

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TODAY

A public lecture given by Br Martin L. Smith SSJE at the General Seminary, New York, on April 14 1997, during a session of the College for Bishops. Included in the CDI Participant Manual

I would like to begin this lecture with a preamble which signals that we are aware of beginning to accustom ourselves to the post-modern climate. That sounds a little pompous, but these points can be put simply. I can quote Neils Bohr, the celebrated physicist, "Every sentence that I utter should be taken by you not as statement but as a question." Truth seems to have made its escape from dogmatic assertions demanding submission. Truth has reappeared somewhere else as an event occurring in conversation within communion, when we engage and respond to a speaker whose words constantly imply the questions, "Is this so? What is your experience?"

Then I could pass on the dictum, "In the post-modern world every sentence should end with the phrase *et cetera...*" We are learning to face the radical incompleteness and partialness of any and every statement. Every statement cries out for amplification and correction from other standpoints than the one the speaker is occupying at that moment. So let us listen for the unexpressed "*et ceteras,*" as well as the unexpressed question marks. And thirdly, as we cross the post-modern divide, we are learning to be a little more realistic about claims to objectivity. All standpoints are more personal and prejudiced than we were taught to think was proper. We have to recover from the embarrassment of that discovery and realize that, once we are aware of them, we can afford to be more friendly towards our prejudices. The literary critic Anatole Broyard used to tell his writing students, "Hang on to your prejudices they are the only taste you have got...Paranoids are the only ones who notice anything anymore." In thinking as in life, if you do not fix a starting point, you'll never get started. Kenneth Grahame, the author of *Wind in the Willows*, once showed his awareness of how much of ourselves we are displaying in any kind of lecture or essay in these charming words. "You must please remember that a theme...is little more than a sort of clothesline on which one pegs a string of ideas, quotations, allusions and so on, one's mental undergarments of all shapes and sizes, some possibly new but most rather old and patched and they dance and sway in the breeze and flap and flutter, or hang limp and lifeless and some are ordinary enough, and some are of a private and intimate shape and rather give the owner away and show up his or her peculiarities. And owing to the invisible clothes line they seem to have some connection and continuity."

Our theme this evening is Pastoral Leadership. A good deal of what I will say focuses on episcopal ministry, but I hope it is not difficult with a little recalibration of scale to apply many of the insights to pastoral ministry at the level of the parish. And in stringing out my proposals -questions -I throw up items of an intimate shape that give the owner away. My particular line, or bias, is to pursue the topic from the standpoint of what could be called roughly, interiority, or spirituality. Its what I'm used to, and it could be useful, so long as everyone recognizes that it is one lens among many for surveying a topic with many aspects.

Viewing the topic of pastoral leadership through the lens of spirituality is not the same as investigating the 'devotional life' (post-modern discourse is full of 'air-quotes') appropriate to men and women in leadership, although the equation spirituality = devotional life is regrettably entrenched in most parts of the church. Spirituality is a complex of practices and values concerned with the divine urge for our freedom. Spirituality is about setting about being set free. How do we set about living freely in the Spirit? Spirituality is not a realm of concepts and ideals but is embedded in praxis, actual ways of practicing freedom. We need lots of practice to be set free. And the consensus of all the wisdom traditions of spirituality, eastern and western, is that freedom is intimately related to awareness, to what we allow ourselves to admit into consciousness, of what

we are prepared to know and face, what we don't want to know, what we repress, what we banish, or what we hand over to others to know so that we won't have to. In our Gospel of John, Jesus tells us that it is the truth that will set us free. The *Pneuma*, the Breath of God, our Advocate, the One on our side, is the Spirit of Truth.

To approach the issue of pastoral leadership in the church from the standpoint of spirituality then, is to raise the question, "How do those who are called to this ministry break through to the truth of their identity and find spiritual freedom in and through the exercise of their vocation?" And the answers are bound to be related to the question of awareness. "In order to be on the way to being free as a woman or man who is a pastor/leader what do I need continually to learn to be aware on How do I practice the full consciousness that enables me to live this identity authentically?"

