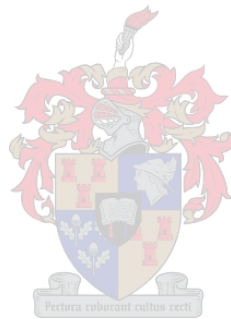


# **In Search of a Family: The Challenge of Gangsterism to Faith Communities on the Cape Flats**

by

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Stellenbosch University**

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## **DECLARATION**

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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## SUMMARY

Gangsterism, as described in this study, is a serious problem. It has deep historical roots in Cape town has developed into a kind of 'resident evil' that rears its ugly head time and again, despite several efforts by state organs to crush it.

The study was not attempted as a thorough and in-depth research on gangs as such. The main research question was: How do faith communities, in particular Christian churches, respond to the challenges of gangsterism on the Cape Flats.

The research gives an overview of gangsterism as a global phenomenon and how it specifically manifests and presents itself within the context of the Cape Flats of Cape Town. The discussion of gangsterism deliberately wanted to dispel the notion that there are quick-fix solutions to gangsterism. People of faith should guard against superficial analyses and over-simplification of social issues, including gangsterism, poverty and unemployment. With this in mind, the research has traced the historical origins of gangsterism in Cape Town, highlighting various socio-political, economic as well as cultural and personal factors that contributed to the formation and establishment of street gangs. It was also noted how some of these factors still exist in post-apartheid South Africa and continue to provide fertile ground for gangsterism to continually raise its ugly head in communities on the Cape Flats. It was important to note that many gangs have evolved from ordinary street gangs to sophisticated, high-profile crime syndicates that have built strongholds in poor communities. This furthermore underlines the fact that there are not quick-fix solutions to gangsterism as if it is only a few youngsters causing trouble that should be sorted out [Chapter 2].

Faith communities on the Cape Flats have come a long way themselves. These communities have shown an incredible resilience in the face of many challenges as a result of socio-political factors. It is therefore important to discuss some of the elements that contributed to this resilience as the research explores the nature of the ecclesiology that has developed over a period of time. What transpired is that the ecclesiology under discussion is dynamic, not static in nature. The type of ecclesiology on the Cape Flats may be called a social-systemic ministry of inter-contextual presence. It is responsive to the social context, and is kept alive by the context with a huge emphasis on orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy. The situation on the Cape Flats requires a missional ecclesiology as faith communities are challenged to continuously involve themselves in the *mission dei*. While reaching out to the world, faith communities are also called

upon to be open, practicing hospitality as they welcome gangsters and ex-gangsters into their spaces of worship [Chapter 3].

The next question to explore is: What kind of pastoral care is needed when faith communities on the Cape Flats have to deal with the challenge of gangsterism and other social phenomena like poverty, unemployment and substance-abuse? In order to answer this question, it was necessary to trace back the development of pastoral care and counseling over many centuries. Learning from these historical developments, a communal-contextual paradigm for pastoral care was chosen as a base theory. This choice indicates a move away from individual care with a focus on the human “self” to a hermeneutics of systemic, public care and compassionate presence. Some of the elements of this kind of care is discussed which include contextuality, as well as the eco-systemic, hermeneutical, anthropological, relational and public nature of pastoral care. It is also important that pastoral care operates and is practiced inter-disciplinary in order to provide the best possible help to care-seekers.

The final question that is posed is: How different is the care that faith communities provide from the care of any other welfare agency or non-governmental organization (NGO)? In order to link an eco-systemic and social hermeneutic paradigm to the theology of presence of God within communal and contextual systems, a pneumatological approach to theory formation in pastoral care is proposed. Pastoral care has to offer more than behavioural and social sciences, because we believe that the salvation and grace it offers are good news to people. Pastoral care offers not only comfort and consolation, but also transformation (change and growth) and the fostering of a mature faith and spirituality by means of Scripture, prayer and the sacraments within the *communio sanctorum*, the *familia dei* [Chapter 4].

## KEYWORDS

Gangsterism; Cape Flats; faith communities; pastoral care; missional ecclesiology; social-systemic ministry of inter-contextual presence; communal-contextual paradigm; hermeneutics of systemic, public care; compassionate presence; pneumatological approach

## OPSOMMING

Gangsterisme, soos dit in hierdie studie beskryf word, is 'n ernstige probleem. Dit het diep historiese wortels in Kaapstad, wat met die verloop van tyd ontwikkel het in 'n tipe 'plaaslike euwel' wat gereeld kop uitsteek, ten spyte van talle pogings deur staatsorganisasies om dit uit te roei.

Die studie is nie aangepak met die doel om 'n deeglike en in diepte navorsing te wees op bendes as sodanig nie. Die hoof navorsingsvraag was: Hoe reageer geloofsgemeenskappe, meer spesifiek Christelike kerke, op die uitdagings van gangsterisme op die Kaapse Vlakte?

'n Oorsig word gegee van gangsterisme as 'n wêreldwye verskynsel en hoe dit spesifiek manifesteer en voorkom in die konteks van die Kaapse Vlakte van Kaapstad. Die bespreking van gangsterisme stel ten doel om die idee te verwerp dat eenvoudige oplossings te vinde is vir gangsterisme. Gelowige mense moet waak teen oppervlakkige ontledings en ooreenvoudiging van sosiale aangeleenthede, insluitend gangsterisme, armoede en werkloosheid. Gedagtig hieraan, het die navorsing die historiese oorsprong van gangsterisme in Kaapstad nagetrek, met klem op die verskeie sosio-politiese, ekonomiese sowel as die kulturele en persoonlike faktore wat bygedra het tot die vorming en vestiging van straatbendes. Melding was ook gemaak van die feit dat sommige van hierdie faktore steeds bestaan in post-apartheid Suid-Afrika en voortgaan om 'n geskikte milieu te skep vir gangsterisme om voortdurend kop uit te steek in gemeenskappe op die Kaapse Vlakte. Dit was belangrik om te vermeld dat bendes ontwikkel het van gewone straatbendes na gesofistikeerde, hoë profiel misdaadsindikate wat hulle ingegrawe het in arm gemeenskappe.

Dit bevestig verder dat daar geen eenvoudige oplossings is vir gangsterisme, asof dit slegs 'n paar jongelinge is wat kwaad aanvang en uitgesorteer behoort te word.

Geloofsgemeenskappe op die Kaapse Vlakte het self ook 'n lang pad gestap. Hierdie gemeenskappe het 'n ongelooflike weerstand getoon in die aangesig van menigte uitdagings as gevolg van sosio-politiese faktore. Gevolglik is dit belangrik om sommige van die elemente te bespreek wat bygedra het tot hierdie weerstand in die lig van die bespreking van die aard van die ekklesiologie soos dit met die verloop van tyd ontwikkel het. Dit het geblyk dat die ekklesiologie onder bespreking dinamies en nie staties van aard is. Die ekklesiologie van die Kaapse Vlakte kan na verwys word as 'n sosiaal-sistemiese bediening van inter-kontekstuele teenwoordigheid. Dit reageer op die sosiale konteks, en word aan die gang gehou deur die konteks, met meer klem op ortopraksie eerder as op ortodoksie. Die situasie op die Kaapse Vlakte vereis 'n missionale ekklesiologie soos geloofsgemeenskappe voortdurend uitgedaag

word om hulle te betrek in die mission dei. Wyl hulle uitreik na die wêreld, word geloofsgemeenskappe ook opgeroep om toeganklik en gasvry te wees teenoor benedeelde en gewese benedeelde deur hulle in hul midde in plekke van aanbidding te verwelkom.

Die volgende vraag om te ondersoek is die vraag na die tipe pastorale sorg wat nodig is wanneer geloofsgemeenskappe op die Kaapse Vlakte te doene het met die uitdagings van gangsterisme en ander sosiale verskynsels soos armoede, werkloosheid en dwelmmisbruik. Om hierdie vraag te kan beantwoord, was dit nodig om die ontwikkeling van pastorale sorg en berading oor die eeue na te speur. Gegronde op hierdie historiese ontwikkelinge, is besluit op 'n gemeenskaplik-kontekstuele paradigma as basis teorie vir pastorale sorg. Hierdie keuse dui op 'n wegbreek van individuele versorging met die fokus op die menslike 'self' na 'n hermeneutiek van sistemiese, publieke sorg en medelye teenwoordigheid.

Sommige van die elemente van hierdie tipe sorg word bespreek, wat kontekstualiteit insluit, sowel as die eko—sistemiese, hermeneutiese, antropologiese, relasionele en publieke aard van pastorale sorg. Dit is verder ook belangrik om kennis te neem dat pastorale sorg interdisiplinêr werkzaam is en uitgevoer word om die bes moontlike sorg te bied aan diegene wat om sorg aanklop.

Die laaste vraag wat gestel word: Hoe verskil die sorg wat deur geloofsgemeenskappe voorsien word van die sorg van enige ander welsynsorganisasie of nie-regeringsorganisasie (NRO)? Om 'n eko-sistemiese en sosiaal hermeneutiese paradigma te verbind met die teologie van teenwoordigheid van God binne gemeenskaplike en kontekstuele sisteme word 'n pneumatologiese benadering tot teorie vorming in pastorale sorg voorgestel. Pastorale sorg het meer om te bied as die gedrags- en sosiale wetenskappe, want ons glo dat die verlossing en genade wat dit bied goeie nuus is vir mense. Pastorale sorg bied nie net bemoediging en vertroosting nie, maar ook transformasie (verandering en groei) en die kweking van 'n volwasse geloof en spiritualiteit deur middel van Skrif, gebed en die sakramente binne die communion sanctorum, die familia dei.

