

Education

Theological Reflection for All

Finding the ultimate meaning, is the goal of the EfM program writes **Martha Goodwill**.

THE DESIRE TO create meaning out of experience is universal. From one generation to another, people need to find answers to important questions or at least simply to understand better their experience. As a person matures the issues change but the desire to know and understand remains. We are meaning-seeking beings who hope to find wisdom that guides us. In general, the term “theological reflection,” used in various ways throughout the theological world, means knowing God and knowing about God through experience.

Theological reflection is a life skill used to create meaning, in fact, to discover ultimate meaning. What makes reflection theological is not a specialized vocabulary, but the relentless, restless urge to experience wholeness which brings a person to the Holy. The word “holy” in English stems from the Old English word *haleg*, which means whole.

Education for Ministry makes a bold claim: Each of us is a theologian. It is not an option. The question is not whether or not we reflect theologically. The question is how proficient we are.

Throughout the four years in EfM, participants practice the discipline of theological reflection. Models and methods developed within the program guide and support theological reflection. Assignments present fundamentals of theological reflection. The intent is to provide resources and practice for the refinement of this life skill. ✕

About Education for Ministry

“Theological Reflection has been a wonderful tool for me. I have thoroughly enjoyed sharing within our EfM Group. Taking an image, exploring the metaphor, sharing where it is found in our culture, searching the Bible for scriptures, exploring what we learned and always ending with a wonderful Collect. It has taught me about Spiritual discernment and how important it is for me to think and feel about myself, others and our world. It has truly given me the insight to be a LIGHT for the World!”

Shirley Duncan

“The process of Theological Reflection has been of great value to me in trying to sort out complicated situations, especially those that embody conflicting values or are emotionally charged. The discipline is particularly effective when performed in my EfM group - with spiritual friends who are mutually respectful and non-judgmental. My goal is to apply the discipline regardless of where or with whom I am when such a situation arises. I am often surprised by the different perspectives of others regarding a particular issue, and find that the process opens me to other ways of seeing things.”

Judith Radasch

“I am still working through the process of Theological Reflection, and having difficulty wrapping my head, if you will, around the concept. But, it has helped me to be able to stop and review my concerns and questions, and work on a broader perspective of working problems out.”

Doriel Boyce

“For me, Theological Reflection is opening the door to a difficult topic and inviting God into the conversation.”

Susan Board

Education for Ministry is a lay theological program from Sewanee, The University of the South. Contact Diocesan Education for Ministry Coordinator Martha Goodwill at mgoodwill@episcopalswfl.org for information.

