

# Week Thirty-one

## YEAR ONE

### Read

Micah  
Isaiah 1–39  
Excerpt on Micah from Collins's *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* found in Part II, pages 220–23  
Collins, Chapter 16, "Isaiah," pages 164–73

### Focus

Micah and First Isaiah contain familiar passages that have been often quoted. Identify key verses from both prophets that speak to vocation, mission, and ministry.

## YEARTWO

### Read

Galatians  
Powell, Chapter 15, "Galatians," 307–22

### Focus

Galatians, known as Paul's "angry" letter, brings emotion to center stage in developing a theology. Consider how Paul's anger plays in the creation of his theology. Explore what working with his anger led Paul to do. What light might be shed on Paul's view of gifts for ministry?

## YEAR THREE

### Read

MacCulloch, Chapter 21, "Enlightenment: Ally or Enemy?" pages 769–816

### Focus

The Enlightenment produced a sea change in Western Christianity that continues well into the contemporary social and intellectual context. In what ways has the Enlightenment revolutionized the understanding of human nature? Think about the positive and negative impact the altered views of humanity have had on understanding vocational development.

## YEAR FOUR

**Read**

Peace, Rose, and Mobley, Foreword, Introduction, and "Part I: Encountering the Neighbor," pages xi–41

**Focus**

In the Foreword to *My Neighbor's Faith*, Joan Chittister aptly describes what the book intends and why: "In this book all the languages of God are spoken—Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian and Muslim—so that we can learn from one another."<sup>61</sup> Much is to be learned about God's "commonwealth of love and justice," also known as God's reign or the kingdom of God. Identify the ways the essays in "Part I: Encountering My Neighbor" contribute to developing a theology of mission and ministry in a pluralistic world. Also, what specific ideas, images, or stories foster vocational development?



## ALL YEARS

**Respond**

The work done throughout this unit fosters vocational development within the context of a missiology that asserts that Christians are called to witness and participate in the way God is changing the world. To that end, review the work you have done this week and throughout the year. Identify key concepts, images (metaphors), stories, and actions that enhance your beliefs about what God is doing in the world, society, and individual lives. Particularly note how what you have learned and experienced enlivens the "Vocational Paradigm" (bridge metaphor) and how it (the metaphor) illuminates what you have read.

**Practice**

Christian vocational development must be grounded in scripture. One of the primary passages from the New Testament that has guided Christian formation comes from the Epistle to the Ephesians. The EfM theological reflection method that begins with a passage of scripture provides a way to thoroughly examine and understand the theological implications of a passage from scripture. You are invited to reflect on Ephesians 4:1–16 using this method.

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you

61. Jennifer Howe Peace, Or N. Rose, and Gregory Mobley, eds., *My Neighbor's Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), xii.

were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people." (When it says, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. —Ephesians 4:1–16

The "Theological Reflection Beginning with Scripture" outline, found in Part II of the *Guide*, may be helpful for this reflection.

Additional questions to use in the **exploring** portion of the reflection on the Ephesians passage:

- How does God disclose God's self in this world?
- What deep need is exposed?
- What is shown about the "commonwealth of love and justice"?

When you reach the **connecting** phase of the reflection, focus on the following:

- An action/personal experience consideration around a time when you faced something related to the central idea of the scripture passage;
- A contemporary culture consideration around one area, such as what our world of employment says is important in relation to the central idea of the scripture passage; or what our government views as important regarding the subject of the passage;
- A personal position consideration around what you believe about the subject of the reflection.

When the reflection turns to **applying**, include questions such as:

- How do you understand vocation and call as the result of this reflection?
- Comment on implications for your vocational development.

Create a summary statement of what you have learned, especially with reference to vocational development.