## **SLEUTELWOORDE:**

Gangsterisme; Kaapse Vlakte; geloofsgemeenskappe; pastorale sorg; missionale ekklesiologie; sosiaal-sistemiese bediening van inter-kontekstuele teenwoordigheid; gemeenskaplik-kontekstuele paradigma; hermeneutiek van sistemiese, publieke sorg; medelydende teenwoordigheid; pneumatologiese benadering

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# CHAPTER 1:

## EXPLORATION AND BASIC ORIENTATION

### 1.1 THE CONTEXT AND MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

Many people, both inside and outside South Africa, perceive the country as being one with very high levels of violent crime.<sup>1</sup> Antony Altbeker (2007:12) calls it an “unavoidable, irreducible reality” that “every single piece of reliable data we have tells us that South Africa ranks at the very top of the world’s league tables for violent crime.”<sup>2</sup> While some would blame all of this crime on the new government’s policies after 1994, it would be more correct to acknowledge that several factors have contributed to the current state of affairs, and that we should actually go much further back into the history of the country to find the causes of the violence.<sup>3</sup> Such critical social analysis “allows for scrutiny of the ways in which violence has mutated over time and in different social contexts, its various points of genesis within social formations, its cyclical impacts and residual effects on all sectors of society” (Stevens, Seedat & Van Niekerk, 2003:353).

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<sup>1</sup> Vogelmann and Simpson (1991), Hamber (1999), Shaw (1997; 1998), Bornman, Van Eeden and Wentzel (1998) (among others).

<sup>2</sup> Altbeker (2007:33) is of the opinion that the uniqueness of South Africa’s crime problem is not so much the volume of crime as “its extraordinary violence, with interpersonal violence and the exponential growth in robbery the principal manifestations of this”.

<sup>3</sup> In a paper delivered at the conference of the International Reformed Theological Institute (*‘Violence and Christian Faith’*) in Indonesia in July 2003, the researcher argued that it is necessary to go back to colonialism and imperialism to trace the roots of violence in SA (MacMaster, 2005). In a chapter named “A country unhinged”, Altbeker explores the arguments that are usually put forward in attempting to explain the high incidence of violent crime in South Africa – “each (of the explanations) has much to teach us, but none seems entirely satisfactory (2007:96). Altbeker deals with the argument that colonialism and apartheid (with its vertical or state violence, as well as the violence stemming from the oppressed people’s resistance) are to be blamed for the pervasive violence. He also discusses the “disappointments of democracy” (2007:99), declaring that “the fruits of democracy have not all been sweet” (2007:100), driving a frustrated, angry fraction of South Africans into a life of crime. The counter-argument for the “apartheid-did-it” explanation for Altbeker is the fact that many other countries in the world have gone through “long periods of disenfranchisement, oppression and collective violence ... and yet, only a handful has levels of violence that even approach ours” (2007:101). Other arguments that are dealt with include “inequality-causes-crime”, alcohol and firearms, which he finds unsatisfactory. Altbeker also discusses the question of values, or rather the inadequate transmission of values, and the fact that the death of apartheid “meant much more (ungoverned) social and cultural space within which young people could find and assert their selfhood ... having to figure out for themselves what limits to fix on their own behavior” (2007:118). Altbeker put forward a (by his own admission) “controversial” and “even provocative” culture-based argument: “Violence has become a cultural phenomenon. It is a form of behavior driven by its own logic and attractive in its own right, one that is, for a specific minority, an expression of their selfhood, something towards which young men are drawn by the ‘enticement, or incitement, of peer-group prestige’” (2007:119).

Gangsterism, as an inherently violent phenomenon, has come to be associated with certain sections of the population, namely the Coloured and Black groups. The researcher use the term “gangsterism” to emphasise the seriousness of the phenomenon. It is more than just a group of youngsters or school pupils who form a group for the sake of having fun or showing off – the so-called “juvenile, delinquent, or youth” gangs (Klein, 1995:21). The concept is also used to distinguish it from a group of people whose main reason for existence is to commit criminal acts like robbery, hijacking, theft or other violent acts per se (referred to, for example, as ‘a gang of robbers’). ‘Gangsterism’ in this study refers to a very particular phenomenon that has a long history and may involve two or more generations of family members; it is well structured and has clear hierarchical systems.

Coloured people,<sup>4</sup> especially, and within certain residential areas in particular, experience the occurrence and negative consequences of gangsterism more than others groups (cf. Dixon & Johns, 2001:10). Gangsterism has become such a common phenomenon in some Coloured townships on the Cape Flats<sup>5</sup> that many people have almost accepted it as part of their everyday reality, with some youngsters even romanticising it and hero-worshipping well-known gang

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<sup>4</sup> The term ‘Coloured’ is used for the sake of distinction. The term has been and still is the topic of much debate, especially among intellectuals. It is interesting that it is used more freely in post-1994 South Africa. In Afrikaans, many people prefer ‘Bruinmense’ (literally, Brown people) to ‘Kleurlinge’ (Coloureds), specifically due to the very negative Apartheid connotations of the term ‘Kleurlinge’. The issue and debate is definitely not buried. Mohamed Adhikari’s book on the Coloured identity, *Not white enough, not black enough* (2005), is an important contribution to this debate. The central argument of his work is that “Coloured identity is better understood not as having undergone a process of continuous transformation during the era of white rule, as conventional historical thinking would have it, but as having remained essentially stable throughout that period” (2005:xii). There are, of course, other views and perspectives, as Adhikari points out. These include the work edited by UCT sociologist Zimitri Erasmus, *Coloured by history, shaped by place: new perspectives on coloured identities in Cape Town* (2001), which argues that “coloured identities are not based on ‘race mixture’ but on cultural creativity, creolized formations shaped by South African history of colonialism, slavery, segregation and apartheid. This conceptualization undermines the common sense view that conceives colouredness as something produced by the mixture of other ‘purer’ cultures. Instead, it stresses the ambiguity and ceaseless fluidity of coloured identity formations while remaining conscious of the conditions under which they are produced (2001:14). There is also the book by the former rector of the University of the Western Cape (UWC), Richard van der Ross, *The rise and decline of apartheid: a study of political movements among the coloured people of South Africa, 1880-1985* (1986). See also Elaine Salo’s chapter, “Making race, making space: locating coloureds in South African history and urban planning”, in Salo (2004). We should maybe accept the fact that there will never be any consensus with regard to this issue or what the most suitable terminology should be. People will make choices and feel comfortable with their choices, and others will object in general to the use of racial terminology for any group of people.

<sup>5</sup> The ‘Cape Flats’ (Afrikaans: “Die Kaapse Vlakte”) refers to a flat, sandy stretch of land that is located on the outskirts of the city of Cape Town – to the southeast of the central business district. It is generally referred to by people as ‘the Flats’ (“Die Vlakte”). The residents of the Cape Flats are classified as Coloured and Black/African, but it is mostly the Coloured people that would refer to themselves as being “from The Flats”.

leaders<sup>6</sup> (cf. Kinnes, 2000). The well-established and highly organised gang culture on the Cape Flats in Cape Town has been described as very unique (in relation to that in the rest of the country).<sup>7</sup>

The fact is that gangsterism impacts negatively on people, especially young people and children, as well as on whole communities. It causes severe trauma, loss of lives and loss of property; it robs and has robbed many young people of an opportunity to develop their God-given potential. Scores of young people are trapped in gangsterism because of poverty, unemployment and generally unfavourable socio-economic living conditions rooted in years of political exploitation and deprivation (Schärf, 1990). Many learners drop out of school every year, compounding social problems in communities already suffering as a result of unemployment, poverty and related social ills. Many of these learners do so because they feel that it is the only way to survive in a 'gangsters' paradise', or because they have been coerced into gangsterism. Drug abuse may also serve as a pathway to gangsterism.

According to Schärf (1990:235), the year 1986 stands out as the period in which gangs re-emerged in Coloured townships, while they also emerged in the Black townships of Cape Town for the first time. Black and Coloured townships, in particular, experienced constant political battles, vertical violence and counter-violence that progressively eroded traditional social structures. The two States of Emergency in 1985 and 1986, which were declared to help the State keep control, contributed in no small manner to the collapse of traditional family and communal structures, and saw the rise of a more militant youth who decided to defend themselves and their communities. Schärf (1990:237) highlights three coincidental factors that contributed to gang formation or the re-emergence of gangs:

- The *crisis in education*, the rejection of so-called 'gutter education', the lack of alternative instruction in schools, large-scale abandonment of school, and unemployment as a result of limited job possibilities (even for those who have completed their schooling)
- The emergence of the *Young Lions* (military populism) – impromptu fighters, militant young people, who saw themselves as the vanguard of the struggle and who generally adopted an arrogant attitude towards the older generation

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<sup>6</sup> When Colin Stansfield, a well-known gang leader, was buried in October 2004, he was hailed by many speakers at his funeral as a "messiah" and "a gift from God", *Weekend Argus*, October 10, 2004].

<sup>7</sup> Marana Brand wrote a short series of articles about gangs on the Cape Flats in the Cape Town daily newspaper *Die Burger*, 21-24 September 1993.

- The *politicising of sport* under the banner of SACOS (South African Council of Sport), with the result that many young people ceased to play any sport

These socio-political developments created a crisis in the functioning of traditional families and caused a shift in authoritative structures in communities. Young people started to challenge parents, teachers and other authorities more than in the past, leading to a disintegration of traditional societal structures in general and family structures in particular. Added to these South African contextual factors, we may also add factors like globalisation and increased urbanisation, as well as a general destabilisation of traditional social role players.

It was also subsequent to these developments that the term ‘the lost generation’ was used increasingly to describe young people who were falling victim to the political struggle. Many of these young people found an outlet for their frustrations and disillusionment at being left out and left behind in gangsterism.

Within these deprived and neglected communities, gangsterism is like a ‘resident virus’. It is there all the time – at times showing its ugly face, disrupting communities, creating an atmosphere of fear and leaving many injured or dead. The violence by gangsters take place through gang wars over turf or area of operation, and takes the form of open fighting or drive-by shootings. This is normally followed by action from the side of the police (e.g. special task forces or operations), or community (protests, marches, petitions, or even vigilante action). It may disappear for a period of time, leaving the impression that it has been defeated – but it actually bides its time, feeding on the adverse socio-economic conditions of the community, until it is strong enough for another surge. Just when people start picking up their lives again, it raises its ugly head. One of the major reasons for this is that the socio-economic as well as structural conditions of the particular communities have not been addressed aggressively and radically enough to deny gangsterism its breeding ground. There is clearly a lack of sustainable, combined State and community programmes and actions that can counter gangsterism in a significant manner, providing young people and communities with viable and better alternatives.

