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LEADERSHIP: SPIRITUAL, ETHICAL, OR BOTH?*

Anna Abram
Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, Cambridge

/// Introduction

There are numerous synonyms and terms associated with leadership. We talk about leaders as influencers, planters, governors, managers, directors, principals, executives, and presidents. The word "leader" comes from the Old English word "lædan" meaning "to go before as a guide" (Oxford English Dictionary n.d.). It was first used in English in the fourteenth century to describe a person in charge. In Greek, the word "episcopos" is used to denote the idea of being in charge (see Bible Hub n.d.; WordSense n.d.). The exact translation of this word is probably an overseer or someone who surveys from the top. To survey is to examine the condition of something or to query in order to understand or collect data. The notion of leadership belongs to the language of hierarchy of roles and powers with the leader being in the top. The hierarchical model of leadership is practised in most secular (business, academia, army, or healthcare) and religious (ecclesial) set-ups and organisations. Historically, most leaders, especially military, political, social, and religious (with a few exceptions), were men. Leadership was related to generalship. The art of leading the army was called

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"strategy" (in Greek "stratos" means "army" and "agein" means "to lead"; Merriam-Webster Dictionary n.d.). The military language spread into our contemporary organisational vocabulary with strategies for leadership and winning or losing leadership contests.

Ancient texts on leadership were usually associated with warfare or the *polis* (running the city-state). In the Renaissance, some elaborate suggestions on how to practise political leadership were presented in Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince* (see Machiavelli 2017). Machiavelli's advice to the governor of Florence is to use manipulative tactics in order to make the people of Florence submissive to him, with fear being at the heart of this advice: "As long as you are doing them good, they are entirely yours: they'll offer you their blood, their property, their lives, and their children – as long as there is no immediate prospect of their having to make good on these offerings; but when that changes, they'll turn against you" (Machiavelli 2017: 36). Using contemporary categories, this style of leadership could be labelled as "manipulative" leadership. The literature on leadership mentions other styles. At the time of writing this paper (June 2022), an online search showed that there were over 60,000 books on leadership on www.amazon.co.uk (Amazon n.d.).

Chris Lowney in his book *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450 Year Old Company that Changed the World* (2003) captures well the key characteristics of "great" leadership: being self-aware, heroic, ingenious, and loving. Lowney, an ex-member of the Society of Jesus, who later served as Managing Director of JP Morgan and worked in leadership positions in several other organisations, brings Ignatius of Loyola into his model of leadership. There are other types of leadership mentioned in the contemporary leadership discourse, such as "virtuous leadership," with emphasis on virtues of justice, fidelity, temperance, and courage as character traits of the virtuous leader. Amongst the virtuous appear Mahatma Ghandi, Winston Churchill, and Nelson Mandela, as well as the social figures of Martin Luther King and Mother Theresa, religious authorities, including St John Paul II, Dalai Lama, and Pope Francis, as well as business personalities, such as Bill Gates. Other types of leadership include "authentic and positive leadership" with emphasis on such traits as self-awareness and self-improvement, openness, transparency, and optimism; "social responsibility leadership" or "servant leadership," which see the leader as someone who is not ruling over people but rather is responsible for their well-being with a sense of privilege to serve the people and humility as the measure of leadership.[1] Luk Bouckaert and

[1] A good summary of the notion of leadership and how it evolved can be found in J. Thomas Wren's *The Leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership Through the Ages* (1995). Models of leadership

