

A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF CHAPLAINCY

*Edited by John Caperon, Andrew Todd
and James Walters*



‘This excellent and varied collection of essays confirms chaplaincy studies’ place at the vanguard of practical and public theology. In affirming the mission of God as beginning in the world beyond the church, it challenges us, in turn, to become a more worldly church through the practices of discernment, participation and witness.’

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THEOLOGY AND MODELS OF CHAPLAINCY

— BEN RYAN —

Introduction

In one sense, there is nothing new about chaplaincy. There have been chaplains for a very long time in various institutional settings, notably hospitals, the military, universities and prisons. What is new is the sense of chaplaincy as a phenomenon which is on the rise, with a remarkable spread into ever new areas of British public life.

Chaplaincy has become extraordinarily broad and difficult to easily pigeon-hole. How can a single model encompass at once a full-time Anglican vicar living alongside soldiers on campaign with that of a lay volunteer visiting a shopping centre? These contexts, and the work being done within them, share a title ‘chaplaincy’ but are too disparate to provide clear ‘one size fits all’ models.

Yet there are some uniting features to this spread. One is that chaplains are public operators. Their role is going out to where people are, as opposed to waiting for people to come to faith groups, and confronting society as it is, rather than as faith groups might want it to be. That being the case, there ought to be some unifying theology that can group together the nature of this public-facing religious work – even if the contexts in which it is employed remain remarkably disparate.

There is a range of available models for chaplaincy on which such a theology might hang. The unifying feature of good chaplaincy models, this chapter argues, is one of personalism – an attitude that speaks to humanity’s innate need for relationships (both between individual people and between individuals and God) in fulfilling our individual nature.

I shall begin by considering four themes that define the changing nature of chaplaincy models before looking at a set of possible models, both theological and secular, that have been applied to chaplaincy.

Themes creating change in chaplaincy models

In looking at models for chaplaincy there are a number of developing overall themes that are worth considering. Not all are equally relevant (or even present at all) in every chaplaincy setting, but these themes do set the scene for some of the ways in which models are changing.

The role of the chaplain has evolved over time in line with the evolving religious and social landscape

Most Christian chaplaincy throughout the twentieth century operated effectively as an extension of the parish model.

The sorts of service, religious and pastoral, usually provided within a parish were taken to those who for whatever reason were unable to attend their parish church (perhaps due to incarceration, military service, hospitalisation or being away at boarding school or university). This functioned within a context in which for most of the century society was unquestionably Christian. It was, therefore, entirely uncontroversial that the 1952 Prisons Act specifies only three compulsory prison staff: ‘a governor, a chaplain and a medical officer’ (Her Majesty’s Government 1952).

Today the social context in which chaplaincy is operating has changed dramatically. According to the 2011 Census 59 per cent of the UK call themselves Christian (down from 72 per cent a decade earlier), 11 per cent belong to a different religion and 25 per cent have no religion (Office for National Statistics 2012). The British Social Attitudes survey of 2014 shows that just 18 per cent of the British call themselves Anglican, and 8 per cent Catholic. There has been a significant growth both in raw numbers and in public awareness of minority faiths, particularly Islam, and among those of no religion.

With these changes the assumptions underpinning public life have shifted. The primary space for religious engagement has shifted; today, encounter with religion is less likely than ever before to take place within a parish church. Chaplaincy, accordingly, is no longer an *ancillary* service that extended the core business of the parish to those outside a normal parish context, but is now increasingly becoming a *primary* meeting point between religion and society (Ryan 2015, p.79).

Chaplaincy has proved particularly suited to such a change in context and as a result it is no surprise to see chaplaincy expanding from its traditional settings into an ever-broader space including sports clubs, town centres and workplaces (Ryan 2015, pp.14–16). Partly this is because of the nature of chaplaincy. The British may no longer be going to church, but they are certainly going to continue going to work, to hospital and into other public spaces. The great advantage of chaplaincy versus other forms of Christian ministry is that it is innately public. Chaplains are always operating outside a church context – they are going to where people already actually sit.

There is a wider sense of the appropriateness of chaplaincy to the modern world. In a society which is ever more mobile and individualised, chaplaincy retains an appeal by being present in often very personal relationships with service users in their own unique context (such as the workplace).

The personal connection is hugely important in countering the idea of religion as an old-fashioned structure alien to the lives of most people. It appeals in that sense to what Grace Davie famously identified as the persistent sense of 'vicarious religion' (Davie 1994) – the appeal of some sort of latent religious sensitivity without much active churchgoing.

