SERVING GOD

AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA:

THE MINISTRY EXPERIENCES OF CLERGY IN VICTORIAN

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEES

Submitted by

Aviva Malkah Kipen, T.P.T.C., T.O.C., B.A., M.A.

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In response to the Australian requirement of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research\(^1\), volunteer clergy fill the pastoral care positions on in-house Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs).\(^2\) I served for more than a decade in the role and found myself increasingly convinced of the merit of the task, despite the heavy workload and the long meetings. It became clear that while attending to the identical workload as all other volunteers, I was experiencing HREC work as a vehicle for my religious convictions, as a religious experience, as part of my rabbinic identity, as ministry. I wondered whether other clergy had similar understandings of the HREC pastoral care portfolio.

This thesis is concerned with how 13 Christian and Jewish clergy participants experienced their HREC service. I invited participants to narrate the application of God’s call to HREC service and the skilling/training that prepared them for the specialty. Semi-structured interviews yielded reflective responses on their sacred service to the nation. The constructivist paradigm was used to analyze the data. Anticipating the grooming of prospective HREC pastors, I reviewed existing training resources as a basis for recommendations for consideration by theological colleges.


\(^2\) Known elsewhere as IRBs/RECs.
Experienced in Victoria’s multi-faith community, my female, rabbinic identities were alert to the divide between my Jewish heritage and that of Christian contributors. Reflecting on participants’ contributions across the faith divide replicated, to some degree, the situations in HREC meetings. We may pastor to those of like, other or no faith, be they committee colleagues, researchers, or research participants whom we will never meet, but on whose behalf we give our time and effort. The HREC task is to give pastoral care across the faith divides.

My research task was to enter the experiences of colleagues and to seek the professional commonalities and differences across the faith divides as a contribution towards the continuance of clergy HREC work, and in doing so to identify whether my experience of HREC work is affirmed by others as an identifiable ministry in service to God and the Commonwealth of Australia.
STATEMENT OF ORIGINALLITY

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any university or other institution.

To the best of my knowledge the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.
I extend my grateful thanks to:

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GLOSSARY, ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

√ Square root symbol indicates three letter Hebrew verb roots

AD/CE Common Era replaces Anno Domini as the Jewish time
convention for the secular calendar, hence BCE Before CE

AHEC Australian Health Ethics Committee, an NHMRC sub-
committee

Bavli Citations from the Babylonian Talmud are detailed by
tractate, page and folio numbers. There are no Jerusalem
Talmud citations, which would have been identified
Yerushalmi

CPE Clinical Pastoral Education

FHC Federal Health Council

Heb. Hebrew

HHS U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

HRA Health Research Authority of the UK NHS

HREC/REC Human Research Ethics Committee (pl. HRECs), Research
Ethics Committee (pl. RECs)

IRB Institutional Review Board (pl. IRBs) also known as Ethical,
Institutional or Research Ethics Boards (REBs)
Midrash

Proper noun; a rabbinic literary form of text interpretation, deriving from the Hebrew √D R Sh, infinitive lidrosh, to expound; also to explain, interpret, discourse

Originally oral in form, several collections of midrashim (pl.) were captured in their own anthologies, recorded during the centuries following the destruction of the Second Temple and other individual examples appear in a range of citations within the volumes of the Talmud.

Midrash Halakhah has the weight of determining Jewish normative behavior.

The literary treatment of biblical text by which to make a series of homiletic points, Midrash Aggadah has provided the method by which other darshanim (pl. text interpreters, darshan sing.) have subsequently brought the term into English. Through that literary usage, the process has extended the original meaning to apply, for example, to interpretations of works of art and popular literature of all kinds. The method by which the Hebrew term finds its currency in English is itself Midrashic.

National Guidelines

The Australian Human Research Ethic code which preceded the National Statement

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National Statement or Statement

Used as short forms for references to the Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research

NHMRC National Health & Medical Research Council of Australia

NHS UK National Health Service

NRES UK National Research Ethics Service

OHRP U.S. Office for Human Research Protections

OT. This convention as identified by Turabian 7th Edition\(^3\) will not be used, except if cited in direct quotations.

Whilst the Christian convention for citing from the Jewish Bible is to identify that corpus as Old Testament, I shall distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish texts as follows:

\textit{Torah} referring to Pentateuch (also references “teaching”)

\textit{Nevi’im}—Prophets

\textit{Ketuvim}—Writings

\textit{TaNaKh}—the acrostic referring to the three combined sections.

Where translations from the Hebrew texts are my own, I will not cite any print edition of the text. Where translations are quoted, they will be cited in full.

\footnote{\textit{Kate L. Turabian}, \textit{A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations} (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).}
Where references are to Christian Bible citations, books will be identified by conventions cited in Turabian, 7th Edition.4

**pardess** An orchard; homophone for *paradise* and mnemonic for levels of Midrashic text response

**Parish** Parish, Diocese, Hierarchy, Denomination, Church and other Christian terms are used generically to apply to other faiths, in particular to Judaism and the communities of the Jewish contributors. This eliminates the need to distinguish between a parish and a congregation (*kehilah kedoshah*) or to further belabor the point that there are no appointing hierarchies within Judaism, as each congregation is autonomous as is the case in some Christian denominations.

**“to pastor”** As the research seeks to establish the pastoral ministry being exercised in HREC work, I created a present participle and other grammatical forms to identify the intentional work of the pastor, for example “Have you experienced that as *pastoring* to colleagues of your Committee?”

Interestingly, Spell-check in Word auto-corrects this to ‘pasturing’, the noun for the pasture land where its nourishment takes place or the verb form of putting animals to pasture, an apt link to the pastor’s task of shepherding a flock.

**REB** Health Canada’s Research Ethics Board

**Sho‘ah** The preferred Hebrew term for Holocaust

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Biblical references: Citations from the Jewish Bible correspond to its sentence divisions and numbering. See OT.

Grammar: Participants’ quotations are cited verbatim and no attempt has been made to alter grammar. Where extra clarity has been required, editorial brackets will indicate an insertion. Where the content of editorial brackets is in italics, this is a deliberate alteration for the purpose of veiling a quotation that would identify the participant, their institution or HREC or some other person or institution (see Methodology).

Issues of gender-sensitive language: To the extent possible and where appropriate, Hebrew translations will be rendered as gender inclusive, deliberately removing the male and female elements and inserting a neuter alternative in the English. To remove the repeated use of the “his/her” or “her/his” dual alternatives where no specific gender reference
is being made, I deliberately use “their”, the third person plural possessive pronoun to eliminate reference to either male or female gender.

Spelling: American spelling, per the Word spell check is used, except where original quotations are cited, in which case they are rendered verbatim.

This thesis is presented in typeface Calibri, 12 point, 1.5 line spaced. Footnotes are presented in 10 point.
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INTRODUCTION

The Personal Journey Towards a Research Question

In 1999, in my role as a congregational rabbi in Melbourne, I was invited to a meeting over lunch, with the clergy member on one of Monash University’s Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs) who was scouting for a colleague. Essentially the invitation was a recruitment drive and the Reverend invited me to think about taking a place on the parallel committee. The nature of the work required was intriguing and I was coaxed into ‘having a go’. I met the Chair of the committee and was welcomed aboard. The offer came with the promise of mentoring and ongoing support. I would later come to regard all of what would follow as on-the-job training. Each month I would receive a packet of materials to review. My mentor read everything I read and coached me until I was proficient in the evaluation processes. I began by sharing all my proposed reporting reactions and developed my skills with each round of monthly review. When my skill training was complete, I would undertake the monthly review work without mentoring and submit my reports directly to the HREC Secretariat.

I was subsequently appointed to the Victorian Biotechnologies Ethics Advisory Committee (VBEAC). My clergy experience in those two settings—academic and governmental—was unexceptional; I came to know many others were doing similar work in Victoria’s parallel HRECs.¹ We were all

volunteers; a small sitting fee, petrol money and car park vouchers were the only payment. These did not remotely compensate for the hours expended in responding to the demands of the tasks on each month’s slate. Busy with a more-than-full clergy load, I nevertheless accepted renewals of the invitation to serve in both settings and I only removed myself from the serving clergy pool during my time as a researcher. Like all other committee members, I had made time available to read submissions, write reports and collaborate with co-readers, participate in or chair subcommittees of the VBEAC and make presentations to other bodies as required.

The Questions that Arose

In the course of several years’ work, my professional reflection process resulted in questions that seemed also to apply to others:

- What motivated busy clergy to continue to add this heavy workload, term after term?
- How were other clergy from different faiths responding?
- Did others have interfaith expertise at their disposal?
- What was the place of clergy contributors in the otherwise secular human research ethics landscape?
- What kind of pastoral care was being enacted?
- To what extent did the clergy feel that their contribution in the HREC setting was part of their understanding of their professional ministry?
• Could knowing the answers to these questions assist with future clergy recruitment by providing the platform upon which training for future HREC clergy’s work might rest?

Over time this rich landscape of professional questions came into focus as a formal thesis topic. Although it was not possible at the outset to know whether there would be consequences arising from my investigation, I wondered whether potential links to future mentoring and coaching, in-service training and specialist course opportunities might be derived from the research outcomes.

**Formulating and Mapping this Thesis**

Chapter One provides the multiple contexts within which this work is located, the international and local historical settings, the current regulatory requirements and the obligations of the HREC clergy to their ordaining institutions and their understandings of the ministry each demands.

Chapter Two situates this investigation in relation to the literatures of adjacent fields and describes the contribution by which they cast light on, but do not fully illuminate this research. Whilst the place of clergy in the development of the bio-ethics field and the philosophy of ethics contributions is well known, the view of professional ministry on the contribution of HREC volunteering appears to be an as-yet undocumented area inviting further study. Chapter Two connects some of the dots in this specialized ministry field.
Chapter Three reviews the methodological considerations that shaped the data collection and analysis phases. It also notes personal style as a major contributor in qualitative research work.

Chapter Four tackles the data. Of the 13 interviews whose scripts provide the evidence for reflective review, the topics and sub-topics that emerge from the voices of the participants are established and woven together through analysis.

Chapter Five addresses the question of training guidelines and content for the skilling of future ministry contributors to the NHMRC work.

Having created the data foundation, Chapter Six provides theological reflection upon HREC work as a ministry that assists with shaping the Australian community.

Brief conclusions appear in Chapter Seven.
CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL CONTEXTS, CHURCH EXPECTATION AND RABBINIC IDENTITY

While the spiritual role of ordained ministers remains much as it was in the seventeenth century, the sociological contexts in which they work have undergone significant changes.¹

The Civil Context

Commencement of Australia’s Human Research Ethics Conversation

Following recommendations of a Royal Commission of Inquiry, Australia’s Federal Health Council (FHC), precursor to today’s National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) was established.² FHC’s first meeting took place in 1937. Nazi euthanasia of disabled German children and adults and later experimentation on captured concentration camp inmates were yet to come to light, but their exposure in the post-WWII Nuremberg war crimes trials would spur codification of human research ethics as a field. Subsequently, and undoubtedly in the light of the ethical code emerging from Nuremberg, the reach of the FHC grew to reflect changing times and circumstances. It became an independently constituted statutory agency in 1992. Through the partnership with the then Australian Vice Chancellors’ Committee (now Universities Australia) the renamed NHMRC grappled,

along with its many other tasks, with health and medical ethics best practice in research and extended that focus to research from all disciplines. Their efforts resulted in the first trials through the National Guidelines\(^3\) and enactment by means of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007\(^4\) of Australia’s self-understanding of how persons are to be treated in the conduct of research that involves human participants.

**National Governance of Human Research**

In Australia, “Human research is governed by Australian law that establishes rights for participants and imposes general and specific responsibilities on researchers and institutions.”\(^5\) Whilst the system emerges from Australia’s internationally significant medical research output since the early twentieth century, Australia’s national oversight system is far more extensive than governance of medical research and trials.

All research, inclusive of all disciplines in which humans are participants (as opposed to those experiments in which animals provide the live subjects\(^6\))

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\(^3\) The document is no longer available for consultation, having been superseded by the Statement.


\(^6\) Animal Ethics Committees do not require participation of the clergy, per committee membership provisions. See NHMRC, “Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of
and which is conducted with Australian government funding\(^7\), is subject to that mandatory human research ethics scrutiny as codified in the National Statement, which sets out responsibilities “intended to be consistent with the international human rights instruments that Australia has ratified.”\(^8\)

### Details of Mandated Service for Clergy

Governance under the National Statement requires the provision of pastoral care, most often supplied by clergy who bring their pastoral expertise to the deliberations of Committees. This thesis investigates service to the Australian public through the ministry of clergy who occupy places on Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs) by virtue of their “expertise in pastoral care.”\(^9\)

To date, despite occasional media references to clergy participation in the HREC system, there has been no serious opposition to their participation. Very few members of the public would know of the HREC system or the place of the clergy within it. One example of the inclusion of clergy in the popular discourse surrounding research ethics went to air on 13 April 2010 in *The 7.30 Report* with ABC Reporter Mary Gearin’s item “Medical Trials in Animals for Scientific Purposes,” https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ea28 (accessed December 25, 2014), 20.

\(^7\) Non-government projects may and should also make use of the Statement and utilize fee-for-service providers who will oversee their projects on a paid basis.


\(^9\) *Ibid.*, 81
The segment was primarily about the need to push on with many clinical trials, which would make Australia a competitive place for product development and new treatment models. Included on the panel was a Catholic priest identified in the program transcript as “Bill Uren”, of whom Mary Gearin said in her introduction, “Father Bill Uren is one of the architects of the National Statement on the Ethical Conduct of Human Research and has sat on a dozen ethics committees over the past two decades.” Among his several contributions Uren said,

A lot of research is conducted on—particularly medical research—on people who are vulnerable. It’s about people who are suffering from disease or disability. And so somebody who has a pastoral relationship with people in that particular cohort is the sort of person we thought brings a new perspective onto the ethical review. But it’s not just a matter of what’s up here in the head, but what’s up here in the heart.11

His reference to heartfelt care as a component of ethical review did not explain how that “new perspective”12 was enshrined in the requirements, rather than being desirable or available.

**The Primary Document**

Section 5 of the National Statement provides the detailed requirement by which clergy are recruited:

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11 Australian Broadcasting Association, “Bill Uren”.

Composition of HRECs

5.1.29 The minimum membership of an HREC is eight. As far as possible:

(a) there should be equal numbers of men and women; and

(b) at least one third of the members should be from outside the institution for which the HREC is reviewing research.

5.1.30 This minimum membership is:

(a) a chairperson, with suitable experience, whose other responsibilities will not impair the HREC’s capacity to carry out its obligations under this National Statement;

(b) at least two lay people, one man and one woman, who have no affiliation with the institution and do not currently engage in medical, scientific, legal or academic work;

(c) at least one person with knowledge of, and current experience in, the professional care, counseling or treatment of people; for example, a nurse or allied health professional;

(d) at least one person who performs a pastoral care role in a community, for example, an Aboriginal elder, a minister of religion; ¹³

There is no doubt that clergy are to be included in committees alongside provision for the particular needs of the First Australians.

This thesis is occupied with that strand of the ministers’ experiences governed by the primary document. Using the lens of ministry studies the project addresses the ministry of those clergy, in the State of Victoria,

¹³ NHMRC, National Statement, 81, my emphasis.
whose voluntary efforts enact their profession through this mandated
HREC service.

The University of Divinity’s HREC Process: A Pastoral Care Workload
Example

The obligation to prepare for meetings, attend and follow-up devolves
equally to all committee members. All must become skilled at navigating
the particular forms and requirements for documentation within their own
institution; some use formal feedback forms which are to be sent to the
Secretariat in advance of meetings, others do not. In order to be able to
assess whether applications meet the requirements, members must have
read and understood the National Statement—a document of 101 pages—
and continue to refer to it as necessary.

Whilst smaller institutions may meet less often than others, the result may
be that every member reads every application in full; whereas in university
settings where hundreds of applications are received, there may be a
triage system in which two or three readers write detailed assessments of
projects and provide summaries for each other to question. In several
settings, where projects are minimally invasive and non-contentious in
nature, as measured against the criteria of the National Statement, an
expedited track may result in a sub-committee assessing and signing off on
such applications. In clinical settings, where the state of current research
forms the background to applications, or where documentation from other
sites in which the proposed research is to become a new center are
included, a single application can run to 100 pages. Where agendas include
several such applications, the reading load is very demanding. As an example of the load in a humanities context, the University of Divinity’s HREC application form\(^\text{14}\) allows for a maximum 4,260 words of answers in the body of the form itself, plus supporting documentation which can run to thousands of words in questionnaires, letters seeking consent and recruitment materials, for which there is no word limit.

The Faith Community Contexts

One Clergy Size Fits All?

It is noted that “Composition of HRECs ... 5.1.29 (d) ... a minister of religion”\(^\text{15}\) does not identify any faith tradition as desired or preferred. In Australia’s complex multi-faith landscape, clergy from every identifiable faith are equally qualified to fulfill this regulation by virtue of the absence of any denominational disqualifier. Despite efforts to recruit from beyond Jewish and Christian clergy\(^\text{16}\) the data are limited to those of Christian and Jewish clergy. Their ordination identifies them as priests, ministers and rabbis. That ordination obliges each to serve within their tradition and within their faith community. In addition, HREC service employs that service beyond the internal reach and structure of the ordaining faith, to

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\(^\text{15}\) NHMRC, National Statement, 81.

\(^\text{16}\) Detailed treatment appears in Methodology.
the broader Australian community. Yet individual clergy appear to be making a link between the expectation of their own faith to service its internal community and an extension to serve beyond it, when they take up HREC work.

**Expectations of Individual Traditions in Relation to their Ordained Clergy**

In its own way, each religious tradition and denomination sets its parochial tone and the language of published policy and publicity reflects the style of the ordaining institutions. By virtue of declared denominational relationships to God, all have visions much larger than individual Jewish congregations, Christian parishes, regions, presbyteries and dioceses. Yet the level of initial recruitment detail is generally set in terms of the parish or its equivalent. Whilst the ultimate goals, love of God, salvation, peace on earth, goodwill to all humankind and betterment of the world (Heb. *tikkun olam*), may have similarities, the ways the ordained clergy are to contribute to each demonstrate a great range of expectation and method, theology and level of scale.

In this context, it is the pastorate that is key; no credentials or evidence of pastoral skill are included in the terms of committee composition. For those committee members who, themselves, have never received pastoral care from clergy, the expectation of what pastoral care is to be supplied on HRECs may not be entirely clear. Further, the traditional spiritual and social ‘shepherding’ that historically defines religious ‘pastoral’ care, may resemble social work from the standpoint of those with no religious knowledge from which to judge the ministry role as being divinely
instigated rather than humanistic. But it is not the satisfactory completion of a Clinical Pastoral Care unit or placement or similar qualification that entitles the pastoral contribution in the committee context. It is ordination itself that identifies pastoral, shepherding skill, despite the diversity of meanings each ordinand and faith institution attaches to the pastoral role.

Committee needs must be met and each member must pull their weight. The ethicist, lay woman or lay man, lawyer or doctor may have a faith which they enact in private and which they are not required to disclose in the committee context. But the faiths of the clergy are presumed by virtue of their traditions and ordinations, which give them authority within each one. The corporate faith positions may be presumed by virtue of the denominational labels, but individuals represent the range of theologies and personal positions within those faiths and traditions. Each enacts their HREC service as an expression of their ordination beyond their corporate identity within their ordaining faith.

That internal pastoral role is clear to Catholics:

A [Catholic] priest is both the leader and the servant of his parish community. He leads them to Jesus by his example of faith and by celebrating the Sacraments of the Church. The priest welcomes new members into the Church at Baptism, he forgives their sins in Reconciliation, he officiates at the celebration of their Marriage, anoints them in time of illness and commends them to eternal life at their funeral. And, most importantly, every day he offers the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass in accordance with Jesus’ instruction to his apostles at the Last Supper. ...

A diocesan priest will likely spend all his priestly life in the parishes of his diocese or archdiocese, but, having promised
obedience to his bishop at his Ordination, he may also be called on to undertake other tasks, such as teaching or lecturing, chaplaincy, formation of seminarians, administration of the diocese or directing diocesan agencies.\(^\text{17}\)

The prime focus on his relationship and service to God through the Sacraments and Church is pastoral, a shepherding of the flock. Other denominations identify the minister’s role with the title Pastor, the nuanced meaning of that role and its practise, being understood in denominational terms by each church or synagogue.

The Lutheran ordination prayer, “Heavenly Father, bless N in his ministry of the gospel. Make him a faithful pastor, a patient teacher, and a wise counselor ... Give and receive comfort as you serve within the church”\(^\text{18}\) links the giving and receiving of comfort to the faith components which drive the candidate to ordination. Comfort is to be given in response to the gospel and the Church’s teaching. The gospel directs the work. To apply that gospel in a secular setting of any HREC is a clear ministry for the Christian clergy. It insists upon the Gospels rather than the Qur’an, the Gita, the Dharma or other sacred writings. Christian ordination is an obligation to God in and through Christ. Yet HREC service provides for a universalized rather than a particular faith’s care. There are tensions between service to the ordaining bodies and service to the HREC secular.


\(^{18}\) David Schubert, ed., Church Rites: Prepared by the Commission on Worship, Lutheran Church of Australia (Adelaide: Lutheran Church of Australia, 1994) 137–144.
system, albeit that Christian thought and practice underpin our secular governance model.

Diverse kinds of ordination language disclose the bridges between introspective focus of pastoral care in service of God within the congregation or denomination and the gaze towards God’s diverse creation beyond the ordaining institutions. For example:

The ordained ministry of the Uniting Church consists of two offices: the ministry of the Word and the ministry of deacon. Both these ministries have a responsibility to safeguard the apostolic faith through preaching the Gospel, administering the sacraments and exercising pastoral care. This threefold task mirrors the threefold nature of the call of the Christian life as expressed by the Basis of Union—‘worship, witness and service’ (para. 1).19

In service to God there is language to accommodate service to others within or beyond the Church.20 Obvious to some as witness, the task of serving souls in HREC work, with no overt opportunity of bringing them to Christ, may perplex those for whom salvation through Jesus is their ministry driver. Further, the ordaining churches have as their raison d’être salvation through Christ. How are the expectations of the ordaining institutions served when clergy, with understandings of their own work, undertake pastoral human ethics oversight in secular settings under

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20 Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA), Ordination and Ministry in The Uniting Church in Australia (Sydney: Uniting Church in Australia National Assembly, 1994), Part 3, §80.
national legislative requirements that make no provision to identify the respective merits of particular theologies?

With all Anglican priests passing through the diaconate and few rising to the level of bishop, the majority of ordinands remain priests. Bishops receive the Episcopal Staff, “as a sign of your pastoral office. Be to the flock of Christ as a shepherd, and not a wolf. Encourage the faithful, support the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, restore the outcast, seek the lost.”21

Far greater is the number of priests who must, “Be a pastor after the pattern of Christ the great Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep. ... Love and serve the people with whom you work, caring alike for young and old, rich and poor, weak and strong.”22 The focus may appear inward, “to the people with whom you work”.23 But there is a broad potential, recalling the original exhortation to every Deacon who must, “play your part in the life and councils of the Church [also] ministering among the sick, the needy and all who are oppressed or in trouble ... and to pray and work for peace and justice in the world.”24

21 Anglican Church of Australia, A Prayer Book for Australia, 806.

22 Ibid., 793.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.
There is no restrictive boundary that identifies where the limit of the community ought to be and the charge to the new deacon is to “search out the careless and indifferent”\(^2\), inviting the pastor to seek the flock and identify sheep who are not yet aware that they could belong to it: “In the Baptist Union of Victoria, ordination celebrates the recognition that a pastoral leader is called by God, gifted and prepared to be recognized as a spiritual leader in church and society.”\(^2\)

This Baptist notion of recognition as a spiritual leader “in society” attaches to the pastoral leadership which ordination affirms. This sense of outreach is implicit in the other ordination rites, with the task of mission, even though it may not be articulated or labeled visibly to the secular observer. The tension between “in church” and “in society” invites the Baptist pastor to extend beyond the church, but cannot address the issues of non-acceptance by those for whom the ordination conveys a title of respect but carries no applicable theological authority, from their vantage point.

Among many other tasks on the list for prospective trainee American\(^2\) Progressive rabbis, “HUC-JIR Rabbinical School prepares rabbis to ... Provide pastoral care and religious guidance” even though there is no image of ‘shepherding’ as a model for pastoral care in Judaism.\(^3\) My own


\(^2\) There are no Progressive rabbinical training institutions in Australasia.

training was at Leo Baeck College, London. Its current website shows a detailed structure grid of academic, practical and vocation progression through the five year program. “Pastoral Care” is mentioned as a module title by name in conjunction with “Community Skills” although the elements of pastoral care equivalent to those of Christian denominations cited are taught in units titled “Life Cycle” and “Reflective Elements: Norwood/Jewish Care Placement”.

My 1991 ordination certificate makes no reference to pastoral care, the professional preparation subjects being identified following the list of academic subjects as “ancillary”. Yet, whilst the ordination is to the Jewish people as a whole, “Rabbi and Teacher in [the people of] Israel” the task is identified clearly. “May the Lord be with her, and establish the work of her hands, that she may bring honor to the Torah, enhance the name of Israel and increase peace in the world.”

Whilst the role of pastor to both the “faith-full” and “faith-less” is cast in terms of service within each faith, pastoral care also functions as a work of outreach on behalf of particular traditions and the enactment of care of souls attaches to the eschatologies of the various denominational models whose ordination each pastor enacts. Yet, significantly, the National Statement clearly demands that, “S.1.35 Members should be appointed as

which church language is entrenched in our everyday use of Christian thought, even in this explicitly Jewish setting.


31 Gender sensitive language is now in use.

32 Ibid., my emphasis.
individuals for their knowledge, qualities and experience, and not as representatives of any organization, group or opinion.”

This clause demonstrates that whilst there may be pressures brought to bear by one or other faith or denomination in known matters of principle and the incumbent clergy cannot insulate themselves from contentious issues within their own faith, neither are they appointed to promulgate their own teachings at the expense of the sensibilities of others. Here the expectation of the ordaining institution is set aside to the extent that—thetically—it does not have, by virtue of the tenure of any one if its clergy, a ‘plant’ on the committee, who can ensure their denominational agenda is served. Ordaining institutions and church hierarchies do not supply the HREC clergy. Individual ministers are approached and accept or decline without reference to other colleagues (unless they should choose to discuss it). Rather, the ordained clergy bring the faiths that they love and about which they are passionate with them into the meetings, as representatives of the notion that religious faith is one of many filters through which the prospective experiences of human subjects in research projects may be screened for the purpose of ensuring the care of each future participant. It is an embodiment of love consistent with a Christian understanding of right living, but a relatively new setting within which to provide that love, by means of pastoral care, for those within any number of flocks (including the non-Christian ones) as well as those beyond them.

The public servants who framed the pastoral care clause provided for all ministers of religion, without faith or denominational distinction, to serve interchangeably on HRECs, thus enabling all ordainees of all faiths who feel called to serve HRECs if they so wish. Given many variants to the understanding of the pastoral role, of which these are just a few, there must be some consensus that enables the successful integration of clergy who may be recruited from every faith or denomination into HRECs. I have seen no attempt, at HREC level, to filter which clergy might be invited to participate and I have seen no attempt by any denomination or faith to object to the tenure of any individual minister on an HREC on the grounds of their faith, theology or ordaining institution. Imams and Buddhist monks have participated in Victoria.

Any potential jockeying for the inclusion or exclusion of any specific faith or denomination is eliminated by virtue of the open category for recruitment. Each sitting clergy person serves for their own ministry reasons, as much as by virtue of the opportunity that the regulations provide for their service. Identifying the complexity of those ministry motivations that fuel HREC service was a major strand of the interview process.
The Ministry Studies Context

The Diversity of Ministries in Australia’s Religiously Plural Nation

My research questions could have been asked in a strictly areligious framework as a secular sociology investigation. However, the questions emerging from my professional clergy identity and reflection upon my HREC work were religiously based. Ministry studies, the degree track for advancement of and within the clergy profession, offered the unambiguously faith-based context for inquiry. Being an ordained, experienced HREC contributor, I could identify areas from my own work that seemed likely to be of potential significance to others contributing to the same specialty workload.

