

No Longer Servants, but Friends: A Theology of Ordained Ministry

Edward Zaragoza



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The time has come, Edward C. Zaragoza argues, to lay a new foundation for how we understand ordained ministry. He begins by reminding us that, on the basis of the priesthood of all believers, clergy are ministers with, rather than servants of, the congregation. Building on the horizontal nature of this relationship, he suggests that we begin to think of a friendship model of ministry. In this model the authority of the ordained arises not from the quality of their service to the congregation (a service which can too easily lead to subjugation or superiority), but from the fact that the church has set them apart to minister with and among them, carrying on their own ministry of prayer, proclamation, and teaching, in ways that enhance and facilitate the ministry of the whole people of God. In this timely and constructive theological analysis, Zaragoza offers a new paradigm for understanding the function of ordained ministry in the life of the congregation. After presenting a critique of the "servant leadership model" and explaining the risks inherent in it, the author presents a "friendship model" of ordained ministry and explains how this model arises from and takes place within the context of the whole people of God.

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