Chaplaincy as a necessarily bilingual ministry

Connected to the changing landscape is the theme that chaplaincy models will need to take full account of the need to be 'bilingual' – speaking the language both of religious ministry and the context-specific language of their setting.

A prison chaplain, for example, must be able to speak in religious terms of the point and nature of their work, but also to do the same in the official public language of the prison service.

In line with the way the overall context has changed we should be conscious that it is no longer taken for granted that religion has a place in public spaces. Though England maintains an Established Church, in practice most public spaces have an assumed secularism. The case for chaplaincy needs to be made at least in part on terms that demonstrate its utility in the public language of the different settings. The 'secular' models discussed below take on a particular significance here.

The end of clerical chaplaincy?

A third theme changing the models of chaplaincy is the increasing move away from chaplaincy being the exclusive activity of clergy. Of course, in many Christian denominations and non-Christian religions there are no clergy anyway, or at least a very different conception of the role. However, even among Anglican and Catholic

chaplains who have historically been largely the remit of clergy there has been a noticeable shift.

Partly this can be tied to the fact that the role in many sectors is now becoming more part-time and volunteer-led. A case study undertaken by Theos (Ryan 2015, p.27) in Luton found 169 chaplains of whom only 39 had received some sort of religious training (such as that leading to ordination). Clear national data is hard to find on this. Analysis of official returns from Anglican dioceses showed 1321 ordained chaplains and only 248 lay chaplains (Todd, Slater and Dunlop 2014). However, that report concluded that there was a significant gap in data held on lay roles. The authors suggested that while that data put the ratio at 8:1 ordained to lay, in all likelihood it was closer to the other way round in reality.

Despite this shift, it is fair to say that much of the focus, particularly in finding a model of ministry or theology, remains premised on the assumption that the chaplain is likely to be an ordained minister. It is notable how much pastoral theology work continues to hark back to Gregory the Great's sixth-century 'Pastoral Rule' – a book designed as advice to a newly appointed bishop. Even today the development of practical theology often retains a tension over the exact breakdown of such roles to be particularly considered clerical and those which are to be entrusted to the laity. Benedict XVI's *Deus Caritas Est* (2005) is typical of the trend, stressing the character of the Church in providing a threefold ministry: proclaiming the word of God, celebrating the sacraments and exercising charity. Yet which of these, if any, are to be done by the laity is left noticeably unclear.

This raises some particular challenges for modern-day models. For example, if part of the role of chaplaincy is to deliver religious services, there are particular aspects that are currently reserved for ordained clergy. For example, only Catholic priests may hear confession, or say Mass, so if Catholic chaplaincy roles are going to be filled by the laity, that raises a challenge.

The intended beneficiaries

The intended beneficiaries of chaplaincy were once obvious. The great majority of the population were practising Anglicans and Anglican chaplains ministered to them while Roman Catholics, Methodists and others provided chaplains to support their own denominations. That model fits awkwardly into today's more diverse Britain. Chaplains in most fields are expected to minister to anyone, regardless of faith or belief. This is made explicit in many codes of conduct and contracts (see, for example, the UK Board of Healthcare Chaplaincy's Code of Conduct for Healthcare Chaplains).

Yet this is not always an entirely clear distinction, certainly not in the case of the many unpaid visitor and volunteer chaplaincy roles. Plenty of chaplains are appointed precisely due to the desire to have a representative of a particular faith group. There is a difference in model between those chaplains (usually volunteers or sessional appointments) who are called in when requested by a member of their faith group, and those in more regular capacities who are more embedded in the everyday life of their setting.

This difference has consequences. One is a fear of imperialism – of Anglicans being assumed (by virtue of their Established Church model) to be able to speak to anyone, and therefore, for them to disproportionately dominate the paid and leadership roles within chaplaincy teams. This can cause resentment among other chaplains who feel sidelined. It is also a legitimate concern that there can be an assumption that one chaplain is as good as any other, whereas several pieces of research have suggested that service users prefer chaplains of their own faith and do not always feel sufficiently catered for by others (Orchard 2000; Siddiqui 2007).

Models of chaplaincy

The four themes above each provide important context in which chaplaincy models are developing. In terms of the

specific theological and secular models on which chaplaincy can draw, a good summary was provided by Miranda Threlfall-Holmes in *Being a Chaplain* (Threlfall-Holmes and Newitt 2011). Her schema split chaplaincy models between theological and secular:

Theological

- missionary
- pastor
- historical/parish model
- agent of challenge
- incarnational/sacramental.