This pattern of gang violence followed by police and/or community action, followed by a period of calm and another outbreak of gang violence, can be demonstrated by giving a chronological account of gang activities since about 1989, when the Police’s Gang Unit was established as a unique and very pro-active task force (Claasen, 1990). In the first year of its existence, the successes of this unit were listed as having confiscated more than seventy stolen firearms used in murders, more than five hundred bullets and hundreds of home-made weapons. They also



arrested more than fifty suspects for murder and more than sixty for attempted murder and other criminal transgressions.

A spokesperson for the police, when reporting on the successes of the Gang Unit, quite rightly pointed out a 'variety of socio-economical factors' as the main cause for the formation of gangsterism. These included a disorderly family and community life; child neglect; lack of parental discipline; broken homes and unemployment.<sup>8</sup> Thirteen years on, after having witnessed, amongst others, several operations with striking codenames and the activities of PAGAD<sup>9</sup>, there was another operation against gangsterism, named Operation Ntsikila, in 2003.

The killing of a number of leading gang leaders during the late 1990s brought an atmosphere of fear to communities of the Cape Flats. In addition to the much-publicised killing of Rashaad Staggie (co-leader of the *Hard Livings*) by PAGAD in 1996, others who were gunned down in 1997 were Moeneeb "Bow-tie" Abrahams (HLs) in Manenberg (January); Edmund "Ougat" Heroldt, brother of the notorious Jacky Lonty, in Silvertown, Athlone (February); Firm gang members Katy-Ann Arendse and her husband, Faried Davids, in Heideveld (March); Leon "Chippies" Achilles, one of Rashied Staggie's five confidantes, in Woodstock (April); Farrel Human, Lonty's 'lieutenant', in Manenberg (April); Ivan Oliver, Rashied Staggie's henchman, in Goodwood (May); Jeremy "Sniper" Paulse of the *Sexy Boys*, allegedly killed by other members of the *Sexy Boys* (October); and Ismael April, well-known and influential leader of the *Mongrels* gang, in Grassy Park (November).

These killings did not stop gangsterism. They might rather have caused gangs to re-align themselves and also to re-strategise. One specific example is the formation of CORE (Community Outreach Forum) in September 1996 – "an umbrella body including leaders from the most powerful gangs in the Western Cape", including both "current and reformed gangsters" (Dixon & Johns, 2001:14). The killings might also have had a potentially dangerous

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<sup>8</sup> *Die Burger*, 2 October 1990.

<sup>9</sup> PAGAD is the acronym for People Against Gangsterism and Drugs. PAGAD was formed during the second half of 1995 when a group of concerned people came together and identified drugs and gangs as the main problems in their community. It grew into a mass movement of people taking a principled stand against these societal evils. PAGAD became famous or notorious after the public execution of Rashaad Staggie, co-leader of the *Hard Living Kids*, one of the largest and most notorious gangs on the Cape Flats, in August 1996. After that incident many people dissociated themselves from the movement. Dixon and Johns (2001:6) state that "dissatisfaction with the potentially dangerous spontaneity and political incoherence of the organisation's early days grew rapidly in the second half of 1996". After one or two leadership tussles and changes, splits, police action against several of its leaders, alleged involvement in shootings and murders and consequent arrests and court cases, the organisation has almost completely disappeared.

consequence, namely the emergence of new leaders. New leaders have to prove themselves worthy of leadership, authority and respect and may utilise even more violent methods to prove themselves. The fact that gangsterism has not been rooted out, even with the elimination of so many gang leaders, proves the point that it has found a very favourable breeding ground in the communities of the Cape Flats.

Having been a minister in congregations on the Cape Flats for almost two decades, the researcher has become aware of the complexity of the situation. Some serious questions could be asked, e.g. is there political will on the side of the government to address the problem adequately and aggressively by means of a holistic inter-departmental plan of action? (That is, short-term action by the combined security forces supplemented by large-scale medium- and long-term socio-economic upliftment, development and empowerment.) Are communities prepared to take joint responsibility for what is happening and work towards more permanent solutions? What role are faith communities playing to bring about fundamental changes in the communities they are serving? Are those people and organisations that are doing sterling work in certain communities doing enough to join forces in order to achieve even greater success?

These and other questions form part of the motivation for further research by the researcher on the issue of gangsterism. The approach will be from a practical-theological perspective with a specific, pastoral-theological focus (see Section 1.8.3).

## **1.2 PRELIMINARY STUDY/RESEARCH**

This study is preceded by preliminary research done while working on a Master's degree in practical theology (MacMaster, 2001). That particular study explored the trauma experienced by faith communities as a result of the high incidence of violent crime in communities on the Cape Flats. It identified a number of areas that needed further attention with regard to long-term, preventative and healing interventions as faith communities faced the challenge of violent crime, and included:

- positive modelling of healthy values and a healthy lifestyle;
- the breaking down of stereotyping;
- the rebuilding or re-establishment of shared values, e.g. mutual respect for life and property, forgiveness and reconciliation, care-giving;
- the rebuilding and establishment of healthy families – especially in the light of a major breakdown of traditional extended families; and

- a focus on children – especially adolescents and young people in families as well as the church – as a high-risk group with regard to involvement in crime.

The contribution of this research project will focus more on the challenge of the phenomenon of gangsterism to faith communities on the Cape Flats of Cape Town from a practical theological point of view.

It should be very clear that the problem of violent crime is indeed a multi-faceted phenomenon. It has already been argued that crime in general, and gangsterism in particular, is a very complex issue that cannot be approached with simplistic and one-dimensional solutions. On the contrary, gangsterism requires a multi-dimensional intervention within a holistic model, taking into account its systemic nature (cf. Kinnes, 1996:18). As such, a practical-theological approach to gangsterism would have to take into account the complexities of the concrete social realities of the Cape Flats context.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Gangsterism is a common reality for the residents in many communities on the Cape Flats in the Western Cape. Gangs provide an alternative family structure for many young people who are longing for love, recognition and acceptance. Many young boys look for that missing father figure and brotherhood and view the gang and the gang leader as substitutes. Other socio-economic factors also influence young people's decisions to join gangs. These may vary from personal or interpersonal to structural-systemic factors – from low self-esteem and negative school experiences to severe peer pressure, self-protection against gangsters, drug and alcohol addiction and unemployment and poverty.

The question arises how faith communities have responded and are responding to the challenge of gangsterism. The researcher wants to look at the church's self-understanding (practical-theological ecclesiology), and what defines a church that is called to minister to people on the Cape Flats who are confronted with gangsterism.

The researcher also wants to critically examine the care-giving dimension of faith communities as they respond to the challenge of gangsterism. People are in need of care – not just the victims of gang violence, but also those who join gangs and those who decide to turn their backs on gangsterism.

## 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With reference to the above-mentioned research problem the researcher puts forward the following research questions<sup>10</sup> as points of departure for this study:

- What is the nature of gangsterism as a global phenomenon and in what manner does it manifest itself on the Cape Flats?
- What does it mean to be the Church of Christ on the Cape Flats – in other words, what practical-theological ecclesiology are we talking about on the Cape Flats, where we have to deal with phenomena like gangsterism?
- What base theory for pastoral care or pastoral work is needed within the specific context of the Cape Flats? What would the main elements of pastoral care be given the specific context of the Cape Flats?

## 1.5 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

- A practical-theological ecclesiology that deals with the concrete social realities of the people of the Cape Flats should be formulated. The church, as family of God, *familia dei*, is theologically and socially well-positioned to provide people with a sense of belonging. This family, however, has become such a closely-knit family of confessing members that it is not very open to 'outsiders'. The church should therefore be more missional and welcoming – opening its doors, arms and hearts to the many 'out there' who long for the concrete expression and experience of God's unconditional love and acceptance. The researcher argues that a new church structure has developed within the specific context, which we may call a social-systemic ministry of inter-contextual presence.
- Pastoral care will have to take note of the work done by others in the field of crime prevention and the reintegration of people who have been rehabilitated or who have decided to turn their backs on gangsterism. Pastors and pastoral care-givers who do not form partnerships with other role players, will have limited 'success'. Because of the systemic nature of gangsterism, all relevant socio-economic factors should be taken into account and addressed. Pastoral care in itself needs to move from the so-called Western, client-centred counselling room model to a communal contextual model.

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<sup>10</sup> One typically finds research questions, not hypotheses, written into qualitative studies (Creswell, 1994:70). Research questions, goals and objectives become signposts for explaining the purpose of the study and guiding the research.

- The unique contribution of a practical-theological approach will have to be clearly worked out in order to distinguish it from the contributions of other social sciences. From a practical-theological perspective, the response of faith communities can and should be more than the rehabilitative work done by nongovernmental organisations (NGOs). The researcher believes an eschatological and a pneumatological approach to pastoral care provides the necessary link between a systemic and eco-social hermeneutic paradigm and the theology of the presence of God within community and contextual systems.

## 1.6 RESEARCH GOAL

The goal of the research was to investigate whether faith communities, by virtue of their being *familia dei*, could respond in a meaningful and active way to the challenge of the phenomenon of gangsterism as it manifests itself in communities on the Cape Flats of Cape Town.

For that reason the researcher will study gangsterism in order to gain and develop knowledge about the phenomenon and its impact on individuals, families and communities.

The researcher further aims to develop a new and improved praxis for the role of faith communities facing the challenge of gangsterism. This may imply a paradigm shift in terms of an ecclesiological self-understanding – from a hierarchical structure to a systemic system; from a denominational, exclusive, self-maintenance structure to an inclusive, community (communal) and missional structure.