That this is a traditional understanding of spirituality can, I think, be verified. A good example would be the book "On Consideration" written by St Bernard of Clairvaux for a former monk and pupil of his who was elected pope at a turbulent time when the population of Rome were in the middle of one of their frequent revolutions. The book was intended to help him hold steady and make sense of his role in the midst of very complex pressures. The fascinating thing about the book is its comprehensive range. His counsel deals with a whole spectrum of issues, about his political and social responsibilities, about comprehensive reforms as well as theology and prayer. It is fraught with a vivid sense of the inevitable and unresolvable conflicts, tensions and polarities of the life of leadership. He wants Eugene to "consider" the whole scope, the big picture. Consideration is active, searching awareness that integrates insights gained from every area of the field of experience. "As opposed to contemplation which deals with truths already known, consideration seeks truth in contingent human affairs where it is difficult to perceive." (Elizabeth Kennan) "It imparts knowledge of divine and human affairs. It puts an end to confusion, closes gaps, gathers up what has been scattered, roots out secrets, hunts down truth, scrutinizes what seems to be true and explores lies and deceit. It decides what is to be done and reviews what has been done." (VII 9)

It is intriguing to discover that Bernard's insights into the pressures experienced by pastoral leaders and the counsel he gives, have in many instances a startlingly contemporary relevance. For example, the book begins with the subject of the dangers of being overburdened as a result of the tendency of the pastoral role being what we call today 'overdetermined,' saturated with an excess of superimposed responsibilities. He warns that stress will lead to the dangerous condition of "numbness"; pruning his schedule is necessary. He goes on to warn of the distortion of the pastoral office by the invasion of litigation. This constant arbitration in legal disputes is wrecking the ministry of oversight and has to be resisted. He deals with the question about what to do about a corrupt and incompetent staff that he has inherited by insisting that the only remedy is to replace them with trained and trustworthy people. Bernard even anticipates our very contemporary pastoral theme of the importance of ministering to oneself It is encouraging to find that this isn't a piece of modern psychobabble but a traditional ascetical counsel. So he emphasizes the necessity of Eugene carving out some leisure in order to practice consideration, and he puts it in terms of including himself as part of the flock he is called to pastor. "I praise your devotion to humankind, but only if it is complete. Now, how can it be complete when you have excluded yourself? You too are a man. For your devotion to be whole and complete, let yourself be gathered into the bosom which receives everyone... You also drink with the other from the water of your own well Therefore remember this and not always, or even often, but at least sometimes give your attention to yourself Among the many others, or at least after them, you also have recourse to yourself" (Bk 1 4:5)

The wide-ranging and comprehensive scope of this pastoral treatise helped me realize that pastoral leadership, especially in its form in the episcopal office, requires a spirituality of wide-ranging and

integrated awareness. To be a bishop is to require spiritual tools which relate to the vocation of sustaining an over-arching, inclusive and comprehensive vision. Let us take this a little further.

The standpoint of interiority encourages us to take our images and metaphors seriously, to internalize and amplify them so that they resonate deeply. The episcopal office has at its heart a simple image. The *episkopos* has oversight. We need to feel the image in our bodies and not just rationalize it. The image is one of the body elevated or raised up so that the eyes can take in the full view of a situation, impossible if one remains at ground level. An overseer literally can see over a situation of collective endeavor from a vantage-point that enables him or her to take in the whole scene. Those of us brought up to be familiar with old-fashioned factories can envisage those elevated booths which enabled an overseer to view a range or system of machines so that he or she could continually monitor the system. At the beach the lifeguards have elevated seats in order to have the panorama necessary for their task. The episcopal office is a charism of panorama, or integral view. The office is a vantage point for gaining a vision of the whole situation of a substantial Christian community, a situation that is unlikely to be so clear to specialists focussing on a particular dimension of mission, or to those who are wedded to the claims of a particular locale. The spirituality of episcopacy is especially a spirituality of panorama, or taking in the big picture. The bishop is entitled to ask all the questions that can be asked. She or he has the guardianship of all the questions. So the spirituality of a bishop should be a spirituality committed to the pursuit of a wide-range of consciousness and awareness.