Secular

- pastoral care
- spiritual care
- diversity model
- tradition/heritage model
- specialist service provider.

My intention is to build on those same models while adding to the theological models the ideas of ‘cultist’ and ‘exile’, and to the secular models a ‘community mediator’ model. It should be noted that few if any chaplains will fall only within one model – they are necessarily interacting with one another, not least given the theme of bilingualism highlighted above. The strongest theological models are those that are most mindful of the power of relationships and encounter, and several of the models presented below need some adjustment to better reflect that point.

Theological chaplaincy models

Missionary

In the context of an increasingly secular society the appeal of a missionary model is obvious. It has in it that sense of going out and taking the gospel to the unchurched. This is also a model which suits the issue of chaplaincy having to fit into very different contexts – finding language to suit the particular situation of, for example, a prison.

The danger of the missionary model lies in chaplains being perceived as agents of ‘proselytism’ – using a position to abuse vulnerable people, or otherwise seeming inappropriate within a plural and multi-faith space (Bickley 2015). It is also something which seems to be more openly discussed in some sectors than others. Town-centre chaplains and sports chaplains are almost universally Christian (versus the more diverse NHS and prison sectors, for example) and often drawn from more openly evangelical Christian traditions. They are correspondingly more likely to talk in terms of mission and evangelism, than say, NHS chaplains, who seem more wary of the charge of inappropriate behaviour in the public square. Nor is such reticence entirely due to a concern to be seen to be acceptable to secular employers. More generally there seems to be a conscious desire to avoid being an evangelist among many chaplains.

If chaplains are barred from evangelising by secular spaces and therefore refrain from seeing themselves as missionaries, there is a possible tension between the theological basis of chaplaincy and what they are doing in practice. If, however, their reticence is about something more than official policy, that raises a more challenging theological question as to whether evangelism is viewed as a genuine part of ministry by chaplains. To put it another way, are chaplains scared of the possibility of evangelism?

It is worth noting that the missionary model does not necessarily mean explicit ‘proselytising’ activity. A common

line from chaplains in interviews for the Theos project was the quote attributed to St Francis that they sought 'to preach the gospel. If necessary, use words.' This sense of being a witness to faith without being 'preachy', as many phrased it, has a strong theological pedigree within this missionary model.

Threlfall-Holmes includes this as the first of the theological models, and yet it seems to be one of the most contested by chaplains themselves. There is understandable concern to avoid what Pope Francis has called 'the solemn nonsense' of proselytism: crude, unsubtle, even rude attempts to convince others of the truth of Christianity. Those are fair concerns, but there is also a need to be mindful that mission is a fundamental tenet of Christianity, and that going out and spreading the gospel, whether via words or deeds, is a part of Christian ministry.

In some of the models that follow the power of chaplaincy as encounter is discussed. This is also a key point for the missionary model. Chaplaincy work at its heart is about encounters between chaplain and service user, where the chaplain is manifesting in that relationship something of God's love for humanity. There is power in such encounters, with at least the potential for radical transformation in the life of the service user. The missionary model, like several of the models below, is at its best about the power of relationships to create change.

Pastor

If the missionary model feels as if it particularly gets at the idea of being a public ministry in a space with many non-Christians, then the pastor model provides a specific focus on the caring content of the ministry.

Like the missionary model, it is about witnessing to the love of God through service to others. It is in some ways the easiest theological model to sell to secular spaces, since it ties closely to secular models of spiritual and pastoral care. The

output amounts to the same (pastoral care), the difference is in the theological background. So, for example, in Winnifred Fallers Sullivan's book, *A Ministry of Presence* (Fallers Sullivan 2014, p.178), the idea of presence in chaplaincy is tied in with the idea of servanthood (*diakonia*).

The question in this model is whether there is sufficient theological content for it to be durable in its own right.

Certainly, there is a biblical case to be made for the necessity of caring for the vulnerable, with the parables of the good Samaritan (Luke 10.25–37) and the parable of the sheep and goats (Matthew 25.31–46) being just two frequently quoted examples. There is little, however, distinctively Christian about most pastoral care. Christians are certainly called to care for the vulnerable, but as a model for chaplaincy, simply caring for others is a rather limited vision of the role.

Historical/parish model

This model is essentially the original model of chaplaincy – an extension of the parish to those unable for whatever reason to attend a parish church. It works best within strong institutional settings with a clearly defined community.

