**THEO6202/IST3041 THEOLOGICAL THEMES IN PASTORAL CARE**

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Case Study Guidelines

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A. Provide a description of the situation, the parties involved, and the context. Identify your role and what are you trying to accomplish. State the major issues this raises for you to address and the resources you need to address them.

B. Provide a brief history of the problem and a brief assessment of the social, psychological, cultural, economic, and family-systems dynamics operating here. Are there medical, legal, or behavioral problems requiring special attention or intervention?

C. Describe your initial interventions, and provide a brief theological rationale for them. For example, if you offered a prayer, describe what you prayed for and what you think about prayer theologically?

D. Analyze the case in detail theologically, using readings for the course and others you consulted addressing this specific situation. Some suggested parameters for the analysis:

1. What faith background does this person have, or in which this situation arises? What makes this a theological or religious issue for the participants? Why did they seek pastoral assistance? How does this relate to your faith background? What in your backgrounds may help or impede your work together?

1. How do the participants view God? How do they think that God views them? What is their image of God and how has it changed over the years? Is there room to think of God as love? How do their implicit or explicit views of God relate to yours?
2. What are the dynamics of faith and hope at work here? What future stories are operative, for good or ill? What is the source of hopelessness (anxiety, dread, suspicion, apathy)? What are the real possibilities for hope? How are these grounded in the community and imagination? How might hope become a positive influence in addressing the situation?
3. How is the fundamental human predicament, traditionally understood as sin and evil, thematized in this situation, and how is grace understood and experienced? What are the central moral issues operating in this situation? Who is responsible for the difficulties, and how might that responsibility be addressed positively?
4. What multiple communities are operative here, for good or ill? Where are they in conflict? Where do they support or supplement one another? What is the meaning and quality of community in this situation? (Issues of estrangement, brokenness, abuse, forgiveness, justice, oppression, intersectionality, reconciliation, liberation, etc.?)
5. How is power thematized in this situation? Where is power localized? What are the sources of abusive, oppressive, and injurious power? Of transformative and relational power? How is God’s power understood in this situation? How do you understand pastoral power and authority in relation to what you are called to address?
6. How are scriptural teachings drawn upon for interpreting this situation? What Bible stories are referenced? How is the Bible used to justify behaviors, positively and negatively? What other spiritual resources are available and drawn upon? How will these be employed in the caregiving?
7. Compose a prayer that expresses your pastoral and theological intentions for this situation. Select a hymn, poem, piece of art, or other music that addresses the core theological issues at work here. Comment on now the prayer and the arts chosen might express your theology and connect with theirs.
8. Identify the main theological learnings that have arisen for you through this case analysis, and what questions come into sharper focus.

E. Write a summary conclusion of what your interventions have accomplished the central learnings and remaining questions. Identify the next steps, and suggested reading on the core issues of this case.