Steven C. Van den Heuvel in their edited volume *Servant Leadership, Social Entrepreneurship and the Will to Serve: Spiritual Foundations and Business Applications* (2019) show how inspiring social and economic leaders are capable of transforming conflictual human settlements into collaborative and caring human communities. Crucial to this approach is the "will to serve." Jesus and Moses are often referred to when discussing the servant leadership model. There are other types including "corporate social responsibility," "transforming" and "moral management" leadership as well as styles of leadership based on religious charisms, such as those of the already mentioned Ignatian (Jesuit) or Benedictine, Vincentian, Carmelite, and Franciscan orders.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to engage in detail with any of the above approaches. The brief survey of meanings, styles, and types of leadership suggests that the idea of "leadership" is not straightforward. There is a plurality of perspectives on leadership and the term itself is ambiguous. This paper, mindful of the ambiguity and plurality imbedded in the discourse of leadership, will focus on two key dimensions of leadership, namely ethics and spirituality. It will argue that leadership which makes a positive impact on or difference to the lives of individuals and communities needs to be ethically solid and spiritually sound. This study recognises the different sets of values and personal characteristics that leadership scholars (from a variety of disciplines) and educators see as necessary for leading well and making positive impact. A good deal of literature on leadership and training opportunities for leaders contains explicit references to "ethics" and "spirituality." However, it is not always clear what the writers mean by these terms and how exactly they see the relationship between spirituality and ethics. The first part of the paper, while reviewing a small sample of approaches, aims to identify the problem. The second part attempts to address it by offering some conceptual clarifications. The third and final part proposes a tentative framework for thinking more constructively about impactful leadership that is both ethical and spiritual. The paper is based on the premise that impactful leadership needs to be practical. "Practical" here means rooted in reality and experience and applicable to concrete situations. To illustrate the latter, a reference to the Russian military aggression in Ukraine and President Volodymyr Zelensky's leadership in handling it will be made. The proposed approach is deliberately broad so that some fundamental points relevant to the theory and practice of impactful leadership can be captured.

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are discussed in Lynn G. Beck and Joseph Murphy's edited volume *Ethics in Educational Leadership Programs: Emerging Models* (1997).

/// Spirituality and Ethics in Leadership Theory, Training, and Practice

Madhumita Chatterji and Laszlo Zsolnai in their *Ethical Leadership: Indian and European Spiritual Approaches* (2015) propose a spiritually grounded approach to ethical leadership. While the authors do not define "ethics" and "spirituality," they are clear on what values are necessary for leading a business in an ethical way. They suggest these values are spiritual and include "self-regulation," "care," and "transcendence." When addressing goals and objectives of business, Chatterji and Zsolnai stress the importance of these values especially for ecological, future-respecting, and pro-social ways of doing business. They argue for the inclusion of philosophy as of equal importance to economics and politics in training business leaders. It is rare to appeal to transcendence as a value in leadership but for Chatterji and Zsolnai this value is crucial. They argue that unless business leaders see themselves as part of a larger universe and recognise that they have extended responsibility, including care for the natural world, they cannot authentically subscribe to ethical leadership. Chatterji and Zsolnai are unique in appealing to spirituality in this way. Others who evoke "spiritual leadership" in the context of organisations or corporate business see spirituality in a somewhat lighter way, focusing primarily on wellness of the employees and practices such as mindfulness (paying attention to the present moment in a non-judgemental way), diversity celebrations, personal crisis management or bereavement programmes. While these practices are not irrelevant to spiritual leadership, they do not cover the spiritual meaning and the potential of impactful leadership. Those who endorse servant or transpersonal models of leadership refer to something deeper, in line with the approach of Chatterji and Zsolnai. Robert Greenleaf, who coined the term "servant leadership" in his *The Servant as Leader*, suggests that "[t]he Servant-Leader is servant first" (1977: 7). Greenleaf explains that the concept is rooted in the deep desire to serve and is tested by the following set of questions: "Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least not further be harmed?" (1977: 7). It seems that the important aspect of spiritually rooted leadership (servant, transpersonal, or similar) is to focus on the other rather than the leader in a way that encourages, values, and empowers the other. It is more than simply creating a performance-enhancing culture so common in business and increasingly

present in academia. It is closer to what Bouckaert, in his chapter "Why Do We Need a Spiritual-Based Theory of Leadership?" (2015), explores in relation to "deep change." Bouckaert draws from Eastern and Western religious traditions as sources of wisdom and an aid in ethical discernment. While he makes a compelling ethical case for "a spiritual-based theory of leadership" and the inclusion of spirituality in management and decision-making processes, he does not explain what needs to happen in practice so that spirituality and ethics genuinely underpin the culture of leadership.