## 1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- The approach to be taken in this research will be one in which the researcher will move between theory and praxis and back to theory, resulting in theory formation. There will be constant dialogue between theory and praxis. In this regard the spiral model in epistemology, theory-practice-theory (as proposed by Van der Ven), reveals that an empirical dimension is important for pastoral theology (Louw, 1998:87). There is a definite reciprocity between theology on the one hand, and theory and praxis on the other hand (Heyns & Pieterse, 1990:47).

- The research is **qualitative** rather than quantitative,<sup>11</sup> emphasising the quality of human actions rather than the measurable (quantitative) aspects. It is 'qualitative' because the procedures are not strictly formalised and explicated (cf. Mouton & Marais, 1985:157). In the qualitative paradigm, an attempt is not made to explain social phenomena, but rather to describe them (Zaaiman, 2003:12). 'Qualitative' also refers to an assessment of the value and function of existing entities or phenomena in terms of their connectedness to human issues, inter alia the quest for meaning, safety, stability and continuity. The researcher will be looking at the phenomenon of gangsterism on the one hand, and faith communities on the other hand, within people's search for meaning and their attempts to make sense when confronted with adversities.
- The research will be **deductive** and **abductive**,<sup>12</sup> indicating that existing literature with regard to gangsterism, practical-theological ecclesiology and pastoral care will be studied. This implies studying and consulting literature written from the perspective of other disciplines, as well as other contexts where gangsterism occurs. It further implies the posing of critical questions to existing theories and models or practical theology and pastoral care.

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<sup>11</sup> The **qualitative paradigm** is normally associated with the phenomenological/interpretive tradition in research, while the **quantitative paradigm** is used within the positivist tradition. The third research tradition, namely the critical tradition, employs the **participatory action research paradigm** (Zaaiman, 2003:11, following Johann Mouton). "The premise of the phenomenological tradition is that humans are unique because of their consciousness. Because of their consciousness humans have the ability to allocate meaning" (Zaaiman, 2003:12).

<sup>12</sup> Norman Blaikie (2000:26) has extended the most commonly known **deductive** and **inductive** procedures, and has added **retroductive** and **abductive** procedures. These classifications are seldom used in writing on research. The aim of **inductive** research is to establish universal generalisations to be used as pattern explanations. It is done by accumulating observations and data in order to produce generalisations, and use these 'laws' as patterns to explain further observations. **Deductive** research aims to test theories to eliminate false ones and corroborate the survivor. This is done by borrowing or constructing a theory and expressing it as an argument in order to deduce hypotheses. These hypotheses are tested by matching them with data. The aim of **retroductive** research is to discover underlying mechanisms to explain observed regularities. This procedure documents and models a regularity and constructs a hypothetical model of a mechanism in order to find the real mechanism by observation and/or experiment. The **abductive** strategy aims to describe and understand social life in terms of social actors' motives and accounts. Through this procedure, everyday lay concepts, meanings and motives are discovered. From these lay accounts a technical account is produced in order to develop a theory and test it iteratively. In terms of Blaikie's research, one could describe this study as abductive.

- The research will also be **hermeneutical**<sup>13</sup> – the researcher will interpret in order to discover possible different or new connections that can change existing models of understanding. Hendriks (2004:19) defines practical theology as “a continuing hermeneutical concern discerning how the Word should be proclaimed in word and deed in the world”. Anderson sees practical theology as “essentially a hermeneutical theology” (2001:37). He states that “(T)heological reflection that begins in the context and crisis of ministry seeks to read the texts of Scripture in light of the texts of lives that manifest the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit as the truth and will of God. (Anderson, 2001:37). Indeed, “the most appropriate paradigm for doing theology is hermeneutics,” declares Louw (1998:102).
- The study starts with an exploration and discussion of the context of ministry on the Cape Flats in order to understand the context in the best possible manner. Within this very specific context the researcher aims to develop a theoretical framework to do theology.
- The basis for the study was a detailed **literature study** of available material which has been collected. These included relevant books, articles and internet-abstracts. A small number of interviews, mostly unstructured, were conducted with a selection of community workers in three areas known for the occurrence of gangsterism over a long period of time, namely Manenberg, Lavender Hill and Ravensmead. All the interviewees themselves are deeply involved in work with gangsters and have a undeniable track record in serving their respective communities in this regard. Their contributions are imbedded in the study and served as various points of reference.
- The researcher as “**participant observer**” – meaning that the researcher has derived insight from the observed actions of communities on the Cape Flats over a period of two decades. The researcher was a minister on the Cape Flats for almost two decades, of which nine years were full time in the Uniting Reformed Church congregation in Bishop Lavis, a township on the Cape Flats. This ministry included pastoral care of families and individuals, as well as personal involvement in community work. He was chairperson of the Community Police Forum (CPF) and the Bishop Lavis Development Forum, as well as a member of the executive community of the Ministers’ Fraternal and a member of the Board of the Foundation for Social Development, a nongovernmental organisation in

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<sup>13</sup> The term ‘hermeneutics’ is etymologically linked to Hermes in Greek mythology. Hermes, the messenger of the gods, was tasked to transmit divine communication into a form that could be understood by human intelligence (Müller, 1991:92). *Hermeneuein* indicates interpreting, explaining or translating. “Practical theology tries to interpret and translate the praxis of God in terms of human and existential issues through the action of communities of faith – the ministry of the church in the world (Louw, 1998:98).

Bishop Lavis. Since then, the researcher has remained involved with communities where gangsterism is still a major problem through contact with community organisations like the Greater Eersterivier Community Police Forum. As general secretary of the Cape Synod of the Uniting Reformed Church and student chaplain at the University of the Western Cape, the researcher was well informed about the social context of the church in the Western Cape. The researcher was furthermore a member of the executive committee of the Western Cape Provincial Council of Churches (WCPCC). This body also had to respond to and deal with the challenges of the socio-economic realities on the Cape Flats.

## **1.8 DEMARCATION OF RESEARCH TERRAIN AND RESEARCH PROBLEM**

- 1.8.1 This study will not focus on violent crime in general, but on gangsterism as a particular form of violence specifically.<sup>14</sup> For thousands of people living on the Cape Flats, gangsterism is a very real daily phenomenon that has been influencing and impacting on their lives for decades. The researcher recognises the tremendously important work done by so many individuals and faith communities in different townships. This research seeks to add value to their endeavours and to contribute in a small way towards long-term solutions.
- 1.8.2 The study will focus mainly on Coloured townships on the Cape Flats. The phenomenon of gangsterism on the Cape Flats is very unique within the South African context. This uniqueness pertains to aspects such as the fact that membership is almost entirely made up of people classified Coloured; membership of a particular gang or gangs might span two or three generations of one family; and the fact that particular gangs have existed for many years and have developed into well-organised and structured organisations. Another factor that contributes to the uniqueness is the strong link that has developed between prison gangs (also called the number gangs) and street gangs over the last two decades.

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<sup>14</sup> The World Health Organisation (WHO) Task Force distinguishes between three types of violence, namely interpersonal violence, self-directed violence and organised violence (Stevens et al., 2003:353). See also Degenaar (1980), who provides a broad scientific definition of violence – as an extreme force willfully carried out against a person, violating that person because it does not show respect for his or her intrinsic value (1980:6). Degenaar introduces the concept of ‘violation’ (= ‘violence done to a moral right’; “The violence not only hurts a person, it also desecrates him” (1980:7). He calls the modes of violence “violatives” (a term employed by SM Stanage).



Gangsterism on the Cape Flats will also differ in some instances from the gang subculture in the United States of America, for example, because of its very specific socio-political roots. One particular factor, acknowledged by almost all literature on gangs in Cape Town, is the contribution of the forced removals of people from District Six as a result of the National Party's Group Areas Act (1950) to the formation and establishment of gangs on the Cape Flats.

- 1.8.3 The study will be done within **a practical-theological framework**. The researcher is aware of and acknowledges the fact that work has been done in other fields, e.g. sociology, anthropology, criminology and even education. Almost nothing has been done in the field of pastoral care. It has already been stated that addressing a complex and systemic phenomenon like gangsterism requires a holistic, interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approach or model.

The choice for a practical-theological framework will now be discussed..

Practical theology is one of the disciplines of theology – it gives a particular perspective on theology as a whole. Practical theology is an operational science (Heyns & Pieterse, 1990:41) and is described as follows by Heitink (1983:17):

Praktische Theologie is niet 'praktisch' in die zin, dat het zou gaan om een louter technologische benadering, bestaande uit aanwijzingen voor toepassing van de theologie in de praktijk. Binne de theologie heeft de Praktische Theologie voor alles een hermeneutische funktie.

Practical theology, according to Heitink (1993:19), is about a mediating event, namely how God's actions are mediated through human service. This anthropological shift in theology means that God Himself is no longer the subject of investigation in practical theology – the focus is on the human experience of God, the Christian faith (Heitink, 1993:114). As such, the empirical dimension in practical theology cannot be denied – practical theology is involved with **praxis**.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> 'Praxis' does not mean 'practice', but 'action, activity' (Heitink, 1993:7). In this regard, Heitink postulates that practical theology deals with God's activity through the ministry of human beings. Another view, put forward by Louw (2008b:18) is that 'praxis' does not actually refer to 'action', but to the motive and sense of actions (the 'intention and motivation, as well as the significance of actions', in other words, the teleology of doing. "Praxis refers to the intention of human actions, to the meaning of our engagement in life issues and to the quality of our being human within the systemic realm of human relationships" (Louw, 2008a:103)

Louw (1998:88) points out that ‘empirical’ in this sense is used in a broader context than the narrow meaning of “sensory perception”. Empirical refers to the components of “understanding and interpretation” that form part of the knowledge process. Louw (1998:88) continues:

In this process, existential, contextual and relational elements play an important role. An empirical approach is thus not only about sensory perception, measurable processes, logical explanations and quantifiable statistics. It is also about experience as

- a network of relationships (system of relations), actions and knowing processes, and
- a dynamic and existential process of understanding, interpreting and imparting meaning.