Admission to HRECs of ministers from all faiths provides a multifaith underpinning for this ministry studies project. The thesis asks clergy who have been contributing altruistically to the nation in both religiously identified and secular institutions (hospitals, universities and agencies) to delve into the one thing that distinguishes their service from that of any other colleague at HREC meetings: their pastoral care expertise as personified through their ministry and that ministry as a consequence of their ordination. Their ministries represent a sample of diversity in the complex national tapestry of religions whose clergy are or have been in HREC service. I was just another example of religious diversity among HREC clergy.
A Rabbinic Framework for Doctor of Ministry Work at the University of Divinity

My own situation is far from usual as a student in the ministry studies landscape of Australia. Whilst Doctor of Ministry Studies is a frequent credential for my rabbinic colleagues in the USA and Canada, I was the first Jewish student to be admitted to UD and it is clear that some traditional understandings of a Doctor of Ministry Studies thesis cannot apply across the faith divide. This is not a project for the betterment of a minister in their congregation. The ‘community’ being investigated is a cohort across and beyond congregations, across faiths and between denominations. Its purpose is not the development of ministry skill within a ‘church’ and its epistemology does not rely exclusively on the European academic theological methods that are inherently Christian. This thesis has its foundations in the Jewish tradition of rabbinic scholarship, albeit a modern, female and Australian version of that tradition.

Emblematic of the openness to cross-faith succession and collaborative clergy service on HRECs, not one Christian clergy approached to be interviewed raised the issue of my Jewishness. The Christian clergy clearly did not see it prospectively as a barrier to being able to express themselves though it was axiomatic that my faith could only be Jewish. Indeed, each gift of interview time from Christian colleagues who had never met or worked with me, but who saw the value of being able to share their work and reflect on it for the benefit of HREC clergy service as a whole, demonstrated the workability of having open clergy recruitment in HRECs. Indeed, they recognized that my crossing the faith divide to inquire of the often-intimate faith experiences of Christian colleagues was an act of great
respect and reverence for the differences in our theologies but also the commonality in our shared efforts for Australia.

**A Timely Affirmation for this Research Project**

The current ‘front’ story of ministry most often portrayed in state and national daily newspapers, TV and radio media is frequently the unflattering one: the terrible stories of clergy abuse, institutional denial, apparent closing of ranks against victims of all kinds and frequent ideological positioning to influence legislative processes. This thesis tells a ministry ‘back’ story, one that rarely receives much, if any, media attention. Most clergy live their daily, weekly, monthly and yearly task, usually without public attention, either positive or negative. Only occasionally does excellent clergy work stray into the public notice and receive publicity and scrutiny from beyond the bounds of their own faith traditions.

In 2014, Fr Michael Elligate received an AM award, the second highest civil decoration in the Australian Honours System, “For significant service to the Catholic Church in Australia, to the promotion of ethics in research, and to the community”. Whether or not we know this priest personally, all can applaud that most recent overt recognition of his clergy contribution to HRECs.

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The point of this investigation is to journey into the drivers of the deeper professional ministry issues at play in HREC work. Gary Bouma notes that qualitative research asks “What is going on here? ... from the perspective of those who are in the situation being researched.”35 This project asks what is going on in the ministry life of clergy who provide HREC service to the nation, not from the vantage point of their giving their time and effort which may later be identified and deservedly appreciated by the community at large, but from the vantage point of their inner faith paradigms, their professional enactment of their faiths and the broadest applications of their ministries beyond the boundaries of what many understand as ‘the parish’. This thesis seeks to know the ministry motivations and experiences of 13 clergy who do HREC work, with a view to making recommendations to the institutions that will train others to follow them.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

WWII: The Second Great War

A conservative estimate of WWII losses is 60 million deaths\(^1\), a vast calamity in European, African, and Asia–Pacific theatres. From the point of view of Australia, the cruelty of the Japanese was beyond anything previously experienced. That trauma had to be assimilated into the national psyche. Of the total number of Australian casualties, 78,834\(^2\) across all theatres of war, deaths accounted for 30,689\(^3\) from a national population of 7,430.2 million.\(^4\) Jewish European Holocaust losses of 6 million of the total Jewish population of 9.946 million\(^5\), comprised 10% of the war’s total death toll and almost two thirds of Europe’s Jewish population. That was a Sho’ah\(^6\), a destruction. Its methods included that new form of ideologically determined and technologically assisted mass extermination, which required a set of legal proceedings to address (in addition to military and economic war crimes) the usage of prisoners and

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\(^3\) Ibid.


\(^6\) See Glossary.
the means of their identification, processing, transportation, dehumanization, starvation, use in experimentation and for the vast majority, destruction. The war crimes trials entered some of the actions of the Nazis and their regime into the historic record. Many proceedings at Nuremberg and additional regional hearings from October 1946 to April 1949, were therefore about the crimes of perpetrators and the experiences of Jewish victims. It is also noted with respect and sorrow that homosexuals and other categories of ‘deviants’, political prisoners and ideological objectors were also subject to concentration, enslavement and in some cases, mass killings across Europe. The trial transcripts and judgments, in addition to providing source material for many other legal and historic areas of scholarship, laid the foundation for what would become the field of human research ethics.

Post-war Judicial Process and Governance Responses

Evidence assembled during European war crimes and doctors’ trials, and subsequent proceedings, exposed three categories of experimentation: those “aimed at [1] facilitating the survival of Axis military personnel ... [2] developing and testing pharmaceuticals and treatment methods for injuries and illnesses which German military and occupation personnel encountered in the field ... [and 3] the racial and ideological tenets of the Nazi worldview.”7 However, the National Socialist euthanasia of Christian German and Austrian mentally diminished children, “kinder euthenasie”

1939–1945, and later euthanasia of similarly identified adults, including those with mental illnesses, proved to be the “test program” which would enable the later assassinations of millions.

Karl Brandt orchestrated that official program of Aryan eugenic assassination, with the personal support of Hitler. In his war crimes trial summation, Brandt’s defense counsel asserted:

These [especially needy individuals] are problems of the community. ... The question is how great a sacrifice may the state demand in the interest of the community? This decision is for the state alone.

How the state decides depends on its free discretion, and finds its limit only in the rebellion of its citizens ...

One can condemn the defendant Karl Brandt only by imposing on him the duty of rebellion and the duty of having a different ideology to his environment.

... There is no prohibition against daring to progress.8

If the state could determine such a fate for its own children of Aryan origin, it could have been no surprise that it would extend similar policies to non-Aryans. The technical—rather than moral—step became making use of Jewish, Sinti and Roma children and adults as vehicles for experimentation. The defense by Nazi criminals was that the state had supreme entitlement to command its citizens and hence, if those citizens were ‘following

orders’, their individual actions were not criminal, regardless of their content.

The judgments, resulting from evidence assembled for the ongoing trials, resulted in The Nuremberg Code of Ethical Conduct9 that would shape subsequent worldwide conventions on the treatment of persons who participate in research:

1) the UN 1946 agreement to form a drafting committee in 1947 in response to the “disregard and contempt for human rights [that] have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind”10, clearly referencing the entire canvass of crimes, including those of human research ethics violations;

2) the adoption by the World Medical Association (WMA) in September 194811 of an updated version of the doctors’ Hippocratic Oath, the Declaration of Geneva;

3) on 10 December 1948, the UN General Assembly in New York adoption of its Universal Declaration of Human Rights.12 Whilst it contains no explicit references to science, medicine, bioethics or research, it makes several references to rights for all without distinction.

9 Nuremberg Military Tribunals, Trials of War Criminals, 181–182.


4) Much later, the specific code addressing utilization of human subjects in research would emerge in the form of the Declaration of Helsinki\textsuperscript{13}, adopted by the WMA in June 1964. Helsinki addressed primarily matters of clinical research within the purview of the medical profession and has been continually updated.

UNESCO adopted its Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights\textsuperscript{14}, which limited its considerations to “medicine, life sciences and associated technologies as applied to human beings”\textsuperscript{15} in October 2005. This extended the original medical context of the Declaration of Geneva and demonstrated the later understanding that ethics towards persons participating in research needed to encompass new kinds of clinical relationships as new treatments needed verification. But by 2005, Australia’s National Guidelines were already far more comprehensive, making requirements for human ethics standards mandatory for all disciplines involving human participants and requiring pastoral care as a mandatory component of that oversight in every discipline.

In his 1975 material Immanuel Jakobovits noted “it is clear from the voluminous documentary evidence now available that even this minimal requirement … free consent after being fully informed of the possible risks


\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
involved ... is being widely ignored in practice.”\textsuperscript{16} Included in the litany of ethically-non-compliant research was the Tuskegee Syphilis Study 1932–1972, which continued to exploit poor Afro-American workers long after the declarations were in place.\textsuperscript{17} In Australia, Dr Bob Montgomery of Melbourne’s La Trobe University replicated the 1963 experiments of Yale’s Stanley Milgram.\textsuperscript{18} Students, who were told their final grade depended on participation in the experiment, were required to inflict what they believed were electric shocks to their peers, to establish whether they would ‘follow orders’. The now-notorious legacy of distress undoubtedly contributed to Australia’s research ethics policy response.

\textbf{Towards a Literature of Ministry in Human Research Ethics}

The religious and spiritual foundations upon which the clergy base their service to HRECs have thousands of years of provenance. Yet, at first sight, academic publishing and theological reflection upon this specialist ministry of HREC service provides a non-existent pool of material from which to draw. Whilst it is axiomatic that new areas of study are not provided with a published literature on precisely the material being researched, the academic landscape within which research situates itself generally provides many foundations for grounding the new work. Still, the literature of HREC ministry is scant in the extreme, most likely because Australia’s policy of


\textsuperscript{17} This is included in the US online training program “Protecting Human Research Participants” referenced in Chapter 5.

requiring pastoral carers as mandatory participants in every HREC is not replicated in English-speaking countries with larger research communities and more RECs/IRBs. Even in those countries with similar concerns for ethical standards and the need to be able to meet each other’s requirements, for the purpose of international compliance and funding of multi-center trials, pastoral care is not provided by *mandatory* (i.e., universal) clergy participation. The result appears to be a lack of documentation of the clergy experience of that REC pastoral care work, perhaps because the clergy cohort involved is so small relative to its proportion of committee participants elsewhere.

An exhaustive search for writing on the ministry contribution to the human research ethics issue revealed no catalogue subheading in the practical theology, training for ministry or theological reflection fields and no book tackles the topic. Responding to my perplexity on the paucity of literature about the HREC ministry field in general, beyond Australian shores, the Reference Librarian at Dalton McCaughey Library, Stephen Connelly, scheduled two ‘search online’ conferences with me. We hunted the usual resource banks and the USA Library of Congress classification headings (which I had already perused) together, without success.

Many clergy and scholars have written about the religious principles impacting research ethics. However, it is theological material rather than their professional reflections on the processes by which clergy contribute to the application of those theologies in departments, staffs and committees. To date, even the Australian context has provided nothing that is explicitly tied to this thesis. Of the UK scholars, Agneta Sutton, a
Catholic laywoman, occupies strategic positions in the British and European Human Research Ethics community. The index to her short textbook *Christian Bioethics*\(^{19}\) provides a scan from Aquinas and Aristotle to zygote, including all-party committees, committees of inquiry, civil agencies and the British and European regulators the British and European Parliaments and European Commission. But the assemblage of philosophers and scholars, church agencies and UK civil authorities makes no reference to ministry. The lack of analogous, mandatory national, county or institutional clergy service does not require her to treat the work of the relative few who do serve in their capacity as community representatives, rather than identified pastoral carers.

Virtually all other writers exemplify the same approach. David Vandrunen\(^{20}\) provides 94 pages of theological underpinning before addressing the “difficult decisions” in a primer for adults taking education programs in churches. His bibliographic essay\(^{21}\) appears in the concluding chapter and identifies an extensive list of exclusively Christian theologians and scholars whose work can then be consulted on the topics he addresses. It is perhaps understandable that for church classes it was not necessary to bring in a range of non-Christian theologies, but it is clear that when theologians and scholars tell the story from a single position, the complexity of issues to be considered ignores respect for religious diversity.

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The responses are a thorough list of major contributors to the discussion of how Christians ought to make decisions and shape policies in the light of their own scripture, tradition and scholarship. That literature may demonstrate the theological issues that underpin the decision-making content of those clergy who serve in the Australian context, but does not address their service. Here is the dividing line that explains why this thesis seeks to document their experience.

**Religious Responses: The Place of Pastoral Ministry as Public Service in Secular Times**

I reviewed websites of advisory and regulatory bodies for New Zealand, Canada, UK, South Africa and USA using faith, clergy, minister (of religion as opposed to governmental minister), religion, pastoral care and membership as search terms. A range of sites provided proof that religious leaders were sometimes involved. But overall, it is demonstrated that Australia’s mandatory inclusion of committee members with specific knowledge of and expertise in pastoral care is unique.

Canada’s Institutes of Health Research ethics office Council\textsuperscript{22} admits business leaders alongside academics and practitioners, embodying the skills-based board of directors model in which pastoral skills do not have a seat at the table. Health Canada’s requirement for community participants

in Research Ethics Boards identifies “Aboriginal”\textsuperscript{23} members as delegates and alternates, and “two members who have no affiliation with Health Canada, one recruited from the community served by Health Canada”\textsuperscript{24} which does not identify clergy either positively or negatively as potentially filling the role. Canada’s 2010 Tri Council Policy Statement defines, “Welfare—The quality of a person’s experience of life in all its aspects. Welfare consists of the impact on individuals and/or groups of factors such as their physical, mental and spiritual health, as well as their physical, economic and social circumstances.”\textsuperscript{25} However, no REB member is designated to have special knowledge in matters of spiritual health other than for those Aboriginal peoples for whom identified REB members are required.

Australia’s nearest neighbor and perhaps closest in terms of cultural alignment, New Zealand, excludes any specific reference to clergy in committee membership: “Item 67 The quorum for any Health and Disability Ethics Committees meeting is five members (including the chair or acting chair), of whom at least two must be lay members and at least two non-lay members.”\textsuperscript{26} South Africa’s Code of Research Ethics\textsuperscript{27} makes

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Ibid.
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no direct reference to diversity or religion or race. However, the composition of its current Research Ethics Committee\textsuperscript{28} (whose term ends October 2014) reflects a range of community representatives from various sectors of South Africa’s diverse cultural groupings. Religion is clearly not an area of concern, but the needs of people dealing with AIDS issues and the needs of children are identified specifically.

UK’s 2012 harmonized governance guidelines notes:

\begin{quote}
4.2 Composition of research ethics committees ... should reflect the diversity of the adult population of society, taking account of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. ... Appointing authorities should take steps, with support from the relevant head office, to publicize the work of RECs and encourage applications for membership from groups who are underrepresented.\textsuperscript{29}
\end{quote}

However no reference is made to ministers or a pastoral care role; rather the emphasis is on comprehensive recognition of diversity. UK’s Nuffield Council on Bioethics Working Party on Donor Conception includes “Wybo Dondorp who is Assistant Professor of Biomedical Ethics at Maastricht University ... His background is in theology and ethics, and his professional

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life has included time spent in teaching and as a minister of the Dutch
Reformed Church. He has worked with the Health Council of the
Netherlands.”30 Whilst the Nuffield’s topic search function does not
identify spirituality or pastoral care, Dondorp’s ministry background fulfills
a function not publicized by others on the Working Party.

The Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority currently includes The
Rt. Rev. Lee Rayfield,31 whose scientific career resulted in 30 published
papers; perhaps his pastoral role is implicit in the minds of all. His photo
and title proclaim his senior clerical status as bishop, unlike Dondorp’s
photo on the university site, which provides no clue as to his religious
connection. But both are male, middle-aged and white. Appointed to
different authorities, they nevertheless give an impression of a certain
uniformity and it is to be hoped that other experts representing Britain’s
diversity are able to take their place as appropriate in keeping with the
harmonized governance guidelines. As to the assurance of pastoral care,
presumably this derives from a lay presence, supplemented by but not
automatically inclusive of clergy.

Searching possible links between chaplaincy and human research ethics,
inasmuch as some Australian chaplains have the HREC role in their job
descriptions, I sought that connection in the UK National Health System’s
documentation. No direct link can be derived from NHS’s own

http://www.nuffieldbioethics.org/donor-conception/donor-conception-about-working-

31 Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority, “The Rt Reverend Dr Lee Rayfield,”
documentation of its extensive multifaith chaplaincy, which is regionally based. Its guidance about chaplains\textsuperscript{32} does not address the potential for research ethics contribution explicitly. Those who serve do so via other recruitment tracks.

The lack of religious references on government sites in Australia and New Zealand, former British colonies that did not identify the Church of England as their established Church, is understandable. Perhaps the inclusion of ministers in the Australian context is therefore a paradox. However their absence from UK institutional committees, in the nation that does have an established Church, appears even more paradoxical. Whilst New Zealand human research ethics governance may appear avowedly secular because of the lack of religious obligation in committee representation, that cannot be presumed. What can be concluded is that, given individual beliefs of committee members remain undeclared rather than nonexistent, there is no way of identifying religious concerns being played out in committee conversation unless individuals choose to disclose their motives and agendas when they contribute in relevant items.

America has a national compliance scheme similar to Australia’s. In-house oversight committees (IRBs), are governed by The Office for Human Research Protections\textsuperscript{33}, which enforces registration standards and


documents the compliance work of IRBs. Presidential Commissions make policy recommendations to their appointing administrations, rather than overseeing research. Despite the sometimes hotly contested religion-state divide, the USA’s advisory bioethics appointments have integrated theologically credentialed delegates along with others.

Whilst their academic publications may imply caring skills, it was their academic leadership that brought potential nominees to the notice of proposers. Among these, several distinguished churchmen have been included. When U.S. President Clinton established the National Bioethics Advisory Commission in 1995, James F. Childress, a Quaker by “background and conviction”, Kyle Professor of Religious Studies and Professor of Medical Education at the University of Virginia, was a member.

George W. Bush’s 2001 Commission included Gilbert C. Meilaender whose academic appointments included University of Virginia, Oberlin College and Valparaiso University, where committee colleague Alfonso Gómez-Lobo had studied at the start of his own extensive career, which ended at Georgetown University. William F. May, later to become founding director of the Maguire Center for Ethics and Public Responsibility and Professor of Ethics at Southern Methodist University, was also appointed. Their Chairman was Leon R. Kass, a doctor who would later teach bioethics from

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a Jewish standpoint. Their report tables their work which seeks to better the happiness levels of the nation, but it is a pastoral effort at a distance.36

I place Daniel Sulmasy in a different category. He serves the current Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues in dual capacities. Sulmasy’s medical training was completed at the Johns Hopkins Hospital.37 But he is also an ordained Dominican Friar Minor. It is his faith credential, OFM, which takes first place on the cover of his book *The Rebirth of the Clinic.*38 He addresses himself to current and intending colleagues:

Don’t lose the original idealism you brought to medical school. The profession needs your idealism, your fervor, your zeal. Medicine needs your spirit. ... Answer instead to whatever you hold most sacred. ... Don’t sell your Hippocratic souls to anyone. Physicians are ordinary persons. They are called to reach beyond the ordinary, however, toward a transcendent ideal.39

Whilst he writes in the third person, Sulmasy wears his heart on both his habit and hospital coat sleeves. Having integrated his two identities, he invites medical colleagues to step into the spiritual terrains that their


39 Ibid., 109.
patients occupy.\textsuperscript{40} In the health care setting he challenges colleagues, “Clinicians have a duty to help their patients, aided by clergy, in addressing the spiritual issues that arise as a matter of course in the face of illness—the recurring questions of meaning, value, and relationship.”\textsuperscript{41} Although he does not address the context of research ethics, his voice is the one that can be most readily applied across the boundary separating clinical care and its ally, research. His writing style is personal even in the assembly of the source materials upon which his argument is based and has struck, for me, the chord that most closely aligns to the language of ministry studies.

Whilst many religious leaders have contributed significantly to the unfolding content of the field that has been dominated by ‘bio-ethics’, rather than the broader ‘research ethics’, it remains curious that there has been very little reflective writing about that professional ministry. Providing guidance for respective flocks and trying to influence public policy accordingly have clearly been the main priorities. Two Jewish examples demonstrate this point. USA Conservative rabbinic ethicist Elliott Dorff, Rector and Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, American Jewish University, is referenced in the American Conservative Rabbinical Assembly’s 2005 Resolution in Support of Stem Cell Research and Education.\textsuperscript{42} It makes reference to the ethical enactment of its general “support [for] well-monitored embryonic stem cell research”.\textsuperscript{43} The Reform

\textsuperscript{40} Sulmasy, \textit{Rebirth of the Clinic}, 161.

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid.}, 182–183.


\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Ibid.}
Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) 1987 Resolution on Genetic Engineering made explicit reference to the part to be played by religions in the advancement of genetic engineering: “Be it therefore resolved that the Central Conference of American Rabbis ... 3. demands that religious leaders be part of all regulatory bodies governing those engaged in genetic research and those hospitals and other medical centers that have established committees on ethics.” CCAR members appear to include leaders from beyond Judaism in their statement and in this, mirror the Australian understanding of committee composition.

Clearly rabbis in both groups are trying to shape government policy. CCAR’s desire for inclusion of faith leaders at the IRB level addresses the challenge of individual faiths moving their beliefs into public policy practice. Both professional bodies bring their theologies into the public square, for scrutiny by and guidance of their adherents and those they seek to influence. Similarly, the U.S. College of Catholic Bishops website shows over 100 items in both English and Spanish about stem cell research under the Human Life and Dignity tab; the Joint College of African-American Pentecostal Bishops website’s slide show included (on the day of my search) diagrams from the Milgram experiments and the American

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Episcopal church’s site addresses itself to policies of social action content.\textsuperscript{47} The North American Imam’s Federation\textsuperscript{48} and Buddhist Sangha in the USA do not appear to be working towards an influence on civic life\textsuperscript{49} unlike the Australian Sangha Association counterpart.\textsuperscript{50}

According to Richard Neuhaus,

Theology, at least in the great tradition, claims to be about truth. It makes cognitive claims about the way things really are. It is one of the great secularizing achievements of modernity to have created the category we call “religion”. Questions about God, judgment, purpose, sin, and redemption are all put into a sandbox labeled “Religion”, leaving the rest of the public square for the deliberation of questions dealing with “the real world.”\textsuperscript{51}

Australia does not, as yet, tether its day-to-day conversation in the terminology of the public square. However, TV and radio place a range of material, however fleeting, into the public domain, which might otherwise never become topics for general community interest. Responding Tweets from members of the public (not exceeding a maximum of 140 characters)
fly across the world and determine, by virtue of their repetition and further comments, whether an item is of more than local interest. These exchanges are tracked statistically and can be read by anyone. The phenomenon has become so influential that celebrity guest “Tweeters” are contracted to publish their comments onto TV show screens, as is the case with ABC’s “Lateline” program, Australia’s nightly news interview show. This adds real-time commentary to unfolding news not just for registered Twitter account holders, but for the general public watching the show. These Twitter examples via the virtual agora, plus the accessibility of news on smart phones means that Tweeters and Googlers/searchers on a range of specialized and multilingual search engines are on the digital public square even without using the label.

Religious communities also use contemporary technologies to a greater or lesser degree and I sought to establish whether this popular level of engagement on the digital public square meant that Neuhaus’ distinction between religion and the real world had become blurred by means of the language of the public square or the behavior of religious leaderships in the cyber world which contributes to it. My search of Victorian faith organization websites revealed that the Catholic conversation is most active on the diocese’s “Aussie Square”, (its terminology) which actively canvasses social issues, driven by its understanding of God’s work in action, with 808 items on the site of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. By comparison, searching all terms listed above identified only ten items on the Anglican, eight on the Uniting and none on the Buddhist, Islamic, Jewish or Victorian Council of Churches websites, though several sites have

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no search function and elements of public policy outreach are explicitly present in some items. It appears that whilst academic, theological contribution to the human research ethics conversation is extensive, with the exception of the Catholics, other faiths are not engaging Australia’s policy activity in human research oversight on the level of popular conversation on the public square. Perhaps they feel satisfied that the religious input already in place is sufficient. Taking the pulse of the activity of the faiths on the virtual public square with regard to HRECs, reveals that whatever the clergy who support the work is achieving, it is done quietly and appears not to attract attention from either their denominations which do not publicize it or the public which seem not to notice it.

Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits (1921-1999) was foundational in spurring Jews to turn their lens of faith towards the consequences of the events of WWII and in particular, the consequences for ethical medical conduct post-Holocaust. Grounding his contemporary review in the long-understood Jewish codes of respect for Creation and God’s created humankind, Jakobovits asserted the notion of "Jewish Medical Ethics"53, his new term. It followed in the footsteps of "Catholic medical ethics, a subject which was highly developed and extensively expounded".54 In the 1959 Preface Jakobovits noted, “The push of one button can now exterminate life by the million.”55 His reference to annihilation by atom bomb56 might appear to sideline events of the Holocaust. However, unmistakable to Jewish readers

53 Jakobovits, *Jewish Medical Ethics*.
54 Ibid., 251.
55 Ibid., vii.
56 Ibid.
and masquerading as a thank you, is the most understated of references: “This publication is made possible by a grant from the Claims Conference obtained for this purpose through the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations London, thanks largely to the efforts of its Director, Rabbi Dr. A. Spitzer, to whom I am much obliged.”

The “Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Inc. (Claims Conference) ... negotiates for compensation payments and aid to victims of Nazi persecution and for the return of and restitution for Jewish-owned property.” It was German reparations money, received by the Claims Conference in trust for Jewish communal claimants, which funded—in addition to schools, community centers and other communal infrastructures all over the world wherever Jewish refugees had settled—the printing of Jewish religious publications whose goal was to reassert, “As long as the moral law reigns supreme, the spectacular advances in science and technology will be effectively controlled by the overriding claims of human life and dignity.” Within Jakobovits’ seemingly-proforma acknowledgement is the anguish of the 38-year-old rabbi, whose own safety in London had been guaranteed by the escape of his family from Berlin pre-WWII. Here is the research ethics link to Judaism’s post-war theodicy, its religious repudiation of the use of human victims in Nazi medical experiments and the implicit call for Jews to grapple with and prevent such behaviors in the future.

57 Jakobovits, Jewish Medical Ethics, x–xi.


59 Jakobovits, Jewish Medical Ethics, vii.
Nazism justified its excesses by blaming the lack of ‘rebellion of its citizens’ despite having instantly eliminated any who spoke out and at the same time cultivated a state-wide propaganda campaign which programmed hatred of non-Aryans, Communists and Jews in a long list of “others” to be scourged from the Fatherland. The German Reich manipulated its church, The German Evangelical Church (Deutsche Evangelische Kirche, Reichskirche) in service of National Socialism’s un-Christian agenda. Historic anti-Semitism was enlisted to support religious and racial stereotyping and provided a ready template for stirring up mass hysteria.