The other image for pastoral leadership is, stating the obvious of course, the shepherd. We consciously carry over from an archaic herding culture an image of the pastor, the herder of sheep, supervising their breeding, birthing, nurture, shelter, their movements to and from pasture. There are many resonances and implications in this *symbol* and one of the most significant ones is the maintenance of the integrity or completeness of the flock. The force of the archaic image depends on our awareness of the artificiality and precariousness of a flock of sheep; it is in real and constant danger of unraveling, dissipating and scattering, from the intrusion of predators and the lack of any natural force to keep the group together. Sheep wander. A flock is an unnatural and unstable entity. It requires constant arduous and unflagging work to sustain the flockness of the flock, sometimes dramatic intervention, always the work of patrol and the defining of the boundaries and orientating the collective movement. The image only works if we see that spiritual community also is something made. It has no instinctual existence. A church is something God continually creates, and we co-create and co-recreate it with God as fellow workers. And the church's pastors are ministers with special responsibility for the promotion of the fullness, wholeness and integrity of the community. So from the beginning the bishop's ministry has been both an agent of and a prime symbol for the church's unity, its integrity and cohesion. And he or she is the agent of and prime symbol for the church's constant striving to realize catholicity, inclusiveness, all-embracingness.

All this states the obvious. Pastoral leadership is active co-responsibility with Christ for inciting, sustaining and guarding the church's life as community. Episcopal pastoral leadership is the particular responsibility for sustaining community at the inclusive level of a diocese, which is a collective large enough to represent, to a greater or lesser degree, the church's catholicity or inclusiveness and wholeness.

Pastoral and episcopal spirituality must then consist in those practices of "consideration" (to use Bernard's term) or integrating consciousness that keeps the pastor/bishop capable of viewing and seeing the big picture on behalf of the community, taking in the full range of evidence and growing in the capacity to integrate more within his or her field of awareness. And we can say right away that it must involve a considerable readiness for conflict because many of those who are committed to a particular part of the scene or a particular aspect of it are not likely to see the view or gestalt of

the whole which the bishops must cultivate precisely because they are called to sustain the overview.

I am almost tempted to say much of the loneliness of being a pastoral leader and a bishop is that this vocation to the "overview" is precisely what most people cannot be expected to grasp. Only a few get to see the whole from a vantagepoint of awareness that can integrate evidence from all parts. The frustration of a bishop is the continual struggle against partial and limited views, standpoints that prevent the holders from taking in a full range of evidence. It is a frustration as old as the new testament, as we see from the exasperation of Paul in the letters to Corinth. Paul as apostle is appalled when leadership is being seized by or given to people who are committed to narrow slices of reality and lack the ability to take in connectedness and wholeness. "I hear there are divisions among you." We can see today the contradictions and confusions that arise in the cases where partisans and ideologues are elevated to the episcopate. A terrific dissonance occurs because of the contradiction between this mentality that depends on splitting off and the spiritual demands of the office itself.

Bishops tell me that they realize that not a great deal in parish or academic life actually serves as much of a preparation for the office of bishop and this makes sense too. Only the actual experience of having the overview gives you the overview. A bishop therefore has to develop a sense of identity with the help of fellow-bishops and other insightful people in the face of very widespread and inevitable misapprehensions and distorted views of what a bishop is. In fact this is one of the prime tasks of episcopal spirituality. To keep on doing the work of discernment in the midst of a force field of projections, stereotypes, precedents, traditions and popular assumptions about leadership and pastoring, many of which are highly distorted and distorting. The work of spiritual awareness is to grow in the capacity to identify these often almost invisible forces in the environment of society, in the church and in ones' own psyche. Journalists and politicians have their ideas what a bishop should be, different constituencies within the clergy and laity have their ideas, the episcopal predecessors had theirs and left them around as spectral forces with an afterlife of several generations, and so on.

Classic spirituality had at its heart the discipline of discernment through what was called the "manifestations of thoughts." The ancient form of spiritual direction was not asking advice about prayer but articulating one's experiences to a wise person, especially spelling out concerns that had a particular obsessive character in which one seemed to be being pulled in one direction or another by a kind of undercurrent. The idea was to bring to consciousness if possible the source of this undercurrent working against freedom. The practice is still indispensable and we will need both private and group settings in which to do it. And one can easily imagine how it might help by identifying in the environment and in the psyche forces that are exerting a distorting influence on the experience of being a pastoral leader.

