

Introduction

“SOUL” (*psyche, anima*) IS THAT WHICH ENLIVENS, energizes, animates human existence, as distinguished but not separated from the body which is animated. Body minus soul equals corpse. A warm body is one with soul—alive

The term *soul care* translates the ancient Latin idea of *cura animarum*: the nourishment, guidance, and care of that which animates human existence. Curacy, or soul care, is a vocation set aside to guide souls in their journey through life toward fulfillment of their genuine freedom and possibility.

The previous Volume I, *Becoming a Minister*, set forth classic pastoral writings on the calling and work of the minister. This present Volume II, *Ministry through Word and Sacrament*, asks how that care-giver acts to provide nourishment and guidance for souls in eight crucial arenas of ministry: care of oneself; ministry of the Word; soul care through prayer; ministry of the sacrament of beginnings—baptism; ministry of holy communion; the education of the soul; the nurture of community; and the engendering of support for ministry. The following Volume III, *Pastoral Counsel*, will focus upon individual one-on-one conversations as a major concern of pastoral care. Our present purpose is to show that soul care occurs not only in individual conversations, but also in a community of care, in public settings like preaching and worship, and in sacramental life, in baptizing and celebrating the Eucharist, in the teaching of children and adults, and in the nurturing of community in the parish and the civil order.

The eight questions of this volume are:

- Why do *care-givers themselves need soul care*? And what special nourishment is required to transcend despair over the burdens of care for others?
- How does soul care occur through community by means of public witness and the *preaching of good news*?
- In what sense does *the worshipping community and the life of prayer* provide the broader social and necessary spiritual matrix for individual soul care?
- How do sacramental ministries constitute central acts of soul care, beginning with the ministry of *baptism*?
- Why is *confession* intrinsically connected with holy *communion* so as to constitute the quintessential service of soul care?
- How does the pastor *teach* the soul to increase in faith and behavioral excellence?
- How does the pastor nurture *community* in the parish, and *civil justice* beyond the parish?
- How may the care-giver best find and order resources *properly to support ministry* without eliciting abuses?

The Christian pastor struggles for the health of the person and the life of the soul simultaneously in these diverse developmental phases and arenas.