However, not all churchmen or laity colluded with the state church’s status or behaviors. It is not possible to know whether Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) would have taken up the issue of treatment of persons from the research ethics point of view had he survived WWII. But Jürgen Moltmann’s (born in 1926, just five years after Jakobovits) POW years confronted him with the necessity to experience faith within the realities of this world. His subsequent studies and career emphasized the impact of real world events on Cold War and Liberation theologies, which he understood to be inseparable from any serious theology, post-WWII:

> The new political theology came into being in Germany after the war, under the shock of Auschwitz. Those of us who came to theology in those early postwar years were painfully aware of inescapably having to live in the shadows cast by the Holocaust perpetrated against the Jews. ... We associated with the name ‘Auschwitz’ not just the moral and political crisis of our people, but a theological crisis of Christian faith as well. Why—with only a few exceptions—did Christians and church leaders remain silent? For personal courage was not lacking.60

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Moltmann’s staunch Christian faith walks the tightrope of accepting that other theologies have legitimacy, despite eschatologies that diverge from Christianity’s. In the 1989 Preface to Creating a Just Future\textsuperscript{61}, Moltmann (like Jakobovits before him) observed of the situation then facing the planet of potential “annihilation, the time in which the end of humankind ... has become possible ... it is more important to learn the new questions of life and death to which we still have no saving answers than to repeat the old answers to the questions of former generations.”\textsuperscript{62} Moltmann also observed, “In a pluralistic society the church of Christ certainly does not have the right to speak for all men and women, Christians and non-Christians. But all men and women in this society have the right to hear what Christians have to say as Christians, i.e. on the basis of their particular belief and their all-embracing hope.”\textsuperscript{63}

Some would consider the first statement self-evident. The second is the privilege of every robust democracy, which accepts the proposition that all faiths are entitled to profess aloud what they believe and assert their truth and appeal to others without reprisal. Despite Christianity being identified in Australia as the largest religion numerically\textsuperscript{64}, according to Moltmann if it “does not have the right to speak for all”, it necessarily follows that


\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 49.

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.

neither can any other faith speak for all; every religion represented in Australia’s plural landscape can be substituted for “church of Christ” and “Christians” in Moltmann’s proposition and must be equally true in our plural democracy. Hence, many faiths speak for their own faithful and others beyond their religion. But the nexus enabling the input of religion into authoritative systems, requiring compliance with international codes through local governance, was still missing for Moltmann, although Australia was in the process of establishing a national framework to enact it. In the HREC context, every faith would represent the notions of “claims of human life and dignity” interchangeably and the element of the religious life concerned with that dignity and life, ‘care of souls’ for some, is compressed into the task of pastoral care.

In terms of Australia’s secular democracy, in which all may express their religious ideals through their democratic rights, it is not clear how faith came to have a seat at the NHMRC human research ethics table. But our plural democracy makes a unique place for clergy to contribute to Australia’s secular HREC system, which enacts the legislated provision for pastoral care in all research involving human participants. As the distance from the events of the Holocaust increases, not all clergy will feel impelled by the same issues as those whose theologies were shaped by WWII and its aftermath. Whether for those original concerns or for a new range of reasons, pastoral care continues to be provided throughout Australia and to date there appears no shortfall in volunteers. As religious responses to


66 Sadly, in 2012, the Director of Corporate Communications at NHMRC could not supply minutes of those meetings, citing the seven-year destruction program of non-strategic government documents. Professor Susan Dodds is currently writing the NHMRC history and perhaps her research will shed more light on this aspect.
secular times, those clergy provide service to the civil society. What the research seeks to identify is the extent to which that service is shaped by the enactment of faith as it embodies the challenge of the literatures of Judaism, Christianity and the secular context and can therefore be understood as ministry.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Identifying Myself

Though I began with clear intentions as a researcher and went towards a research format that I believed would serve the goals of the project, the voices of others rang in my ears from the first research seminar presentation, early in the life of this thesis. It was interesting to note that phenomenon and commentate upon it at the outset. I began the seminar by explaining that the research question had emerged from my own many years of service on HRECs. One academic immediately declared that this would result in an auto-ethnographic study, with my experience and voice center stage in the data and method. Having withdrawn from all HREC commitments for the duration of the thesis, I knew that this was a line that I did not intend to traverse, not wanting to focus on my own-voice-narrative of service to HRECs. However, having identified and clarified that divide, I was immediately alert to the potential significance of expectation on the part of listeners at seminars and future readers.

In owning the personal descriptor of myself as researcher, I also needed to interrogate other descriptors that might strongly ‘suggest’ if not ‘choose’ a methodology for me, as the opening anecdote depicts. “Caucasian, able-bodied, in late ministry career, from middle-class stock and first generation Australian post WWII” might be a set of descriptors to fit many ministry
studies researchers. However, add “Jewish, female, heterosexual, wife and mother, the first Australian woman ordained as a rabbi” and doubtless many more which could be applied, and projections upon my persona as researcher have the potential to become overlaid with assumptions about what my research intention should have been and thus which methodology ought to have served it. The example demonstrates that, just as researchers begin within their own contexts and must remain alert to them, so too do their listeners, peers and readers.

Seeking the Paradigm

Whichever methodology is ultimately chosen, it reflects the larger operating agendas, value systems, biases and assumptions underpinning the project, i.e. the voice of the researcher. Production of the questionnaire, the conduct of interviews and the crafting of the merged data into analytic narrative, all expose that voice within the paradigm chosen to serve the participants and their data. Deciding on the appropriate paradigm would inevitably invoke the larger, Jewish value set that is voiced by my ministry in its Progressive application.

Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln\(^1\) unify the characteristics of four clusters of inquiry paradigms by means of three components: ontology, epistemology and methodology. The paradigm whose characteristics matched their conjunction of components with my own orientation is the constructivist model. Methodologically, constructivism requires a

“hermeneutical/dialectical”\(^2\) relationship to the data. Participants’ data would likely begin as face-to-face conversation captured on audio files and be transcribed as text for review, then hundreds of pages would become, and indeed emerged as, a tome. The tome would demand the same kind of interpretive, meaning-making analysis in which I had been trained in my biblical and Midrashic studies. This met one of my own needs, the one that put me in my rabbinic comfort zone, the place of hermeneutical and dialectical engagement with text. Perhaps at the preliminary stages I had, even unconsciously, understood the relationship between “Oral” and “Written” Torah from the Progressive standpoint as analogous to the relationship between orally gathered data becoming written text and requiring analysis, elucidation and comment.

Structuring the Research Using Secular and Sacred Skills

Imagining: The First of Four Phases

Having served for several years on a university HREC, one of several clergy who had taken the role in parallel committees, I realized that I knew virtually nothing about the experiences of others fulfilling that HREC role. I was doing my work; they were doing theirs. There was almost no communication between members, even if another member of clergy was present that day and certainly no chance to ask strangers, who happened to share my profession, about what was driving their work. Yet I had deep

\(^2\) Guba and Lincoln, “Competing Paradigms,” 109, 111.
questions about what others were doing, questions—if the work we were
doing was significant—that appeared significant. The desire to be in
conversation with other clergy who served HRECs and to learn from their
separate accounts could only be realized with a sanctioned research
project, with my having the status of ‘researcher’.

Given that HREC clergy posts are regularly filled with no apparent shortfall
of candidates, there must be an explanation for the interest in and
commitment to the HREC work by so many volunteers. I hoped that
whatever HREC clergy could report might become a basis for training
future HREC clergy in the work. I had already moved to the ‘methods’ stage
of wondering and problem solving, imagining ways to gather the data and
how the data might be used.

For Michael Crotty, the *methods* by which gathering and analyzing data to
answer the research question are chosen and anticipated, provide the
basis for the first stage of qualitative work. Choices, which reflect the
suitability of methods as they serve the anticipated outcome in the form of
design strategies, flow from first imaginings to his second stage,
*methodology*. Once those enactment details are confirmed, they invoke
Crotty’s third stage: explaining the context that legitimates the behavioral
choices provides the *theoretical perspective* and fourthly, *epistemology*
demonstrates the foundational knowledge theory upon which these three
are grounded. I was attracted to the Crotty approach as it matched my
instinctive first two steps. However, it proved impossible for me to

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separate the many elements of theoretical perspective that informed my imagining, thinking, designing, planning and trialing, from their enactment as reflection of the theoretical perspective that informed it. My inherent Jewish foundational knowledge was in continual dialogue with the academic, theoretical perspectives and that dialogue demonstrated the theoretical knowledge construct that framed the project.

**Methods: The Step Towards Methodology**

Whichever methodology was to be chosen, it had to grapple not only with the question being asked, but also respond to a range of assumptions. Of the many, some included:

- that apart from my own curiosity, others doing HREC work would be similarly interested in the question and be prepared to surrender their time and expertise to enable me to pursue the line of inquiry

- that a link could be established between past and current clergy service and from reflection on that service, recommendations might be made about the future

- that needs can be anticipated and prepared for by predictive (and reactive) training and that such training would be considered desirable, to extend the talent pool and enable skilled succession if retirements or illnesses result in empty HREC places needing to be filled

- that the specific task of ministry in HRECs might be of broad interest if orientation were provided and thus cultivate the
need for additional people to be skilled, in response to their interest in this specialty

• that the range of faiths and denominations might broaden if pre-skilling were available and made known through clergy and interfaith networks for the purpose of alerting clergy of faiths as yet not regularly active in the HREC system to their potential service to the nation via this ministry

• and that, by extension, the NHMRC would be pleased to know that the clergy valued their invitation to contribute to the system and were taking the opportunity to prepare themselves for that service.

Having already leapt towards these potential outcomes, there was clearly a great impetus to my first imaginings. I would go on to create a trial questionnaire and, following ethics clearance and recruitment, test it. I would use the questionnaire as the framework for 12 further interviews and then use the data as text for analysis and reflection.

I decided on a series of semi-structured interviews, which would be guided or orchestrated conversations structured around identified themes, to meander according to the individual interests of each participant. Interviews would be recorded and transcribed, allowing for detailed review and the cross-matching of coinciding and contradictory data. The data were to capture the place of HREC service as identifiable narratives or stories, within individual understandings of each participant’s ministry. Mine was never to be a quantitative approach. It was to be an interactive
engagement, providing qualitative material for me to sift, to untangle and then to weave into a series of strands, if not into a delightful coat of many colors.

Whether or not separate stories were told chronologically or meandered to and fro across time in the telling, it would be my task to discern the meaning from their unfolding. I hoped to provide an experience of sharing time with participants as they told their stories. By inviting that sharing and telling, I was implicitly in the business of co-constructing their narratives. My prompts, non-verbal encouragers and questions in response to their data would draw out their ‘tellings’ and place them into the record for analysis. My own voice would provide ongoing direction by means of the wording of the questionnaire, during interviews, and in the grafting of the multiple quotations into the reported results.

That being said, it was my task to use the voices of the participants with integrity, serving the data and trying to establish their interest in and commitment to the HREC work as a part of their ministry. Consideration for how to present the data was shaped by my awareness that the way a writer grafts contributions together itself shapes the meanings of quotes in many ways. The result was to seek to balance the voices of contributors in their own right as against the observations of the researcher.

**Human Ethics Clearance for the Project**

Before seeking my research ethics clearance from the university’s
committee, a draft questionnaire was formulated and submitted with my application, so that sample questions could be included in the proposed recruitment invitation packets. The proposal was approved, with the proviso that if trial testing of the questionnaire required overhauling of the questions, that such alterations be submitted to the HREC for further approval. I had been authorized to recruit and trial the questionnaire, to take preliminary soundings as to its suitability and then continue if nothing needed further amendment on the basis of the answers provided in the sample interview.

A first ‘road test’ interview was scheduled in response to my desired participant receiving the approved recruitment package. By virtue of their HREC work, every potential participant would be an expert in reading my invitation documentation before making an informed decision as to whether or not to participate. By accepting the invitation to be interviewed, all potential contributors knew what they would be experiencing and would very likely be able to commentate on the experience of the process of the conversation they had agreed to have. My effort to do ‘good’ and therefore ‘ethical’ research was subjected to ongoing scrutiny by expert clergy colleagues, as part of each recruitment and interview.

The trial interview began with a disconcerting comment from the participant, who said he had done me a bit of a favor in setting the time aside, given that “there really wasn’t much to say” about the HREC work. After 90 minutes of ongoing exchange, it appeared that there was a good deal to say, that the questionnaire was eliciting it and that there would be
no need for a major redesign stage. I was ready to proceed to full recruitment.

Recruitment and Commonality of Purpose

The recruitment population was limited to those clergy serving or having served Victorian HRECs, thus clearly demarking the sample boundary. One of the intriguing points about the framing of the National Statement’s reference to ministers of religion is the absence of any reference to specific faiths or denominations. That absence of any exclusion zone provides the opportunity to our multi-faith community for all faiths to be represented. I knew anecdotally that beyond my own Jewish and Christian committee colleagues, Buddhists had served HRECs in previous years and that one Muslim imam was currently serving. I hoped to be able to find representatives from a broad sweep of those ministers of religion to represent our religiously plural Victoria and provide a range of data. I began by sending my package to individual clergy with whom I had served or others who were known to me from conferences and NHMRC training events. In some instances, I did not know the names of the serving clergy, but I knew that an imam or monk was on a particular committee. In such a situation, I would contact the committee secretariat and explain that I had recruitment packets I was authorized to distribute and asked that they pass these along, given that I did not know the identities of the serving or previous ministers of religion.

In the course of trying to find those ministers of religion not known to me, I found that some institutions transparently divulge on websites the names
of those who sit on their HREC/RECs and others go to great lengths to prevent names being identified. I was left with a question relating to transparency of governance in those institutions that obscure references to their HREC staffing. One secretariat advised that they would ask their Chair to pass on a packet. They were told (and then related this to me by phone) that the Chair had advised that they would read the packet and decide whether or not to pass it to the sitting minister of religion. I found this an odd hurdle to put between the envelope and the freedom of the minister to decide for themselves, but as a result could not make any further progress in recruiting a minister who would have enlarged the diversity of the sample. It is not possible to know whether every packet was passed on by seemingly-receptive secretariats, whether each was then read and whether a decision not to participate was taken by those who did not respond. On the other hand, one institution disclosed the names of members on its website and I was able to send the recruitment packet with the explanation of how I had identified the recipient, who called and joined the project.

One person said they had been listening to a friend talk about their interview experience at a dinner and told that friend to pass on his contact details. Only one person who was sent the packet by mail communicated that they would not be available to participate. Two others, who received the packet directly by mail, declined by not responding at all. A total of 13 participants agreed to be interviewed. To conceal their identities as far as possible, I have provided biblical pseudonyms. These identify gender as the only distinguishing factor, using the first 13 initials of the alphabet. No conclusion should be drawn as to the faith or denomination of the participant by association with their assigned biblical namesake, given that
I had recourse to Christian and Jewish scriptures to provide the names in order by gender. No namesake’s initial corresponds to the actual name initial of the participant, but the alphabetical order correctly places the contributions in interview sequence order.

When thanking his contributors to *Storylines*, Elliot Mishler observed, “respect for their privacy and the standard restraint of confidentiality preclude acknowledging them by name. Pseudonyms used in later chapters will have to serve, but since they will recognize themselves, I hope they will hear me thanking each of them personally.” With a more respectful appellation than just a single initial, my thanks go to Abner, Bilhah, Cedron, Daniel, Ezra, Felix, Gabriel, Hiram, Isaac, Jael, Kenan, Lois and Micah. Like Mishler’s contributors they may recognize themselves, but my hope is that readers who suspect that a particular comment may have been contributed by “so-and-so” would likely be wrong in their attribution.

Further, in some instances it has been necessary to obscure or even alter context, names of colleagues, internal hierarchies and any other details, which might instantly match the pseudonymous namesakes to their HREC contacts. Where quotes have been deliberately changed, those obscuring alterations have been [bracketed and italicized] to signal that this is an alteration by the researcher for the purpose.

No one terminated an interview, no one lodged an objection, everyone signed off on their transcript and within a period of several months, the data had been gathered in a series of one-on-one encounters in homes and

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offices at the convenience of contributors. One person was interviewed by phone by request. As data gathering exercises, the experiences were positive and congenial. I became more fluent with successive interviews, but even the slightly edgy first two attempts yielded full texts. Many of the people I interviewed had more seniority in the HREC work than I. Without exception they were helpful and enthusiastic and clearly felt commonality of purpose, with contributors having time to reflect with someone who knew their HREC work. We touched great depths in some participants’ stories but I don’t imagine for a moment that, given the short time frame of the interviews, we captured the totality of each story.

However, to the extent that their owners chose to share them at all, it affirmed their degree of comfort and flexibility with the research design and language—the vehicle for the research—even though participants’ language was often not the vocabulary of the researcher herself. In every case, either during interview or when appointments had been concluded, there was a comment about the fact that no one had ever inquired about the HREC work of the participants. I was onto something new and the interviewees felt that they were a part of the undertaking.

The Self as Researcher: Woman as Other

The contribution of others is their own. Similarly, my level of awareness as I entered the role of researcher into those contributions could only be framed from my understanding of the data to be provided. I moved back and forth between my work with the literature, the data of others and my commentary, not only about their HREC work, but also upon my responses
to the data and processes that provided the content for my reflection and conclusions. Two inseparable identities, academic research candidate and holder of vested interest as participant in the human research ethics community, had to work alongside each other. Unless something specifically referenced any of my additional identities (some of which have already been acknowledged), those were not necessarily alluded to during interviews. Generally, that proved a comfortable divide. However, one significant recruitment anecdote must be recounted here.

Responding to the invitation in the recruitment packet, someone phoned to set up a meeting time. I answered the phone and the male voice asked to be put through to Rabbi Kipen. Clearly, as a female, I was the secretary! When I explained that I was Rabbi Kipen, a momentary hesitation at the other end of the line was unmistakable. I smiled to myself and ploughed ahead, hoping that the person would not be deterred by my gender. In the event, he did agree to the appointment and we had an excellent meeting. After our interview, he smiled and admitted to a moment of confusion at the outset. Clearly it is not just the participants who must be recruited, but the researcher is also subject to personal scrutiny.

The study could easily have been conceived as researching the uniquely womanly perspective of HREC ministry, in which case it would have situated easily within a methodology to serve Feminist Critical Theory. However, a project driven by gender concerns was not the objective. As a result, though my female identity is audible and visible and thus explicit, my female biases and sensibilities whilst implicit, are not at the forefront of the design criteria of the study. Despite the narratives containing
fascinating material, which represents a women’s data sub-set, of the 13 participants only three are women. It appears, anecdotally, that there are far fewer women serving HRECs than men and thus I was not able to have gender balance within the participant sample.

The Self as Researcher: Rabbi as Other in Interfaith Dialogue

My rabbinic identity was itself a methodological consideration. Might other ministers have a problem speaking about their Christian ministry with someone who didn’t share their foundational religious convictions? And could the language issue scuttle my work with the data, if I was showing lack of respect or lack of knowledge that would result in incorrect interpretation of the data in the meaning it had for the giver? Not one Christian participant made the slightest comment about my Judaism as a source of discomfort. Even so, I worried that I lacked sufficient depth of Christian knowledge to work with the stories that might be shared. I know the experience of being misread by others in interfaith contexts; there was a level of anxiety as I planned to walk delicately around the sensitivities of participants, so as not to offend. For each, exploring the content of their HREC contribution for the purpose of research was a new experience.

Developing the climate that would allow for detailed information exchange, required that the religious gulf be bridged and trust be established. By the time I interviewed Ezra, who spoke openly about his life pre-seminary, I knew that HREC colleagues who had made the commitment to participate felt aligned to me by virtue of our shared work, even though we diverged theologically.
However, taking this degree in ministry studies (a Christian domain until 20 years ago) exemplifies the tension of ‘rabbi as other’ within the context. The presumption is that the ministry to be enhanced by undertaking the coursework and research is Christian. The professional literature is almost exclusively Christian; the degrees are virtually all tethered to Christian ministry frameworks, even if offered by open enrolment universities and colleges. The University of Divinity exemplifies this proposition. The statement at the top of the Nomination of Examiners form reads, “The University of Divinity is committed to pursuing the highest standards in teaching and research in Christian theology and ministry, and to being an exemplar of ecumenical cooperation.” I am the first non-Christian student of the University and have been able to continue through the generosity of the senior staff, who saw the potential for a broad enrolment.

Nevertheless, as much as I may have learned about Christianity and the faith of my HREC colleagues, I do not deeply know what it is that they mean when they share their answers with me. Yet, each of the Christian participants knew that very well. Not one who agreed to be recruited was hesitant to share their experiences with me. The unspoken affirmation was that, despite being aware of what I could not know, there was a sufficient common ground in my own HREC experience and parallel—albeit very different—rabbinic experience of HRECs, that I would be able to work sensitively and perceptively with the data being provided, despite not believing in its specifically Christian content.

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Interfaith work has provided many experiences by which to practice both the disclosure and receipt of information. However, even the term has problems in seeking a suitable, Jewishly identifiable epistemology by which to navigate the delicate and frequently foreign terrain. If we deconstruct ‘interfaith’ to understand ‘inter’ as ‘between’ the faiths, the notion of sharing information across boundaries appears understandable. However, the usage of the word for ‘faith’ does not always sit universally, even though doing the work of knowledge and experience exchange across the boundary of religions is an increasingly well-trodden path.

When I worked for Rabbi Dr. John S. Levi, AM, he once told the story of having attended an interfaith meeting as the guest of a certain Christian denomination. In an attempt to distinguish the Jewish way of knowing from that of his hosts, he attempted to explain, “Judaism isn’t a religion of faith” but rather “a religion of questions”. Whilst at prayer, we may affirm many religious sentiments with “amen”, from the Hebrew י’ha’amın to believe. That is often a corporate affirmation and does not require individual disclosure of belief. Even at the level of definitional distinction I was struggling with the label that places the research in the interfaith landscape. How much the more so would I then have to struggle, when engaging with different belief systems and different uses of language when speaking about participants’ ministries? Theologically, I am ‘other’ to my Christian colleagues and they are ‘other’ to me. Even so, there was common ground and whatever hurdles would be negotiated.
Crotty’s Final Stages: Methodology as Reflection of Theoretical Perspective and Epistemology—“Arba nikhnas l’pardess Four Entered the Orchard”—PRDS, a Mnemonic for Analysis of Qualitative Data


This short quotation is offered as the proof text for the expository methodology of Midrashic, hermeneutical meaning-making from texts. The Oral Tradition provided a handy mnemonic by which the Hebrew word for orchard “**par de ss**” identifies the levels within any text, within which expositors operated hermeneutically (and still continue to do so). The original, formal collections of *midrashim* were the results of input from the earliest rabbinic generations. But the method itself has been used and reused subsequently for many other kinds of texts, for example art works.8

At the first level **P**, *pshat* the simple and self-evident meaning, observers identify the superficial and visible characteristics and structure of the text. Obvious meanings are identified, seeming contradictions between similar or divergent passages elsewhere are noted. The level of **R**, *remez*, the clue or hinted meaning, invites the interpreter to delve beneath the visible, literal text and seek an entry to deeper symbolic meanings. **D**, *drash* is the level of exposition in which the text can be lovingly lifted from its specific

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6 Talmud Bavli, Chagiga 14b.

7 *Ibid*.

setting and grafted onto or contrasted against texts containing similar or contrasting content, for the purpose of making a point without regard to the chronological positioning of either quoted passage. It is a level of interpretation through analogy, parable, image, characterization, humor, irony or other devices by which to apply the literal content of one passage for other, elucidatory purposes. *S, sod*, the final word from the original ‘paradise’ homophone, means secret. Treating any text for interpretation on this basis, traditionally required working at the level of esoteric—in other words, secret—meaning, the one known only by those with advanced levels of spiritual practice derived from elite instruction at the rarified stratum of a few trusted scholars. In this research context, it constitutes the level of access to text by means of spiritual insight as evoked in my commentary through having journeyed within the data texts. Here *sod* indicates levels of emotional response observed through the lens of religious formation and tradition by both the participant and the researcher. Paradoxically, *sod* the secret place, invites the unveiling of what is protected; it is the place of disclosure, the elucidation of what is deeply held within the spirit.

Each of these elements of working with text provides similes for trawling through my written data for the purpose of scouring it:

1) for observable meaning from the text elements

2) for what emerges as meaning arising through hints from just below the surface of the text

3) for opportunities to find themes, characteristics, words, phrases, stories, gaps and even silences by which to connect contributions,
in order to cut and paste, compare and contrast notions which must be elucidated from but are triggered by the text provided

4) and for potentially buried levels of meaning which may emerge from deepest intuitions, as sparked by the material provided as a result of its resonance in my spiritual response.

In every case the hand of the researcher, who owns the interpretation, is clear. Whilst the original material quoted is attributed, how it is then appropriated becomes overtly the work of the expositor. Not every item requires all four levels of analysis. Having been gathered from the 13 sets of contributions, some descriptive (i.e., *pshat*) answer clusters will fully plot all the characteristics to a particular question. Where that mapping is insufficient, further issues that appear to be hinted at will then be brought to light. Threads will be gathered and the data woven according to the colors and patterns that emerge from repeated reading. Once the material has been gathered, it will provide a reliable foundation for reflection. Conclusions derived from that process move beyond the texts of their contributors, to invite training observations.

Those who continue to walk in the metaphorical orchard, where trees provide blossom, bees pollinate the flowers and fruit sets and grows to maturity, know the *pardess* conventions have continued to provide the standards for ongoing, rabbinic peer review. Whilst it may resemble contemporary styles of academic work in text analysis, Midrashic interpretive engagement has a transparently religious agenda. Its task is to give credit to the interpreter, who gives credit to the contributor of the
original opinion, for the sake of doing the work of Torah, to advance the nature of God’s teaching as it is understood in each interpretive generation. In other words, religiously based Midrashic text analysis is constructivist. It is enabled by means of time-specific responses to Jewish cultural and academic knowledge derived from the canonized content of the Jewish sources, which provide the data for hermeneutical engagement.

The hermeneutical analysis described as stages of observation, intuition and creative interpretation reflect my understanding of the classical Midrashic method. The typed interview transcripts are faithful written reproductions of the interviews conducted. For the purpose of this research, they hold the status of sacred texts, deserving of the most reverent treatment. Just as Jewish scholars are enjoined when studying the many historic layers of their sacred scriptures, I engaged with my participants’ texts according to the instruction of Ben Bag Bag: “Hafokh bah, v’hafokh bah, di’khola bah Turn it and turn it [repeatedly], for everything is in it.”

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9 *Pirkei Avot* 5:25.
CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

Becoming a Clergy Member of the HREC: From Recruitment to Integration

The periods of service represented by the respondents differed greatly. Daniel, Ezra, Felix, Gabriel, Hiram, Isaac and Kenan had each served more than ten years and were veterans with multiple committee appointments. All the others were newer recruits. The shortest period of service was that of Lois, at just over a year. For some participants it was a new portfolio not previously prepared for academically or with any anticipatory skilling. Lois recalled, “I got the promotion in 2007, I joined the HREC a year ago.” There was no anticipatory grooming process by which those with a potential interest could be cultivated, other than by studying relevant higher academic degrees. Many participants had that academic interest and brought doctorates and other top-level qualifications to the work, extending their personal interests in the research ethics context. For some with that theoretical knowledge, being ‘thrown in at the deep end’ was the start or extension of an emerging interest. For Isaac, committee service “really triggered my interest and the beginnings of my involvement with the bio-ethical scene” after he had completed a doctorate in a related area.

“Hin’ni, Shlacheni Here I Am, Send Me!”1: Recruitment

Recruitment arising from job descriptions resulted in appointments for Ezra, Kenan, Lois and Micah. Bilhah’s initial service was not mandated in

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1 Is. 6: 8.
her position description but she wove it into a subsequent job profile. The means by which other participants were recruited differed and reflected a range of approaches and organizational styles.

Recruitment approaches reflected strategies dependent on personal knowledge of the individual clergy. In the most direct approach of all, Felix’s next-door neighbor made a personal pitch. “He said to me ‘look I need a Minister of Religion on a couple of jobs, would you do it?’” Abner was a logical recruit from a team ministry in which three other colleagues had served HRECs and identified him to a Committee Chair. A congregant of one parish who was an HREC member himself, suggested his own minister Hiram, to HREC colleagues. Using his detailed out-of-working-hours knowledge of the minister, he was able to present the candidate to his professional colleagues, who then agreed to pursue the suggestion. In response to after-hours conversation between domestic partners, a colleague of Kenan’s suggested him to her spouse, who worked at the agency seeking the new committee member. In all cases the qualities of the person were known, sometimes arising from work already being done in, or near, the host organization of the HREC. Bilhah recalled, “I think that, um, what actually happened was that [so-and-so] said that they had a vacancy, that I would be a useful sort of person and that I had a few clues about it, I believe … that’s how it worked.”