From my conversations with bishops I can easily come up with examples. Let us think of the misconceptions that exert a distorting influence on the business of being a pastor. One very common one is the notion that the business of pastoring is personal one-on-one (telling expression!) care of an individual who has a problem, is undergoing some kind of personal transition, or is in 'spiritual need.' When one is doing that one is exercising one's role as a pastor. A slightly more sophisticated version extends one-on-one to include a family in need or in transition. In that case being a pastor is one of the hats a bishop, for example, wears. He is also an administrator, liturgical president, teacher etc, etc. All these are common misconceived as separate roles into which with more or less versatility he steps one after another. The bishop is 'being a pastor' when he leaves his desk, quits his meetings, to rush to the bedside of the sick wife of one of

the priests of the diocese to be with the couple in their hour of need. " At last" the bishop may say, harking back to his or her days as a parish priest, "I have the chance to be a pastor again. " Or the onlooker says to herself, "I now realize that Bishop X can be a pastor when he chooses to be ..."

Well, there is probably no need to develop the scenario in more detail. No doubt the training given to new bishops keeps on underscoring the crucial transition from a ministry that is devoted a lot of energy to the personal care of individuals, couples and families to a ministry that engages with a large system or institution, the diocese as a whole. But I suspect it takes a tremendous amount of awareness before one has seen right through the distortion. The distortion is treating 'pastoring' as a discrete activity. The key thing about the identity of pastor is that pastor makes a better adjective than a noun. It is not that the role of bishop tends not to leave much time for being a pastor, except for occasional troubleshooting, or 'nurturing' (blessed buzzword) her or his staff. Rather being a pastor is what a bishop is being in everything a bishop does, insofar as that contributes to her or his sustaining the overview and promoting the health and integrity of the larger whole. In fact a pastoral leader might be more faithfully pastoral in the hours spent toiling in administration that makes for progress, working with consultants, laboriously renewing vocational discernment processes with representatives from all over the diocese, than in personal ministries that seem pastoral in the popular view.

Another variant is to identify the role of pastor with the special responsibility that a bishop has for the ordained clergy. Of course, (so this version goes) the bishop cannot possibly be everybody's pastor but he or she must be the personal pastor of all the clergy. That there is some truth in this notion is obvious but the dangers perhaps are more hidden. Just now we are in a transitional phase halfway between an outmoded clericalism and a not-yet realized understanding of ministry as the responsibility of all the baptized. I suspect the present notion of the bishop as pastor of the clergy will have to be looked at again and again as part of examination of the tenacity of clericalism. I took part on a Tuesday in Holy Week in the renewal of priestly vows in a diocese. All the clergy were present with the bishops. But what does it mean for bishops and clergy to renew their vows as pastors, with the laity of the church utterly absent from the solemn gathering except for the cathedral verger, the organist and one or two volunteers helping with the luncheon? What does this say theologically about our conception of pastoring? I was taken aback to be told by a liturgical expert that this liturgical ceremony was invented by the Vatican authorities in the upheavals of the early seventies when the loyalty of the parochial clergy seemed more and more at risk and it seemed good to create an occasion when they could all be seen renewing their solidarity with the hierarchy. Did we do well as Anglicans to adopt this Roman ceremony in this form?

Beneath misconceptions of pastoring there is a strong undercurrent of prejudice fueled by the value allotted to psychotherapy in our culture. Real pastoring is seen as a transaction between persons in private. By contrast activities that concern the community are often downplayed or disparaged as "bureaucracy" or "social activism" or "maintaining the institution. "

Another distorting undercurrent present in the force field of the contemporary pastoral environment is the association of pastoring with affirmation. Listening carefully to conversations we soon begin to pick up the link many people have made between pastoring and saying yes, pastoring and making someone in a situation feel affirmed and good about themselves etc Here pastoring has become a kind of style, specifically a style that precludes refusal. There is a chorus of pain in the church about how 'unpastoral' its processes are, such as the ordination process. No doubt there is a tremendous amount of ineptness and confusion in many of these processes and they call for constant reform. However the link with affirmation is a cultural contamination. "Let

your yes be yes and your no be no" said Jesus, and there is nothing to suggest that we do not have to say no as often as we have to say yes. Experienced bishops who have run the gauntlet of this prejudice remind us that authentic pastoring involves a great deal of saying no to a great number of bids, proposals, claims, entitlements, fantasies, and even sound and holy ideas that have to wait their turn. Care for the whole invariably means the careful refusals that keep things in proportion, husband resources, assign priorities intelligently, and so on.