Those who emphasise the importance of ethics in leadership aim at providing practical guidance for leaders. Not many ethical leadership scholars engage deeply with ethical theory. There are some exceptions, such as Amalia Amaya, whose work is grounded in virtue ethics, in particular Linda Zagzebski's *Exemplarist Moral Theory* (2017). In her "Exemplarism, Virtue and Ethical Leadership in International Organisations," Amaya (2020) argues that for leadership to be ethical, moral virtues have to be connected to intellectual and communicative virtues as well as managerial and political abilities.[2] However, the growing field of organisational ethics is dominated by empirical approaches and rather reductionist views of ethics. Many of the studies claim to measure values and suggest methods for creating ethical leadership.[3] Some of the approaches could be considered as bordering with moralising or even unethical (in a disciplinary sense of ethics rather than as a moral judgement) by a typical ethicist (including the author of this paper). In short, ethical leadership is not always perceived and articulated in an ethically sound or inspiring way. It is almost as if "ethical leadership" – and in some cases "spiritual leadership" too – were new buzz terms or trends. Companies and corporations need to be seen as investing in ethical leadership and are considered superior if they capitalise on spiritual leadership.

What exactly is the problem? Scholars of organisational ethics who write about ethical leadership tend to view ethics as either legalistic, empirical, or mechanistic. Regarding the latter, they seem to start with the premise that we learn what to do and how to behave largely by observing

[2] For other virtue approaches to leadership, see Caldwell et al. 2015; Cameron 2011; Flynn 2008.

[3] See, e.g., Archie B. Carroll's "Ethical Leadership: From Moral Manager to Moral Leader" (2003: 7–17). Archie lists seven habits of highly moral leaders: (1) moral leaders have strong ethical character; (2) moral leaders have a passion; (3) moral leaders are morally proactive; (4) moral leaders are stakeholder inclusive; (5) moral leaders have an obsession with fairness; (6) moral leaders are principled decision makers; (7) moral leaders integrate ethics wisdom with management wisdom and a mix of core character traits, which include integrity, fairness, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, patience, excellence, forgiveness, empathy, altruistic love, self-determination values, purpose, motivation, drive (intense will), power, energy, courage, resilience, and aspiration.

and following the example of other people. While this line of thinking is not problematic and it is even in line with the Aristotelian perspective on learning virtue, it is overly optimistic to presume that the people at the top of organisations can be trained to be ethical role models; that others will follow their examples; that companies will engage with ethics by creating codes of ethics; and that ethical climate in the organisation will flourish. A system known by the acronym CELMS, which stands for "corporate ethical leadership management system," is used for training top executives to become ethical leaders (Trevino et al. 2000: 128).

While role models and moral exemplars are important, creating an ethical climate in an organisation or society in general is much more complex. Being a moral person or a moral community requires much greater awareness of human agency and what goodness, rightness, badness, wrongness, freedom, and other relevant ethical issues involve. The most the moral leader or manager can do is to inspire and to be accountable for all they do. Even organisations known for subscribing to a solid teaching on moral matters do not always embody their own teaching. Catholic schools and universities all over the world are frequently presented as examples of ethical leadership, both in terms having good leaders (head teachers, principals, and other staff) and in the way they inspire their pupils and students to practise values and commitments in line with Catholic social thought (CST). Yet, as Gerald J. Beyer argues in his *Just Universities: Catholic Social Teaching Confronts Corporatized Higher Education* (2021), many Catholic educational institutions (Beyer refers to the United States) fail to embody CST in their campus policies and practices. He claims that the corporatisation of the university has infected US higher education with hyper-individualistic models and practices that hinder the ability of Catholic institutions to create an environment filled with bedrock values and principles of CST. This suggests that fostering a genuine ethical culture rooted in spirituality is not easy even in institutions that are familiar, at least in theory, with what ethical leadership involves. So, what could potentially help in addressing the emerging gaps and lacks: the gap between theory of ethical leadership and its practice (Beyer's point), the lack of spirituality in ethical leadership theory (Bouckaert and Greenleaf), the gap in seeing ethics and spirituality as connected even if distinct (Chatterji and Zsolnai), and the lack of a solid ethical and spiritual (grounded in wisdom tradition as well as contemporary inter-disciplinary approaches)? The next section of the paper attempts to illuminate the meanings of ethics and spirituality and the relationship between them in order to address implicitly some of the above gaps and lacks.