Some people were well known via publications or other community service. Others were complete beginners, but were identified as potentially suitable by virtue of already holding different roles in the HREC’s institution. Cedron was already serving as a chaplain, “and after going
through the process of being credentialed ... I was approached by the Head of Chaplaincy.”

In the case of denominations seeking to have a representative on a consultative committee on particular matters, some individuals were nominated to participate by their churches. Those appointments pre-dated the establishment of HRECs, but provided initial grounding and an obvious progression into what would become HREC work. This was the case in Catholic and Protestant hierarchies and IVF was the trigger. Daniel recalled, “The Archbishop phoned and said ‘What do you know about IVF?’ And I said, ‘I know nothing about IVF.’ And he said, ‘Well neither does anybody else, you’re it on the state government committee.’” Importantly, though IVF committee participation was instigated by denominational directive, subsequent HREC service was not. An exchange to clarify was unequivocal: “Kipen: So it didn’t have to go always through the hierarchy once you were known? Daniel: ... never went through the hierarchy. Kipen: So you’re not the archdiocese’s representative? Daniel: No, no. No, no.”

Isaac’s experience was not dissimilar:

Kipen: A lot of people who have chosen to find their niche in special ministries like this, you all ... wear the hierarchical institution of the church lightly ... 

Isaac: Yes, yeah.

Kipen: And also travel somewhat under the radar, so that you’re free to do this...

Isaac: Yes that’s a fair comment too, I think, that’s right.
Kipen: because you clearly haven’t chosen to go through the synod hierarchy.

Isaac: No no. That was not me, Aviva.

Whilst these anecdotes show styles of recruitment not associated with the requirements of government appointments, the lack of formal recruitment process should not be interpreted as appointments having been casual. Whilst government committees must advertise vacancies, receive applications, assess these against stated criteria and conduct competitive interviews, other institutions are free to develop their processes to reflect internal culture with regard to the constituencies they serve. However, the veterans could have had little sense of how the work of clergy would initially be integrated into HRECs. Equally, new committees could not have anticipated how the clergy would function or add value. Daniel recalled that at the outset, “they were basically looking around for anybody who could serve.”

Whilst reflecting on the present situation rather more than his original move from nominee to committee member Hiram said, “we are somewhat careful on recruitment to make sure that people feel that this is the thing that they want to do, not because they’ve got some axe to grind, that’s the only concern ... come on, give it a go, see if you like it, if you don’t well ...” Often that match between nominee and committee appears to be cemented in a non-mechanistic way, but still with considerable care for both parties. For Cedron, all those formalities were managed deftly, so

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2 My own VBEAC appointment came from the advertisement in the newspaper, application, short listing and competitive interview sequence.
much so that he did not realize they were taking place. “I understood that there was a formal process of attending a meeting as an observer. I understood following that there was some process of approval, but I didn’t meet with anyone.” He did not make the connection between having already held a chaplaincy role and having been approached by the Head of Chaplaincy, with the notion of having already been interviewed and his candidacy for the role most likely discussed in an HREC meeting prior to the formal approach being made.

Gabriel’s sense was, “I think the check and balance of it is the institutions select the members of the committees. Kipen: and if you don’t fit you don’t get renewed? Gabriel: And you don’t get selected in the first place most probably.” There appears to be no shortage of recruits to the “pastoral care” posts on Committees. Anecdotally, the networking into the clergy community seems to have been effective and broad, including Buddhist and Islamic representatives, although their voices do not appear in this research.

I Believe In Unicorns\(^3\): Should HREC Clergy Declare What they Believe?

It is intriguing that the sense of what would make for a good clergy fit on a particular committee does not appear to include any reference to individual religious ideology or personal position on significant issues. In response to questions about whether such inquiries had been made directly, Gabriel recalled:

Gabriel: Not at all.

Kipen: And might that have been a legitimate set of enquiries?

Gabriel: I think so. But some of the others, you know, somebody checked that out, thought that all through beforehand.

Kipen: So they decided that you were a safe enough bet, but they never asked you anything contentious?

Gabriel: No.

This requires that the people doing the checking could have known or assessed Gabriel’s ideological positions and leaves us wondering who checked and how. Jael was clear on that point. “Jael: They will bring them in for an interview. Kipen: Well they wouldn’t know how to interrogate someone’s theology would they? Jael: No they wouldn’t, indeed.”

Taking the opposite view, Hiram’s reply was forthright, “No! Kipen: Oh? Hiram: No, I don’t think so, because that would be to somehow limit your judgment, that would prejudice your capacity to respond to each protocol as it came along, which is what you are supposed to do, as opposed to saying well I have got a doctrine in opposition to [such and such a kind of project].” However, in previously stating that one of the tasks of recruitment was to find out whether or not the prospective member had “an axe to grind”, there appears a degree of contradiction in his reply.

Micah considered the issue of his personal theological code in terms of his past experiences of his institutional staff role and how that might be viewed on the in-house HREC:
Micah: On one of the old marriage forms they used to say what denomination are you, and [these days] people say ‘what’s denomination’, you know. Or people say to me ‘can you just tell me the difference between a Roman Catholic wedding and a Christian wedding?’ … people don’t know. So we’re really getting down to the fact that you’re Christian or you’re Jewish or you’re Muslim; it’s faiths rather than denominations now. ... So when I come to a committee like this [HREC] I’m seen more as a chaplain rather than a Uniting Church minister.

Kipen: And no one’s ever asked you about your own attitudes to anything in particular?

Micah: I think in [our institution] that’s a given; you are The Chaplain, therefore everything that “I” think about chaplains, you are. But everybody’s got a different perception or idea of what a chaplain should be. So that’s, kind of, one of the things we have to work with ...

Kipen: So you’re on the receiving end of a lot of projections?

Micah: Yeah.

Of the three Catholic participants, Daniel followed the line of questioning about the issue of projection to an inconclusive end point:

Kipen: ... if you walk into a non-denominational setting, like some of those that you’ve described, where the insider i.e. Catholic knowledge cannot be presumed, ... would it have been appropriate for those people sitting in a secular environment to ask you to disclose some of the things that would inform the religious bias that you would bring to the table?

Daniel: Yes, yes.

Kipen: [in response to the tone of voice of the reply] It’s obviously never happened to you?

Daniel: Never happened.

Kipen: Is that because people presume Catholic equals a certain set of beliefs and decisions?
Daniel: Yes, I presume so and it’s not, it’s fairly rare for anything denominational to occur in a research ethics project as a matter of fact, I think.

Kipen: …. would it have been similarly appropriate for someone to say to their first ever serving Buddhist monk or nun, or their first imam, “can you please tell us what your religion says about this so we know where you’re likely to be?” Would that be appropriate?

Daniel: Well I think if, I think it would be appropriate if the people who were also either of other religious persuasions and of a secular persuasion, were asked to expound their point of view too. … you’ve talked about “religious bias”, I think that’s an unfortunate word, “bias”, I think it’s …. (a pause)

Kipen: Or ‘position’?

Daniel: Position, yes. Then people who come from another religious persuasion or from none, are just as …. (a pause)

Kipen: Likely to have a position?

Daniel: Yes.

In summary, the personal qualities of prospective members override the theologies to which they nominally belong, in the case of those who must be recruited from outside the organization. Appointment to a chaplaincy or in-house staff position provides sufficient clearance for a clergy appointee to serve without further disclosure of their beliefs, when their service on the HREC flows from that appointment. There is no agreement as to whether it would be fair for clergy to be required to disclose their positions on issues, but a suggestion that equality would require that clergy might be required to divulge policy positions prior to appointment, providing those of other religious or secular persuasions were to do the same. To date, that has clearly not been the case for the clergy or for others on HRECs.
“Chanokh la’na’ar al pi darko Educate the Child for its Journey”\textsuperscript{4}: HREC Readiness—Multiple Foundations for the HREC Ministry

Formation level ethics training for HREC ministry. I invited participants with foundation level ethics qualifications only, to reflect on that element of their ministry training, for its suitability in readying them for the pastoral care role in HRECs. Did a single unit of schooling in their denomination’s core theological ethics provide for the demands of the assessment process identified by the National Statement in the research context or had it aroused their interest in the potential for ethics oversight service? Jael was typical in noting her foundation-level training was all the skilling she had prior to HREC work, “No other than having done a unit of ethics in my theology degree.” Cedron’s foundation-level unit was identified as “medical ethics we might identify it as bio-ethics.” Bilhah’s interest had emerged during formation and she extended her formation training with additional undergraduate units, “I had an ethics major in my theology qualification, like … bio-ethics.” Clearly the absence of further ethics studies was not a barrier to their various tenures.

Clinical Pastoral Education as training for HREC ministry. The current roof body for CPE in Victoria is ASPEA, the Association for Supervised Pastoral Education in Australia Inc.\textsuperscript{5} Many foundation-level programs out-source pastoral care training to this CPE provider and

\textsuperscript{4} Prov. 22:6.

frequently chaplaincy positions use its credential as a necessary qualification. Given that some HREC clergy are also chaplains who might have CPE training, I waited to see if any would reflect on the degree to which they felt CPE was a suitable preparatory training for the pastorally skilled HREC member. Only three made any reference to CPE training. Kenan said that he thought CPE might already provide a connection, despite the fact that he was no longer in touch with exiting formation graduates. Jael had, “a unit of CPE” during formation training and clearly applauds the CPE training. She spoke about encountering students on placement: “It’s part of what goes on [in her institution] and I always get … CPE students to answer a question, even verbatim, ‘Are there any ethical issues?’ because I want them to be aware of just thinking it through. And often there are, not necessarily major ones, but certainly ones you need to be aware of.”

Lois differentiates between the elementary level of CPE and the advanced levels of training. However, she continues, “I am not known in the CPE circles, because I haven’t done any CPE” making clear it is not her credential, despite working alongside many others for whom CPE is their professional qualification. “Within pastoral circles people understand the work that goes behind being an ordained person, so they know that you’ve put some work in and you are not somebody who has done a unit of CPE … and so the ordination has given me a little bit of credibility.” She is clearly neutral about the CPE credential for herself and is clear that her authority is from her ordination, which is respected by peers as a pastoral training of another kind. It appears that she feels no need for CPE units for herself and makes no link between clinical pastoral ethics and human research ethics.
These were the only CPE references in all the data set. Perhaps, if participants had been unanimous on the subject of CPE as a suitable skill base for HREC ministry, this thesis would have necessarily become a more detailed examination of the CPE program. But having been provided with the opportunity to assert CPE as a suitable foundation for HREC work, it became clear that this was not the consensus. The sacred space at the bedside of patients and souls in need is apparently not recognized—even with prompting at interview—as analogous to the pastoral protection ministry being provided in the HREC context. It provides sensitivity and reflectiveness, but does not address the gamut of issues likely to be encountered in HREC applications.

**Postgraduate work in ethics/philosophy as training for HREC ministry.** Daniel, Ezra, Gabriel and Isaac developed HREC interest as a result of higher studies in disciplines directly related to ethics work. Perhaps HREC interest was jogged by virtue of them having credentials that made them conspicuous specialists and therefore likely HREC recruits. From the point of view of grappling with challenging ethical/moral conundrums and having read copiously in the field likely to emerge at meetings, it appears that their denominations or colleagues felt them to be suitable potential recruits. That was the case for Daniel and Isaac, even though their degrees did not address the content of the then-newly-emerging field of IVF. Whilst it had not been their initial ministry expectation, the HREC specialty emerged over a number of years.
For those who completed postgraduate work in the general area of ethics, the foci were on areas of personal interest rather than on the content that might be addressed specifically within the research governance system.

Postgraduate work in other disciplines as training for HREC ministry. In some instances, higher studies had provided a previously identified academic specialty. But whilst most participants had multiple qualifications, these represent a wide range of academic disciplines in addition to theology/divinity and philosophy/ethics. It is not possible to identify those skill sets here, as their owners would become instantly recognizable. However, as I would find out during interviews, every participant had credentials that demonstrate their ability to process large quantities of information systematically, in addition to their foundation trainings that enable them to think through issues spiritually/pastorally.

Counterbalanced in committee composition by lay women and lay men, who represent the community at large and must be able to wade through project paperwork without necessarily having any academic qualifications at all, highly qualified clergy would be unremarkable in HRECs. But I smiled when Kenan said, “I think they felt I wouldn’t be too threatening.” Like several others in the participant sample, his credentials are intimidating. But in a committee landscape in which very highly qualified specialists wear their skill identities to enable committees to be quorate (lawyer, ethicist, epidemiologist and other identified specialists), the credentials of the pastoral care person also have significance. When asked whether he thought committee members might have felt more comfortable speaking about a range of proposed research with someone who was not only
trained in clergy matters, he replied, “Yes I think that’s probably quite appealing.”

When Micah completed his doctorate and was then introduced with his academic, as well as his clerical titles, he reflected, “people that you haven’t met up until now ... they’ll come in [and be introduced to] Doctor So and So, and you think ‘oh, that’s me’, you know ... it’s kind of a jolt and it’s kind of a reminder of what you have done with your life.” Whilst the comment was reflexive, the implied impact of Micah’s title in the committee was also unmistakable in terms of his status, despite his own modesty. Often the degree of personal intellectual ambition was ongoing. Bilhah, Cedron and Ezra continued to study at even more advanced levels either after or whilst participating in HREC work.

Abner, Cedron, Hiram, Kenan and Micah had high-level degrees, but their specialties were not directly connected to research ethics work. Even so, Cedron and Kenan both actively connected the discipline of their academic work with that of their HREC activity. Cedron’s higher degrees were stepping stones in his ministry preparation, which he actively connected to his first profession:

> I see my role as a rabbi in large part as a preventive healer or a healer once people are ill. Both in a spiritual sense, but also in a practical sense, in terms of developing community that supports people in need. Helps reduce the chance of them going to hospital or get[s] them out quicker. ... I think my role in the committee broadly contributes to healing ... by contributing to the advancement of medical science and healing but not in the way that I just described. ... [But] I am approached by family members [about] an ill member of their family or when
someone is ill and they come to see me, I feel much more in touch with current medical issues and current medical practice than I might otherwise feel if I wasn’t regularly attending that committee. And that’s an important part of my pastoral care; I know … each clergy person would have a different approach, but more and more I’m coming to understand that one of the things that I can provide for people is a level of … understanding in their situation that can provide some support and help and crosses the line between pastoral care and … patient advocacy. … it’s kind of continuing professional education.

In summary, whether the skill level was formational or higher, all participants began working inductively in HREC settings on the basis of their knowledge set, rather than on the basis of specific task training.

“V’shinantam le’vanekha Teach Them Diligently to Your Children”⁶: Induction, Further Training and Ongoing Professional Development

So how were clergy brought up to speed for their HREC work? Preparation to address meeting content was very mixed. In the case of those with ethics-specific advanced credentials, there seems to have been nothing. The veterans had cut their institutional teeth contributing to or working with the early drafts of National Guidelines and did not comment on induction or training. For later recruits in large institutions, the process appears to have been well orchestrated. Cedron was invited to be an observer at a meeting and having been approved—not least perhaps by virtue of the impression he made there—was given a package of materials

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⁶ Deut. 6:7.
to read, along with his service contract and other paperwork, which comprised,

documents that I signed about confidentiality and due diligence and responsibility of the members of the committee, but I don’t believe that my documents were any different from any of the other members of the committee. I don’t think it was a specific clergy document we were given. ... My understanding is, and again I’m going just from my memory, is that it’s a kind of a year-by-year proposition and it’s just kind of an administrative, at least in my case it’s been a kind of an administrative thing: “Do you want to keep going?” you know, “We want you to keep going, do you want to keep going, here’s the paperwork, sign it for this year” kind of thing.

The difference between well-inducted and actively supported clergy and those virtually unsupported seemed large. Micah had brought his original induction folder out and placed it on the table in his office in anticipation of our interview. He showed me the extensive documentation that situated the work in the context of the entire organization, the necessary forms, policies and contact materials. That was the organization’s standard for all HREC recruits and clearly support was available if required. His was a tangible example of a detailed induction process, actively resourced from an HREC secretariat. At the other end of the scale I would contrast Lois’s experience. Whilst resourcing seemed almost non-existent, she did not feel empowered to seek support given that resources were so stretched. As Lois allowed me to probe, it sounded like a very lonely process even though, like Cedron, she had observed a meeting:

    Kipen: Do you think that’s a fault, that you weren’t given anything more by way of professional induction into how to do the job?
Lois: Probably, at the time it seemed ok, but probably yes, in retrospect I would say probably yes, because that first meeting was a huge...

Kipen: Did you go back to the guy that you originally phoned ... and ask for any help?

Lois: No I haven’t.

Kipen: Did you go to anyone to mentor you?

Lois: No.

Kipen: You were just in the deep end and swim ...

Lois: Just try it, and so for the first meeting I was allowed to be an observer and so you can see how we do it and then from then on I began receiving a couple of projects each meeting.

Kipen: To be a primary reader?

Lois: Yes.

However, whilst each HREC member attends meetings in the company of other colleagues, the bulk of the preparatory work, reading applications, writing assessments, reading minutes and communications, can only be achieved alone. Perhaps the solitary nature of the work suggests to administrators that no initial support is necessary. The expectation seems to have been largely that appointed clergy could accept that, and apparently in the majority of cases they do. And whilst no participant had complained, it could have only been possible for them to have reached conclusions confidently, after they had skilled themselves by studying the necessary materials. For most, that appears to have been the norm, though none mentioned any time devoted to reading and absorbing the National Guidelines or its successor the National Statement.
The opportunity for clergy to speak to each other about their HREC work appears to have taken place when they worked together on other things, or if they overlapped within a denomination or other roles brought them into contact. But in answer to inquiries about whether HREC clergy seek each other out to deliberate over the general issues of the work, the answer was generally negative. The work is largely solitary and apparently does not invite much discussion within the clergy cohort.

As to follow-up skilling, by means of in-service training, experiences were diverse. Some veterans were contributors to development and delivery of NHMRC training days and did not personally feel the need for additional content training for themselves. Some participants never went to the training days on offer. In the case of Gabriel, who answered, “No, no” to whether he ever attended the training days, it was the strength of his reply which surprised. When asked whether it was because he was, “not interested?” his reply was, “Not remotely.”

Not all those with similarly advanced postgraduate credentials felt the same way. Ezra attended regularly: “Whenever the NHMRC held a one-day training session, we were always encouraged to go along to them.” His team was also able to attend Monash University’s Bio-ethics Intensive course, a time-consuming and costly option, provided at the expense of their committee. Ezra enjoyed a team experience with others from his committee, appreciated the venue for the four days away and then expressed his unqualified pleasure at the learning experience itself,

Great course, how comprehensive, what fine quality people they had to cover each of the sessions. ... one of the nicest
things that we took away from it was that we were really doing
the right thing, generally that what we heard was consistent
with what we were doing. We all said that in qualitative
research we learned a great deal.

In the case of Lois, she felt that only the doctors in her financially
constrained medical context received funds for training. She had the
opportunity to attend the free in-house lectures and seminars on medical
content, but no opportunities that were research-ethics-specific.

By contrast, Cedron did not attend, but had the chance to do so:

We have an email list where they send out notifications of
conferences and learning opportunities; I’ve not been in a
position to avail myself of any of those. I’m pretty sure they
indicated that there was some limited funding available to
cover some of the tuition; the programs that come to mind
were all in Melbourne.

Bilhah’s reply was the most comprehensive and she appears to have
enjoyed all the available training opportunities:

I went to a number of trainings at various sorts of things; oh,
the one week Bioethics Intensive course, Helga Kuhse, Peter
Singer (which he didn’t do); a number organized by NHMRC
and Federal Government. Yes, tended to do every three years.
A couple of other Melbourne things, some internal training by
my institution, relating to use of the forms and tweaking
internal practice; lectures by Lynn Gillam and Julian Savulescu
and other bio ethics things by invitation.
In every case where attendance was offered through the HREC, funds had been available to cover the costs. Lois’s situation seemed the least well resourced setting of all.

In some committees there is a strong culture of continuing updating. Hiram’s institution conducts retreats to thrash out issues and build collegiality. Felix said,

[We] have a very strong commitment to in-service training and there’s always, every year either at a national or local level, there’s provision for visiting speakers. You’re given a fair amount of written material to peruse when you get time, and there’s ... a very strong sense of keeping up with things. ... [they] are just designing a day at the moment on issues of privacy ...

Felix has not attended the Monash advanced bio-ethics course because, “it comes at the wrong time of the year, it comes just before Christmas”; one of the challenges of trying to balance a parish load alongside other opportunities.

“Lo yikhbeh balailah neirahh Their Candle is Not Extinguished by Night”
Balancing the Workload

The challenge of the workload and actual meetings has to be accommodated by all HREC members. Asked if that was a burden, Isaac explained, “my general attitude on these things was that if you take up

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7 Prov. 31:18.
something, you give up something. ... most of the time that I was on this Committee was after I retired.” For Micah, “I get a notice that there are four meetings this year and put them in your diary and be there.” Finding time to attend meetings seemed less of a challenge than the reading load. He went on to say, “Oh well, depends on the number of applications, but you know we can have hundreds of pages. Look I’ll be honest, there’s some times when I read the title of it and I say I can’t contribute to this so I don’t read it. And that’s understandable, they understand.”

Other committees with heavier loads, by virtue of more meetings and more projects to consider at each, demand extensive preparation. For Jael, “The biggest challenge is just the sheer volume of reading and staying sharp and not just kind of switching off with one more project and I’ve read so many, yeah that’s my biggest challenge yeah, staying sharp, like, awake while I read a month’s worth of stuff.”

For those whose job mandates participation, at least the reading is theoretically done in work time. But for those with other workloads as well, did they need to negotiate with their managements for permission to take on the work? Daniel said, “I never asked.” Cedron’s experience remained intriguing to him, even several years on:

When I announced it to [my management], because I don’t recall asking them, and told them that I’d just been accepted onto the [HRE] Committee, there was spontaneous applause which I think in the context of this interview is an interesting thing to reflect on. To be honest I expected people to, you know, maybe say, “Oh that’s interesting” and move onto the next thing, but they actually applauded as if this were some great achievement.
But he went on to say, “I don’t think I’m getting any pressure from anyone to pull out of the committee, but I have a lot of time pressures and it does take a significant chunk out of, it’s a chunk of time that I could quite easily fill with everyday activities ... and feel more on top of things.”

It seems that no participant experienced resistance from their managements in relation to the service they rendered to the HREC and in answer to questions about whether or not it had been necessary to preach or teach to ensure support of that ministry, there appeared no need for those activities. Cedron recalled,

there was at least one element that came up in which I was able to reflect on some of the experience in the ethics committee. I’ve not taught classes about it yet. But I think it’s worth noting that the kinds of ethical issues that congregants might be interested in are the broader, big questions that are not generally the issues that are raised by the nitty gritty of the research committee.

Ezra’s experience differs a little in his understanding of the teaching task:

... when I was in the parish ... there were a number of folk who were aware that this is something that I did. Whether it was the lady who was the Parish Secretary or members of the Parish Council or just people that I met within the parish who heard about it in conversation or if they were doing work at the parish office and they asked “what are you doing?” and you’d explain.
There is a sense from both, that any parish teaching is an indirect and gentle form of explaining, rather than a chance to showcase the HREC work.

The delicacy of skirting general information without betraying the confidentiality that applies to all committee proceedings would be another area requiring careful attention when having parish conversations to explain HREC work. However, Jael hints that sometimes her explaining needed to be within the institution: “I did more self-teaching as I went along, answering questions and having to really defend the activities of the Committee to those who rather it just be closed down and shot. But, so, I used to come up with the arguments and I published little bits and pieces in the [in house journal].” Occupying a staff position as opposed to being an appointed visitor who enters the committee and then departs the scene between meetings, Jael’s “parish” was the organization itself. Whilst she was not preaching from a pulpit, she was clearly addressing the embattled situation of her committee’s work and teaching through her role-modeling, through her dissemination of knowledge, through personally chosen professional reading and by asserting the message through publication. The internal culture appears, initially, to have been hostile and hers appears to have been an embattled context at the outset of her service.

For Isaac, the teaching was a clear task. But he described it by means of reference to an older mentor, who had instructed another colleague that teaching was, itself, a significant ministry. Having told that anecdote, he didn’t quite confirm the teaching ministry of his own work. I prompted, “and the ministry itself was going to be, in part, the cultivation of the minds of other young intelligent characters?” to which the unequivocal
reply was, “Exactly, yes.” There are several participants whose ministries included a range of teaching settings, from the role-modeling of Jael to the formal subjects taught by Isaac and several others. For some, teaching was a primary focus of their ministry, whilst for others it was a consequence of their context and interactions. From explaining in the parish context to publishing for general consumption, the teaching and preaching outputs appear to have been a gentle flow rather than a raging torrent. But for those who engaged in it, there was a clear sense that this too contributed to spreading the word about the work of their HREC ministry, even though that language was not explicitly employed.

Section Summary

Whilst the range of recruitment processes, induction methods, support systems and ongoing training did not deter any of these participants, it is impossible to know whether some of those items contributed to the departure of any other clergy from the work. Whilst the clergy are presumed to have religious principles, such details were not experienced as having been solicited directly. Whilst the demands of pre-reading were unanimously agreed to be huge, the challenge of finding time (never enough for most members) somehow did not result in resignations from any of these participants. None expressed any sense that the work did not merit the time, effort or challenge to life and professional workload balance. Some were motivated to study at the highest levels in the field and put that training at the disposal of the Australian people by means of their HREC service. Others without those levels of credentials took it upon themselves to become competent, even if supplementary training opportunities were not provided within their institutions. The investment
of time, effort and commitment demonstrates that they valued HREC work. Given so many demands, I began to search for the motivations behind this specialist clergy workload and the nexus between religious principle and its application by means of HREC ministry.

“Kol d’mamah dakah The Quiet, Murmuring Voice”\(^8\): God’s Call

Call, Calling or Vocation?

The purpose of revisiting each participant’s call to and understanding of ministry was to identify how each understood the consequence of their vocation for later HREC work as a ministry. Whilst Catholic participants tended to use the language of ‘vocation’ and others tended to refer to ‘call’ or ‘calling’, I used both terms interchangeably in interviews. In some cases ordination followed lay ministry.

“Yikra’eni v’e’eneihu God Will Call Me and I Will Answer God”\(^9\): From Call to HREC Clergy

This was an invitation to each participant to tell the story of having felt called by God. It is, perhaps, the most intimate question that can be asked.

\(^8\) 1 Kings 19:12.

\(^9\) Ps. 91:15.
None told their experienced more clearly than Ezra: “I did experience it as a sense of being called. Not so much a sense that I suddenly started thinking ‘Hey wouldn’t that be a nice thing to do’, but in the sense that something outside me, that we call God, was taking the initiative in that. It kind of hit me, rather than just kind of developed.”

After a range of discernment journeys, participants followed many paths to ordination. In every case, long periods of study and further periods of work to become experienced and highly skilled in pastoral ministry followed. Some participants linked their calling to the contexts of families and congregations that provided the prompt during early years. For Abner, it was the role-modeling of the minister throughout his early life. Daniel admired the work of his schoolteachers, who were clergy, and he identified them as models for his later choice.

Gabriel connected his call to childhood social justice conversations; his family discussed matters of right and wrong in their religious frameworks around the dinner table. For Hiram, that strong association of love for parents and their determination to expose him to the issues for which they were advocates and activists in their day, brought moving emotion in the retelling. Kenan recalled, “I was actively involved in the church youth movement and I think it was out of that, that I developed that interest and eventually quite a strong sense of call.” They all felt called during their relative youth or early in their working lives and went straight into ministry training via traditional entry points for their faiths or denominations. Even if ordination followed postgraduate work, providing there had been no
other work career prior to ordination, those identified as “first-career clergy” are Abner, Bilhah, Daniel, Felix, Gabriel, Hiram, Isaac and Kenan.

