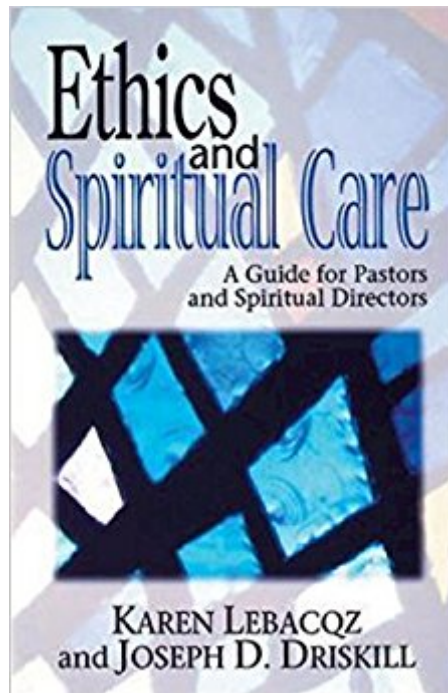




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# Ethics And Spiritual Care: A Guide For Pastors And Spiritual Directors



## Synopsis

Ethics and Spiritual Care responds to three phenomena of increasing importance: Although spiritual care is at the heart of ordained ministry, there is no text in professional ethics for clergy that focuses specifically on spiritual care. What ethical guidelines are needed to ensure that spiritual care in ministry is appropriate? Many people in our world do not consider themselves “religious” but use the term “spiritual.” The burgeoning interest in “spirituality” is an invitation to people with little training to set themselves up as “spiritual directors.” Guidelines are needed not simply for the ethical practice of parish ministry, but for specific practices of spiritual direction. Allegations of “spiritual abuse” have been made both in practice and in the literature; the term is being used with some frequency. The development of this term and its implications requires some scrutiny and response, as sexual abuse is not a good model for understanding spiritual abuse.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

2001 KAREN LEBACQZ is Professor of Theological Ethics at Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California. She is ordained in the United Church of Christ and is a member of the Society of Christian Ethics.

Excellent

Small book, but very real and powerful information

I needed this book fast and in decent condition for a summer course at my seminary, it was ordered, shipped and received in great condition with good communication from the seller on shipping status.

First chapter ok but rest .... I am not big fan of this book. However, for widening horizons on more Protestantism prospective it is fine.

Disappointed to find this heavily focused on church issues with rare overlap with issues in my own faith community.

Product was as described and arrived on time. Packaging was great. good good good good good good good good good good

Ethics and Spiritual Care is a collaboration between well-known ethicist Karen Lebacqz (author of Sex in the Parish) and Joseph Driskill, a professor of spirituality. The authors explore many ethical dimensions of ministry as spiritual leadership. The book begins by examining two fundamental questions: What is authentic spirituality? And, is the "professional model" adequate for examining ministry? They then move on to pastoral care, pastoral counseling, and spiritual direction--the differences between them and the ethical issues involved with providing spiritual guidance. Although the entire book is very good, I think it really shines in chapter four. Here they explore several ethical quandaries: when to tell people "this is not the right church for you," dealing with noncongregants who come for assistance, dealing with spiritual practices from other religions and traditions, and dealing with the fine line between spiritual gifts and mental illness. Chapter four also introduces the concept of "spiritual neglect" and examine several issues where pastors too often neglect to lead: family violence, spiritual growth, feminist spirituality, stewardship, and social justice. The next chapter focuses on specialized and workplace ministries (for example, campus ministers, and hospital & military chaplains). These ministers' ability to structurally impact their institutions (if they do not merely become agents of the institutions leadership) is highlighted. The authors also point out that these ministers are not always given the recognition they deserve as "real" ministers. The connection between spirituality and workplace is also explored. Ministers may be so wrapped-up in the culture of overwork and so accepting of their own long hours that they preach the virtue of "hard work" to people who are already overworked. On the subject of workplace spirituality, the authors

caution, "If spiritual practices are used to help people endure situations that should be transformed, the spiritual practice is simply a coping technique in the service of harmony or productivity." The final subject of the book is spiritual abuse. Other authors' discussions about the spiritual abuse of parishioners are examined. Lebacqz and Driskill then provide their own "composite picture" and analysis. The spiritual abuse of clergy is also examined. Ethics and Spiritual Care does not provide hard-and-fast rules of "do this" and "don't do that," though it does provide some guidelines. Its real strength is the depth with which it explores a wide-range of ethical issues in ministry. The book is well-written and easy to follow. It is not some dense theological treatise where you have to wonder what the authors are trying to say. In summary, I agree with the opinion of Richard Gula printed on the back cover--this book "should be required reading in ministry training and continuing education programs." I doubt any religious leader will be sorry they got this book.

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