/// Spirituality and Ethics: Conceptual Clarifications

Both spirituality and ethics are concerned with ways of living. They are like two sides of the same coin, albeit each side is different. Broadly speaking, ethics involves understanding what is right and wrong, and good and bad, as well as living in the light of this understanding. Spirituality has something to do with transcendence (Chatterji and Zsolnai) or the move "beyond the realm of mere things […] into the innermost structure of reality" (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace n.d.: 128). Human beings access this reality by getting in touch with what Patrick Hannon calls "more than meets the eye" (2004) and engaging in practices that fulfil this search. As noted earlier, scholars who refer to spiritual or ethical leadership do not often explain what exactly they mean by spirituality and ethics. First, it is important to recognise that there are good and bad spiritualities and there are good and bad spiritual leaders. Adolf Hitler was considered a spiritual leader. President Vladimir Putin as well as the Patriarch of Moscow, Kirill, are considered as such. After all, if the data is correct, approximately 65% of Russians are supporting military actions in Ukraine and believe in the spiritual quest the country is undertaking (Yaffa 2022). There are other leaders responsible for invasion, including the military commanders who order killings as well as the soldiers responsible for atrocities. Many of them believe that their actions are morally justified. There are 90 million believers under Patriarch Kirill, with 40,000 clergymen, who are considered to be spiritual leaders, of whom only 223 signed the petition for peace and objected to what Patriarch Kirill sees as Russia's duty to cleanse Russian Orthodoxy of "forces of evil that are hostile to the unity of Russian people and Church" (Matthews 2022: 124). How do we connect the points on ethical leadership in the earlier part of this paper to this concrete reality of war? There are no easy and short answers except for suggesting that each context, in peace or war times, in the field of business or military action, can tell us something important about leadership, be it ethical or spiritual or neither.

There are studies that deal with distinctions between ethics and spirituality as academic discourses and morality and practised spirituality as lived experiences. These are relatively recent studies as for a long time ethics and spirituality had not been seen as partners. In the Christian tradition the gap between the two can be traced back to the sixth century AD and then to the Council of Trent, when moral theology and ethics got disconnected from their theological roots and linked with (canon) law.[4]

[4] For a summary of historical studies, see Keenan 2002, 2004; Abram 2020.

The handbooks of moral theology seldom referred to spirituality, nor did Christian spirituality discourse have any serious engagement with the study of ethics. It had been almost impossible to find in a theological dictionary an entry that would seriously speak about morality and spirituality as linked with each other. When they did speak, as in the case of *A New Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, the tone was predominantly critical and not helpful towards establishing a positive relationship. An entry in this particular publication is entitled "Mysticism and Ethics," most of which reads as a disapproval of mysticism and presents ethics as superior to it. Philosophical works, such as John Cottingham's *The Spiritual Dimension: Religion, Philosophy and Human Value* (2005) or Pierre Hadot's *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (1995), are rare examples of attempts to bridge spirituality and philosophical ethics. "Christian Spirituality and Theological Ethics" by William Spohn in *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality* (2005: 269–285) and Richard Gula's *The Call to Holiness* (2003) are two of the finest theological examples of integrating both spirituality and ethics. Gula makes a useful distinction when he suggests that spirituality is the "wellspring of the moral life" and that "[m]orality reveals one's spirituality" (2003: 37). This could mean that what as leaders (and human beings) we do, how we live, how we relate to each other at work and home, how we relate to ourselves as well as to the rest of the world reveals how we are internally. Our external behaviour reveals what we value.

This approach to ethics and spirituality appears different from what we have been considering in the earlier section. It touches on something more fundamental. It seems that until we address some of these fundamental points related to worldviews, values, goals, and perspectives, we cannot talk meaningfully about impactful leadership. Not only secular models of ethical leadership could benefit from greater engagements with ethics and spirituality. The tendency to see ethics and spirituality as disconnected is still familiar even within Catholic thinking. For example, CST, which is a strand of Catholic social ethics, could be more engaged with spirituality. Spirituality can illuminate regions of human experience such as personal (or internal) formation, perception, interpretation, motivation, imagination, discernment and attunement. None of these regions explicitly feature in the *Compedium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, or even Pope Francis's encyclicals, for example *Laudato si'* or *Fratelli tutti*. More space is given to them in moral philosophy and psychology (especially its psychoanalytic strand).