For Cedron, having been an organist during undergraduate years sowed the seed, which germinated in spectacular fashion much later, after he had trained for and commenced his professional career:

So it was kind of a life desire ... I did have a sense of calling ... a sense that I ought to be doing [ministry training] ... yet it was something that was not practical or realistically attainable. And forever was told it [the profession] gets better, next year it will get better, in “x” years it will get better, [after the next stage is completed] it will get better and after the [following promotion]. And at a certain point I realized it just wasn’t going to get better and that I was now old enough and worldly enough to be able to broaden my horizons and look elsewhere. And eventually came to do what I always wanted to do.

In Cedron’s case, his sublimated desire for the clerical life burst through a secular career path already in place, requiring a complete reorientation.

Like Cedron, others ‘sensed’ their calling but did not act until later, for a range of reasons. For Micah the move into ministry came after life-changing events, which propelled a new career direction. For Jael theological studies went alongside career, home and family, as is often the case for women trying to balance many loads simultaneously. Her enactment of the call to ministry had to wait for a realistic window of opportunity. For Lois’s denomination, progress towards women’s ordination resulted in long delay and the opportunity to seek the ordination track was not available in early career. Lois’s and Jael’s
ministries emerged as second career choices, reflecting to some degree, their ages and their denominations’ positions in relation to the possibility of ordination. Bilhah, being younger, did not have to overcome that hurdle.

Lois and Micah had first careers with no particular helping content. Ministry as a career was distilled for Ezra, Jael, Lois and Micah because their first careers had lacked something significant and gratifying, a longing that was not being satisfied, even though they were happy with their actual work. Having attained the credentials for, or experience in initial careers, Cedron, Ezra and Jael gave themselves to ministry training as a natural extension of their previous ‘helping’ careers that can be identified as analogous to physiotherapy or social work.\(^\text{10}\) For Gabriel, completing his first university degree revealed that the presumed profession would not be sufficient and he moved to theological studies rather than enter the workplace.

Participants demonstrated many applications of their callings, with alternative denominational structures providing diverse opportunities for enactments of their vocations. Traditional pulpit roles initially attracted Abner, Daniel, Cedron, Ezra and Felix. In the case of Bilhah, her initial call deliberately set that parish model aside in favor of a non-pulpit construct. Gabriel, Hiram, Isaac, Kenan, Micah and latterly Lois, combined ‘facilitatory’ careers with their ministries, working for large agencies or not-for-profits, whose charters are helpfulness rather than commercial gain. In some cases working in those helpful organizations was their ministry. Their

\(^{10}\) Listing those first trainings or careers explicitly might make for easy identification within the small participant pool, so I refrain from detailing them.
work in those agencies (as opposed to parish settings) was congruent with the value sets of their faiths and therefore provided comfortable niches for ministry. In other instances, work within helping agencies was conducted simultaneously with active, formal ministries in other settings.

During his HREC tenure, Hiram successfully combined formal, part-time or occasional appointments in parish ministry simultaneously with another profession, whilst Kenan dipped in and out of clerical appointments to pursue other career goals, which took higher priority from time to time. Daniel’s primary identity also allowed some academic teaching, as did Isaac’s. Chaplaincy provided traditional roles in parallel with the parish model for Bilhah, Jael, Lois and Micah. Not all found it possible to continue to hold the tension between their visible ministry and other helping-type work. Lois tried, but ultimately made the decision to separate the identities that were not coexisting comfortably.

Bilhah, Lois and Micah all became involved in HREC ministry by virtue of their job descriptions. In Jael’s case, as a result of having worked in the institution and then being invited to act in the role when another colleague was on leave resulted in her being appointed permanently. For Micah, participation was a presumption rather than a formal task in his position description.

Within larger denominations, the range of roles provides a variety of ministry options. However, over both long and short careers, there are opportunities for multiple role identities and chances to develop specialties, depending on institutional contexts, denominational
assignments and the family lives of participants. Those with doctorates in the ethics or moral theology areas identified their specialty as the result of arduous preparation. For most, the addition of HREC work to their other ministry portfolios was an informal embrace of a new opportunity. Not one participant embraced HREC work as the result of a goal pursued.

Jael’s drift into the HREC followed integration of her previous career with ordained ministry:

My experience of vocation has been mostly, it’s a sense of being drawn towards something; that then needs to be tested. ... I am not sure I could express it any more clearly than a kind of attraction ... when I started here I came as an Anglican chaplain, so I guess it was tested by the church saying “well ok we think that, actually, that attraction ... is a real thing and you can do this, so off you go and do it”.

Whilst drawing together other threads of her complex task, she reflected that [the institution] is her “during the week parish.”

Whether working within or beyond religious agencies, whatever the range of jobs, each participant qualified HREC work unambiguously as a component of their ministry. Inviting respondents to narrate their call and its application in HRECs in secular settings Daniel said, “you are different from, let’s say ministering in a parish, school ... which brings them ‘to your door’ as chaplain; but sitting on the committees, you put yourself ‘out there’ and the people you engage with are on the outside of the tradition you represent.”
Whether in early, mid, late or retirement phases of working life, all respondents were clear in the identities they were bringing as clergy for the purpose of their HREC recruitment and participation. Regardless of the other kinds of work that they may have done formerly or still retained alongside their ministries (whether part-time, fulltime or emeritus) the HREC work was a clear application of their ministry and thus an unambiguous response to their calling, even if not automatically claimed as ministry. For those whose original helping profession embodied at least part of their work aspiration of healing, there are many ministries which supply that and which made logical springboards to HREC work. Ezra connected it this way,

We are fortunate that within the Catholic Church ... [we] bring about healing, which is part of what we understand as part of the mission of the church ... I am lucky enough to have a particular role ... trying to make sure that ... we embrace the[se] values ... as a church. ... The mission of Jesus Christ was to heal and this ... by doing what I do in HRECs ... is one way of contributing to that healing mission.

Diversity is one of the key drivers behind HREC composition. The range of backgrounds and frames of reference that have driven participants towards religious ministry enriches that diversity. As representatives of a range of religious understandings, these participants rebuff any suggestion of clergy operating as a monolithic group across the HREC system. Some stories of calling pursued straight lines from early inklings to ministry without detours, some embodied moving away from something else towards ministry and others demonstrate parallel tracks of ministry with other things. There were several combinations, demonstrating clergy careers that are nuanced and varied, in response to God’s call. No two
tellings of call/vocation are identical, yet commonalities abound between the participants.

Applying God’s Call to HREC Service: How the Clergy Pastor to Committee Colleagues?

In the HREC ministry role, which came into being only two decades ago, clergy enact a ministry beyond their church, mosque, synagogue or temple. Did HREC non-clergy colleagues wonder what those clergy would be doing in meetings? Were they presumed to be ‘God Botherers’? Would they try to raise religious matters inappropriately, even insist on prayers or try to convert committee colleagues? Such might have been undisclosed concerns reflecting the stereotypical projections on the part of committee members who were not familiar with a range of clergy in the increasingly diverse religious context in Victoria. The provision of pastoral care in HREC composition addresses pastoral concerns on behalf of intended research participants, researchers and the institutions that support them. However, in the first instance it would be identifiable clerical behaviors that would easily label ministers of religion in their clerical personae.

At the outset, my frame of reference expanded the National Statement’s pastoral care chore. In addition to care for intended research participants, I wondered about care for those within HREC membership, including the needs of committee colleagues, researchers submitting applications for committee approval and secretariat staff in the employ of each institution. This disclosed my own understanding of the pastoral task and invited
others to either validate or dismiss that broader definition of HREC pastoral outreach.

The ways HREC clergy reflect on their Committee ministry service informs the ministering profession about a place which has been created for religion in research settings far beyond the traditional congregations. A series of questions invited participants to reflect on how their ministry role might be viewed by others. The questions did not presume an authoritative conclusion could be drawn on behalf of the clergy-watchers. However participants were invited to wonder about how they are seen by colleagues and the extent to which that perception might match participants’ self-assessments.

Ezra offered an anecdote about his acceptance on the part of Catholics, who appear to have a different yardstick from those of other faiths and none. Chuckling, he referenced his attire as a symbol of perceived authority:

It was kind of ironic that at the secular HREC no one seemed to care less if I wore a clergy shirt or not. But at a Catholic HREC you stood a pretty good chance of someone giving you a little sanction for daring to show up dressed as a clergy person. ... In Melbourne I haven’t encountered that ... So ... from time to time I will show up in a clergy shirt, often for no more intelligent reason than because on Sunday ... you tend to dress like that while you’re doing services ... and often on Monday you look at that shirt and say “I think I could get another day out of that one”.
Ezra recounts the sartorial episodes with good humor, accepting that some fellow Catholics perceive the clerical collar as an assertion of authority, which deserves and even requires “sanction”. Those for whom those shirts have no significance do not read anything into their appearance at meetings. Ezra’s pastoral identity comes not from title or uniform, but on the basis of preparation and contribution in the meetings, on the basis of care not collar. However, the various regalia do make clerical identity overt, if not authoritative.

**Leading HRECs in prayer: Overt pastoral care to colleagues?** I asked whether there was ever an occasion when clergy had been asked to say a prayer or lead a moment of reflection in an HREC meeting. The responses in all secular contexts were clear, “No, no, never had that” was the generic reply. Felix’s role in leading prayer applied beyond the secular HRECs on which he served: “Rotary is perhaps where I do it most … I am trying to think, well … after the bushfires or after the 9/11 there were public … events in which I was asked to contribute, but they weren’t specifically Ethics Committees.” The other two Catholic priests did have instances where they had been asked to contribute what they identify as prayer within Catholic settings. Daniel’s experience provided regular opportunities for prayer within Catholic institutions:

Daniel: Well certainly when I served on committees that have been [within the] Catholic tradition … they often ask you to say a prayer at the beginning, you know, a prayer for wisdom.

Kipen: But not outside the framework of the church institutions?

Daniel: No, I don’t think I’ve ever been, no. I mean, you know when you go to funerals of colleagues who you’ve got to know, on these various committees, and they’ve sort of sometimes
their spouse or child or somebody like that [dies or is ill] but never directly within the committee.

This suggests that whilst prayers were offered only in the Catholic contexts, nevertheless pastoral relationships had been established in secular settings and could then be utilized, if desired, to meet needs beyond the HREC’s formal meetings as an extension of the formal agenda.

Speaking of his experience in one hospital setting, Ezra explained,

The [institution] HREC begins with a little reflection thing … we do pray a bit … and that can be as diverse as someone bringing a poem along—about someone being announced that they are a little Geelong supporter …—to reflections and prayers. … It goes around the committee. So often when it’s my turn I would bring along one of the Psalms that we could pray together, a little bit more specifically prayer than others.

But on the other hand, I would not be unique in that. I can think of one other member who would bring along a prayer that we were all invited to pray. You work out what’s appropriate and what’s not. … I’m conscious that there is a Jewish membership of the Committee, so I am probably more comfortable bringing along a Psalm and hoping that the members who might have no religious faith and will say “oh it’s [the setting] and go along with it.” I was thinking one occasion I [would conclude with] “… To the Father, through the Son … in the unity of the Holy Spirit” and I thought “that’s probably too Christian.”

The two approaches differ in that Daniel identifies what is religiously appropriate by virtue of the affiliation of the institution, whereas Ezra assesses the composition of the committee and navigates individual sensibilities, so as to make the prayer moment as inclusive as possible.
when it is his turn to lead it. Significantly, he is not prayer leader by virtue of his clergy identity. Rather, all members contribute to the task of providing a spiritual moment upon which the HREC’s work is based. In Catholic institutions where religious guidance is the driver of the value systems governing HREC work, prayer is identified as appropriate and usual. In the secular contexts, the role of ‘clergy as leader of prayer’ is irrelevant and therefore set aside. All three Catholic priests appear comfortable with the separation between secular and religious institutions and the prayerful/non-prayerful roles they play in each. That also appears to be the case with all non-Catholic participants, for whom there seemed nothing further to say about being leaders of prayer beyond secular HRECs, but not within them.

Alternate forms of pastoral care towards committee members: Covert intentions or examined inner motivations? Whilst the inverse of ‘overt’ is ‘covert’, the implication of something being covert is that it is hidden and that by virtue of being masked it needs to be masked. Prayer, as a form of overt pastoral care, would be entirely visible and identifiable. But that does not mean that the clergy, who do not pray aloud at meetings, are without a transparent agenda of caring for their committee colleagues. Yet in some cases, even very ardent proponents of the HREC ministry needed to be coaxed to articulate the pastoral ministry being undertaken with, for and alongside non-clergy colleagues.

It also became clear that the definitions of pastoral care are individualized and do not necessarily expand to embrace suggestions offered from definitions being used by others doing the same work. What I discerned
from comments made by participants as indicators of pastoral care were not always similarly identified by their owners. It was at that level of discernment that I sometimes had to encourage the consideration of alternative suggestions, those provided by other participants, in order to connect examples as yet unrecognized by some clergy with other illustrations already provided. That did not always yield an acceptance of the proffered suggestions and I was ultimately left with the task of making decisions as to whether or not it was appropriate to bridge the definitional divides and include particular examples as demonstrations of pastoral care or not.

For example, Cedron was happy to give pastoral credit to others but not take that credit for himself. It is hard to imagine that his own contribution did not add to the enactment of pastoral care in his HREC, but at the outset, he chose to define that care in terms of recognition of life events:

... I mean we have a very compassionate chairperson ... and also there’s ... the professional ethics head and between the two of them I think they manage the group behind the scenes and, you know, notify us if something’s going on, someone’s had a baby or something like that, in which case we’re all, you know, individually congratulate the person or whatever. I mean [when so and so] had a baby there was a lot of ... friendly emails ...

In reply to questions about how her training to listen attentively results in her being aware of a pastoral concern for the emotions of committee colleagues, Jael became quiet and thoughtful:

Kipen: Have you ever found that your pastoral skill in this regard has been helpful in the dynamic of the committee, has it enabled you to operate in a facilitatory way?

Jael: Mostly I let the chair do the chairing. There will be
occasions where I guess I hear something that’s underneath the words and I might just, kind of, try and draw that out. I can’t think of a particular example at the moment, but yes, there are odd occasions that that happens.

After prompting about an earlier reference to trials concerning patients in vegetative states she then continued, speaking of non-clinicians on the HREC, “It can be quite difficult to separate what you think your ethical principles are and what your gut feeling is around some of this stuff, because most of us have got quite strong personal opinions around … the vegetative state …”

Cedron’s reply contrasted with Jael’s appreciation of the struggles that individual committee members can be experiencing in their work during meetings. Something emotional had entered her conversation, yet Jael declined to identify it as pastoring to her committee: “Kipen: so nothing comes to mind in terms of pastoring your committee for things that have happened? Jael: No.”

By interview 12 with Lois, the phrasing of the question demonstrated how accumulating responses invited further questioning that could draw out more nuanced pastoral responses:

Kipen: Have you ever … been aware that you are doing something, as a minister in the room, that others may not even be aware of … pastoring individuals or the group …?

Lois: Yes perhaps … I do feel a little bit protective about this layperson because, I feel that … when he speaks … he does kind of go round and round in circles trying to land on what he’s trying to say, which, you know, I find that frustrating too, but …
I find myself trying to help him land if I can.

Kipen: ... it does sound as though you rely on your own pastoral skills all the time in the way you handle other people in the meeting.

Lois: Yes.

Kipen: Do you think they’d be aware that ... they were being pastored to?

Lois: No I don’t think so ... you end up in those pastoral conversations in a supermarket, you know, so it’s just what you do, it’s part of your training, it’s part of who you are, it becomes part of your identity and you don’t even realize you are doing it yourself, until you look at it.

I suppose now, as we have this discussion, I never think “oh now I am being pastoral, now I’ll have to put my pastoral hat on and try and help you”. But as I look back on it, I think “OK, I do, yes I can see the ways in which I do that”. But you don’t think, you don’t cognitively, you don’t consciously, you are not consciously seeing that, when you are doing it.

Kipen: So it doesn’t start with a formal awareness or intention?

Lois: No.

Kipen: But in retrospect you are prepared to own it?

Lois: Yes.

This reveals not so much a covert intention, in the sense of something deliberately masked, but rather a disclosure to the self of something previously unconsidered. Lois’s sense of pastoral service as an everyday occurrence had simply not been extended to consideration of her HREC work. Her explanation of not having raised the question to herself for conscious consideration made sense to her and the pieces of the puzzle clearly clicked into place for her, as soon as she brought them to mind with deliberation.
Micah’s observation about the newly-generic identity of the pastor in a civic context, as opposed to their more familiar denominational identity, might explain why consideration had not been given to the role by so many participants:

Whereas once upon a time pastoral care may have meant just that, pastoral care with a Christian background, I think these days that has really changed now to offering a spiritual support ... So even though the position on the committee has remained the same, I think the meaning of that position has probably changed if you know what I mean ... 

This separation of the personal, denominational commitment from the provision of generic spiritual support, in the HREC context, is borne out in Hiram’s way of connecting his pastoral concern for HREC members and key support staff at one level and his concern for researchers and prospective research participants at another. However he displays an unhesitating consciousness about the task of providing that support, which makes it overt to others, rather than veiled:

Hiram: We would pause the meeting to care for members of the committee. [A key Secretariat staff member’s] mother died ... we finally found out what was going on. We paused and we spent a little time to dwell (he pauses, remembering).

Kipen: Now some people will just call that plain ordinary good manners and human decency, but was there any part of you that was aware that you were ministering to this tiny little group because they were ‘a congregation’ of their own.

Hiram: Yes, I mean it’s the way I am, but that’s why I am a clergy person ... [when] somebody has found a particular interview stressful; stop, pay attention ... utterly critical in figuring out what’s going on and if there was [body language that signalled something significant] somewhere around the table, it got looked at ... That’s about the issues, but also just in terms if something significant, positive or negative, happened.
We work together and see each other on a fairly regular basis and we need to … for me it was part of good management as well as pastoral caring and tending to people.

Similar concern is on display and applied to prospective principal researchers\textsuperscript{11} who attend the HREC for interviews. Hiram continued,

\textit{... certainly ... the research ... [was] subject to ... pastoral care concerns ... and occasionally the perpetrators of the research here were getting themselves into completely silly situations, or diabolical ones ... In those early days, particularly in the medical profession but in others as well, those who were “insensitive to persons” violated my profound personal and professional sense of sanctity of the person, of the care that the persons deserve, require, demand we ought to do, and I would operate out of that category which is well developed [for me] as a priest ...}

Hiram’s level of deliberation in the active care for secretariat staff, committee members and the research community, extends Lois’s concern beyond one particular individual. He understands the HREC network as a “congregation” or community, even though it is identified institutionally as a ‘committee’. That appreciation of the inherently pastoral element of the HREC task, notwithstanding secular or Catholic contexts, was also clear to Daniel. However, he was under no illusion that staffs may fail to realize the pastoral intent at the outset and makes that assertion equally about hospitals and HRECs:

\textit{Kipen: Are you aware that you are actually pastoring the committees ... ?}

\textsuperscript{11} In Australia, students whose applications are vetted by the HREC members submit their proposals under the imprimatur of the academic supervisor, who is identified as the Principal Researcher.
Daniel: Indirectly, I suppose that is what I’d say, indirectly pastoring … particularly with secular institutions, when you first come on, they think you’re the ‘thought police’ … you’ve just to wear that for a while until they come to accept that … even if you have different views, they’re reasonable.

Kipen: So you really become a bit of a whipping boy for the place of faith in a secular world?

Daniel: To some degree, yes … it’s always a bit, well not embarrassing exactly, but a bit challenging when you start off.

Kipen: Would you have to credential yourself?

Daniel: Yes … rather than, well, you know, “Yes Father, no Father, thank you Father.”

Daniel’s sense of journeying with others came through as proof of pastoral concern and the way he chose to exercise it indirectly. With a certain wry awareness of the lack of his own automatic acceptance and authority, and even at the habitual distrust of Catholic priests as stereotypes of presumed authority, Daniel accepts the need to just wait for others to normalize his presence. Whether attending to matters on hospital wards, collaborating with clinicians or doing his HREC work, he clearly experiences his conspicuous identity of “Father” as making for discomfort, until others realize that he is not “the thought police” but rather “pastor”. He could not attempt to be covert, but the degree of perceived intrusion seems to subside as time goes on and he becomes an accepted member of both hospital teams and HRECs.

Delicacy, patience and quiet efficacy do not equate to covert ministry, but rather to ministry at a discreet distance, ministry subtle enough not to be easily discerned by staff or committee recipients. Daniel clearly considers
that a suitable profile, for those who see their roles as pastoring “indirectly”. He is conscious of his ministry in its indirect application despite it being proclaimed by virtue of his title and collar. He implies that other ministers also utilize influence, rather than instruction, as their prime method of indirect guidance.

Pastoral work appears innate in these examples, whether direct or indirect, even when the pastors are not conscious of their efforts and even if reticent to acknowledge them when initially prompted to consider labeling them.

Applying God’s Call at the Next Level of Distance: Pastoral Care for those Who Will Never Meet their Pastors

Person-to-person care, as enactment of the divine call, is demonstrated in each of the examples already cited, from sending baby greetings to resolving distress in meetings, supporting staff who manage committee business and preventing would-be researchers from getting into precarious situations. It is not possible to know whether these matters receive particular consideration from other non-clergy HREC members, although the demands of the categories of ethical evaluation imposed by the National Statement are mandatory upon them all. But if some participants were reluctant to speak about their HREC work as pastoral ministry in the face-to-face context, how would they choose to make the connection between their efforts as enactment of the meta-level of pastoral motivation through HREC service on behalf of people they would never meet? How may that ministry to those who will always remain anonymous and beyond the direct reach of clergy pastoral care, be understood?
Still declining to identify her work as pastoral, “While I wouldn’t have a pastoral role ...”, Bilhah’s Uniting Church understanding is that “calling to ministry [has] prophetic, preaching and pastoral roles.” After reflection, she made the following connections,

probably there’s bits of all of that in the work on an Ethics Committee. There’s a teaching role to a certain extent, when you say to members ... that Christians and religious people in the community [do and don’t do this or that]. And a prophetic role [when saying something like] “I’m awfully sorry because I can’t agree.”

Like some others, she is reticent to identify such prevention of harm—by means of her objection—as pastoral work, preferring to use her understanding of the term ‘prophetic’. It is a courageous identification, given prophecy’s historically conspicuous and proactive task, one that had to counteract the destructive behaviors of so many. I wondered if that role might put Bilhah on the outer edge of the committee by virtue of having to disagree often or strenuously, or make demands. She replied, “Most people are fine with it.” As only the second interviewee in the sample, it was very significant to me that Bilhah brought out a prophetic understanding of her task. It would remain in my awareness throughout the subsequent interviews. I would invite others to think about the prophetic function as being analogous to HREC work for clergy, by using direct and indirect questioning.

Isaac hesitated, ambivalent as to whether he was fulfilling a lay or ordained prophetic, preaching and pastoral role in HREC work. Then he mused,

I’m just not strongly aware of consciously playing that role at any point in any of the committees I served. ... I would think
there’d be some who’d see it as a perfectly appropriate way of exercising an ordained ministry, but there would be others who would say “well there isn’t enough commitment there to the body of the church.”

As if interrogating the commitment to his own denomination, he then argued against himself by means of a reference that had been made to him in a church publication that,

mentioned me as [an] appropriate way in which the church should be exercising its social responsibility. So ... I thought to myself “well that’s both a compliment, but it’s also, it brings a bit of clarity to what I think ... I’m on about ... [in my HREC] service”. I’ve always thought there was a possibility that even an institutional church could be a bit prophetic about issues of war and peace ... exactly where I was coming from, a similar ... perspective on wider social service as an essential part of ministry.

Pleased by the affirmation of his work, Isaac’s acknowledged “perspective on wider social service as an essential part of ministry” unambiguously relates the call to God’s service as an obligation to serve the wider society, even if that might bring questions from those who are denomination-centric in their concerns. The task of service to the society at large aligns clearly with HREC service, by means of standing up for what is right in the prophetic sense and deriving from the prophetic tradition how to care for individuals by preventing harm and ensuring they are respected.

Responding to my suggestion that Felix’s ministry is “to be with people where they are at” he replied, “Most definitely, all the time, never stops ... It’s more to do with humanity. Kipen: Because if people aren’t courageous then courageous things don’t happen? Felix: That’s right, yes.”
Accepting the call to ministry creates a tension between the expectation of ordaining institutions and the flocks who support them, and the personal experience which each minister has of their call in its potential for universal application. Demonstrating that universal/particular divide, Felix and Isaac highlight priorities towards humanity, whilst others would start with the church/religious denomination as the vehicle for tending to that humanity. Micah captured that tension, ever mindful of the precarious position of prophets, by adding, “... Prophet’s not known in his own home town ...” evoking Matthew 15:11. His modesty, like Isaac’s, meant that Micah’s affirmation from a national body of chaplains was the thing that reassured him in his in-house ministry, of which HREC work is a component.

The opportunity to pastor in secular institutions further emphasizes the ground upon which the HREC clergy stand, in regard to a ministry towards people whom they will never meet. In recalling one story, Micah’s otherwise-mild demeanor changed to demonstrate that he could take an uncompromising stand on HREC applications that sought—in his opinion—to violate individuals through the method of data gathering proposed research findings: “We’ve had applications looking at [a particular issue] and I stood up strongly against that, because they wanted to video ... I said ‘you know, that’s not right to have a camera over [them], you don’t sit in your office and have a camera watching what you’re doing and that, it, would just be a total violation.’”

Distinguishing between those agenda items well within his technical grasp and some others that are not, Micah is clear about the boundary between primary and secondary pastoral care relationships and their application:
Micah: I step back from *academic areas beyond his own training*, because that’s not, you know, it’s not where my area of expertise is.

Kipen: Actually your expertise is your theologically informed pastoral care.

Micah: That’s right but that wouldn’t be *primary* pastoral care.

Micah sees intervention to prevent harm as primary pastoring, but imposes a content-based boundary between himself and the issues before the HREC on matters where he feels less confident to know the message he ought to be delivering. No other participant brought up the issue of an application’s content as a deterrent to their contribution. But here is one example of the limit to prophetic obligation, as experienced by Micah, in which he sets some applications aside in his own mind, as being beyond both his direct and indirect pastoral care.

**Section Summary**

Having been called to ministry and ordained, participating clergy have chosen to enact their understanding of vocation, in part, by accepting positions on HRECs in recognition of their pastoral care skills. The work provides a range of opportunities to influence others, by speaking up to prevent harm and by informing others as a means of what some identify as prophetic and teaching ministries. Significantly, the contributions are delineated between interpersonal, i.e. primary pastoral care, as distinct from mediated, i.e. secondary care. Whether identified as ‘primary and secondary levels of pastoral care’ or ‘direct and indirect pastoring’, the two layers of care demonstrate that clergy approach the committee task with varying understandings of the levels of application of their pastoral skill.
The majority embrace the distance between the researchers and the ultimate participants, as one of the challenges for implementing provision of pastoral care as necessarily imposed by the committee processes. There are clear understandings of how the work adds to the success of the total oversight process, by means of preventing harm and ensuring the most compassionate possible research activities as reflective of pastoral care.