This is extremely important for this study of gangsterism and the response of faith communities to this challenge. The researcher is indeed talking about a network of relationships between members of the gang, between the gang and the community in which it operates, between the faith community and the broader society, and between the faith community and gangsters and ex-gangsters. The hermeneutical dimension of understanding, interpreting and imparting knowledge forms an integral part of our theoretical framework. The researcher believes that it would be foolish for a faith community to try to involve itself in social action without first making an attempt to understand the social context. The normative character of theology enables us to re-orientate and direct our current and future actions in service of the Gospel in the light of Scripture and tradition.

The praxis-orientated approach in practical theology refers to the integration of practice and theory. Fowler’s understanding of praxis (as cited by Louw, 1998:91) provides an important perspective on the motivation for and goal of this study:

Praxis involves the ongoing integration of action and reflection through which political and social processes are maintained. Praxis refers to an intentional action which is aimed at transforming patterns in society. When practical theology is engaged in praxis, it reflects on intentional action strategies which are aimed at transforming social contexts. Hence, the interests for a ‘doing theology’ in practical theology.

In conclusion, the purpose of the study is intended to make a contribution to the transformation of societal patterns in communities of the Cape Flats. This is done within the field of practical

theology, which has its meaning and origin in the praxis of God. Pieterse's (1993:108-113) summary of the benefits for practical theology working with an operational science approach provides a good framework for our study. The benefits are given as follows: (i) It gives to practical theology a clear theoretical basis and methodology from which to operate and confirms practical theology's position as an independent discipline and not only as the application of theology. (ii) The theory-praxis relationship is taken very seriously. Praxis could be investigated critically with the help of the critical theory perspective, underlying the operational science approach, and investigated empirically. (iii) Practical theology's relationship with other theological disciplines became more creative because practical theology now could serve theology much better. (iv) Practical theology's relationship with other social sciences improved, and a truly interdisciplinary relationship has developed. (v) The object of practical theology has broadened. Practical theology's focus has moved beyond the traditional focus on the offices of the church and is directed to all the actions of the church. (vi) The focus of practical theology has broadened even more over the last decade or so to include not only the actions of the church, but human actions in the light of the gospel.

## 1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN

**Chapter One** describes the background to the research and outlines the research design.

In **Chapter Two** the researcher undertakes a focused examination of gangs. By means of a literature study he gains information about and insight into the formation and existence of gangs on the Cape Flats. He explores the connection between gangsterism and drug abuse, as well as the role of rites of passage as part of the initiation into gangs.

**Chapter Three** looks at the existence of the church on the Cape Flats, with a particular aim of developing a framework of a practical-theological ecclesiology relevant to the context. In this research, the term 'church' does not refer to a particular church denomination, but to the church collectively. As such there will be references to more than one denomination or even to so-called "bedieninge" (= ministries, as they are called by people on the Cape Flats) or church traditions. The two concepts 'church' and 'faith communities' will be used interchangeably, showing a strong preference for the latter.

In first part of **Chapter Four** the researcher identifies the major historical markers and explores how pastoral care has developed over the centuries. He wants to acknowledge the fact that faith communities have had to face challenges regarding the way they have practiced pastoral care

from the earliest days. This is necessary to address the notion of theory formation in pastoral care, as well as for the reframing of existing dominant paradigms. Another important reason for tracing the historical roots of pastoral care is to investigate whether traditional models of pastoral care are suitable for more systemic questions within cultural and ideological questions.

Building on the information and discussion in the first part of the chapter, the second part serves as the main focus of the research – finding a base theory for doing pastoral work on the Cape Flats in the light of the phenomenon of gangsterism. Opting for a communal contextual paradigm, as opposed to the classical and clinical models, the researcher unpacks the communal contextual model to show the richness thereof and its applicability to the situation on the Cape Flats. Eschatological and a pneumatological perspectives that create a normative theological framework and distinguish the theological base theory in pastoral theology from empirically-designed theories are proposed (Louw, 1998:65).

**Chapter Six** deals with the challenge that gangsterism presents to faith communities in general and pastoral care in particular. The outcomes of the research are presented, as well as the areas for further research and exploration.

## CHAPTER 2:

### GANGS ON THE CAPE FLATS

Gangs are no accident; our society inadvertently produces them, and they will not decline as a social problem until we confront our relationship with them. And to confront our relationship to street gangs is to come face-to-face with some well-entrenched self-interests that also are important to understanding ourselves. Gangs have a social context, and to paraphrase Pogo, the context is us. (Klein, 1995:3)

#### 2.1 PREVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to look at the phenomenon of gangsterism as it manifests itself on the Cape Flats of the Western Cape. The researcher chose the Cape Flats because he resides in Cape Town, has ministered in congregations on the Cape Flats, and is still involved in communities on the Cape Flats where gangs are operating. The manifestation of gangsterism on the Cape Flats also provides a unit of research that may be studied from different perspectives. Because of certain sociological-cultural factors, a unique demographic entity has crystallised over a period of many years. I will attempt to provide a working/operative definition of gangs and look at the root causes of gangsterism, as well as some of the most common characteristics of gangs. This chapter draws on a body of knowledge from the fields of criminology, sociology and anthropology.

#### 2.2 GANGSTERISM: A GLOBAL PHENOMENON

It is important to point out that gangs are a global phenomenon with a long history,<sup>16</sup> and not restricted to certain countries. Spergel (1995:3) emphasises this when he writes:

Youth gangs have existed in Western and Eastern societies for centuries. Most recently they have been reported in England, Scotland, Germany, Italy, Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union, Bosnia (formerly part of Yugoslavia), Albania,

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<sup>16</sup> Yablonsky (1962: 6) refers to the works of Frederic Thrasher (*The Gang*, written in 1927, and William F. Whyte (*Street Corner Society*, published in 1943). *Gangs of New York*, written by Herbert Asbury in 1927, was used as the basis for the 2002 movie *Gangs of New York* directed by Martin Scorsese and starring well-known movie stars Daniel Day-Lewis, Leonardo DiCaprio and Cameron Diaz.

Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Mexico, El Salvador, Brazil, Peru, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, The People's Republic of China and Papua New Guinea. Youth gangs are present in socialist and free-market societies, in developing and developed countries.

In 1962, Lewis Yablonsky wrote: "The current violent gang may hopefully become a social fossil" (1962:xi). Unfortunately this has not happened. On the contrary, we have seen an increase in gangsterism across the globe. British actor Ross Kemp, who published a book called *Gangs* in 2007 after having travelled "from Rio to Moscow" to do research on gangs, is convinced that gang membership is on the increase globally (Kemp, 2007:7). Kemp found, for example, that Rio de Janeiro was "a city at war with itself" (2007:9). Rio's *favelas* or shanty towns are home to some of the world's poorest people and some of its most violent gangs. These gangs include the Borel gang, the Commando Vermelho (CV) gang, Amigos dos Amigos (the Friends of the Friends) and the Terceiro Commando (TC). Even a country like New Zealand, "with ten times more sheep than it has people", has more gangs per head than any other country in the world, "and two of the worst, the Mongrel Mob and Black Power, are locked in a deadly battle to be top dog" (Kemp, 2007:55). The conflict between these two gangs has apparently been going on for decades. According to Jarrod Gilbert, lecturer in sociology at Canterbury University and an expert on New Zealand gangs, the country has no fewer than seventy major gangs with an estimated 4 000 full-time members. The population of the country is just over four million (Kemp, 2007:61).

El Salvador is home to the Mara Salvatrucha 13 (MS 13 or El Salvador Gang) and 18 Street gangs – statistically the most violent and aggressive gangs on the planet. In El Salvador there are at least a dozen murders a day – the vast majority carried out by these two gangs (Kemp, 2007:88). Kemp also travelled to St Louis, Missouri (USA), where the Bloods and the Crips have been at war for longer than twenty years, and where St Louis authorities estimate that some 8 000 gangsters are operating in the greater metropolitan area (Kemp, 2007:144). Kemp (2007:215) describes Moscow in Russia as a city of broad views and handsome prospects, but it is also home to some very unpleasant gangs. Most of the members of the National Socialist Union (NSU), a neo-Nazi gang, hold down reasonably well-paid day jobs and train to be neo-Nazi in their spare time (Kemp, 2007:219). The German Nazi's key message – that everyone and anyone who did not exactly fit their notion of racial purity merited enslavement or extermination – has become the gospel of the neo-fascist Moscow gangs (Kemp, 2007:231). The NSU are together "out of straightforward racial hatred", in contrast to the situation in other

parts of the world “where people join gangs in the generally mistaken belief that this will make them wealthy, earn kudos or at least help them to stay alive” (Kemp 2007:240).

In Jamaica, the country’s gang problem is “catastrophically bound up with its politics” (Kemp, 2007:250). In the late 1970s and in the run-up to the 1980 general election, politicians from both the major political parties, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People’s National party (PNP), armed people in Kingston’s garrisons (local neighbourhoods) to bring in the vote – if necessary at gunpoint. The killing has not ever stopped – the gangs have simply shifted in shape, and if anything grown even more murderous (Kemp 2007:250). Gangs like the High End and Low End violently defend their turf and drug markets, resulting in Jamaica having the highest number of homicides per head: 60 per 100 000, compared with 44 in South Africa and Columbia’s 41 (Kemp, 2007:250).

The United States of America has a long history of gangs, especially among African American and Latino communities:

Gangs in one form or another have been around for hundreds of years. Pirates were probably some of the original bad gangs. The groups that traditionally come to mind when one thinks of modern day gangs are the Crips and the Bloods from California. The origins of the Crips and Bloods can be traced to the late 60’s, and the gang culture is so ingrained on the west coast that many families have three and even four generations of gangsters residing in the same residence...African Americans have a 75 year history of street gang involvement in Los Angeles, younger than its Latino counterparts in Los Angeles, namely the Mexicans, who date back to as early as 1900. (Nawojczyk: 1997)

Gangs have become a fixture in the Mexican American populations of southern California and other regions of the nation. Beginning in the 1940s as a small number of neighborhood-based youth groups given to periodic outbursts of destructive behavior, gangs have evolved into very deadly and violent street entities. Today, a still-small number, between 4 percent and 10 percent, of Mexican American youth belong to gangs. (Vigil: 1997)

The discussion of gangsterism on the Cape Flats will be looking at the specific contextual factors that contributed to the formation of gangs, as well as the elements that cause gangs to have been able to sustain themselves as a phenomenon over so many years. In other words, there

will be factors and elements that correspond with international trends (elements of sameness), but others that will point to the specific Cape Town-Western Cape-South African context (element of differentiation). In the last category will be socio-cultural factors, ideological (political) factors, as well as economic factors.

