

# Editorial

## Chaplaincy, Disability, Raphael, Rembrandt and COVID-19

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**Abstract:** Four topic areas are covered in this issue of *Health and Social Care Chaplaincy*: (i) healthcare chaplaincy, spiritual care and disability, (ii) COVID-19, (iii) deuterocanonical considerations of the “Angel Raphael” and (iv) the artwork of Rembrandt.

**Keywords:** chaplaincy, disability, Rembrandt, Raphael, COVID-19

### Introduction

Since the publication of the special issue of *Health and Social Care Chaplaincy* which addressed the multiplicity of issues caused by COVID-19 (see Carey, Swift & Burton, 2020), the difficulties of providing pastoral care under pandemic conditions continue to be noted. Research by Annette Haußmann (Heidelberg University) and Birthe Fritz (Marburg University) considers the various challenges for pastoral carers in Germany in their cross-sectional study during COVID-19. Their results involving 307 pastoral carers show a drastic decline in face-to-face communication, with significant differences between the various fields of pastoral care and the

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alternative methods which carers adopted to provide ministry during COVID-19 (Haußmann & Fritz, 2022).

Another valuable research contribution is that by Jan Grimell (Church of Sweden), who has contributed previously to *HSCC* regarding Swedish chaplaincy (Grimell & Bradby, 2022). Dr. Grimell uses a case study example to explore the “core features of a Swedish hospital chaplaincy identity”, both in theory and in practice. The focus of this case study was to specifically explore how a full-time position as a hospital chaplain, coupled with extensive experience within a secularized context, forged a specific chaplain character consisting of six overarching core features or identity markers (Grimell, 2022).

### **Disability and Spiritual Guidebook**

Another area noted in this issue of *HSCC*, which affects chaplaincy and spiritual care, arises from the revision of the ‘spiritual guidebook’ in Finland. The authors, Ikali Karvinen (University of Eastern Finland and Finn Church Aid), Sinikka Winqvist (Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities) and Varpu Lipponen (private practitioner), provide insights into the revision project. They reflect on the needs of people with disabilities and the potential role of spirituality in order to renew and update the guidebook to better match the contemporary spiritual landscape of Finland.

### **The Angel (“Chaplain”) Raphael and the Book of Tobit**

Those interested in biblical exegesis will appreciate the valuable work of the Franciscan chaplain Neal Dunnigan (Cork Community Chaplaincy Services), who considers the chaplaincy ministry of the “Angel Raphael” to the Tobit family as narrated in the deuterocanonical Old Testament Book of Tobit. According to Dunnigan, the Book of Tobit focuses on how the distress of Tobit and his family is soothed by the divine presence of the disguised angel “Raphael” (“God heals”). After reviewing the literary and historical context of the story, Dunnigan then explores the characterization of Raphael in contrast with contemporary archetypes of spiritual care. The similarities and differences are enlightening.

### **Rembrandt**

The final article for this issue centres around the artistic work of the internationally famous Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), a Dutch painter, printmaker and portraitist. Presenting several pieces of Rembrandt’s work

for readers to reflect upon, Elizabeth Topper (an independent researcher) explores what can be extrapolated from Rembrandt's empathetic portraiture, with a view to positively impacting the spiritual care encounter. Topper describes Rembrandt's ongoing process of introspection and his concomitant ability to bear witness to his sitters, as evidenced by his compassionate portrayals of their vulnerable humanity.

### **Book Reviews**

We conclude this issue with three book reviews. Rev. Prof. Christopher Swift reviews the text by Kelly and Swinton (Eds.) (2019), *Chaplaincy and the Soul of Health and Social Care: Fostering Spiritual Wellbeing in Emerging Paradigms of Care*. The second book review by Catherine Lewis-Smith discusses the text by Peng-Keller and Neuhold (Eds.) (2019), titled *Charting Spiritual Care: The Emerging Role of Chaplaincy Records in Global Health Care*. In conjunction with this latter book, readers should also consider the 'White Paper' by Vandenhoeck and co-workers (2022), 'Charting by Chaplains in Healthcare: White Paper of the European Research Institute for Chaplains in Health-Care (ERICH)' (<https://journal.equinoxpub.com/HSCC/article/view/20583>). Lastly Rev. Dr. Steven Nolan completes a thorough analysis of Dr. Brent Peery's text *Outcome Oriented Chaplaincy*.

### **Epilogue and Call for Papers**

As per previous issues, the Editors hope that you also enjoy this final issue of *HSCC* for the year of 2022. Articles submitted in preparation for the 2023 issue will be initially published online via "advance access" as soon as these are approved for publication.

As COVID-19 looks to continue, we invite additional papers on this topic. Another area of chaplaincy which is being increasingly explored is that of moral injury (Carey & Hodgson, 2018). While this topic has been extensively covered with regard to military chaplaincy, authors/researchers are encouraged to submit articles to *HSCC* that consider moral injury within medical, nursing, allied health and social care contexts.

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