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**Bringing Sanctity to Australia’s Quest for Knowledge: Multiple Ministries in Service to God and the Nation**

“*I Love God and My Country, I Will Serve the Queen and Cheerfully Obey My Parents, Teachers and the Laws*”

The Australian colonies, seeing the potential of pooled resources, spent time observing the models of other commonwealths and then created Australia’s first constitution. It began,

9th of July, 1900

**COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA CONSTITUTION ACT**

An Act to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia

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12 The post-WWII children’s pledge of allegiance, recited in government primary schools, after facing the flag and singing *God Save the Queen* (the then national anthem of Australia) at the start of each school week. The content of the school flag ceremony has changed to reflect great diversity in style and content since my early days in the teaching service.
Whereas the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God, have agreed to unite in one indissoluble Federal Commonwealth under the Crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and under the Constitution hereby established ... 13

Whilst the new commonwealth did not follow its colonial parent and identify a national church, God was clearly The Presence upon whom all Australians could and ought humbly to rely. Religious allegiances, discriminations and inequities followed. But in our multiple, current understandings of God in the civic life of the nation, there is room for all to perceive, experience and understand God in a range of iterations. This requires delicate positioning by HREC clergy, who are supposedly appointed for their pastoral sensitivity, not their denominational allegiance. Yet those denominational loyalties surely impact the contributions of individual HREC clergy to the nation.

Secular HREC Processes: Holy Work for the Clergy

Preventing harm and ensuring the most compassionate possible research are project-specific and transacted within the confidential contexts of HRECs. Their comments demonstrate that clergy understand the contribution they make in their HREC contexts as an enactment of their response to God through ministry 1) at the micro level within committees and 2) in the larger context, at one remove from the participants they will never meet, whose wellbeing they are protecting. Whilst their work

appears identical to that of others who are non-clergy, there is an interior awareness of its sacred content. Those who undertake HREC ministry placement in response to God’s call do so with a clear sense of seeking justice, by means of influence, utilizing prophecy, and teaching ministries to which they were ordained.

This final stage of data analysis gathers the links between the task-specific HREC pastoral work and the larger understanding of the world to which it contributes, as reflective of the religious visions driving individual ministries. Whilst participants were exclusively Victorian, they were invited to connect their individual local committee and common state-level contexts to their ministry to the greater, national commonwealth, under whose regulations they all work.

**How Individual Clergy Speak for those of All Faiths and None**

Several participants had not considered their efforts in the committee microcosm as ministry on any scale of national significance. Inviting those who had not, to extend consideration of their HREC contributions to the national context, produced many moments of silent thought, as different participants tried to reframe their familiar experiences in the larger perspective. The Catholic tradition, whose long-held positions on certain research issues can make for divergent views in meetings, is not only the one struggling on behalf of the pastoral needs of all Australians. The tension between tenets of faith and their application in secular contexts creates a strong dynamic for some.
One participant in particular demonstrated that polarity inadvertently. I commented on body language that accompanied the answer about the micro/macro tension and then offered an interpretation about the individual’s position in relation to their church. The body language that had developed was arms extended and hands spread, palms facing inwards. It could have been interpreted as setting two boundaries that faced each other. But there was a sense of curve, as though a very large ball had been removed and the hands continued to hold the pose:

Kipen: You’re holding your hands out at two opposing ends ... poles apart. I actually see ... your professional vulnerability ... you holding your hands around a tension of diversity in the nation?

Lois: Yes.

Kipen: And in which the integrity of people with faith can be accommodated?

Lois: Yes and they don’t have to all have the same kind of lifestyles and beliefs.

Kipen: And that’s the thing that enables you to do this work in your role here in a [setting] which is avowedly secular?

Lois: Mmm.

The interview moved into deeply reflective mood. Given some of the issues discussed in this participant’s committee, there was clearly a sense of boundary between that minister and their church. I must be extremely circumspect in the details here. An immovable commitment to the embrace of HREC issues, on behalf of those for whom the research was being proposed, was in clear tension with some of the positions of the minister’s denomination. Holding the terrain in favor of sound research appeared only to have been achievable by means of committee
confidentiality. It provided significant protection that the participant experienced as a necessary support for their work. This foreshadowed several issues.

By pausing to narrate what the body language had evoked for me, I was able to suggest the great courage needed in the determination not to follow that or any denomination’s particular ‘party line’ theology on particular occasions. Further, the tension within the outstretched hands was clearly indicating that those being “held” were receiving strong protection within the embrace. I offered,

Kipen: So you don’t think of yourself when you walk through the door as being a builder of that [strong, protective, courageous14] Australia, but actually you are.

Lois: Yeah I suppose I am. I certainly don’t think of myself in that way, no, and there is a whole lot of things we’ve discussed here, it will be interesting to see the transcript ... “I’ll have to think about ...”, that I have not thought about it, not consciously thought about it, ... but yes, I would have to affirm that.

The words ‘strong, protective and courageous’ emerged from answers provided from previous participants. Several ministers had recounted similar experiences, sometimes feeling that they had to step towards or away from particular teachings, which buttressed their stance within the HREC. I proffered degrees of affirmation of their strength, protectiveness and courage, very gingerly. Those who embraced my comments generally displayed a delicate balancing act in which recognition and acceptance of

14 These adjectives appeared in an earlier question.
the affirmation appeared to vie with modesty about the extent of their contributions, “I have not thought about it, ... but yes ... I would have to affirm that.”

This comment demonstrates the work of one faithful individual balancing the self and the relationship to their denomination in the national context, against the beliefs of their own tradition and others’: “… so now I see myself as ... broader I suppose, so my theology has changed I guess in some ways, because of, I’ve really been forced to examine some of what I’ve hereto thought I believed, and adjusted it a little …”

For some, the small shift from those religiously-neutral labels to what might be called ‘religious parlance’, provided more familiar vocabulary and made accepting affirmation more comfortable. “Prophecy”, “righteousness”, “witness” and “mission” worked as pseudonyms for the other qualities in some cases. Those historic, corporate terms allowed discussion in the context of the greater undertaking, rather than in personal terms. That was important to several Christian participants. Being able to ‘adjust’ their understandings in the light of encounters with the beliefs of others and the consequences for ethical research was a theological process and certainly not a pragmatic one. They understood the sacred commitment to being faithful and engaging beyond one’s own tradition (labeled by some as mission) to grapple with the proper standards without compromise (labeled by some as righteousness) and to insist on those standards on behalf of the vulnerable and voiceless (prophecy and witness) as their ministry work.
The extraordinary paradox, already examined, of having persons of all faiths asserting care on behalf of persons of all other faiths as well as their own, had demonstrated impacts for many. Whether participants were identifiable leaders in their faiths or not, their HREC contributions are ‘quiet’ in the personal sense, even if they are well known in their institutions and beyond. That degree of humility in response to their ‘strong, protective and courageous’ qualities does not equate to tentativeness. Indeed the courage on display in committees, arising from that deep engagement with theology with which they either align or disengage, must be assertive. But the humility is the absence of any need to shout that work from the rooftops or call attention to it, as in Cedron’s surprise at the interest in his appointment. Perhaps it is this modesty in the role, of speaking for one’s own faith but on behalf of others beyond it, that has allowed the integrity of HREC ministers to stand across the national system by virtue of in-house committee success and appropriateness. Clergy might name it witness, others diligence or staying power.

**How Catholic Priests Manage their Convictions on Behalf of Both Catholics and Others**

Catholics are the largest single identified Australian denomination and perhaps because of their strong voice on doctrinal matters, Catholic clergy are present on many HRECs. However, there is an important principle at stake in not only being aware of and taking Catholic sensibilities into consideration, but ensuring that this appears to be so not only for them but for those of all faiths and none. When it comes to demonstrating pastoral care for all, ‘justice is not only done by HREC consensus, but must
also be seen to be done\textsuperscript{15} for all faiths and denominations. One proactive approach was explained by Hiram: “[by] getting a Catholic on deliberately … we couldn’t be said to be excluding Catholics who will review medical research, and so if anything came up potentially sensitive to Catholics [we] made sure he\textsuperscript{16} had a look at it.”

This states a strongly proactive committee position with regard to Catholic issues. Being sure that no accusation of exclusion could be made is just as important a strategy as ensuring there are diverse religious views represented, if the subject matter of the committees is likely to be challenging. Daniel said, “In the early days they might have been shocked and surprised to have a Catholic priest in an avowedly secular institution and that it works.” But the Catholic participants were far from unanimous as to how the “Catholic communities” ought to be catered to.

For Ezra it is not about imposing the Catholic viewpoint on everyone, but making it possible for Catholics to be provided with the chance to know which way to proceed, if they choose to abide by the Church’s teachings:

I know that there are lots of Catholics who go to IVF, but technically it’s something that the Catholic Church does not approve of. … I am always happy to work with the ambiguity of things … If the protocol says “because of the drug you’re taking, we want you to use two methods of birth control”, there’s no

\textsuperscript{15} To paraphrase The Right Honorable, The Viscount Hewart, 7\textsuperscript{th} Lord Chief Justice of England.

\textsuperscript{16} Whilst only men may be ordained in the Catholic Church, many women religious from Catholic communities in Melbourne have the academic credentials and communal standing to merit nomination and appointment to committees. Despite my deliberately attempting to find them, I was not successful.
point in my saying ... that I’m a’gin birth control and I want that paragraph taken out, because it’s not going to happen.

I also take the view that if there was a Catholic who was looking at this particular study and they had strong feelings on that issue, they can easily say “no, that is not for me.” ... you would make sure that this was clearly spelled out in the protocol and then people can make up their own minds. Otherwise you become the Chief Censor rather than the Human Research Ethics Committee.

Daniel’s take on the same issue was slightly different, insisting on his formulation being acceptable to Catholic teaching: “ ... some research projects with women ... they’d advise ... that anybody who’s on this particular project shouldn’t get pregnant, and they’d say, ... ‘should be using contraceptives’ and I ... put my oar in and said ‘no, should be using some form of birth control or abstinence’.”

I wondered whether Daniel felt that approach covered outreach to prospective participants of all religious communities:

Kipen: Your own identity is very clearly marked as a Catholic but you’re actually there as a symbolic post holder.

Daniel: Yes.

Kipen: Have you ever found yourself wondering, “Would someone from a different religion have a problem with this?” ... You said before, “Jesus said it because it was right” therefore if Jesus said it, is [it] likely to be right for everybody?

Daniel: Yes, well hopefully that’s the case.

Kipen: Ever struggled with that?
Daniel: Oh, you get challenged ... But not, not, I’ve never lost any sleep over it!

Daniel does not see HREC work as interfaith, other than through interacting with other committee members of different faiths. Clearly he is comfortable to hope, but is actually insisting, that what constitutes good Catholicism will be good for others and loses no sleep as a result.

Speaking of the eventual consequences of the reduced number of vocations, Felix postulated an absence of a sufficient number of priests trained with Ezra’s style of mindset. Of being able to navigate for Catholics within the parameters of the need for ethical research to be conducted for the community at large, he speculated,

I would see educated Catholics who have a great commitment to community service and intellectual horizons, to take their place, and I think they will be more than acceptable by the HREC people and they will do the role. ... the laity will step up into these roles and that’s how it will happen.

Implicit in this prediction is that the ‘ministry of all believers’, intellectual and community-minded lay Catholics will eventually fill places currently occupied by ordained priests, if their supply should be insufficient. It may be that the range of Catholic voices would reflect further diversity in that situation, but a divergent range is already on view. Whilst Daniel did not approach the issue of vocations, he also made a comment about the laity, “I think the laity, Catholic laity, have a new found confidence in themselves and they’re not going to be dictated to by the priest.”
Here is the point at which Daniel’s orthodoxy and his HREC authority bump into lay reality. In his role as priest, he does not concede wording of protocols that would sanction behaviors frowned upon by his church, yet anticipates a time when the laity will decline to be dictated to. Perhaps this explains the greater flexibility of Ezra and Felix. Another case invites speculation as to how the lay and ordained Catholics grappled with each other’s positions in a non-Catholic setting:

Well this was, the super irony is that the ordained Catholic lined up with the ordained Uniting Church minister to support embryonic stem cell research; the lay Catholic said “no”! I think that’s fantastic success, I think that means everybody’s exercising their individual conscience and moral rationality in that setting in a remarkable way ... with such civility and such honor and respect for each person’s position.

Suffice to say there appears no monolithic Catholic position across HRECs and whilst there are evident Catholic preoccupations, not every Catholic priest responds to these in the same way.

How Are the Hierarchies Involved in this Service?

There is nothing secretive about the work itself, only the content details, which are subject to ‘closed meeting’ confidentiality. It provides the freedom for clergy to do their HREC work without intervention from their hierarchies. It is individual clergy, rather than churches, who fulfill the regulations mandating pastoral care to be provided on HRECs. Without being appointed by or accountable to their hierarchies, they are free to make themselves available via recruitment processes which do not concern
church superiors and are therefore without any taint or possible accusation of ‘denominational gerrymandering’.

Although the hierarchies do not nominate or appoint their candidates to particular HRECs, inasmuch as appointees are known, senior staff could take pride in their clergy contributing to the greater, Australian good beyond parish structures via HRECs. To what extent does this appear to be the case? Hiram grimaced and suspected that, “There is no way that [anyone’s] Bishop would ... give a damn, in fact he’d say ‘[how come] you got that much time left over [to add this workload]?’ ... Oh ... community service in the church, we don't know what it means anymore, they used to—but no.”

The frustration of Hiram’s take on some churches’ restricted understanding of ‘the greater good’ shows through here. It is not unlike Isaac’s earlier concern about the legitimacy between a church-centric ministry and one that situates HREC work in a more diverse landscape and the fact that several clergy never thought it necessary to consult those higher up the authority tree. It is not possible to conclude that the hierarchies fail to recognize HREC work’s strategic and holy impact. Perhaps church managements do not place emphasis on HREC’s significance; perhaps not every HREC minister announces their work in their annual reports. Perhaps, from previous references to the lack of hierarchical involvement, failure to acknowledge the HREC work of their clergy indicates that superiors do not see HRECs as core business or perhaps are not formally aware of its contributions. Alternatively, individual clergy want their HREC work quarantined from hierarchical intervention and ensure that it is.
But would the churches respond better if given the chance to do so? Ezra observed, “We have a wonderful network of Catholic hospitals where we work in partnership with folk of all faiths and none, to bring about healing which is part of what we understand as part of the mission of the church. ... the values that we work out of are the particular values that, as a church, that we embrace.”

It would therefore be reasonable for his church to affirm the work of their clergy who add to those partnerships, advance the mission of the church and ‘bring about healing’. Yet, there appears to be a lack of attention to the HREC specialty ministry and none of the ministers is calling their work to the attention of their managers. Their quiet passion can contribute without intervention from ‘higher up’ and their ongoing reappointments in settings where their contribution must meet the expectations of others in order to be judged worthy, appears the preferred validation. As already seen, at the parish level, individual communities are proud of their ministers for undertaking the work and embrace it in a way that upper echelons seem not to have done.

**Satisfactions in HREC Service**

Whilst they can identify a range of ministry satisfactions arising from their HREC work, there are personal satisfactions for the ministers that might also be experienced by several categories of HREC members. In addition to doing good and taking pleasure in a general civic contribution there are additional satisfactions. Not least, the company is intelligent, as stated by Daniel: “They’re intelligent people. Most of them, I think ... most people
who serve are reasonably intelligent on these committees.” So there is a stimulus that nourishes the ministers intellectually, often despite the tedium of the preparation and the long meetings. It provides professional enrichment through intellectual engagement on micro and macro levels.

Isaac had two clear components of satisfaction that also resonated for the others,

Yes, well I suppose the two main things I’d say,

1. was the sense that one had the ability to make a contribution in the sense of being heard and listened to with respect, [perhaps an indication that ministers are not always given that courtesy elsewhere] not necessarily with total agreement by everyone on the committee. Although as you would know, most of these committees work to a very large extent, and deliberately I’m sure, by consensus.

2. But secondly, ... well there was the personal satisfaction side of not just being respected, but enjoying the company of peers who were either medical or legal types or interesting lay people with a social work background or whatever it might be. There was a, I suppose, there was a sense of being affirmed and enjoying the company of them.

The second comment hints that the collegial affirmation in the company of “interesting” and also intelligent “medical ... legal ... lay” committee members is a counterbalance to the solitude required in the assessment of applications and report writing. Taking Isaac’s comment further, Ezra’s first observation is another significant satisfaction applying to many repeat committee appointees. In HREC work there are clear markers to indicate
that you are reflective, efficient, cogent and task-focused as indicators of successful performance.

Without losing his modesty (he takes a gentle poke at himself, perhaps to lighten the enormous seriousness with which he and all participants clearly take their appointments) there is a pleasure in knowing that you do something really well. Regardless of what work we do, there is satisfaction on having achieved excellence:

I think I am reasonably good at the work that HRECs do. Now that might mean therefore, that I tend to be of a somewhat obsessive-compulsive personality and like reading and enjoy contributing to things and all that stuff. And saying that you are good at what HRECs do doesn’t necessarily indicate that you are a well rounded person ... The sense that I found that I could do this work and do it well, and find it rewarding. It was one of the things that said to me that “this is part of the call”.

Satisfactions in HREC Ministry

Ezra’s quiet work for the nation is summarized this way:

One of the things that I have learned in ministry is that there is a call to be concerned about the most marginalized. ... To try and make sure that research is a safe place for them is important to me. Now that’s not to say that that is my only concern, I am certainly also concerned that good research takes place and therefore that good new treatments are worked out, because ultimately, as a society, we all benefit from that.

Ezra’s investment in the pastoral care of the marginalized and vulnerable is unmistakable. Helping to shape the benefits to society warms his heart. All
participants felt that sense of contribution to something much larger as one of many pleasures.

“From Little Things Big Things Grow”17 Communal pastoral work—naming a baby, visiting the sick, preparing a funeral—is small scale; its emphasis is within the community network. Each pastoral intervention nourishes those it touches directly and also feeds the greater good, by building the community of the denomination or faith and its contribution to the society in which it is located. The impact of HREC clergy beyond their parishes and beyond their faiths, by means of similarly small-scale interventions within committees, actively contributes in the same way, by means of flow-ons into contexts beyond their churches/synagogues/temples. Gabriel linked his ministry to the national context, by means of references to Australia’s scale. Before providing his perspective, these statistics underpin his observations.

Australia’s total population is 23,425,700. Of those, 7,500,600 are in New South Wales, 5,821,30018 in Victoria. Of the 247 countries currently listed by population size19, Australia currently ranks 53rd. If Victoria were an

17 Song title, lyrics by Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody, referencing the seemingly small, symbolic actions of Gurindji elder Vincent Lingiari, which would initiate the movement for Indigenous land rights in Australia.


independent country, it would rank between Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan at 113 ahead of Denmark, Finland, Singapore, Norway and Ireland. There would still be 134 countries smaller following the 113th rank if Victoria stood alone. Given this positioning, and the cluster of countries with similar populations listed by way of yardsticks for comparison, we might not be surprised at the academic output of Victoria if it were autonomous.

Even so,

Gabriel: ... we manage our small-country-ness quite successfully because what we achieve is that we build trust-based personal networks across all of these divides ... I think these [HRECs] are really important settings. It’s a small enterprise at one level ... but it’s part of a much larger network of the way of working that we’ve developed in Australia.

The sense of contributing to something greater than a single committee, or faith, or community, is a great satisfaction and for some parish clergy provides a counterbalance to the parochial nature of local life.
“We are one, but we are many / And from all the lands on earth we come”\textsuperscript{20}: HREC pastoral care for a culturally diverse population.

Within Australia’s smallness is a great diversity within both the First Peoples, whose traditional lands embrace every climatic area of mainland and many offshore island zones, and the waves of settlers from elsewhere. Connecting Australia’s smallness with the global consequences of every problem solved, Gabriel captured the challenge and reward arising from that diversity as, “... vital to this substantive plurality that we’ve got ... to be able to participate in that process, it’s very rewarding.” For Lois, her experience of the plurality was clearly identified; “My sense of ministry here has really broadened and not to mention the interfaith, multicultural issues.”

“In today’s world, understanding between people of different traditions is not optional. It is essential.”\textsuperscript{21}: Pastoral care for a religiously diverse population. Australia’s religious diversity is reported by means of the only voluntary question on the compulsory census. In 2011 (the most recent census year) the question invited respondents to identify their religion from this order of options:

- Catholic,
- Anglican (Church of England),
- Uniting Church,
- Presbyterian,

\textsuperscript{20} Lyrics from \textit{I Am Australian}, Written by Bruce Woodley and Dobie Newton, 1987.

Buddhism,

Greek Orthodox,

Islam,

Baptist,

Lutheran,

Other—please specify [blank boxes are provided for the purpose] or

No religion.22

The order of options gives a hint at the proportion of responses anticipated. Although it was repeatedly stated that it was rare for research protocols to be of explicitly religious content, awareness of cultural diversity includes religious diversity.

At a management level, it is appropriate for recruitment of successive ministers to be broadly reflective of that diversity. Hiram bemoaned repeat default hiring of “yet another Anglican” minister. He addresses management’s responsibility to ensure diversity in committees, “… some form of saying that a wider range of religious input is necessary, … a female rabbi … a Buddhist.”

For Gabriel that bridge to the Islamic community, in relation to future participation of Imams in HRECs, was specific:

They [the managements of HRECs responsible for recruitments] know too little about it, they know too few people to be able to reach out and to say this imam and that community leader … but you look [at] Waleed Ali, when one becomes safe you’ll want him or her everywhere and it’s a broader social issue for us I think to work out how we engage the whole Islamic … set of communities.

However, Felix has an Islamic committee colleague and notes,

... when I listen to him, he represents not so much an Islamic view, as such, but he’s very good on the whole ethnic minority thing and he’s got a very strong sense of who is under-represented in research … Now no doubt his Islamic faith is part of that view of life, but we rarely, we don’t have a religious question as such, it’s just more the perspective you bring to things in your own humanity. And that’s where he … has very strong sense of ethnic minorities and is fantastic at reminding us that we don’t overlook this matter.

At the level of appointees, I inquired whether individual ministers had sufficient knowledge to respond to items of religious sensitivity on behalf of other faiths and how they would equip themselves to acquire that knowledge if they did not. Bilhah had plenty of resources to draw on: “There are a lot of chaplains who are on … my network … and I had some ideas of who I could ring. [On one occasion it was a case of] ‘You’d better send me some Muslims because I don’t know.’”
Cedron was able to quote a specific example of care for the Islamic community,

I have had to think about other religious perspectives [interference] and I in particular I think Islam ... particularly with the diet stuff ... but also with dealing with study participants who died and dealing with their relatives ... I’ve not followed up and researched further because it didn’t seem to require further investigation to actually make a decision, but it did make me wonder about what the religious perspective would be. If it was something more complicated, I would have to use my network of contacts to find out someone to talk to about it.

Ezra’s example also touched on the Islamic tradition, after a very long silence for reflection:

... in something to do with autopsies and needing to hold the body back for a couple of days came up, I’d probably be saying “Listen I think the Muslims like to bury people within a certain people of time .... and I’m not exactly sure what it is ... you might want to be able to say that foods are kosher or halal or whatever else it’s supposed to be.” It’s been a rare case that if something cropped up someone wouldn’t know where to go to get information about this.

Micah confirmed that:

Micah: Sometimes issues would come up which were not really a problem for me from my particular theological stance or my church, but would be a problem for, say, Roman Catholics or Muslims, and I would feel well I have got to represent their position as well.

Kipen: That’s correct.

Micah: So ... we need to think about how we deal with that.
Clearly the needs of Muslims in our community are in the minds of these participants and being attended to, whether through networks, research and self-directed learning or the resources of secretariats.

*Dina d’mal’khuta dina* The law of the land is the law\textsuperscript{23}: Pastoral care in the context of legal compliance. Australian Law mandates how the government collects and distributes its research budget, how recipients are to receive and account for grants and what may not happen to persons in the pursuit of research outcomes. Ezra described one possible research consequence, mandated by public health law, for participants in clinical trials:

[In the research application] You’ll find that there’s testing for HIV or for Hep. B or Hep. C, and I always check that the patient information consent form *informs* people that these are “notifiable diseases” and therefore, if they did test positive, that this would be reported to the authorities. If they did take this on, they have to know that it would be a chance of this happening. ... it’s information you should have to make a truly informed choice.

Advising recruits as to legal requirements and ensuring their best possible protections fits comfortably in the general area of concerns that comprise the pastoral care check list. However, Gabriel’s prophetic voice notes the legal compliance begs the question of “a better kind of theory of justice.” HRECs are not establishing legal precedent in the courtroom sense, but they are setting precedents for the actual conduct of life, by insisting on

\textsuperscript{23} *Bavli Ned.* 28a.
treating persons with respect, not damaging them, being honest and respecting their autonomy. These demands imposed by the National Statement are congruent with the religious values of all faiths, albeit that enactment of what is considered proper treatment of individuals and groups may vary from tradition to tradition.

Managing that diversity of what constitutes ‘proper treatment’ goes to the heart of Australia’s plural society; a multiplicity of cultures operate within it, mostly without disruption. Whilst the faiths work with and through the law, the religious visions of justice reflect the theories of their original teachings in present day applications.

\textit{Tzedek tzedek tirdof Justice, justice shall you pursue}^{24}: HREC service as social justice ministry. Hiram reminisced about his youth as it shaped his ministry, “... as soon as I could pick up a newspaper I was reading ... having some sense of there being causes worth fighting for, sensitive to social justice issues, pain, people who are hurt by systems, very sensitive to them ... Dad had started commenting critically ... watching Churches hurt people ...

^{24} \text{Deut. 16: 20.}
Similarly, Gabriel’s ministry seeks a system that is genuinely just, “... not just intellectually, but spiritually and liturgically as well, which is why it wasn’t just a vocation to justice, it was a vocation to justice grounded in a particular kind of community. So that meant that ethics and justice were at the center of my sense of vocation.”

Through HREC compliance, the ‘particular kind of community’ to which researchers are required to address themselves is one whose values and behaviors are broadly congruent with those of the clergy and their HREC colleagues. In their Australia-wide application, human research ethics standards become one yardstick against which all research behaviors may be measured to create a kinder community here and hopefully further afield. Ezra was clear about that aspiration. I tried to acknowledge his efforts, but he demurred: “Kipen: So, it sounds as though you are actually very good at promoting this piece of work as a piece of social justice. Ezra: I think that if I was very good I’d have written something about it!”

From the point of view the spate of past abuses coming to light in many Australian religious communities, victims and innocent observers alike will need a great deal of healing and it may take years for religion to recover from the impact of the treachery being uncovered by inquiry after inquiry. As a result, publicizing genuinely excellent social justice work and altruistic care for the communities at large is difficult and must proceed with caution. Perhaps writing would be a good method. But ‘walking the walk’ will be the key role-modeling that demonstrates, in the quietest and subtlest of ways, faith in its generic applications; faith in the merit of trying
to find justice, faith that people respond positively to compassion, that we must not despair despite the worst behaviors of others and ourselves.

Those who have not been perpetrators of abuses and who still have the energy to work towards the goal of justice in caring, loving, some would say ‘holy’ communities, can make their contribution to social justice through HREC ministry. They do so by bringing their value set and religious faith into the public domain for the greater good. The final questions in each interview invited participants to reflect on how they did that, what the experience had given them and how it was specific to HREC work.

Ministry to the Soul of Australia

Kipen: Has there ever been a case … at the HREC, that there is something going on there in conflict with your identity as a Christian or your identity as a clergyman … that in some way pits it against what’s good for Australia?

Micah: No.

Kipen: Tick in the box, nobody has thought so! 25

I had asked the last theme question in a number of ways, but by the time I was at the final interview, it was concise and sought to elicit any mismatch between philosophy and implementation of individual ministry practice: “Is there ever a time when you feel that good policy for God is in conflict with good policy for Australia?”

25 In Australia ‘a tick in the box’ is a check mark √.
For Micah, it became instantly clear that all the questions had been leading to this point. Having invited participants to set out the pieces of their own ministry puzzles and put them together with final reference to the macro impact of HREC work, he was immediately alert to the ‘punch-line’: “Wow, that’s what you are doing in your thesis, isn’t it!”