## 2.3 GANGS ON THE CAPE FLATS

The origins of gangsterism, drug dealing and violence on the Cape Flats lie deep in the unique social structure of the Western Cape. Forced removals and other apartheid policies provide a partial but by no means complete explanation for the violence. (Dixon & Johns, 2001:3)

It is rather difficult to pinpoint the origins of gangsterism on the Cape Flats to a specific time or period. It is, however, commonly traced back to about 1937 in the old District Six. A group that called themselves *Globe* operated as some sort of neighbourhood watch doing community policing in District Six, fending off 'skollies' (wandering criminals). In order to do their task they asked for protection money from home and shop owners. About ten years after its formation, the leader of *Globe* was murdered. He was succeeded by his brother, who implemented his own modus operandi, which included an increase in protection monies and exploitation of people by means of trading drugs and operating brothels.

The forced removals of people under the Group Areas Act (1950) from District Six to the Cape Flats resulted in the splitting up of groups like *Globe*. Members of *Globe* were scattered across the Cape Flats and, in many cases, formed new gangs.

There seems to have been no particular interest in the further development of the gang culture on the Cape Flats. In 1982, Don Pinnock published a book on gangs in Cape Town, *The Brotherhoods: Street Gangs and State Control in Cape Town*, which sheds some light on this phenomenon. The title indicates a certain close and special bond that exists between members of a gang. "Brotherhoods" imply something more than friends, more than 'boys from the 'hood' – it implies some type of 'family' connection. Every family has a particular story shaped by a variety of factors. Every family is also functioning as a system within a larger system (the community). The factors that shape the family are not restricted to interpersonal or internal factors, but include external, structural factors within the broader ecosystem (cf. Pinnock, 1982:8-9).



In 1982, Pinnock estimated that approximately 80 000 people in the Western Cape belonged to one or other gang. Because of strict secrecy among gangs, inter alia, the estimate of 80 000 was still being used in 1990, while Kinnes (2000:12) quotes the SAPS's Gang Unit estimate of between 80 000 and 100 000 people belonging to about 137 gangs operating on the Cape Flats. In 1994, Captain Wickus Holtzhausen, then media officer of the police in the Western Cape,<sup>17</sup> declared that at least seven heavily armed gangs headed by so-called *Godfathers* were engaged in a continuous war in order to protect or expand their trade areas and routes. These seven gangs (also called the 'primary gangs') are named as the *Americans*, *Hard Living Kids (HLs)*, *Sexy Boys*, *Dixie Boys*, *Yuru Cats* and *Laughing Boys* (Standing, 2003). The *Americans* has affiliates called *Young Americans*, *Ugly Americans*, *United Americans* and *Sexy Americans*. Other smaller gangs include the *Born Free Kids (BFKs)*, *Scorpions*, *Cisco Yakkies*, *Sicilians*, *Cape Town Scorpions (CTS)*, *Naughty Boys*, *Nice Time Kids*, *Junky Funky Kids* and *Corner Boys*. In recent times we have seen American gangster rap-influenced spin-offs such as the *Westsiders*, *Eastsiders* or *No Fears* prevalent in schools, where the gang rivalries of fathers, uncles and elder brothers play themselves out (Mail and Guardian, 2002). A number of smaller gangs operate only within a particular township/suburb, which may actually only include one or more blocks of flats.<sup>18</sup>

It is not entirely clear what the meaning or motivation behind each of the names of the gangs was. Research into the names would probably reveal some interesting facts about the phenomenon. In an interview with Johan de Meyer (1996), Rashied Staggie gave some insight into the name and reason for existence of the *Hard Living Kids*. According to Staggie, the *HLs* was not a gang, but an organisation. As long as there was poverty, there would be *Hard Livings*. Gangs were for "skollies" (scoundrels); *HLs* were for people who struggled – "dit is maklik om te sterf, maar moeilik om te bly lewe" (It is easy to die, but it is difficult to stay alive). The *Hard Livings* life was built on "wisdom, understanding and insight" (*wysheid, begrip en insig*). "n Verantwoordelike mens wat die insig het om te sien hy is arm, het die wysheid om te gaan werk, hy het die wysheid om sy kinders op te voed. Maar die wette is natuurlik ook buigsaam. Die reels is buigsaam as dit gaan oor hoe om geld te verdien. Dit stop waar die maag anders dikteer" (A responsible person who has insight to see that he is poor, has the wisdom to go and

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<sup>17</sup> *Die Burger*, 7 June 1994.

<sup>18</sup> Gangs also operate in the Black African townships of the Cape Flats. However, these gangs are not so deeply rooted and well-organised as those in the Coloured townships. The following gangs were involved in organised crime in Gugulethu and Nyanga: the Adderley gang, Ntsaras, Mafelas, Guilty Boys, Soweto's and the Balaclava gang (Shaw, 1992).

work; he has wisdom to educate his children. But the rules are naturally also flexible when it comes to how to earn money. It stops where the stomach dictates differently).. He claims that oppression was the reason why his organisation came into being. This was also the reason given for a march organised by the umbrella body CORE to parliament in September 1996, “calling for ‘present and previous governments’ to accept responsibility for them turning to crime” (Dixon & Johns, 2001:14).

When one pages through the Cape Town newspapers for the period 1989 to 1998, there are many headlines and reports that indicate the reality of gangs on the Cape Flats.<sup>19</sup> In a series of articles on the gangs in the Cape Peninsula, Mariana Brand writes that nowhere in South Africa does one find a gang culture similar to that on the Cape Flats.<sup>20</sup> A large number of gangs operate in a very well-structured fashion. They have good order of ranks, internal discipline and loyalty.

There is also a strong connection between street gangs and the number gangs in prisons. The number gangs are a different phenomenon than street gangs.<sup>21</sup> These number gangs originated in the prisons and operated within that context. According to senior superintendent Jeremy Veary, former head of the Crime Information Division of the Police Services in the Western

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<sup>19</sup> Some of the articles in *Die Burger* read as follows: “Bendegevegte in die Kaapse Skiereiland is ‘n alledaagse ding” (28 October 1989); “... meer as sestig bendes wat inwoners van die Kaapse Vlakte dekades terroriseer en vir wie menseleuens nie meer ‘n duit werd is nie” (21 April 1990); “Die Kaapse Vlakte wat deur bendes geteister word, staan by menige inwoner bekend as die ‘Vlakte van Verdriet” (13 July 1990); “Bendes voer ‘n skrikbewind op die Kaapse Vlakte” (10 October 1990); “Regters versoek dat die regering kyk na bendegeweld” (2 August 1994); “Bendegeweld vier hoogty in Elsie’srivier” (3 November 1994); “Amptelike syfers dui daarop dat Kaapstad en omstreke die hoogste misdaadsyfer in die land het ... Kaapstad is een van die gevaarlikste plekke ter wêreld”; “Die Kaapse gewelddadige bendes het reeds wêreldberigtheid verwerf ... Die bendestelsel is so diep verwortel” (20 March 1998); “Die bendekultuur is al só diep gewortel, en só baie mense se welvaart hang daarvan af” (14 April 1998).

<sup>20</sup> *Die Burger*, September 1993 (See footnote 7).

<sup>21</sup> There are three main prison gangs, namely the 26s, 27s and 28s, “all originated from bands of outlaws that had plagued late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Johannesburg” (Steinberg, 2004a:6). “The Number gangs take their inspiration from the real historical figure who founded them, Nongoloza Mathebula, an early Johannesburg bandit who built a quasi-military band of outlaws, welding his small army together with a simple but potent ideology of banditry-as-anti-colonial-resistance” (Steinberg, 2004b:1). “The 26s were to accumulate wealth, which was to be distributed among all three camps, and acquired through cunning and trickery, never through violence. The 28s, in turn, were to fight on behalf of all three camps for better conditions for inmates. They would also be permitted to have sex, in their own ritualised manner, among themselves. They were never to touch a 26. As for the 27s, they were the guarantor of gang law; they were to keep the peace between the three camps. They would learn and retain the laws of all three gangs, as well as the laws of the relationships between gangs. And they would right wrongs by exacting revenge: when blood was spilled, they would spill blood in turn. Today, in 2004, that is how South Africa’s three major prison gangs understand their origins. In the 26s and the 27s, sex between gang members is formally outlawed and subject to severe and violent punishment (Steinberg, 2004b:10).

Cape, prison and street gangs initially operated as separate entities,<sup>22</sup> but are now working closely together (Capraro, 1998). Jonny Steinberg writes the following in his award-winning book *The Number* (2004a:9):

The Western Cape's street gangs, which had transmogrified into massive criminal empires in the later apartheid years, had taken Number lore and spread it all over Cape Town's ghettos. The Firm, one of the region's two largest criminal organizations, had been calling itself the 28s, recruiting and initiating new members with bastardized 28 rituals, and honing an organizational structure based vaguely on the 28s' original hierarchy. The Americans, the other of the two mega-gangs, had done much the same with the 26s.