Military chaplains are a classic example of Christian ministers taking the parish model on military campaigns, but similar models exist within schools, prisons and universities.

In the university context, this brings up a philosophical split over chaplaincy models. Catholic students have been actively encouraged to view the university chaplaincy literally as their own parish, taking Mass and the other sacraments together with fellow students (Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People 2004). Other Christian denominations have shied away from such a model, with chaplains encouraged to perform a more general role for the institution as a whole and/or to encourage Christians to attend local churches. For those latter chaplains, chaplaincy is not considered to be providing a church for worshippers

within a place in the same way that Catholics might see it. It is interesting to note that research indicates that engagement with university chaplaincy by mainstream Protestants is significantly lower than it is among Catholic or Pentecostal students – perhaps indicating that engagement is higher among those groups that view chaplaincy more as a localised church (Aune 2016).

The broader question is whether such a model remains desirable. It certainly meets the particular needs of Christians within certain contexts (particularly those who are unable to attend a local church), but in other ways can be seen as promoting an insular vision of Christianity. Where chaplains' great advantage is their ability to go to people, rather than requiring people to come to church, this seems to perpetuate the struggles of the parish model.

Agent of challenge

In a number of chaplaincy models there is an idea of the chaplain as a figure able to challenge or confront behaviour within their setting. Most commonly this is associated with people using the language of 'prophet' in describing their role. This might involve challenging particular policies or practices within an organisation.

The gap between this and other theological models is that this role performs a very different function. The missionary, the pastor and the incarnational role (below) are all following established models of pastoral theology originally applied (at least primarily) to priests. Their target, in each case, is individuals within the space in which chaplains work – prisoners, employees, patients and so on. The prophet figure, by contrast, is speaking primarily to the institution. This function is about being a voice for justice, rather than care, challenging the practice of organisations, rather than simply working within them.

The focus of this model on justice makes it one of the few models that works particularly well for lay chaplains. Justice, in Catholic social teaching, has been considered as political work and, therefore, the priority of the laity. Celebrating the sacraments (as in a parish model), teaching or proclaiming the gospel (as in the missionary model) and pastoral care (as in the pastor model), by contrast, have been seen as duties belonging particularly to clergy. That distinction is less meaningful in other Christian theological traditions – but does at least serve to highlight that this model operates in quite a different theological register to other chaplaincy models.



Incarnational/sacramental

This model is similar to the missionary and pastor models in being tied up with the idea of substantiating the love of God or the message of the Christian faith within the person of the chaplain. The difference from the pastoral model is that if that model focuses particularly on the activity of a chaplain, this one has tended to focus on the simple fact of the chaplain's presence. Some prefer to use the language of sacrament – with chaplains by virtue of their existence in a place being a physical manifestation of God's love.

There are a number of potential problems with this model. One is translating it into any sense that is meaningful to secular spaces – where it can sound like special pleading and refusing to actually committing to really *do* anything! More fundamentally, the too frequently unacknowledged issue with this model is that it relies on the assumption that there actually is a regular chaplaincy presence. Increasingly, chaplaincy models are relying on part-time, volunteer and sessional services. Relatively few chaplains actually do constitute a constant real presence in the life of any given space, which for a model based on presence seems a fundamental weakness.

Nevertheless, this model gets towards the crux of chaplaincy. The weakness, as expressed in Threlfall-Holmes and elsewhere, is to focus this model too much on the identity of the chaplain, and too little on their methodology. Only a minority of chaplaincy work involves constant presence within a place (most chaplains are part time), but by contrast almost all chaplaincy work is involved in the business of relationships. The talk of sacramental presence makes the process sound too passive, unless it is understood within a context of deliberate relationship building.

This model might be stronger still, however, if it adapted the Catholic social teaching idea of 'personalism'. Personalism at its most basic is the idea that all humans are innately relational beings. It is based on Trinitarian theology, in which the three persons of the Trinity are essentially in relationship with one another. In the same way humans are understood not as atomised individuals, but as beings for whom maximising potential can only be done through relationships with others.

In this context, the point about incarnational theology is not simply that God became incarnate but that as God's incarnate, Jesus met, spoke to, healed and taught people. The fact of the incarnation is made more significant by the constant encounter between God and humanity in the life of Jesus. In the same way, chaplaincy's greatest theological tool is its ability to encounter people. To quote Pope Benedict XVI, 'Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or lofty idea but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and decisive direction' (Benedict XVI 2005).