Well, these and many other currents and projections are at play in the pastoral environment and a contemporary pastoral spirituality will be concerned to help us bring them into the sphere of consciousness so that they can be seen for what they are, understood, and so that we can gain a measure of freedom from them. And this work will have to be done in constant conjunction with the bringing to awareness of what each of us as pastors bring into play, the projections, needs, distortions, and ideals that are largely unconscious. For example, an authentic pastoral spirituality will constantly seek to examine what my inner needs are doing to the business of my pastoring. I do not think most of us were equipped with a spirituality of vocation that fully acknowledged the extent that we are motivated in ministry by needs. We bring desires to ministry that cry out for fulfillment, and God, so to speak, exploits our recruitability. Most of us have to be pastors out of some inner drive and God is involved in that, messy though it often is, and gives us the Spirit of truth to transform and convert those desires. But that process of conversion involves an asceticism, a discipline of facing and bringing to consciousness the needs we bring to ministry. Needs that are not acknowledged join the shadows and work from behind as demands.

A major element in the spiritual direction of pastors is precisely this bringing into the consciousness and prayer of these inner needs. The need for intimacy motivates us towards personal care of others; if that need is not faced and attended to in the rest of our lives it will intrude upon and distort our pastoral relationships. Some of us are motivated by a deep inner need to reform and correct. We are the enlightened children who will correct the errors and heal the wounds of our parents. Unless we face into that and channel this zeal specifically everyone who comes our way will be subjected to our need to be enlighteners and teachers.

Most obviously a bishop who has not faced quite deeply the part his need to be admired has played in drawing him into ministry is in for a rough ride. Those who obstinately withhold that liking and admiring are going to excite deep rage in him or crushing resentment and depression, all aspects of the same reaction. And of course they will withhold it from anyone exercising pastoral leadership, since a pastoral leader cannot affirm every claim or fulfil every projection, since she has responsibility for the health of the whole rather than the gratification of each part. The demand to be liked can take over; in that case gratifying and affirming all comers will involve abdication of pastoral responsibility for the larger whole.

Pastoral leadership today also requires an area of spiritual awareness that is specifically opening up because of the changes in consciousness that are taking place in our day. The spirituality of pastoral leadership has always been grounded in the gifts of ever-widening empathy, the capacity to identify with and therefore engage with the varied and different elements of the whole. Its most famous expression in scripture is in the passage in I Cor. 9 where Paul speaks of his empathic engagement with the radically different constituencies of Jews, gentiles and those he called 'the weak', those at an immature level of religious awareness, in order to win them. "I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings." I have heard many pastors groan at this passage, as if it seemed to propel them into an impossible over commitment or held up an unattainable ideal of versatility. Or I have heard it used in a rather sarcastic tone about pastoral leaders who tend to agree with the last person who spoke

to them in a kind of spineless and unprincipled affirmation. "I am afraid our suffragan bishop has turned out to be one of those 'all things to all men' type; where does he really stand on anything?" But authentically this passage points to the type of spirituality we are exploring aloud. To be responsible for catholic community, we need the spiritual gift, the charisma, of a versatility of empathic identification with the distinctive constituents of the whole, many of which, because of the way they are embedded in a situation with less perspective, do not see that they need one another, as illustrated in Paul's image of the body whose various parts are tempted to think that they can do without the other organs.

What is becoming especially clear today as we cross the post-modern divide is that this empathic versatility strictly depends on the pastor's consciousness of his or her own particularity and limitation of standpoint. In all sorts of ways we are having to become conscious of the inevitable partiality, bias and restrictedness of our own life-stance. It is fascinating to watch this process happening among pastoral leaders, and being chaplain to the house of bishops has given me hundreds of occasions to observe it. Suddenly it dawns on a leader that his racism is not a matter of personal hostility to people of color, but is rooted in unconscious, unacknowledged unearned white privilege. You can see leaders turning into heterosexuals and some of them even recognizing their heterosexism. Until recently there were no heterosexuals. There was only sexuality, and then some 'perverts' did unspeakable things in some marginal twilight world of unreality. Now the visibility of gays and their claims to have being change reality; the majority sexuality has become one of the ways of being sexual instead of the only one. With the advent of every new woman bishop into the House, the maleness of the House is revealed more vividly and embarrassingly. What used to be how bishops were, what used to be the being of bishops, is now being shown up as how men have acted out being a bishop, not at all the same.