Spirituality can safeguard the notion of ethical leadership from being viewed predominantly as a code of ethics to be inculcated through

(a rather mechanistic as in CELMS) training of moral leaders, while ethics can safeguard spiritual leadership from becoming an isolated pursuit removed from genuine solidarity (including with the poor, as is stressed by the principal of the preferential option for the poor) or social justice concerns and reduced to training in mindfulness. While the Christian spiritual tradition defends the legitimacy of a certain partiality towards oneself (by promoting such practices as examination and formation of conscience or contemplation) and the dedication of time and resources for self-improvement (spiritual direction or retreats), the Christian ethical tradition encourages us to see everyone as a neighbour to be loved. These two strands of the Christian tradition express a healthy balance between the importance of self-formation and concern for the other, without falling into impartialist tendencies that dominate some contemporary ethical discussions (for example, forms of utilitarianism). Cottingham reminds us that the territory of morality covers both interpersonal relations (how we treat our fellow human beings) and what he calls "intra-personal ethical formation – with the individual's journey towards self-knowledge, self-development, and harmonious living" (2010: 66).

The inclusion of spiritual formation in training for ethical leadership or ethics in training for spiritual leadership or spiritual and ethical formation in impactful leadership could potentially be transformative for both individuals and communities. Theoretical studies of this proposition could only enhance the discourse of organisational ethics and strengthen or even transform leadership theory. Cottingham argues that while the two domains (impartial treatment of others and self-development) are distinct, they are connected: "one might reasonably suppose that individuals whose inner moral life has been enriched by self-reflection, and who have made progress towards psychological maturity, will manifest this growth among other things in their attitudes and relations to others" (2010: 66).

On the basis of what has been explored so far, I want to argue that impactful leadership needs to involve both partialist and impartialist domains, each illuminated by ethics and spirituality. Uncovering the depths of human nature as part of leadership training can only boost the understanding of organisational or communal workings. This point is explored by James Keenan in his "D'Arcy Lectures" at Campion Hall, Oxford, especially in his study of vulnerability and recognition (see at the YouTube channel of Campion Hall, Oxford, 2022). There are other themes that are relevant to the project of linking ethics with spirituality for the sake of impactful leadership. We shall turn to them next.

/// Impactful Leadership: A Tentative Framework

If we agree that spirituality involves the recognition that there are values such as truth or freedom that we have not created but to which we are called to respond and these values cannot be owned by anyone, any group or nation state, then the framework for impactful leadership needs to have space for addressing these big themes. There are resources (practices or spiritual exercises) in the Christian and other spiritual traditions that can help with occasional self-emptying from preconceptions, detaching from sentimental distortions of the other, oneself, history, and the sacred. Practices of introspection and inner purification might not be appealing to everyone on a leadership training pathway but without openness to inner movements and shifts from inauthenticity to authenticity, from self-absorption to self-transcendence, there is no personal growth and genuine service to others. Failure to be open to such shifts and to recognise the ultimate value, to free oneself from preconceptions, attachments, bias, and various destructive forces risks confusing spirituality with indoctrination and manipulation. We see the consequences of the latter in the Russian military action in Ukraine.

Impactful leadership requires openness to ultimate realities without manipulating them into ego-centred versions of these realities. This is not easy to practise as human beings (individually and collectively) can be mistaken about what these realities really are. Still, the desire to be open to them, overcome stagnation, and envision integration and transformation in the self and society are all part of the spiritual quest and conditions of ethical leadership. There are five key elements which are essential for the study and practice of impactful leadership. What is offered here is no more than a *tentative* framework for thinking and developing further our understanding of impactful leadership.

First, impactful leadership is conditioned by the quality and depth of moral and spiritual formation of the leader. The aim of such a formation is to expand self-awareness and gain a greater self-knowledge. It is a process (rather than a set of one-off training opportunities) of engaging in practices that foster a better understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses, operational values, one's relationship to the ultimate value, one's biases and limitations. The process involves constant checking and questioning one's beliefs (about oneself and the rest of the world), reviewing attitudes and commitments. Moral and spiritual self-awareness encompass acceptance of one's vulnerability where vulnerability is understood not as a liability

but as part of being human. In Scott Pelley's "60 Minutes" interview President Zelensky made a poignant observation about himself: "I am not the strongest warrior but I am not going to leave […]. This is my choice and I can't do any other way" (in Ukrainian, see Pelley 2022; for a summary in English, see 60 Minutes 2022). Ten months of the Russian military invasion in Ukraine have shown not only Zelensky's leadership skills but also a high degree of self-knowledge. It is hard to speculate about his spiritual and ethical formation but it is clear that both as a man and a leader he has proven himself to be someone who has a deep internal life and a positive relationship with himself as well as those around him. Pelley remarked: "the moment Zelensky told his people that he refused to flee, Ukrainians refused to fall" (60 Minutes 2022). This suggests that self-awareness and authentic action make an impact on others.