A torrent of heartfelt responses to their visions of the contribution of their HREC work for Australia poured from Lois, Micah and Daniel, across the breadth of represented denominations:

Lois: Well it would be about that “how do we think of persons?” … it is that labelling of persons ... the categorizing ... whether we are talking about the aged, the pregnant, the women, the men, the drug affected, whatever the cohort you know we are talking about, the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander ... it’s this kind of “but hang on a minute, you know, one humanity."

Micah: Where do they turn to for ethical and moral standards if they can’t turn to your chaplaincy. ... and how we model ourselves amongst Jews and Muslims and the refugees and where do they look for role models ... if they can’t look to their chaplains. So we have a huge responsibility. ...

There are [Australians] who haven’t been to church ever, whose families have never been to church, whose grandparents probably haven’t been to church. But you sit down around a ... table and the issue of death and dying and mortality and kids, it all crops up. So there’s a spirituality there that I think we address, whereas a social worker doesn’t address. I think we’ve got to really make that difference.

Daniel: It’s not like ... walking the streets and giving money to the homeless and things like that, but it’s remotely, it’s remotely, hopefully; it makes a difference in the long run to a
... wide range of people. ... So it’s really a very important national agenda.

*Ivdo et Adonai b’simchah Serve God with Joy*\(^{26}\): Individual Conceptions of Ministry

Underpinning these visions of ministry to the nation are each participant’s deepest conception of their own ministry. I was honored to receive so many deeply held explanations. These examples are emblematic but highly abbreviated and I allow them to stand without further comment:

Kipen: Where is God working through you in this work?

Isaac: I’m going to answer this by saying “in giving me Jesus”.

Kipen: And how does that work?

Isaac: That works by a sense of being willing ... to take up the cross and follow him, without worrying too much about who this ‘God the Father’ really is.

I asked Ezra,

Kipen: What’s the ministry?

Ezra: Let me give two answers; one of them is probably not quite there, but it’s moving towards it.

In the early stages of this I was struck by the fact that there aren’t too many places within Australian society where the mainstream society as a whole is enthusiastically trying to find clergy to become involved in what’s going on. Generally we are somewhat marginalized and ‘out there’ somewhere. So one of

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\(^{26}\) Ps. 100:1-2 Whilst √ayin vet dalet is used as the verb for worship. This derives from the initial understanding of God’s service as the physical labors of sacrifice, the work of Divine Service.
the things of that struck me about HREC was that this is one role where I was invited to be precisely because I was a clergy person. I have always tried to respond to those invitations because I think part of trying to proclaim the Good News, trying to perform ministry, is trying to make a difference in those areas of life.

But getting into that more closely, I guess it is trying to make sure that the values that we would hold to be of value are the values ... respect for the person.

As the interview with Gabriel drew to a close, he unified his ministry understanding from the multiple strands he had been weaving together throughout:

Gabriel: I think we’ve got more [HRECs] in Victoria per head of population than anywhere else in the world, and I know it drives [researchers] crazy, but I suspect it is one of a whole range of institutions that build a level of trust about the role of people who bring different metaphysics together, that help sustain the incredibly valuable structures that we have.

Kipen: Your body language is pushing outward and upward with every step, so it seems to me that the serving God and serving Australia agenda are simultaneously on the upward and the outward.

Gabriel: Absolutely.

Kipen: And you’re taking people with you, which I suspect they don’t notice, but must be an intrinsic part of your ministry function.

Gabriel: Yeah I think it is.

Kipen: So obviously there’s great intellectual satisfaction in knowing that you’re leading the conversation ... the result of which is that if your [HREC does] it well, and they start to speak the issues in their networks and conversations with colleagues as researchers, that actually you drip feed into the national shaping of what it means to be an Australia that works its way
towards one of the multiple “Kingdoms” that have to co-exist in a plural society.

Gabriel: I couldn’t have put it better myself.

Section Summary

Having brought many understandings of service to God from a variety of theological backgrounds into HREC service, the clergy who pastor to their committee colleagues and on behalf of recruits they will never meet are a diverse group, of whom these participants are only a small sample. Participants’ data demonstrate robust autonomy and freedom of thought, which replicate within their committees the independence and autonomy being protected on behalf of future research participants. These qualities demonstrate that HREC clergy are not enacting directives from their hierarchies, but rather bringing their deeply-held concerns to the service of all Australians, alongside other HREC volunteers of all kinds. The repeat appointments of those with deeply held views demonstrate that they are appreciated by their committees, which must embrace the diversity which results in the occasional anomalous or unpredicted outcome triggered by clergy or lay faith concerns. These provide further demonstrations that the work of committees is not just ‘rubber stamping’ and that the clergy contribution is not generally ‘party line predictable’.

Whilst the workload is taxing, there are multiple pleasures which coexist with a sense of deeply faithful commitment, the joy of serving God through the work. These clergy demonstrate a degree of theological adaptability and appreciate working in contexts which endorse their intellectual effort, where they can test the limits of faith and conviction as
respected and recognized committee colleagues in response to new boundaries at the frontier of research knowledge; that collegiality and intelligent company are rewarding. The privacy to undertake the work without hierarchical intervention or parish-level detail provided by committee confidentiality, lifts the attention to minutiae demanded for smooth meetings to the level of welfare within the national landscape. It also encourages the level of conversation which shapes attitudes and enables many religious visions of holy living to be enacted one research project at a time, by means of respect for one prospective participant at a time. Through modeling that care, meaningful relationships are created within the committees to enable the listening required for the clergy to be heard as equals and for them to hear and pastor to their colleagues, however subtly they may do so.

After 90 minutes of deep thought and conversation about HREC service in the pastoral care role, for those who had not identified it at the outset, there was an embrace of the understanding that HREC work enacts individual ministries in a much larger context than that encountered at committee level. Just as individual faiths and denominations address the greater issues of response to God, so do the individual clergy, when they choose to take on HREC work. For those who were highly conscious of that level of working beyond their own congregations, affirmation of their work and the chance to grapple with some of the paradoxes of being ‘underneath the hierarchical radar’ in the course of the interview brought serious, sometimes humorous and above all honest disclosure about the HREC effort, which cannot be observed but goes on quietly as a service to God and to the nation.
CHAPTER 5: THE QUESTION OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR HREC MINISTERS

A Current View of Job Skilling

In our global world, where content and feedback are instantly accessible via Internet tools, the systems approach to the classical learning circle of ‘stimulus, intervention, evaluation, change of stimulus, subsequent intervention’ responds much more quickly than was ever envisaged during my days as a Training Officer in the 1970s. Background and work experience, together with subjects later undertaken towards a master’s degree in vocational education and my experience as a new member in a range of HRECs, prompted my assumption that a training program would be the result of this project.

Training is the vehicle for acquisition of base-level skills and is often required for appointment in the workplace. ‘On’ and ‘off’ the job additional training is directed towards improvement of efficiency (including safety training), quality and consistency in the workplace.

The same model applies to the volunteer sector, in which similar competencies are required and similar appreciation for the range of organizational components develops individuals who are skilled, cooperative, thoughtful and imaginative in advancing the visions of the communities for which they give their energy and passion. Increasingly, knowledge of workplace ethics within commercial settings reflects the
behaviors demanded by managements, who insist on the health, safety, security, honesty and multi-cultural/equal opportunity awareness components within workplace cultures. Volunteer settings require the same attention to compliance with whichever policies create the reputations of both ‘for’ and ‘not for’ profit organizations.

HRECs function within formal workplaces—hospitals, universities, scientific institutes—and largely comprise employee staff members. In addition to those paid workers who undertake HREC work as volunteers, in the sense that they are not paid extra for undertaking the appointment, lay women and men plus ministers of religion join the group from beyond the organization. The data assert that great care is taken to attempt good matches between potential HREC clergy and their committees. The indication of successful matching was the frequent renewal rate of participants within their committees.

It is demonstrated that the HREC ministers bring a range of baseline competencies with them when they begin HREC service. Clergy fall into two broad sets based on credentials: 1) those with single formation ethics subjects or even minor/major study streams at undergraduate level and 2) those with master’s and doctorate degrees from a range of sectors. Regardless of the level of credentials, these two sets function in parallel in a broad range of institutional HRECs of comparable task complexity, whether medical, academic or communal.
This would suggest that something already happens to enable comparable service between the two sets of HREC clergy, despite their vastly different levels of anticipatory preparation and the range of cultures to which they adapt. One trigger for remedial training is ‘quality failure’. Had the clergy not been performing well, despite the careful and deft selection processes described, individual tenures would have been short and replacements found. No participant reported experiencing that or seeing it happen to others. How then, is the training process or any training shortfall within HRECs to be understood?

Before making recommendations in support of any training, it is necessary to identify which standards need to be upheld, how to establish that performance or knowledge benchmarks have been successfully reached and the delineation between shared responsibility of managements and employees/volunteers in reaching the competency goals. Only then will it be possible to establish which training is the appropriate strategy. Once standards are identified, the training provider needs to be contracted and standards for delivery and compliance determined. In an ideal world there is time to undertake needs assessment surveys, to place them before stakeholders for consultation and to enact the shared decision with sufficient resourcing. Best practice models would support design, pre-test and implementation stages and provide the community of peers, which could exercise its oversight of the initiative, the opportunity for input as a component of evaluation and further reaction.
Placing Clergy in the HREC Skills Context

Felix and Hiram shared their positive experiences of in-house training. Both volunteer in organizations that have the resources to provide in-house training to their HREC staff. However the rest of the participants reported training opportunities were from exterior provider sources and not more than half the participants took advantage of these. Cedron and Gabriel admitted (as did others by inference) that they never took any HREC-specific training at all, despite it having been offered. Of these, the course training maximum time experience would have been 4.5 residential days of the Monash University Bio-Ethics Intensive course. Were the course hours averaged over a decade of service, this amounts to not more than a few hours of formal training per year.

Whilst issues of scale apparently determine whether in-house resources are available to provide the needs of an institution’s HREC staff, issues of personal preference determine whether the courses offered (even at the expense of the organization) appear to be sufficiently enticing, or are scheduled at convenient times, to warrant the giving of additional time to what is an already time-consuming, altruistic commitment. Even so, whilst the uptake of supplementary training appears very low, there is no apparent feedback to suggest that ministers are holding back the efficiency, quality or consistency of their HRECs.

Despite the documented range of induction processes, styles of welcome and supported/unsupported preparation offered by secretariats and committee colleagues, it would appear the ministers already make the
necessary leap to establish a baseline competence quite quickly and then widen their repertoire of experience and response with additional time in committee service. From the conversation suggesting recruitment, to the opportunity to either meet the committee chair or the opportunity to attend a meeting as an observer, the completion of any formal contract paperwork and the completion of the first round of application reviews, several competencies must have been acquired.

The content of the National Statement must have been absorbed⁴, at least in the sections immediately relevant to the applications being reviewed at the initial meeting. Meetings must be prepared for⁵ by deciphering institution-specific application forms and any multi-center trial documentation for submission of assessment opinions.

My personal journey to competence, disclosed at the start of this thesis, seems very different from all other skilling stories recounted by participants. Some clearly identify the application of their understanding of ministry (for which their foundation and higher ministry training prepared them) to their HREC work and seemed to have no need to recount the early skilling stages. Others explained their pursuit of training to expand their skill range and nourish their sense of the work as meaningful and gratifying, once their service had been established. In every case, each must have taken the necessary, initial steps to learn the documentation required through personal study, now known as ‘self-directed learning’.

⁴ NHMRC, National Statement, 74.
⁵ Ibid.
Some new colleagues experienced the HREC equivalent of a ‘beginners’ slope’ when they joined. In some cases, observing a meeting was that non-participatory learning opportunity. It is not possible to know the number of meetings it took each participant to become a fully contributory committee member. Yet nothing in the data suggests that the participants were unequal to the task. I had asked Gabriel, “Kipen: Did anybody take you under their wing from the point of view of teaching you? Gabriel: No, I just endured these three or four hour-long committee meetings with great suffering.”

Lois described her first meeting as “huge”. There was consensus about the demands of each meeting’s workload, but not the task of having become skilled enough to deal with it. I found that surprising, but perhaps the requirement is just accepted as a given, something that comes with the opportunity to serve for all categories of HREC members, and therefore does not merit comment. However, whilst the beginners may find the large workload the biggest hurdle, all are required to advance their skills: “5.2.3 To fulfill that responsibility, each member of a review body should: (c) attend continuing education or training programs in research ethics at least every three years.”

How much training, what constitutes the training and how the obligation is to be managed, are left to in-house administrators. There is no process by which HREC members account to their appointing authority for HREC-specific self-development training compliance, unlike the UK’s NHS Health

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Research Authority, under whose auspices its REC members function: as a condition of their appointment, all UK members are under the obligation, “to attend a minimum of one training day per year (i.e. five hours’ learning).”

British REC members may choose formal courses provided by the NHS, or chart self-directed learning, which for the purposes of the NHS may include, “authorship ... mentoring ... personal reading ... workplace ethics experiences arising from research or teaching ... attendance at another committee e.g. observing how particular types of studies are reviewed ... [in addition to completing units of] distance learning and obtaining formal ethics qualifications”. The definition of what constitutes induction, skilling and continuing education has become broad, individuated and increasingly self-managed but “obligatory” and the level of accountability is highly formalized.

Although Australia has not embraced the same requirement to demonstrate continual updating, several participants recount being active in a range of the identified self-directed learning activities without, necessarily, identifying them as training. Their participation in the broader human research ethics community, whether in person in Melbourne, by

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5 The online booking system provides confirmation of attendance for each trainee’s record of mandatory annual compliance. See National Health Service Health Research Authority, “Training Days,” http://www.hra.nhs.uk/hra-training/training/ (accessed December 1, 2014).

6 National Health Service Health Research Authority, “HRA Guidance”.
attendance at conferences further afield or by influencing others through mentoring, writing and teaching, would all qualify for NHS accreditation. To date, there has been no suggestion that Australia replicate that system, by creating an equivalent, national training database record for each HREC participant. Yet even without the UK’s bureaucratic oversight process we have competence. In what way can the skilling underpinning that competence be identified for current and future HREC clergy?

Distinguishing Between Serving and Prospective HREC Clergy: Is Differentiated Training Needed?

Several participants did not choose to follow up their questions or issues with secretariats or colleagues at the early stages of their on-the-job experiences. The decision not to seek support seems stoic and would not be a recommendation for prospective HREC clergy, who may still be in formation training. As part of the consideration of future specialty tasks, candidates in training may wish to have their interest aroused and prepare themselves in due course. It cannot be assumed that they will bring doctorates in ethics with them to the work and therefore it would be wise to make preparation for their arrival on the basis of the best range of skilling options. In no other area of their training would they be advised not to take the support being offered. Any learning session for prospective HREC members, whether in formation or after ordination, ought to encourage utilization of resources at the disposal of the HREC and the cultivation of supportive relationships to support learning and professional development. As to seminary or foundation-level HREC training, Isaac wondered, “if they’re even mentioned in those [foundation level] courses

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... I mean, you know, we could provide interesting cases to see how these approaches express themselves.”

The idea of using case studies is not new. They have become an effective method for challenging individuals and groups to engage with issues contextually and to be able to demonstrate awareness of multiple and complex variables in a range of settings. One participant, who had candidate formation responsibilities in an earlier part of his career, provided students with information about the prospect of being able to contribute to HREC work following ordination. He made an effort to locate old files containing case studies from earlier years, to show me what he used to do, but they could not be found.

However, it is not only the foundation level that should be addressed in a skilling model. In clergy careers, which can last for decades, initial training needs updating and where ministry specialties are added along the way, additional skilling would be required and accepted as an opportunity for growth and enrichment as well as necessary to undertake the work. To this extent, the NHS requirement of tracking such ongoing professional development would be familiar.

As an example, The Uniting Church’s Victorian Synod made it compulsory from 2008\(^7\) for serving clergy to demonstrate engagement with and

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\(^7\) In anticipation of a 2009 rollout, as confirmed in a letter, dated 18 June, 2008, from the then General Secretary Rev. Rob Brown to Presbyteries, seeking nominations for program facilitators (The Uniting Church, personal communication, December 3, 2014).
sensitivity to multiple issues of professional ethics each year, by means of supervised group interactions based on a series of tailored case studies:

in light of the somewhat tired nature of the existing training material, it was decided to reinvigorate the training. A fresh approach has been developed by Rev Denham Grierson that is based around a series of case studies ... The new program will [emphasize] personal self care, the use of time, appropriate exercise of power, confidentiality and [the receipt/use of] gifts.8 ... 

Each group will normally meet for three hours on two separate occasions each year. ... attendance and fulfillment of these requirements is not optional ... further appointments in the church are not possible until these requirements are met.9

It is feasible for such training to be made mandatory when resources are available to provide the materials, the central management of the program and the coordination of trainers competent to conduct groups and assess personal progress through reflective practice notes that are the requirement for completion. Further, the sanction of no further job placement until evidence of compliance is provided, gives such programs their clout. There are currently about 600 serving and retired clergy whose professional lives are to be supported and enhanced as a result of the investment in their own awareness of the identified professional ethics

8 Ibid.

items through such mandatory training, which was initiated by these case study sessions and their curriculum successors.\textsuperscript{10}

There is no resourcing at the local level to replicate the kind of intensive training provided for in the UCA model described above. By contrast to the scale of the Uniting Church in Victoria, there are only 66 HRECs here. Some clergy have become HREC specialists and volunteer for multiple appointments. The current serving HREC clergy staff probably amount to between 62–70 persons, as some committees have more than one minister attending.\textsuperscript{11} Thus the number of potential trainees for succession to committee postings in any year is likely to be extremely small.

Some volunteers appear to decline additional training they ‘should’ take. Australia has not chosen to go the UK route of managing training compliance and negative outcomes, including staffing shortages, that might result if skilled HREC clergy refused to comply with formally documenting update training, but resigned instead. The National Statement does not spell out the self-directed learning options that might provide direction for training course alternatives. Put another way, would a mandatory approach hinder rather than help recruitment and retention of HREC clergy? Apparently this question has already been answered by the


\textsuperscript{11} It has not been possible to establish the number of retired HREC clergy as no central register of these specialists appears to have ever been kept.
absence of such insistence, whether driven by financial constraints when considering the cost of administering such a scheme, or as a reflection of current quality.

Readymade Solution: One Australian HREC Resource for Voluntary Skilling

Long used in multiple disciplines, the case study format has made its way into religious contexts (per the UCA example) as a means of dealing with multiple issues, positions and challenges. By extension, there should be no particular difficulty for ministers (or any other HREC committee members) embracing the format for HREC-specific skilling through material that provides enrichment reading for those colleagues who seek it, clarification for those who might need it and examples of the committee work to cultivate future HREC clergy. One example of relevant, Australian case study material is already available from NHMRC. It is not clergy-specific and there is no inference from the NHMRC that performance quality issues had been identified to initiate its production. It was already available by the time the Uniting Church was rolling out its new professional ethics training format. It may not have been identified by any of the participants and is not labeled “for training purposes”.

However, a national training resource does exist; learning it is not mandatory and appointment to committees is not dependent on it having been thoroughly reviewed. It was commissioned in mid-2005 and submitted in the form of a report to the then Health Minister, The Hon.
Tony Abbott, MP, in December 2006. Yet no participant named the
document or referenced it in relation to skilling or continuing training
opportunities. Whilst I am preoccupied in this thesis with ministry issues,
y any workplace clergy training would be common across HREC membership
categories and equally applicable to all members.

The 82-page document, *Challenging Ethical Issues in Contemporary
Research on Human Beings*\(^\text{12}\) is a report that was submitted to the
Minister, under a covering letter from Professor Warwick Anderson, the
NHMRC CEO who remains in the post, and Professor Colin Thomson the
then Chair of AHEC\(^\text{13}\) in December 2006. The bulk of the document is a
collection of 10 case studies, which emerged from fieldwork with HRECs
that were approached for input and which provided the comprehensive
series of issues identified. Of the 50 HRECs invited to participate, by
identifying interesting or challenging items that might usefully be examined
for the compilation of the model case studies, 33 did so. From those 33,
five ministers of religion were interviewed by the researchers. It is not
possible to know whether any were from Melbourne, although five HRECs
in Victoria were involved in the project. None of the participants in my
study mentioned having been interviewed about the case studies project.

\(^{12}\) NHMRC, “Challenging Ethical Issues in Contemporary Research on Human Beings,”

\(^{13}\) Ibid., vi.
It is possible that the purpose of the project, given the request from the Minister, may have been to demonstrate that HRECs were doing a thorough and responsible job in a complex landscape. Anderson and Thomson attest,

The report clearly shows that the public interest is being well served in two important respects: research involving humans is being subjected to careful prior review, and research quality is being promoted.

The report reflects the key issues emerging in the consideration of health and medical research proposals. I believe the report demonstrates that members of HRECs take their role very seriously and give careful consideration to each research proposal coming before them. Thorough consideration of proposals requires adequate time, and this may sometimes delay the commencement of research. Being a member of an HREC is a significant commitment and, in giving freely of their time, members of the public and other HREC members bring dedication and a strong sense of responsibility to their work.14

Perhaps the Minister was under some form of pressure from colleagues, state-level administrators or businesses trying to promote their work into the Australian sector, and would have been grateful for confirmation that there would sometimes be delays that might have appeared to outsiders to be unnecessary obstruction. However, it is equally possible to conclude the opposite sub-text. It focuses attention on the time necessary to undertake thorough and responsible review and the resultant occasional delay to some projects. The compilation of the case studies was produced by outside consultants, beyond any hint of manipulation by public servants and was thus beyond any conflict of interest. Collating of views from chairs, committee members and researchers, the emphasis might therefore be

asserting that the case study data confirms that new areas of decision-making ought to be thoroughly aired, respectfully considered and not hurried, to ensure that only justifiable precedents would clear committee scrutiny.

Whatever the original motives and pressures, and given the brief which was clearly identified as providing a response to the requirements of the Minister, there was no mention of making use of the studies for training or recruitment purposes. Re-presented as training or enrichment materials, the areas detailed in the covering letter, “Consent ... Scientific merit ... Conflict of interest ... Risks versus benefits ... Protection of vulnerable people ... Disclosure of information to participants and their families ... Privacy [and] Confidentiality”\(^{15}\) would cover identifiable learning areas detailed in the National Statement. This makes the cases highly relevant learning resources and not only for the clergy.

Presenting the three perspectives on every application’s review—1) the Committee Chair, 2) members, who are guardians of the prospective participants, and 3) the would-be researchers—the cases are excellent exemplars for those seeking to develop their sense of how multiple viewpoints invite reflection on the range of committee positions. The document remains online and can still function in this educative way. It is beautifully presented and attractive to read on-screen, because it can be enlarged to suit each viewer. Some of the cases are relatively simple, though new and challenging they might have seemed a decade ago.

\(^{15}\) NHMRC, “Challenging Ethical Issues,” vi.
Reviewing the cases as examples of what may be encountered in any HREC meeting provides an invitation to journey towards broader and deeper appreciation of the complexity of the HREC task. The confidence and contribution of individuals within their own committee would function as the measure of increased sensitivity and detailed insight, though these would remain informal measures. Potential recruits would have a chance to identify empathically with the positions narrated in the cases and possibly identify with the ministry they might be inclined to exercise there.

Why Have the Case Studies Not Become a Standard Training Material?

In the UK, confirmation of self-directed learning is available to: 1) researchers and others who hold any interest in the sector in addition to 2) chairs and 3) members of RECs, who are also required to demonstrate ongoing self-directed learning or attend events by external providers. That three-category research community matches Australia’s research community structure, but NHMRC has not been focused on providing learning tools for them. As already noted, unlike the UK which makes one day of training per year mandatory and the USA which provides resources for but does not keep a national database of individual engagements with them, Australia has not chosen to monitor ongoing professional learning in the sector. However, the 2014 version of the Statement notes:

5.2.3 To fulfil that responsibility, each member of a review body should:

(a) become familiar with this National Statement, and consult other guidelines relevant to the review of specific research proposals;
(b) prepare for and attend scheduled meetings of the review body or, if unavailable, provide opinions on the ethical acceptability of research proposals before meetings, subject to institutional policies on absences; and

(c) attend continuing education or training programs in research ethics at least every three years.\textsuperscript{16}

Additionally, in the Internet Age, when so many questions may be instantly resolved by means of a query, I posed the question of the report’s visibility to Google. Initially, searching “HREC Case Studies” yielded 136,000 results in .81 of one second, the second attempt resulted in a refined trawl of “about 70,400 results (0.62 seconds)”. The case studies did not appear in the first five pages of results from this generic search, because they reside within a document of much longer name, which does not reference them. Even if they proved to be buried on results from page six or anywhere further back in the research results, they would be invisible to all but the most dogged of seekers. Because the content lies within a document whose name does not indicate any search term connection to “case studies”, despite it being listed that way on the NHMRC website, it cannot be readily located. However, searching again by actual title, the top search result provides the direct link to NHMRC’s page for the publication and provides summary information, a synopsis, an image for the front page and the downloadable PDF. The second Google result link captures the PDF itself.

To make the \textit{Challenging Ethical Issues} document more visible, it might be possible to add search terms to result in more search hits. But the task of

\textsuperscript{16} NHMRC, \textit{National Statement}, 74.
making such a change in the public service environment is, itself, a complex matter. It may not be possible to establish the precedent for adding search subtitles to a document already published, owing to the necessarily enormous data safety management protocols. But even if this is the case, it offers an interesting observation to those who will create further excellent resources to title them to enable multiple rather than single use.

**Online Resources: Options From Further Afield**

The global landscape no longer tethers training to classrooms or particular timeframes. Training in the international context is not physically bound by location, but rather within communities of like-skilled and like-minded individuals who create multiple networks. These may be physical communities, or their interaction may embrace doing the same training simultaneously with others they will never meet, using online technology-based delivery modes and just ‘hanging out’ in the virtual reality of sharing via Facebook and Twitter.

Many examples of online REC/IRB resources exist. A survey of a few examples must suffice to demonstrate where Australian HREC members, including clergy and the foundation training departments responsible for their development, may choose to browse to provide curriculum perspectives on HREC review. The materials fall into two categories: open access, utilizing platforms including YouTube and other video and online documents; protected access, requiring registration for entry to sponsored sites providing resources free to those entitled to access them.
Open Access Examples

The Office for Human Research Protections, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides YouTube educational videos on subjects including The Research Clinic, Research Use of Human Biological Specimens and Other Private Information, Reviewing and Reporting Unanticipated Problems and Adverse Events, General Informed Consent Requirements, IRB Membership, Complex Issues with Research Involving Vulnerable Populations and IRB Records. The videos demonstrate U.S. examples of parallel issues that HREC members would also confront. Whilst American in style, orientation and vocabulary, their content can be subjected to filtering for local conditions and therefore add a degree of interest and cross-reference for a range of Australian HREC members, including ministers, seeking induction or extension. They would also make a suitable vehicle for a self-directed learning unit for ministry students in training, who may wish to view them in their own time and write up a report, following prepared guidelines.

The Office of Research Integrity functions under the umbrella of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and provides case studies of a general nature, which apply to all levels of research integrity. They would be suitable for general foundation-level work not only as students work their way towards publication of their work as papers and conference


presentations of their own, but also as exemplars that provide a template for students to imitate. If trainees were set the task of writing their own case study to demonstrate an ethical issue they may have encountered and wish to tease out by means of capturing the issues for further discussion and reflection, those HHS cases provide a broad menu of templates.

In what they refer to as their “Education” section, Canada’s Panel on Responsible Conduct of Research has used live demonstration webinars. Sadly, this “Introduction” example\(^\text{19}\) only had 115 views subsequent to the twice-oversubscribed initial offering, as indicated in the soundtrack. The Canadian menu of education webinars\(^\text{20}\) retains the voice record but not the visuals of the speakers, which makes it more difficult to focus on the work. But the detail is present providing they capture a listener’s attention whilst watching the PowerPoint-style slides which change as the lectures unfold.