That encounter, in which the chaplain stands as the manifestation of God's love, even – perhaps especially – in places where hopelessness seems to dominate, is achieved through relationships. The matching together of a personalist sense of the importance of relationships alongside the idea of incarnation is the model of chaplaincy that seems

most theologically robust, and true to what chaplains do in practice already.

To these theological models from Threlfall-Holmes there are two additional theological models (cultist and exile) proposed here to broaden the debate.

Cultist and/or exile?

Both these models revolve around a question of how integrated into the life of the wider Church chaplains really are. In the case of the former, the question is whether the people whom chaplains reach really get brought closer to the Church (or faith group) as a whole, or simply become a part of a smaller cult around the specific chaplaincy they have encountered. This is a danger highlighted by Stephen Pattison (Pattison 2015). He focuses on the changing trajectories of religion in Britain, with the decline in church attendance and the paradoxical growth in chaplaincy, and wonders whether this indicates that chaplaincy is itself becoming a religion – one which is quiescent to the multi-faith issues and professional agenda of the day and is utterly divorced from the wider Church.

If this seems a bit overstated it does nonetheless get at the fact that chaplains are often operating at something of a distance from the wider Church/faith/religion. Another aspect of that might be the idea of the chaplain as an exile – operating away from the Church. The difference between such a model and, say, the missionary model is that the latter is sent (literally the root *missio* being from the Latin to send or dispatch), with an implied connection back to the rest of the faith community, while an exile is separate (even deliberately detached) from that community. There is evidence to support the idea that a good proportion of chaplains feel actively disenfranchised from their Church. For example, a disproportionate number of Anglican chaplains are in same-sex partnerships, theologically liberal and likely to feel at odds

with the Church, and therefore possibly using chaplaincy as an 'escape' from the Church (Swift 2014, p.157).

Both these models may have negative connotations, yet they are undoubtedly hinting at a real aspect of chaplaincy, and one that is dangerous for faith groups, who risk losing any benefit from their chaplains beyond their immediate context. It also represents a challenge for chaplains, for whom for whatever reason such a model may be attractive (as providing independence from difficult structures), but risks too great a detachment and loss of (at least potential) resources and support from the Church. At a theological level, the danger is in a breakdown of relationships. With the opening up of a world of transformative encounters, the risk is that if that world is too focused on a single chaplain, and not the wider church, then the service user will not be led any further on that potential journey.

Secular chaplaincy models

Aside from theological models, Threlfall-Holmes also lists a series of possible secular models. The interesting debate is how far these are compatible with the theological models.

There should be a recognition that chaplaincy needs to be a bilingual operation – speaking the language of both faith and secular need. Critically, being bilingual needs authenticity.

Institutions and organisations demand particular services of their chaplains, which form the basis for their invitation or payment. That is their prerogative and is not inherently problematic unless chaplains take those secular needs to be the only purpose of their work. That way lies the risk of the role becoming spiritually empty, devoid of genuine theological purpose or content.

For the purposes of this chapter, therefore, the models below are only considered in brief, and according to what consequences they might have for the theological models above.

Pastoral care

From a secular perspective, the ability of chaplains to provide pastoral care is often the key or even sole model that they support. What it means in practice is of course very broad and might vary markedly in different settings – producing very different output measures for chaplaincy.

The range is sufficiently wide to challenge the idea that this is a single model at all, but rather a catch-all term for the sort of work that characterises much of chaplaincy from a secular perspective. For chaplains, it carries with it a tension too, which is that if taken to the exclusion of all other models this relegates them to nothing more than being professional nice guys, or cheap welfare workers (Newitt 2011). The value theologically of this role is twofold. First, it coheres quite closely to the pastor model above; second, it opens up the space for relationships and encounters that, as argued above, are the key to understanding a theological model for chaplaincy.

Spiritual care

Unlike the pastoral care model, spiritual care assumes the importance of chaplains in meeting some sort of spiritual or religious need. For example, within the NHS context, an increasing focus is being placed on the contribution of chaplains to supporting spiritual health and wellbeing – with demonstrable effects on recovery, mental health and other factors (Kevern and Hill 2014; Raffay, Wood and Todd 2016).

Though these are secular models there is also a secular purpose in having a figure who particularly provides for religious needs that no other member of staff is suited to fulfil. For example, within the prison context, prisoners have the right to practise religion but obviously cannot leave the prison to attend a place of worship, nor would other prison staff be appropriate to run such activities.