According to Jonny Steinberg, this change came about in the late 1980s:

The imagery and ritual of the prison arrived on the street – bastardised, in scraps and pieces – and it spread like wildfire...The street gangs took the world of the prison – its metaphors, its nomenclature, its logic- and imprinted it on the ghettos. Ever since the early 1970s, the street gangs of the Cape Flats have been extorting protection money from neighbourhood shops, demanding a cut in the liquor distributors' profits, taking transit fees from the taxis that drive through their turf, maiming those who dare to sell anything without their permission. But now, beginning in the 1990s, street gangs began using prison as a metaphor to understand their relationship with those upon whom they preyed. The street gangsters are the *ndotas*; the taverners, liquor distributors and taxi drivers from whom they extort are the *franse*. Like the *franse* behind bars, they too must rent the air they breathe. (Steinberg, 2004b: 40)

There seems to be general consensus in the existing literature on gangsterism in the Western Cape about the manifestation of this phenomenon within traditional Coloured townships. The uniqueness of the phenomenon as it is found on the Cape Flats is assumed on the basis of reported cases of gangs and gang-related crimes. This is the only province in South Africa where the phenomenon has been the point of political debate over such a long period of time. The only other cases of gangsterism that show similarity are reported in certain Coloured areas of Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg.

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<sup>22</sup> This corresponds with the research of the international authority on street gangs, Malcolm Klein. He writes: "Although media reports often suggest a close tie between prison and street gangs, experts generally minimize the connection" (Klein, 1995:23).

The next section discusses some definitions of gangs.

## 2.4 DEFINING GANGS

There is no agreed definition of 'gangs' or 'gangsterism'. According to the National Crime Prevention Research-Resource Centre,

(A) critical issue is that all gangs are different: the formation, activities and nature of crime that gangs engage in or commit, are specific to the environment and socio-economic context of a particular gang. Gangs differ from area to area.<sup>23</sup>

The traditional view of gangs includes, inter alia, the designation "skollies", who function within the Coloured communities on the Cape Flats, as well as the so-called "tsotsi" culture that developed during the 1950s with the establishment of black African urban townships. Kinnes (2000) is of the opinion that this definition and understanding of gangs have changed considerably as street gangs have become more organised.

Gastrow (1998), in his study of organised crime, provides definitions of organised crime, crime syndicates and gangs, which are very helpful in our attempt to come to a more clear definition.

In general, gangs tend to be less formally structured than syndicates. They are often territorially based, their criminal activities involve less sophistication than those of syndicates, their members tend to be youths and they tend to identify themselves by a gang name. The many different manifestations of criminal gangs make it unlikely that one single definition will ever be adequate or comprehensive enough to cover all shades and variations (1998:9).

Gastrow then provides the following definition of gangs:

A criminal gang consists of an organised group of members which has a sense of cohesion, is generally territorially bound, which creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in the community and whose members engage in gang-focused activity either individually or collectively (1998:10).

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.ncpc-rrc.co.za>, accessed 04/04/2006.

Kinnes (2000:4) is of the opinion that Gastrow's definition concentrates on the theoretical aspects applicable to gangs, while Pinnock (1982:4) points to the structural aspects of gangs, as well as to the organisation of deviance. Pinnock (1982:4) distinguishes between the different types of gangs and notes the differences in structure between so-called corner kids, defence gangs, reform gangs, mafia gangs and syndicates. According to Kinnes, the important factor that is missing in Pinnock's definition relates to the gangsters' motivation and world view. Kinnes (2000:5) contends that:

Gangs define themselves in relation to their social world and this world engenders the loyalty, brotherhood and universality of their beliefs. The structure of the gang is open to change as the gang progresses in a world of changing criminality. All of these factors influence the typology and structure of gangs.

Kinnes (2000:4) also has a problem with defining gangs as 'youth at risk'. This categorisation proposes to deal with youth at risk of getting into trouble with the law, and excludes the category of youth that makes a rational choice to join gangs despite their age and the 'myriad' of risks attached to membership of a gang. Another reason 'youth at risk' and gangs cannot be equated is the fact that there are layers of gang members who are adults of up to 30 and 40 years of age.

This difficulty in defining gangs is not confined to the South African context. Klein (1995:29), for example, refers to "this definitional ambiguity". It is also not limited to a discussion of gangsterism as a phenomenon, but to definitions in general. Among social scientists in the academic world, definitions are most often determined in terms of variables, many of which are derived from social learning theory. Other studies use personal-biographical characteristics, and still others depend on observations and reports of various kinds. In the book *Gangs in America*, edited by Ronald Huff (1990), there are three different approaches to the problem of gang definitions, which shows that it is not easy to define gangs. One of these approaches calls for a new consensus, while the second shows how different definitions can lead to different conclusions about the seriousness of the gang violence problem. The third approach suggests that perhaps we should not seek consensus for fear of overlooking important conceptual differences inherent in different approaches.

When considering all the existing definitions of gangs, the following 'characteristics' emerge:

- Gang members may range in age from youngsters ('corner kids') to adults between 20 and 40 years of age<sup>24</sup>
- The nature and activities of gangs are determined mainly by their social context
- Membership of gangs may include persons both inside and outside of jails
- Gang members may be anything from street-level operators to sophisticated syndicate bosses
- Gang members may belong to the category regarded by the government and its agencies as being at risk of becoming involved in criminal activities, or may make a choice to become involved, with full cognisance of the risks
- Gangs may be involved in criminal activities for the sake of survival, or may be high-level, structured criminal organisations

The literature shows that, although there are similarities with regard to gangsterism globally, each formation has its own history, culture and traditions. Under gang culture we understand the rights, rituals, practices and traditions of the gang that have been established and maintained for generations. On the Cape Flats, like everywhere else, we see that some gangs do not have a long life-span, while others have very long traditions and life-spans. The gangs that are older are generally more organised.

The next section provides a gender perspective on gangs, and is based on a study by Elaine Salo, who did ethnographic research for her doctoral studies on gender relations in the township of Manenberg.

## 2.5 GANGS: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Elaine Salo brings a very important contribution to the debate concerning the formation of gangs when she looks at it from a gender perspective. Acknowledging the structural analyses of gangs by authors such as Pinnock (SA) and Owumbi (Nigeria), she argues that "they offer only part of the explanation for the existence of gangs in the complex social landscape of urban African townships" (2005:1). She continues:

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<sup>24</sup> Klein (1995:29) places the age between 12 and 30 years, "averaging probably around 20 years of age". He further describes gangs as follows: "They are primarily male; various estimates of female proportions range from zero to 30 percent. Most gangs – if not all – are composed of homogeneous racial and ethnic minorities. Principally they are Hispanic or black, with an increase recently in Asian and other groups. They usually are territorial (*turf*, *barrio*, *'hood*, and *set* are among the more common generic terms), although Asian gangs often present an exception. The gang's criminal activities generally are very versatile. Finally, street gangs range enormously in their duration, from a few months to decades of self-generation."

Gang members have other gendered identities that are embedded within the generational continuity of a household and that are woven within the richly textured social expanse of communal relationships and networks within the township. They are also sons, brothers, husbands, fathers, lovers, friends and social mentors. These other gendered identities overlap, sometimes conflict with, and ultimately shape their identities as gang members. Gangs are not just the social expression of mainstream society. They are also one of the means through which gendered personhood is affirmed and through which communities are forged and reproduced. They provide some of the social and economic capital through which households are sustained, and they uphold the informal system of township justice. They embody the structural bond between the dominant social centre and its peripheral communities, and they are the expression of the cultural and economic contradictions between the two. (2005:2)

Salo presents the following argument:

I argue that whilst the dominant structural factors of racial and economic marginalization are important, one has to look beyond these factors and examine the gendered and generational relationships within the gang as well as between the gang and the community they reside in, in order to obtain more textured picture of ganging practices on the Cape Flats. (2005:2)

Gang membership is not only about resistance and economic survival, but about asserting their gendered identities as heterosexual men who do not possess the dominant material and symbolic capital to affirm their heterosexual masculinity, such as a professional education, a permanent job, or the economic ability to support a wife and dependants. As a result of a set of racial apartheid legislation (including the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act of 1950, as well as the Coloured Labour Preference policy), Coloured women became the unintended beneficiaries of these laws and were thus strategically set as the power brokers for their communities within the apartheid social structure. Women had relatively privileged economic status as a consequence of the state social security programme and the 'feminisation' of the labour force in the textile industry. The net result is that, in Manenberg, the residents become persons through adult women who epitomise local respectability and morality:

Adult women embody personhood in Manenberg, through the extension and the efflorescence of their economic and social mothering roles beyond the private domain. They mediate relations between the workplace, the state institutions and the local

community. They also mediate conflict between individuals within the local community. (Salo, 2005:4)

What about the men? What role do they play in this situation? How does this relate to the subject of gangsterism?

Whilst persons are identified through and by adult women, it is the men that embody and define the social and spatial boundaries of the community among whom the women's opinions count. Men claim their agency in this local context by asserting the primacy of their definition of community over that imposed by the city and state town planners. For it is within the confines of male-defined boundaries that alternative meanings of personhood, gender, style and community are created. (Salo, 2005:5)

Socio-political and economic emasculation over many decades has resulted in a process of emotional toughening amongst township men, colloquially referred to as 'making strong bones'; that is, their display of manhood finds expression in their proud though poignant narration of their emotional and physical ability to withstand denigration. Have things changed for men in Manenberg and other Cape Flats townships since 1994 and the dawn of democracy and the so-called new South Africa? Unfortunately not; with the dominant definition of masculinity having shifted to one that emphasises men's economic roles, these township men continue to be excluded from the labour market due to their low levels of education and their lack of appropriate cultural capital. Within this context, an alternative ideology of masculinity has originated, one in which men's authority is asserted over other gang members, whilst it is simultaneously recognised and reinforced by older women and other members of the community.

Gang practices, according to Salo, not only operate to define the boundaries of local communities, but also provide a rite of passage into manhood for adolescent youths who find themselves in a liminal state, between the local markers of childhood and adulthood. [We will come back to the rites of passage later in this chapter.] These youths are usually high school dropouts, having rejected the dependency status that is associated with the role of a student, but without the resources such as jobs that, within the dominant ideology of masculinity, would define them as men. Violent beatings and the painful tattooing process during the ganging rite mark men's bodies with the values of toughness, courage and loyalty. When confronted with the challenges of racial marginalisation, unemployment and impoverishment, the initiates are expected to display the same stoicism. In a sense, the men's bodies are marked as the physical



boundaries of the local community, 'an alternative social and moral space in which apparently different notions of personhood, gender and style dominate.