As clergy-specific stimulus, other resources that are not formal training ‘products’, also provide excellent input. Daniel Sulmasy’s lecture\(^\text{21}\) is an example of an extension resource that invites examination of spiritual and


non-spiritual practice in the greater HREC landscape of health. Sulmasy’s content addresses the chaplain as a key player in the hospital clinical team. Viewing programs of this kind provides the opportunity for HREC clergy to consider a range of positions in which they contribute and how others may view them. Once again, as an opportunity for reflection, it would be a useful journey for emerging students to undertake in anticipation of considering the place that HREC ministry might occupy in their future ministry, just as Sulmasy proposes chaplains’ roles in hospital settings are a seamless component of the healing team.22

Protected Access Examples

Whether a matter of choice, a requirement of the institution/granting agency or a desire for personal enrichment, access to protected materials reflects a range of cultures in their respective countries. Whilst much is open access, some areas are protected by means of a registration requirement before material can be used. I designate that access as protected rather than restricted. I accessed Canadian, UK and U.S. resources to be sure that they do not prevent members of the public with bona fide reasons for seeking the material from using them. I assume that the sites are monitored for inappropriate use and that my metadata are collected for that purpose. These resources require only that users be prepared to disclose something about themselves for the privilege of free access. This implies that any attempt to flout the privilege of access will be observed by web management software and users could be locked out of further use or their accounts which are monitored for appropriateness.

22 This is reminiscent of Jael’s understanding of her role.
Those with acute privacy concerns will have to restrict themselves to open access materials. However, for the chance to receive the completion certificate of competence from the U.S. National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research online program\(^{23}\), I did not think the questions were at all unusual or intrusive. They would be the equivalent of using a secured pay online site for charitable donations, a reasonable disclosure in order to receive the service. To get to a certificate learners must complete the 109-page program comprising reading units, interactive learning units and have satisfactory scores on the test units.

Several additional links are provided to destinations that can be reached by direct link from the final screen.\(^{24}\) By contrast, it is not possible to know what lies behind the restricted access part of the site whose banner is a padlock and identifies itself as NIH Secure Identity Solutions. There could be additional materials there, but those of us exterior to the NIH must be content with the generous offerings already online.

**Final Note**

I searched for communities of practice whose members shared research ethics as their common professional expertise, to see whether such a group existed and if they posted their own resources. It appears that there


is no drive for HREC/IRB/REC members to create such a group. My own American rabbinic association recently invited registrations for communities of practice in 15 specialty groupings. HREC/IRB work was not one of those, despite the service provided by many USA rabbis, including my former colleague Rabbi Brian Michelson, who provided HREC ministry at the Monash Hospital before returning to the USA, where his extensive service was cited by his Congressman in 2006.25 Apparently the formation and experience of a “Community of Practice”26 does not apply to HREC ministry as a specialist ministry practice. The individual, cerebral HREC ministry work appears to be confirmed as solitary.

Training Summary and Conclusions

In summary, it appears that,

a) established specialists may benefit from training updating but some have not demonstrated their readiness to accept it, even if provided by the NHMRC;

b) some who need it do not always allow themselves to seek it, and

c) many do not comply with Section 5.2.3 (c) of the National Statement and the possibility of documenting self-directed learning as an alternative to Australia’s low requirement for training may or may not provide a useful pathway.

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d) Accessible overseas material meant for the full range of REC members and researchers is deliberately secular and does not address religion-specific issues, which remain the terrain of foundation/denominational and self-directed study.

e) HREC clergy work in isolation from each other and are not a supportive community with learning benefits and so are more likely to seek individual, online, easily accessible materials rather than relying on formal courses which conflict with ministry demands.

f) Students in denominational foundation-level training are likely to encounter case study sessions as part of their professional preparation. This might be extended to include an example of HREC work awaiting them in the wider Australian community, without placing them under any obligation to pursue it.

g) Whilst free, potentially suitable and accessible local and overseas materials are available, it seems unlikely institutions will spend time and money not already slated, to produce local materials even though they would be Australia-specific.
CHAPTER 6: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

theology picks out discourse about God and the divine-human relationship\(^1\)

**Applying Christian Convention to a Rabbinic Research Process: Navigating a Method for Theological Reflection**

Cass Fisher’s *Contemplative Nation* traces the nature of the theological—i.e., God—language of the early rabbis and their use of Jewish vocabulary and style as the vehicle for subsequent rabbinic discourse. His definition is not bound by any religion and may thus be applied to reflections of both Jewish and Christian discourses provided by participants.

That has proved helpful, because Christian models that provide templates for the conduct of the reflective process about our relationship to God utilize Christian language, which is not always a good fit in a Jewish application. For all the Jewish anthropomorphic typing of God, it is hardly surprising that rabbinic language would not easily accommodate a theological reflection process by means of the kinds of questions posed for students in training at the Whitley Baptist Training College in Melbourne, for example. Their current handbook of Supervised Theological Field Education provides a framework for considering the divine-human relationship when reflecting on cases to be presented during group work.

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Principal, Whitley College, Professor of Systematic Theology, Frank Rees poses these questions for theological reflection:

- Where is God in this situation?
- What is God like (or look like) in this situation?
- What is God doing in this situation?
- Therefore what does God require of us in this situation?
- What is God inviting us to become?
- What response shall we make?2

Whilst I would not presume to use this style of language about my perception of God, I know what God requires of me in general, in the 2014 Progressive, Jewish understanding of my relationship to the Divine.

There is recognition here of the breadth of the discourse upon which the interfaith exchange between researcher and participant has rested throughout; a recognition that how we speak about our relationships to God is defined ideologically but may still be interpreted theologically by means of reference to the enactment of the human-divine relationship. When we do the same task and speak about its elements and behaviors, there is sufficient familiarity in language, by virtue of the replicated experiences, to provide a common vehicle for discourse: I have done HREC work, they have done HREC work, we have that much in common as a foundational language for the discourse about our relationships to God as enacted through this clergy task.

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As a result, the less God-bound language of the questions provided for Whitley students provides a framework more easily accommodated in my theological vocabulary, up to the point at which they become uniquely Christian:

- What theological questions are raised by the case [research]?
- Does the case [research] challenge or confirm our professed beliefs?
- How?
- What biblical stories, images or themes are evoked?
- Are there biblical persons, narratives, or images of God that illuminate the case [research]?²

I must decline the questions that follow:

- What images or understandings of the church are operative or challenged?
- What questions might be raised from our denominational history, or the history of the church?³

Further, in addition to the “biblical” stories, images, themes, persons, narratives and images provided by the Christian scriptures for its adherents, the Jewish Tanakh represents only the component of Written scripture, not the complete written canon upon which such understandings must be Jewishly based. By framing this research firmly in the understanding of rabbinic theological method, I have already invoked the

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² Wright, *Supervised Theological Field Education*, 14.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
additional layer of biblical stories, images, themes, persons, narratives and images from their post-biblical, originally-oral constructions, by reference to the rabbinic literature which includes Midrash. These levels of tradition are not included in the Christian reflection models any more than New Testament encounter is incumbent upon mine.

As my answers to the listed questions demonstrate rather than explain my responses to their promptings, reflecting on the divine-human relationship as represented by the data of this investigation, will not rely on any generic Christian template. Rather, I will:

1) reflect, through my Jewish lens, on the divine-human relationships portrayed by the participants who brought their ministry forward for review in discussion of HREC clergy service and  
2) reflect on my relationship to God by means of a personal retrospective, which collects the pieces of my existential puzzle as I set the task of this thesis down, having grappled with the key issues of my personal formation and the means by which my ministry HREC specialty has contributed to resolving them.

A Rabbinic View of a Shared Clergy Task

In the methodology section, I reflected on the challenge posed by different frameworks for the divine-human relationship being in conversation with each other across the Jewish-Christian divide. In the event, the degree of
disclosure by participants brought affirmation that there was no particular barrier preventing our discourse. But any assessment of whether the divine-human discourse bears up to God’s scrutiny can only be a hope, not a conviction. We spoke openly, in the hope that the effort and commitment of HREC service had found at least some degree of favor in God’s sight. Our conversations were not a score-card, there were no right answers, only the chance for clergy HREC colleagues to verbalize what had happened for them as they accepted, prepared for and gave their committed service. There were certainly silences in the interviews as participants framed their answers and thought about them and as I decoded what I thought the answers represented and then rephrased or moved along, in response to my understanding. It did not feel as though language was a barrier.

What moments of mystery (a word recognizable to Christians that perhaps connects to the Jewish element of sod the spiritual secret) there were emerged in surprising ways. One example captures the dynamic powerfully. As Jael and I were well into our meeting, her pager beeped on her desk. She ignored it until it rang again a few moments later. Excusing herself, she read the message and frowned. Picking up the phone, she contacted the ward from which the message had originated. On hearing the voice of the staff members who had sent the page, she was instantly alert. In the silence, I watched a transformation: she was rising from her chair, ending the call, reaching for her stole and anointing box and walking away from our conversation. A matter of seconds effected a huge transformation. She was out the door. I remained in the silence of her office.
It was quite some time before she returned. I had wondered about the balance in roles for those who invest so much in the time-consuming HREC work. But Jael’s flight said it all, in near silence, as I watched her depart. The minister was off to a bedside. I experienced a silence in which to think about the events over which my HREC colleague was presiding: the kissing and donning of the stole, the oil on the thumb or finger tip, the words of invitation to those who were witness to the departure, the prayers. It was not a silence deriving from the inadequacy of language in the sense that Tillich identifies as the language of silence shared, or the sense in which Adorno challenges writers to achieve a language for poetry writing after Auschwitz. It was my silence in contemplation of an act to which, as a non-Christian, I could only be an external observer and yet to which I could attach myself through my own experiences of having farewelled the dying with different rituals, different beliefs.

Upon her return, Jael spoke about the experience of having been called by ward staff to the bed of a patient who was dying alone, without any family members. She observed,

Jael: The prayers were for the nurses; she’ll be all right, the patient will be fine!

Kipen: Because she’s going somewhere else.

Jael: Yes. There were about 3 nurses, 2 doctors … don’t know about whether they were praying, but in the terms of “we are all here to really care for this woman … then we feel good at the end of the day that we’ve done everything we possibly could” … in that sense I think we were all joined, they had some respect for my place there, I have no idea whether they could get on board with it in my terms, but we were all on the same page just the same.
Here was a ministry analogous to the HREC task, the clergy being attentive to multiple layers of pastoral response, to the patient, to the staff, to herself and then to me, and me to her, as we debriefed the experience. Despite what I could not know, there was true exchange about a piece of ministry service, which reminded me of the context of HREC work for the clergy. In every case, we bring our respective prayers, stoles, anointing boxes, prayer beads, incense and holy water with us symbolically into the meetings. They are not visible to others, and even Ezra’s clerical collar could be ‘too much’. But in our metaphorical ‘kit bags’ of religious ‘equipment’, each clergy person brings their theology to the HREC work.

Perhaps for that reason and to avoid the language snares, I used the word “ministry” from the start. It was a projection on my part. I was already asserting something about myself, that my HREC work was much more than bureaucratic, much more than an exercise in checking compliance, much more than clear thinking by which to interrogate faults in logic within research applications. I was signaling that I had labeled the behaviors of HREC clergy as something endowed with unique qualities in addition to all the other HREC members and I was seeking to verify that. If validated by the data, I would receive verification of that self-understanding. I was signaling a deep longing for an affirmation not provided by repeat reappointments at institutional and state level. (I have yet to reach the end of my first term of a federal appointment, so it is not possible to know whether I will be affirmed by a second term or not.)

As themes emerged from the data, I realized that I had constructed the project around interaction with others, rather than the auto-ethnographic
approach originally suggested at the first seminar as described in the methodology, for a deeply embedded reason. I was addressing a need within myself to speak with others about HREC work and thereby sought a peer group of individuals with whom to do so. The participants verified that the work was solitary and that they rarely discussed what their work represented in terms of their faith and in some cases had even avoided their own reflective processes about their service. In each case, the conversation about HREC work was the first opportunity to formally consider the committee work in the framework of their vocation and relationship to what surrendering life to ordination both requires and rewards.

When considering HREC committee service, individual participants were able to juggle a natural modesty with proper consideration of how they thought their service met the criteria of serving God. In only one or two instances did I get the sense that HREC work was not deeply satisfying despite its demands. Despite the consensus that very few research applications contain anything religious by way of content, the arduous advance preparation and the long meetings, there were deep satisfactions in being respected for their opinions, for having an equal place in committee deliberations, in being intellectually challenged and being able to give service outside the gaze of denominational superiors and parishioners. For lives often lived in the glare of the pulpit and parish, the confidential settings of committee work often provided a freedom to be faithful to God in ways entirely unrecognized by secretariat staffs and HREC colleagues. Being the clergy member, not a junior pastoral team member, not having to be aware of parish consequences and politics if there were
delicate decisions to make, provided a joyous opportunity for sacred service.

With each emerging consensus, I realized that what we had all been doing was insisting on the most pastorally compassionate research possible. In parallel, other identical assertions from clergy of Christian faith insisted that the behavior of researchers must provide each prospective research recruit with protection mandated by God, Allah and the key teachings of those who did the work. Each participant felt that what they were doing mattered, that it counted, that it was a different kind of work from the parish pastoral care, the education class, the preaching and presiding tasks but that HREC work was God’s work. There was undoubtedly a degree of courage required to insist, sometimes in the absence of understanding, sometimes in the face of fierce opposition, that something was unacceptable. But all participants were clear that whatever impelled them towards a firm position on difficult or pioneering cases, it was a clear reliance on the faith teaching that informed, but did not always dictate, their theological response.

So, after years of investigation, to the extent that the research interviews provided data that HREC clergy wanted me to have, I knew that what was going on in the hearts and minds of these clergy appeared to replicate what I had experienced. We had found a place for our obsessive-compulsive attention to detail, our unwavering advocacy for prospective participants we would never encounter, an avenue for pastoral outreach to colleagues, secretariat staffs and researchers who might never seek our support otherwise and were mostly unaware that they were receiving it.
We had found an opportunity to serve God with full hearts and deep
conviction, with a sense of moral courage demonstrated by our divine and
human role models.

Retrospective Reflection: Now it All Fits Together

The process of responding to the long Doctor of Ministry Studies journey
has stirred very early experiences for me. In retrospect, I can pinpoint the
events which captured me as a teenager and which have led me to this
point. I was surprised that it had taken so long to connect them, but they
had been buried until the final stage of writing this chapter. Indeed, I was
aware that I had initially failed to capture the deep levels of my spiritual
commentary and continued to struggle to identify what was missing.
Nearly 50 years later, I eventually grasped the importance of the memory
that had emerged after reencountering Rabbi Jakobovits’ book. I was
explaining the sharpness of the connection I had made to my husband and
was unprepared for the emotions that resulted.

On revisiting some of the footnoting for the literature chapter, I was jolted
by clear, distant recollections of a winter in Melbourne when I was in year
11, my junior year of high school. In chilly winter conditions, my entire
class group of 125 students spent a weekend away at the Chedva Kosher
Guest House in the Dandenong Ranges, outside Melbourne. The goal was
undoubtedly to provide an orthodox Sabbath experience from Friday
afternoon through to Saturday evening, before our Sunday late morning
departure. We wore Sabbath clothes and ate copious meals, attended
services, participated in discussions and relished the freedom from our home environments. It was on that weekend that I was asked a question about kosher food issues and overheard someone saying, “Ask Aviva, she’ll know.” It was strange to realize that I was already thought to have knowledge of religious things that others, considered far more clever than I, did not have.

At one session, we learned about Jewish Medical Ethics for the first time from a young, newly-married lawyer who brought his wife for the weekend retreat. It cannot have been much fun for him to spend time with us, but it made a huge impact on me. It did not hurt that he was young, that his wife was attractive and that meant they were what we would now identify as ‘cool.’ What proved remarkable was the long-dormant recognition that the Chedva experience had unknowingly provided the platform for this journey, which waited decades for me to enact through service to human research ethics. Recalling my concentration vividly, I was barely able to say through rising tears, “that’s when Jakobovits’ book and this stuff got its hooks into me.” I was startled. Not that I felt captured like a fish on a line, but rather that I had taken hold of something that I could not really detach myself from and which I would store away for the future.

I recall clearly the experience of being in the informal setting and hearing about ‘this new thing’ and how it connected to the atrocities of the Sho’ah, which some parents of my peers spoke about all the time, but which had been avoided at all cost in my own home. Given my birth in 1952 post-Holocaust Australia, I am both a “dinkum Aussie” and also the recipient of the wartime experiences of my extended family and the Jewish people at
large. From adolescence there was exposure to traumatic film footage of concentration camps. When old enough to be admitted to reading choices from the adult bookshelves at home, I was instantly alert to the only shelf defined as “off limits” and went—unsurprisingly—to the small Holocaust collection. In summer, family friends and relatives rolled up their sleeves to incidentally reveal tattooed concentration camp numbers—macabre texts indeed. Before anyone had coined the term, our generation absorbed trauma transmission, we breathed the narratives, we became witnesses in our own right but in a new generation.

Tracing the Jewish line of this thesis, its foundation in the events of WWII and the war crimes trials which followed, the resulting response by Jakobovits to the initially Catholic and the later Protestant reactions to the Sho’ah, it is clear how my identity as a researcher into human research ethics found its footing. As a member of the second generation of Survivors, I grew up near children whose parents had survived medical experimentation and migrated to Melbourne. I could see the outer scars on the bodies of parents and observe the diminished children some brought into the world as a result. I could not see the emotional wounds, but lived in a milieu that distilled catastrophic loss into the inescapable atmosphere of anguish that pervaded the Jewish community within which I grew up.

My tears were proof of the salty essence of that journey, one shared with so many others, but for which I had found a vehicle to enact an ongoing rebuttal of the events of the Sho’ah. Both intellectually and unconsciously, I had held on to all these components, which shaped the rabbinic career I would be drawn to pursue. If there was a way to attempt some kind of
healing without being a doctor, it was to bring the salve of pastoral care to the suffering and later, to embrace the opportunity provided by the serendipitous meeting which resulted in my invitation to join the Monash University HREC.

Owning that series of connections, it became clear why I was drawn to embark on this research. The broad themes of the questionnaire demonstrate the deep questions I had as a Jewish, Australian woman after extensive interfaith experience. Broadly, did others’ responses to God through ordination include the demand to prevent abusive research in Victoria (mercifully never approximating anything perpetrated during WWII), did they feel they were achieving that and was it done with a clarity of intention with regard to the Australia in which they were giving their HREC service? I composed the questionnaires hopeful that my HREC colleagues were doing a fine job in bringing God into the work of HRECs, albeit without using theological terminology and without making overt my own Holocaust influences.

What did the research provide in retrospect as personal reflection, in addition to a huge quantity of data? Unexpectedly, it brought the opportunity for a discourse that affirmed that there are colleagues of faith whose experience of God demands service to our community to prevent the damage from which the human research ethics codes originally emerged. For doctors the same demand emerges from an updated Hippocratic Oath; for secularists it emerges from the vocabulary of World’s Best Practice, the language of the highest aspirations to standards of excellence. For some Christian participants, it appeared in a range of
vocabularies, from taking up the cross and following Jesus, to bringing salvation as a healing by preventing damage to persons. For me, the afterword to the discourse appeared as tears of appreciation for courageous, forthright, intellectually robust colleagues who stand with those of all faiths to prevent what had happened to so many from ever happening in this country.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Having begun as a project with a presumption of an educational outcome, this research provided several surprises. HREC clergy with doctorates did not always feel the need for additional training despite the provisions of the National Statement. Those who had few formal credentials were not consistent in obtaining more skill or seeking support for their learning curve. It seems likely that only a handful of clergy posts are likely to turn over in any year and in the absence of copious funding, writing special materials for the skilling of so few newcomers seems unnecessary given that clergy quality (as indicated by repeat terms of service) seems high.

By no means does this suggest that because the system does not appear broken, that improvements could not be made. As with all staffing cycles which must plan for succession, prospective newcomers ought to be given an opportunity to 1) become interested, 2) have the means for inquiry gratified and 3) receive credit in their formation studies for having undertaken self-directed learning from the many programs and resources available through easily accessed material online. But in crowded formation-level programs, this sub-specialty seems unlikely to be identified as core, unless program leaders are themselves involved in the work.

It appears from the lack of ethnic and religious diversity alluded to by participants, and confirmed in my own experience, that the Judeo-Christian predominance of clergy to date will need to shift to be more
representative of the diversities that are developing in our communities. That may require intervention by means of targeted outreach to leaders of faiths for whom English may be a stumbling block if they are still newcomers to Australia with no prior opportunity to learn the language at a formal, academic level. Perhaps that will be resolved by the grooming of new academic generations from those emerging communities, but it may be necessary to address that prospective need with additional research as to who might be recruited, how to do that and what materials already available would need to be adapted for the use of these new representatives. As a matter of forward planning, that is likely to be a policy issue addressed at national level, rather than by individual states. That recommendation will be conveyed to NHMRC.

The issues around skilling, improvement and planning for generation change as indicated by this research arise from the collective experience of an unsung cohort of clergy that has given its voluntary service to the nation largely under the radar of the community, their religious hierarchies and their own people. That service has been heroic by virtue of being uncontentious, prophetic, courageous, diligent and matching that of all other volunteers on HRECs, be they lay or professional. Additionally, the clergy have brought the holy energy of their theologies with them in the stages of initial skilling, advance preparation for meetings, attendance and participation in committees and to whatever follow-up has been required. What propels them, as described in their various understandings of God’s imperative, is heard, understood and experienced as God’s call and their vocations.
The range of individual styles, across differences of academic qualifications, years in ministry service, gender, type of employment situation, levels of skill in specific tasks and theological divergence still provide a single description of the collective work provided by the ministers of religion; it is ministry. It may have been presumed that “ministry” was an obvious appellation for the service of academics, administrators, chaplains and parish clergy in their HREC role. But the option was always there for participants to replace that language with vocabulary better suited if they were not happy with my particular “bias”—what Daniel relabeled as “position” in a different context.

This “ministry” provides a significant identity. It endorses something about the nature of the service being gifted to the nation through the provision of a care for persons, which is not interchangeable with such care being provided by social workers or psychologists. What distinguishes “pastoral” care in the complex understanding of their clergy roles is the consensus that God's call demands a level of spiritual gift which makes the care that professional religious provide to HRECs a sacred rather than a humanistic service.

Australia has a “tall poppy syndrome.” We routinely chop down those who rise too fast, are too clever, noisy, rich or influential, even if that is only in the press. We tend to be skeptical. Largely secular, we tend to sideline the clergy or show a good-humored disrespect. Sadly, the press has had ample reason to expose religious institutions colluding with degenerate perpetrators who have victimized individuals and prevented the truth from being known and criminals from being discovered, prosecuted and
punished. Against this sorry backdrop, any misstep by HREC clergy would be fuel to the media and communal fires. Yet it appears that for 25 years, in the absence of scandal or community backlash, clergy of all kinds have and continue to serve in a range of institutions, alone or alongside colleagues from other faiths on the HREC teams. They have taken over from and are frequently succeeded by other clergy whose key dogmatics diverge from their own but whose prime understandings of the divine-human relationship—care, respect and the prevention of harm—are at their core. To date, the multi-faith contributions have transitioned smoothly between the religious traditions and broadened the understanding of the “ministry” term to embrace new traditions, which would not necessarily use that vocabulary.

Individual representatives of the major faith traditions provide the specialized work of attending to human research ethics oversight as identified clergy. It is altruistic work, but provides pleasures that sustain those clergy who do the task in ways that nourish the spirit. It is a demanding yet rewarding workload and it is provided alongside those who—in secular settings—are under no requirement to disclose any religious attitudes, preferences or prejudices. Whether recent ordinand or seasoned emeritus, all give their service at the same level within their committees.

Clergy HREC service is a ministry, a specialized pastoral care for the Australian community, a gift in reply to God’s call, a diaconate, a non-hierarchical contribution proclaimed in the range of faith “discourse[s]
about God and the divine-human relationship". We serve God by caring in our many ways for every individual soul who will be touched by research, each one precious in God’s glorious, but often imperfectly-behaved, creation. We humbly place this quiet service into committees that strive to make our national community a beacon of excellence in research, in keeping with our many understandings of the holy potential which religion invites us to pursue in emulation of God’s example.

*Holy God, we are called and take our place in Human Research Ethics Committees, in service to the ideal of the holiness to which we aspire by Your example. In so doing, we serve the Commonwealth of Australia, in the hope that its values of democracy as an embodiment of the code for living that you demand and as espoused by the Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, are supported by that service.*

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Becoming a Member of the HREC—From Recruitment to Integration

Recruitment to HREC Service, Details of Service and Training and Professional Development

a. How did this ministry of community service become interesting to you?

b. List your HREC service to date and how you were recruited to each post.

c. What forms of professional pre- and post-skilling have you achieved: attended any course or taken any studies to advance your skills in this area? If so, who paid for this?

d. Did anyone ever ask you about the religious issues which would inform your potential service and do you think it would have been a legitimate question if it had been asked? What might you have said?

e. How did you negotiate to take on the added responsibility of committee service in addition to your substantive tasks—were there parish concerns?

f. Was it difficult to manage the demands of fixed meeting commitments against the pastoral demands of your congregation?
g. In which way did your academic or ministry foundation training prepare you to serve on the HREC and have other clergy colleagues spoken about their HREC service?

Call to Ministry and What it Means to You

How do you understand your call to ministry: does Calling interchange with vocation/ministry?

a. How has that operated for you?

b. Have there been any marked changes since you began HREC work?

c. Has that initial call modified or expanded in light of the community work in which you have been engaged?

Specific Experience in Committee Work Seen Through the Lens of Your Call to Ministry and How You Are Perceived by Others on the Committee

a. Given your framework for ministry, how does the specific committee which you serve provide a landscape for you to serve?

b. How do you think others experience your ___________ religious identity?

c. Have there ever been hurdles raised in relation to your religion’s known position on potentially contentious issues?
d. What perceptions do you think others have of your ministry work on the committee?

e. Has presumption of that perception been problematic?

f. How have you sought information that may not have initially been at your disposal in the case of an application or policy decision where other religious traditions’ positions needed to be taken into consideration?

g. AND IF SO In such a case, do you use networks of clergy from outside your own faith, within strict limits of anonymity and generic discussion?

h. Can you recount a time when issues for the committee have resulted in your taking a deliberately pastoral position or providing pastoral care within the committee context for members or administrative/support staff?

i. How have you relied on your pastoral skills?

j. Have your pastoral skills been an advantage in the dynamic of the committee?

Response/concerns by Your Own Community to Your HREC Service

a. Were there any ideological issues in your serving as a generic post holder rather than as a representative of your own denomination?

b. What (if any) teaching/preaching did you do to explain this to your community?
c. Have you had to educate the parish in connection with the new work and how have you done that?

d. Has there been any resistance?

e. Is this viewed as a contribution to the wider socio-political context?

f. Do you consider yourself broad-minded in a narrow-minded parish?

g. In which way is HREC service a vehicle for social action or other triggers?

h. Comment on the balance between your individual theology and being a *generic chair holder* on your HREC.

i. Did issues of a cross-religious boundary nature emerge which were a puzzle or challenge?

j. Have you ever been asked to pray/lead a moment of reflection at a meeting by either your parish or the committee itself?

**Reflection on the Type of Australian Society to which Your Ministry is Contributing**

a. Is there any difficulty for you in serving God and the Commonwealth of Australia?

b. Has your HREC ministry contribution on behalf of your individual faith been a contribution to the broader community of all faiths in Australia? How?
c. In terms of your contribution as an Australian, how do you judge this ministry to be significant in the multifaith setting, given increasing secularism?

d. What satisfactions and challenges have emerged through committee service?

e. Do you know or would you like to be in touch with other clergy who serve this work to develop networks between and beyond the faiths you know?

Reprise Question

Given what you know now, what do you recommend to training institutions and professional bodies?

Is there any other comment you’d like to make?


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