Diversity model

The need for workplaces and public bodies to exhibit, support and promote diversity has led to both new chaplaincy models and challenges. Some chaplains (often titled something like ‘interfaith advisers’) have carved out a niche as diversity experts, working within organisations as advocates for minority religious groups and as advisers on policies – a role which seems to fit well with the theological role of prophet, even if it seems less applicable to other theological models, and less focused on relationships and encounters (Gilliat-Ray, Ali and Pattison 2013).

Tradition/heritage model

Chaplaincy is an old model of ministry and in many settings its sense of tradition or tie-in to the ethos and heritage of its context is essential to its appeal. This is particularly true in historic institutions with strong traditional identities, such as Oxbridge colleges, public schools and the military. The military makes for a specific case study, in which chaplains are part of the fabric of the institution, particularly surrounding key community bonding moments such as funerals and repatriations of service men and women killed abroad. Important as this role undoubtedly is in some contexts, it is probably fair to say that it has little theological content to it in most contexts.

Specialist service provider

Threlfall-Holmes uses this category as a meta-category to include a range of secular themes and models that use chaplaincy to meet some particular professional service – including the models used above or other common aspects of the role such as counselling or signposting to other services. For Threlfall-Holmes, a particular dimension of this is that

this is a model that is demand-led – chaplains fulfil such services as users within a particular setting need and want. As such, we might conclude that this model particularly fits a new, more individualised secular society in which religion and spirituality are personal matters addressed according to a particular individual's need, rather than a more traditional society that might expect believers to go to a place of worship and accept a less personalised response.

More contentious is the role of chaplains in assisting with the Prevent agenda against extremism. This is particularly the case in prisons, but is also growing in school and university chaplaincy. What this means in practice varies from setting to setting, but certainly it would seem that there has been a significant amount of funding put towards Muslim prison chaplains in particular, fuelling a remarkable growth that now sees some 20 per cent of prison chaplains coming from that faith group, compared with 12 per cent of the prison population and 5 per cent of the general population (Todd 2011, p.95). This also adds a real danger, since potentially at least it creates a chaplaincy model in which chaplains are state agents employed with a particular counter-extremism role – a model which is very different from, and which risks undermining, other models (Todd 2013). Chaplaincy that rests on relationships needs trust to work. The perception that chaplains are there for security purposes is, to put it mildly, not conducive to trust. To these models we can add one additional model: the mediator and community bridge.

Mediator and community bridge

A final model of chaplaincy worth considering is the role of chaplains as community bridges. This role occurs in a number of settings. One is among police chaplains (particularly from minority faiths), who have a role not just in offering pastoral care to the police but also in helping them to make connections and grow relationships with local

religious and ethnic minority communities. This role, as a bridge connecting one part of the community with another, perhaps more isolated or insular, part is replicated in other chaplaincies in different ways. Community chaplaincy, for example, works with ex-offenders, and several operate as charities both within and outside prisons, to help former prisoners rehabilitate into a waiting community, possibly via a local church or with a mentor.

Conclusions

This chapter has drawn attention to a number of developing themes within the chaplaincy world, and to several possible models. It is worth stressing again that not all of these themes and not all of the models will be equally relevant in every context. Chaplaincy is a field of immense breadth, and the difference between different settings makes it nearly impossible to find generally applicable themes.

Defining chaplaincy models outside the particular context of the chaplain in question is, as a result, something of a fool's errand, and this chapter has done no more than try at least to raise the parameters within which an evaluation might be made. Chaplains seeking a model might recall Paul VI's encyclical *Octogesima adveniens* which says of the Church's social teaching:

If it does not intervene to authenticate a given structure or to propose a ready-made model, it does not thereby limit itself to recalling general principles. It develops through reflection applied to the changing situations of the world, under the driving force of the gospel as the source of renewal when its message is accepted in its totality and with all its demands. (Paul VI 1971)

Much the same could be said of chaplaincy; it need not have a ready-made model and certainly ought to reflect its particular context, yet it ought to recall also some specific

theological principles that undergird it. Central to those principles is the critical nature of relationship building to chaplaincy. Several of the proposed models above, particularly the missionary and incarnational models, get at the crux of the issue but would be strengthened further if they included a more explicit concern for the essentially relational nature of humanity and the role of chaplains in creating transformational encounters. Chaplaincy across its various sectors is always at its best involved in the business of relationship building. That is often acknowledged, but sometimes insufficiently theologically grounded; what this chapter has attempted to do is to suggest ways in which that theological grounding might be clarified and strengthened.

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