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Foreword and Acknowledgements

When in 1986 Howard Clinebell was invited to an “International Seminar on Pastoral Care and Counselling” in Germany, the organisers hardly expected that this meeting would turn out to be an intercultural encounter. But that was exactly what happened and what was experienced there.¹ Indeed, this seminar started a tradition of yearly seminars, in which the intercultural aspect in pastoral caregiving more and more was made an explicit focus of reflection. In 1995, this resulted in the foundation of the “Society for Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counselling”, SIPCC.²

For the last 20 years now, SIPCC has been an international “learning community”³, with seminars, studies, publications and networking activities – thereby becoming a catalyst (and in some respect a forerunner) in the reflection of intercultural aspects in the field of pastoral care and counselling. And step by step, this focus was widened from the intercultural to the inter-religious field.

This book contains essays that reflect the work and the “learning course” of SIPCC:

- Serving as *Introduction*, in the first essay Helmut Weiß discusses the hermeneutics of intercultural and inter-religious encounters, based on the experiences of SIPCC’s 20 years history.
- The essays in *Part A* tackle – albeit starting from their specific contexts or challenges – general questions for a hermeneutics of pastoral caregiving in intercultural and interfaith perspective. The authors in this part approach

¹ For the story of this seminar and the follow up until the founding of SIPCC, see Helmut Weiß and Klaus Temme, “Reviewing the Journey”, in *Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counselling*, 1, 1996, 6-13. See also the list of seminars in the appendix of this book.

² For actual information about SIPCC, see <http://www.sipcc.org>.

³ Cf. the essay of Helmut Weiß in this book.

pastoral caregiving from a Christian perspective. The intention is not to create an exclusive approach, but to enhance theory formation in pastoral caregiving in line with the very old tradition of the care or cure of human souls (*cura animarum*). This has been done with the vision that pastoral caregiving should explore new frontiers and take up the challenge to be inclusive, taking into consideration the connection between pastoral care, spiritual care and wholeness in healing and helping.

- *Part B* focusses on themes and challenges of caregiving in concrete contexts. Thus, the emphasis is on local issues on grassroots level within different cultural and religious settings. It is clear that the themes that are tackled here are by no means exhaustive, but exemplary in character.
- *Part C*, finally, takes up the challenge of inter-religiosity. For SIPCC, this challenge was present right from the beginning,⁴ but it took some time to find ways to approach it methodologically. The essays in this section show steps to do that without neglecting the fact that religions like e.g. Judaism, Christianity or Islam are (in their self-understanding and in their empirical phenomenology) more than just “cultural expressions of different spiritualities”.

Most essays in this book have been presented and discussed at one of SIPCC’s seminars, and later been published in SIPCC’s magazine *Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counselling*.⁵ Some were specially written for books of SIPCC and are published here by courtesy of Neukirchener Verlag.⁶ All contributions have been reviewed and selected according to their contribution to the field of caregiving, helping and healing; to their representativeness for the different areas of discussion and the intercultural profile of SIPCC’s work; and, finally, to their availability in English.

⁴ In the first seminar of SIPCC 1995 already, a Buddhist monk participated with a lecture.

⁵ This series (ISSN: 1431-8954) is published since 1996 by SIPCC, Düsseldorf, with a parallel series in German: *Interkulturelle Seelsorge und Beratung* (ISSN: 1431-8962). All issues are also online available at <http://www.sipcc.org/schriftenreihe>. The lectures of the seminar 2013 have been published in: E. Begic, H. Weiß, G. Wenz (eds.), *Barmherzigkeit. Zur sozialen Verantwortung islamischer Seelsorge*, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag 2014.

⁶ See K. Federschmidt, E. Hauschildt, Chr. Schneider-Harpprecht, K. Temme and H. Weiß (eds.), *Handbuch Interkulturelle Seelsorge* [Handbook on Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counselling], 2002; H. Weiß, K. Federschmidt and K. Temme (eds.), *Ethik und Praxis des Helfens in verschiedenen Religionen* [Ethics and Practice of Helping in Different Religions], 2005; H. Weiß, K. Federschmidt and K. Temme (eds.), *Handbuch Interreligiöse Seelsorge* [Handbook on Inter-Religious Pastoral Care and Counselling], 2010; all books published by Neukirchener Verlag, Neukirchen-Vluyn.

As is appropriate for an intercultural publication, the styles of language in the different contributions show the different backgrounds of the authors. The style of bibliographical references in the footnotes was unified, in order to assist readers who do further research. All references to internet resources have been checked and, if necessary and possible, have been updated.

As any selection remains arbitrary to some extent, we want to give thanks also to all those colleagues and co-workers, who have valuably contributed to SIPCC without being explicitly present in this book.

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Karl Federschmidt and Daniël Louw

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