It is an authentic spiritual paradox that the more one brings into consciousness about the narrowness and bias built into one's own experience and identity and viewpoint, the more one is set free to identify with and enter into alliance with those who differ from oneself. Only when one has undergone the spiritual death whereby one brings into consciousness and then relinquishes the claim to have *the* take on reality, can one actually begin to empathize with others' take on reality, and in communion with them actually experience more reality. Now part of my motive for tackling the question of pastoral leadership from the standpoint of interiority is that the changes in consciousness that are taking place among us today mean that the connection between the way a pastor behaves and his or her own interiority is becoming more obvious and public. The awful thing is that what we refuse to be conscious of, more and more people can read. The advent of feminism is teaching more and more people to read our fear of women and our incorporation of patriarchal bias; in this new literacy theological rationales have become paper thin, and more and more people can see through what used to seem so substantial, especially arguments from tradition. Actually because a critical mass of people can now 'see through' behaviors dictated by unconscious bias, in an almost automatic social process credibility is being withdrawn from leadership that is not based on wide-ranging and searching self awareness.

Our reflections have led us into an area of engagement with the changes in consciousness that are occurring with such amazing rapidity at this epoch. Christian spirituality is bound to give priority to Jesus' mandate to discern the signs of the *times* and the spirituality of pastoral leadership requires the capacity to engage with changes and developments at the interior level, at the level of soul. It would take many hours of conversation for us to explore these issues but let me finish this lecture by taking one example of the kind of critical meditation, or 'consideration' we need to engage in as pastoral leaders.

Anglican spirituality is always at risk from the bias towards stability, a kind of homeostatic spirituality in which the Spirit constantly restores order, balance and all godly quietness and virtue in a world peaceably governed by a providence that sets in order all things. If things are changing, prayer expresses confidence that the plan of salvation is being carried out in tranquillity and that all things are being brought to their perfection. It is beautiful, but it does not provide us with the essential tools for coming to terms with our actual experience at the end of the millenium. We are in the throes of tumultuous and unprecedented changes and an intractable ecological crisis in which the peaceable governance of providence is not exactly what springs to mind. Pastoral leadership in this context is going to need spiritual resources that empower us to integrate into our overarching vision the powers of chaos and accelerating trajectories of change.

There are historic spiritualities in the Christian tradition, ascetical and mystical traditions, that experienced the soul as a sphere of passionate conflict, where a great contest continually occurs between our desire to break through to transformation and our fearful need to stay the same. It is these spiritualities that have received most confirmation and amplification from modern psychology. We have our work cut out to use these resources and others to forge a spirituality in which consciousness of this drama taking place within ourselves will better empower us to lead. For it is in this contest on the macrocosmic scale that pastors will be exercising their leadership of our communities.

It is an irony of language that one of the meanings of the word pastoral is "pertaining to a tranquil rustic scene." A pastoral painting depicts an idealized landscape of calm and beauty with nymphs and shepherds. Now our pastoral scene is in violent contrast, one in which we coming to terms with the necessity of chaos and the inevitability of conflict in communities that evolve or perish. On a train journey here to New York last year I read Michael Crichton's sequel to *Jurassic Park*, a novel called *The Lost World*. One of the characters a mathematician called Ian Malcolm discusses how complex systems such as corporations learn to adapt or face extinction. He goes on to say this.

But even more important is the way complex systems seem to strike a balance between the need for order and the imperative to change. Complex systems seem to locate themselves at a place we call 'the edge of chaos. We imagine the edge of chaos as a place where there is enough innovation to keep a living system vibrant, and enough stability to keep it from collapsing into anarchy. It is a zone of conflict and upheaval where the old and the new are constantly at war. Finding the balancing point must be a delicate matter -if a living system drifts too close, it risks falling over into incoherence and dissolution; but if the system moves too far away from the edge, it becomes frozen, totalitarian. Both conditions lead to extinction. Too much change is as destructive as too little. Only at the edge of chaos can complex systems flourish.

This passage, in which chaos theory is being filtered down to the popular level through mass-market literature, is remarkably suggestive about the role of pastoral leadership. It is scary to realize that chaos is vitally central in God's creation and that is why leadership has to be pastoral, a ministry of encouragement and guidance. Pastoral leadership will takes its stand at the place of discernment in this "zone of conflict and upheaval where the old and the new are constantly at war." The episcopal charism of maintaining unity will not consist in repressing the war between the old and the new, but encouraging and continually recentering a community in which we know that both the resources of stability and the risks of change come from the Spirit. What kind of spirituality will enable pastoral leaders to live consciously at the edge of chaos?