **Answer Sheet B, Page 1**, assign a 5 to 1 rating to **each** of the response possibilities following the case. You may use each of the rating numbers as many times throughout the case as you judge appropriate.

Definitions of the 5 to 1 ratings are as follows:

- 5 = You would be **very likely** to use this action or principle in the situation described in the case. It would rank highest among your choices.
- 4 = You would be **likely** to use this action or principle. This may not be your top choice, but it would be a comfortable response for you to make.
- 3 = You would **possibly** use this action or principle. It would not be your most desirable or comfortable response in the particular case situation, but it is one you might use.
- 2 = You would be **unlikely** to take this action or choose this principle. You do not see yourself making this kind of response, and, if you did, you would probably be uncomfortable with it.
- 1 = You would be **very unlikely** to take this action or use this principle. This response would be your least likely choice. You would hardly see yourself ever responding in this way in the situation described in the case.

Remember that you are rating the likelihood that you would use **each** option as a response to the situation, not whether you agree or disagree with the meaning of the statement. Always consider each statement in light of the particular case, its question, and your response to it. We hope you will find this a challenging and interesting experience as you think about the issues raised by the cases.

CASE 1R

About a year ago your church council appointed an ad hoc committee to set goals, develop essential organizational structure, and secure staff for an active program of youth ministry. The committee has met regularly and has done its work well. The members have worked out an efficient working relationship and several have expressed to you their satisfaction in coming to know the other members of the committee better. At the last two meetings of the group they realized two things: (1) their task is completed but (2) they don't really want to stop meeting. They have set the date for a meeting at which they expect to make a decision about their future as a group and have asked you to be present to give whatever counsel you can to help them with their decision.

5 = VERY LIKELY 4 = LIKELY 3 = POSSIBLY 2 = UNLIKELY 1 = VERY UNLIKELY

What would you counsel the group to do?

1. Suggest they continue meeting as a group for their own enjoyment but with the recognition that they are no longer meeting to serve a needed function for the church.
- 2.
3. Encourage the group to disperse into other committees, share their successful experiences, and become facilitators in the work of other committees.
4. Meet with them regularly until I understand the dynamics of their group better so I will know what new task to set for them.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
9. Encourage the group to become a Bible study and fellowship group.
- 10.

Some answers have been omitted to protect the confidentiality of the instrument.

Why would you make that suggestion or give that particular kind of encouragement?

11. It is their decision. I am only being asked to facilitate the process of deciding.
12. The group's ability to get a task done well could readily be used in other areas of the church's ministry.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
18. Christian fellowship is a good and commendable goal within the church community.
- 19.
20. They should be clear about what they hope to gain by continuing to meet.

REMINDER: BE SURE YOU HAVE MARKED YOUR RESPONSE CHOICES—5, 4, 3, 2, or 1—FOR EVERY RESPONSE POSSIBILITY GIVEN HERE.

CASE 16R

You receive word that your sister's husband of five years has just been killed in an automobile accident. You liked and respected Dean. He was very good to your sister, but he was an outspoken unbeliever who repeatedly said, "Religion is of interest only to little old ladies of both sexes." He considered your decision to enter seminary a waste of a terrific person. When you arrive at your sister's home, her pastor had already been there. She is distraught because she fears that Dean has gone to hell because her pastor said that anyone who has not made a decision for Christ before death is lost. She tells you, "I can't believe that's true. God doesn't really cut people off like that without any hope. I can't believe in a God like that."

5 = VERY LIKELY 4 = LIKELY 3 = POSSIBLY 2 = UNLIKELY 1 = VERY UNLIKELY

How would you respond to her statement?

337. Remind her that Dean is in God's hands, not under the judgment of the pastor.
338. Recall with her what Scripture teaches about the believer and nonbeliever.

352. Without faith in Christ there is no salvation.

340. Say that God's nature is not bound or circumscribed by what we can believe in.

Though you would probably choose not to say it, out of consideration for your sister's feelings, what else would you be thinking about the issue she raised?

343. Remind her that Jesus is the only way to the Father.

356. A crisis such as this provides a very important time for the re-examination of the faith of the bereaved person.

Some answers have been omitted to protect the confidentiality of the instrument.

357. Situations like this keep one constantly aware of the urgency of bringing the gospel message to individuals who are lost eternally in sin, death, and damnation.

On the basis of what principle or belief would you respond?

347. God calls persons primarily to love and follow him. Assent to a particular set of beliefs or church membership is secondary.
348. The comfort of the bereaved and his/her continued growth in faith are the healing factors to which all attention should turn.

These are just a few of the 24 cases that are part of the Stage I Casebook for POM.