

For Immediate Release

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**Move Over Mission Statements! Spirituality at Work Can Go
Far Deeper Than Words**

Boston, September 26, 2005 – Often framed in customer waiting rooms and given center stage on web sites, company mission statements always sound lofty but rarely indicate a company whose reality lives up to high ideals. *Soul at Work: Spiritual Leadership in Organizations*, a new book by theologian Margaret Benefiel, Ph.D., profiles companies whose commitment to spiritual principles is an everyday phenomenon. As diverse as airlines, hospitals, restaurants, bakeries and manufacturers, these businesses concentrate not only on satisfying customers but doing so consistently with values such as mutual respect, compassion, wisdom, exuberance and gratitude.

“It’s rather obvious how a hospital, dealing with life and death issues, can honor the soul, but I found many more unlikely kinds of businesses doing so as well,” says Dr. Benefiel, who held the O’Donnell Chair of Spirituality at the Milltown Institute in Dublin, Ireland and also teaches at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton, Massachusetts. “It’s possible to both perform practical tasks well and acknowledge the deep yearnings we have for connectedness, reverence and care.”

One key to a soulful workplace that runs through Dr. Benefiel’s profiles of companies like Southwest Airlines, Our Lady’s Hospice, Greyston Bakery, Reell Precision Manufacturing and Document Management Group is paying as much attention to how people in the company treat one another as to how they treat paying clients. Another key is leaders resisting the temptation to make quick decisions, but instead having a practice of “corporate discernment” that looks deeply at the issues involved and aims at the greatest possible buy-in from participants.

“When companies nurture a commitment to spiritual reflection and help create a spiritual community, the workplace becomes more energized, more productive and more profitable,” notes Dr. Benefiel. “Soulful mission statements are only the beginning.”

Soul at Work: Spiritual Leadership in Organizations, by Margaret Benefiel, Ph.D., ISBN 1-59627-013-6 is published by Seabury Books and is available for \$20 at bookstores. For more information, see the website at www.ExecutiveSoul.com

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