Secondly, impactful leadership is conditioned by a similar awareness of others (their strengths, weaknesses, recognition of their vulnerability and hopes). It is not based on dominance but on the recognition of mutuality, inter-dependence, shared humanity, and relationality. It seems, so far, that President Zelensky's success is his ability to relate to people as they are. Perhaps his training as an actor has enabled him to develop his imagination and learn to enter into the minds and characters of others, fictional or real. In the interview with Pelley mentioned above, the listener can feel Zelensky's suffering after he visited Bucha (see BBC News 2022). His words – "I saw death, just death, simply death" (60 Minutes 2022) – are expressing his ability to identify with the plight of others who are suffering. As "an actor who is also a lawyer who turned parody to power" (60 Minutes 2022) Zelensky has been careful not to judge other leaders or heads of state even when he was pushed to do so in the interview. When asked: "Are you frustrated by President Biden?," he answered "No, I am grateful" (60 Minutes 2022). Only someone who is deeply connected to one's thoughts and feelings (as suggested in the first characteristic about self-knowledge) can attend to others with gratitude. It is possible to deduce that his positive experience of human relationships, including those who are intimately connected to him, including his wife, family, and colleagues, provides him with a unique source of strength and encouragement. Impactful leadership in a particular area (professional, political, or other social role) cannot be divorced from the rest of the leader's life. Ethics and spirituality articulate the importance of seeing human experience in a relational way.

Thirdly, what drives impactful leadership forward is a sense of purpose or the moral ambition to serve others. Ethics and spirituality articulate

"purpose" differently. However, fundamental to both, especially within the Christian (spiritual and ethical) tradition, is the principle of human dignity. According to it, human beings cannot be treated as means to an end but as an end in itself (human *qua* human). In the interview with Pelley, Zelensky talks about his goal or dream for Ukraine. It consists of national unity and the value of everyone, togetherness of the people and collective heroism of everyone. He wants all his people to feel victory and when it feels right for those who left the country to return (60 Minutes 2022). The point here is the importance of moral ideals, the vision of communal life, the ability to hold together diversity, plurality, and individuality. Impactful leadership is hostile to narrowmindedness or several reductionist views on measuring performance, as alluded in the earlier part of this paper.

Fourthly, impactful leadership is open to heroic or even sacrificial action. In the time of war this has a unique meaning and potentially is the costliest. Risking one's own life for the sake of others is the highest expression of moral courage and a mark of spiritual growth. As we have noted above, President Zelensky embodies heroism that (fortunately) many political leaders are not called to practise. However, every leader (in any context) is required to confront fear, make difficult decisions, and take risks. Dealing with these challenges is not a matter of completing a course. It requires long-term formation. Ethics and spirituality in conversation with psychoanalysis and other fields (including art) can be crucial for understanding properly what is required, what sacrifices are necessary or morally appropriate, and how to deal with fear and other negative emotions as part of the process.

Fifthly and finally, impactful leadership is conditioned by an ability to creatively discern. There is no one (perfect) model of leadership that fits all contexts. In the earlier part of this paper, we have alluded to several models. Although we have not evaluated any of them, we could probably agree that all have strengths and weaknesses. In times of crises, old scripts might not work. Improvisation, discernment, and practical wisdom are key operational dispositions. According to Thomas Aquinas, practical wisdom has two parts: one is "common sense" and the other "perspicacity" (1947: IIa–IIae, q. 51, a. 3, a. 4). Perspicacity is a unique insight or an ability to see what needs to be done in the unpredictable or unusual circumstances when it is hard to apply the usual moral norms. It has something to do with moral perception on the spot, farsightedness, and innovation. Impactful leaders are moral improvisors and practitioners of discernment. Discernment is a form of insight that is personal and spiritual. According to Nick Austin, it is "something that is known more by practice than book knowledge"

(2019: 7). It is a "skill of moral evaluation in the concrete which employs symbolic and affective criteria to accomplish this evaluation" (Spohn 1983: 30). It is an "imaginative capacity" (Gustafson 1974: 104) that enables one to distinguish between what is important and what is not, what fits with the bigger picture and what does not. Discernment is key to impactful leadership. It is needed for deciding priorities, distinguishing what is more important and what less, in what to invest energy and resources and what to put aside, what is urgent and what is not.

/// Conclusion

There is no quick and easy training for impactful leadership as there is no quick and easy moral and spiritual growth. In order to grasp the complexity and possibilities of impactful leadership, the paper offered a brief review of different approaches to leadership, focusing on a sample that considers ethical and spiritual leadership. It offered clarification of several key terms and identified gaps and limitations in the contemporary discourse of leadership. Finally, it proposed a framework for thinking more constructively about impactful leadership. The paper indirectly has highlighted the need for thinking differently about the development of future leaders and argued that part of this development should include self-development or self-formation.

The paper argued that although the field of organisational ethics is growing and there is a greater interest in ethical and spiritual leadership, what is currently on offer is limited. It does not capture the depth and breadth of a genuinely impactful leadership. We need more than empirical studies of values and traits, ways of measuring performance, and providing (often simplistic) techniques for navigating in the complex field of decision making. We need to identify adequate resources. Some of these resources have been mentioned throughout the paper. Leadership training needs to provide opportunities for giving attention to all spheres of human experience and to cover both partialist (self-formation) and impartialist (other-orientation) strands. It also needs to be open to a greater use of imagination as a legitimate tool for creative thinking, discernment, and perspicacious insight.

If we agree that the relationship between spirituality and ethics is symbiotic and that the partialist and impartialist spheres of human experience are connected, then it seems that leadership in order to be impactful has to involve all these domains. Moreover, impactful leaders are not simply leaders. They also allow themselves to be led. "Being led" can take a form

of a variety of openings and practices that the wisdom traditions have on offer. The "being led" theme deserves a separate study. The main purpose of this paper was to make a case for a proper inclusion of ethics and spirituality. Ultimately, impactful leadership is what enables individuals and communities to flourish and to search for what is truly best. The latter is underpinned by spirituality. We are never free from obstacles, such as the culture of complacency (e.g., relying on a particular reputation, including good reputation, as in the case of US Catholic schools and universities, discussed by Beyer), which prevent individual and communal flourishing. A lack of self-knowledge, self-righteousness, wrong attachments (including attachments to ideas, ideologies, and opinions), distorted desires (for power, control, prestige, and wealth), inflated ambition (including "messianic" or imperialist), a lack of courage, rigorism, and idealisation can hinder spiritual leadership. These and other obstacles deserve a separate study.

Our contemporary "crisis of leadership" has multiple roots, which have not been explored here directly. One of the problems is a cult or idealisation of certain leaders and, associated with this cult, the leader–follower dynamic. At the same time, our world needs good leadership at all levels. We also need strong institutions that embody the ethics they preach and recognise spiritual dimensions. Rather than promoting a cult of individual leaders, we need to foster a culture in which different people can step (at any point) into leadership positions. A growing number of successful organisations practise co-leadership and see the art of leadership as one of several ingredients that get the best of people. There are several other themes and questions that have not been covered here but are relevant to the topic of this paper. Amongst them are concepts of power and empowerment, the role of people on the margins, the issues of poverty, gender, class, and racial injustices. How do we enact impactful leadership by attending to these topics, in particular to power imbalances and listening to less-heard voices? What should impactful leadership involve in order to tackle growing polarities in our local, national, and global contexts? Given that leadership is never perfect, how do we learn from mistakes in leadership, overcome the stigma of failure, and move forward through the failures? How do we prioritise in an increasingly complex (technologically driven) world and negotiate between patience and urgency to act? These questions and themes need to be included in the discussion of leadership. Such discussion, in order to be impactful, needs to be genuinely inter-disciplinary.

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/// Anna Abram – Principal of the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology, Cambridge, UK, where she also leads the MA in Contemporary Ethics. Prior to her move to Cambridge in 2017 she was for 25 years at Heythrop College, University of London, in various roles including Head of Pastoral and Social Studies Department and Senior Lecturer in Ethics. She co-founded and co-edited "Bloomsbury Studies in Global Ethics" and contributed to leadership projects which required ethical analysis within areas of finance (City of London), gold mining (Peru) and education (Poland). Amongst her recent leadership-relevant publications are the articles "Relationality and Attunement in Teaching Christian Ethics" (2019) and "Education for Truth in a Climate of Fake News: Conversation with Thomas Aquinas, Bernard Williams, Wolfgang Künne and Pope Francis" (2019).

E-mail: aa2008@mbit.cam.ac.uk