In summary, these alternative notions of personhood in townships like Manenberg are anchored in women's roles as the economic mainstays of the local community. Coloured women's important economic roles are reconfigured in the context of the local community through the 'moeder' identity, to epitomise the core characteristics of local personhood, namely morality and respectability. While women identify persons in the local contexts, men as gangsters define the boundaries of the local community within which persons are identified.

Salo's important contribution provides a very crucial angle to a pastoral-theological approach to issues like gangsterism in the Coloured communities. Women comprise the majority in most faith communities on the Cape Flats, but, somehow, men are still the major decision-makers. It is important to recognise the different roles played by men and women, and how these roles are negotiated and agreed upon. We will also have to reckon with a wider understanding of 'family' than the traditional, narrow view. This aspect may help us to have a different understanding or assessment of the church as a family and how roles are played out within this community. Herein lies great potential that may be utilised in a very positive way in care-giving in a broad sense.

## **2.6 ROOT CAUSES OF GANGSTERISM**

In this section I look at some reasons for the formation of gangs in South Africa in general and the Cape Peninsula in particular. The different categories utilised for this purpose are not mutually exclusive or absolute, and may overlap.

Many of the risk factors identified by Cheryl Frank in international studies on children and crime will transpire from the discussion of the root causes of gangsterism on the Cape Flats: "family disruption, violence, poor parenting, poverty, inadequate housing and health conditions, poor schooling, truancy, school drop-out or exclusion, peer group activities and pressures, discrimination, and lack of training and work conditions" (Frank, 2006:110). I will begin by discussing the historical political factors.

## 2.6.1 Political causes

### *2.6.1.1 A history of discrimination and exploitation*

Although apartheid is usually regarded as closely linked to the political rule of the National Party (NP), it should be made clear that the 'divide and rule' approach was part of British colonial policy. "Notions of racial superiority formed part of the general pattern of colonial rule into the twentieth century" (Deegan, 2001:5). A "plethora of legislation" (Salo, 2004:74) was promulgated to ensure that the policy of racial segregation was maintained and the economic interests of the white minority protected. This included the Mines and Works Act (1911), which essentially meant that skilled positions were designated for whites, while blacks undertook unskilled work; the Natives Land Act (1913), which prevented Africans from buying land in areas designated as white; the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, which enabled local authorities to enforce residential segregation between blacks and whites and forbade the granting of freehold property; the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1927, which allowed for the strict control of any disturbances; and the 1927 Immorality Act, which forbade extramarital sexual relations between blacks and whites. The establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910 "consolidated the interests of the white population over the black community" (Deegan, 2001:3-14).

### *2.6.1.2 The apartheid policy in general*

When the NP took over the reins in 1948, the system of segregation was showing signs of collapse (Deegan, 2001:23), mainly because industrial development accelerated the movement of Africans. The Nationalists set about entrenching segregation by rooting it in the ideology of apartheid and dividing the country into racial zones.

The National Party did not wish to halt industrialisation and economic growth but rather 'to control its social implications by imposing strict segregation based on racial hierarchy'.<sup>25</sup>

Apartheid under the NP, or Verwoerdian Apartheid, a massive programme of social engineering, was aimed at keeping black South Africans disorganised and economically dependent. "Nationalist intellectuals began working on a social framework for Apartheid, which would ratchet up the segregationist policies to a new level" (Salo, 2004:75). Schärf (1990:233) summarises the position of black people during apartheid as follows:

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<sup>25</sup> James Barber, cited in Deegan (2001:23).

Economic dependency was ensured by preventing the accumulation of capital by blacks. Influx control was designed to confine the surplus African population to the economically impoverished homelands. Housing policies denied Africans freehold rights and other relatively stable form of land tenure and thus robbed them of the opportunity of using their homes as collateral for loans. Licensing provisions in the townships were extremely restrictive, thus limiting opportunities for the growth of a black middle class. All forms of street trading without licences, otherwise known as the informal sector, were made illegal. Even the commodification of domestic services such as beer was criminalized ... In addition, the education system for blacks was designed to perpetuate the *status quo* by keeping blacks under-skilled. Until the late seventies, job reservation protected whites from competition in the job market. There were thus pitifully few legal avenues to *financial success* open to Africans.

Bernard Magubane, referring to “the perverted logic of Apartheid” (1979:149), gives this harsh description from a Marxist viewpoint:

Apartheid, as a policy of naked exploitation allied with dishonesty, is permeated by hysterical irrationality. Such a statement reminds us that the policy of apartheid is a flight from reality into fabulously convoluted rationalizations to justify any action against the African proletariat (1979:159).

Apartheid, Magubane argues, is based on and grounded in Afrikaner nationalism, which he describes as “national consciousness of a perverse kind” (1979:248):

It is a distorted love of one’s own people based on hatred, fear, and contempt for others. It misdirects the service to one’s own people into the subjugation and exploitation of all other peoples. It is a nationalism that is opposed to a free and independent growth of other nationalities. It spiritualizes the national sentiment into crass economic gains. (Magubane, 1979:248)

Whichever way one chooses to look at the history of colonisation, Dutch, English and Afrikaner rule had the net effect that the indigenous peoples of this country were robbed of the wealth, of the land, and of their human dignity. The white settlers made sure that they, and not the African minority, would remain in control of the economy, as Allan Boesak (2005:139) puts it:

The common thread, as in the beginning of the colonial project, was the need for white solidarity to secure white supremacy ... It is important to remember that white, racial solidarity guaranteed white political hegemony, which in turn guaranteed white economic superiority. That early creation of a platform of wealth remains one of the most potent factors preventing genuine black economic empowerment even today.

Because of Apartheid legislation, the majority of South Africans were confined to the under-developed rural areas. However, the economy needed black labour, resulting in the much hated migrant labour system. While women were left behind to maintain the household and care for the children, (economically useful) men had to go away to work in the mines and other industries. This led to rapid destruction of traditional black family structures.

There is no doubt that there is a link between the apartheid policies of the past and the occurrence of gangs in Black and Coloured residential areas. Laws like the Group Areas Act (1950) and its 'twin partner', the Population Registration Act (1950), pass laws (1952), as well as labour preference laws in the Western Cape, contributed in a direct or indirect way to the formation of gangs.

Political resistance and revolt against apartheid, and the consequent suppression by the State by means of declaration of States of Emergency, violent action against protestors, torture and even the murder of political activists by the police, detention without trial and other measures created fertile ground for the existence of gangs as well as various forms of violent crimes.<sup>26</sup>

### ***2.6.1.3 District Six and the Group Areas Act***

It is important to understand the construction of Cape Flats townships like Manenberg as reflecting a long process of urban ordering, associated with the systematic exclusion of Black South Africans and the racial stratification of space that accompanied this exclusion. Racial stratification has informed urban planning and spatial segregation in Cape Town since the late 1800s (Salo, 2004:82). The process of racial segregation in modern Cape Town at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was first marked by the respectable classes' moral panic about the threat posed racial hygiene by the growing black population in the old colony.

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<sup>26</sup> Confirmed by Gayton McKenzie, a reformed gangster in an SABC3 interview on *3Talk*, 10 January 2007.

Land held by Indians and coloureds in city centres was expropriated by the government, and the residents were resettled in housing estates on the peripheries of cities (Deegan, 2001:23), “far removed from jobs and organised in racially segregated townships separated from each other by unoccupied buffer zones” (Rospabe & Selod, 2006:262). This was part of the Afrikaner Nationalists’ project of social and spatial engineering during the apartheid era (Salo, 2004:86), in which Coloureds were socially and geographically defined as occupying an intercalary position between White and African (Salo, 2004:85).

In this regard, District Six in Cape Town has become a symbol of the pain and anger of people who were forcibly removed to what is now commonly known as the Cape Flats. Despite a lack of proper housing and the general occurrence of poverty among the approximately 40 000 residents, a very strong feeling of community and cohesion existed among the people of District Six. The existence of extended families played a very big role in creating a sense of security, general respect for one another, and caring for others. During this time, people accepted responsibility for the care and discipline of the neighbourhood’s children: Your child is my child, and my child is your child.<sup>27</sup> In this regard one may describe the entire District Six as some sort of an extended family.

Father John, Rector of St Mark’s Church, District Six in 2004, describes District Six and the type of community life there as follows:

District Six is a national icon of our history. It is a visible reminder of forced removals that took place under the Group Areas Act. We want to remember and celebrate what the community was about before it was forcibly removed. It was a community that displayed admirable values long before the Group Areas Act was enforced. It was a community of support and racial tolerance. It was an inter-religious community who had respect for each other and attended each other’s funerals, whether they were Muslims, Christians or Jews. It was a way of co-existence that is exactly what we are trying to

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<sup>27</sup> Mapping children’s poverties, Couture (2000:35) emphasises the importance of neighbourhoods as “a series of influence on children”. She continues: “Neighborhoods provide informal networks of friendship, acquaintanceship, and assistance for children and for their families. They offer formally organized institutions for support and care, such as schools, day care agencies, medical clinics, recreational organizations, and religious organizations. They become a means through which beliefs and values are communicated” (2000:35).

encourage amongst all the people of South Africa as we celebrate 10 years of democracy.<sup>28</sup>

According to most experts, the forceful removal of people from District Six had a definitive influence on the lives of many people in Cape Town. One of the most negative consequences was the intensification of gang activities on the Cape Flats. As already mentioned, the existing gangs were protection gangs that were not violent by nature, exercising some manner of social control.

The Groups Areas Act changed the lives of the people of District Six in more ways than one, and in a very profound manner. Prof. Erika Theron (1977:38) refers to the bitterness, distrust and enmity that this legislation, more than any other, has provoked among Coloured people. Old, ordered communities were disrupted, families were removed forcefully from communities where they knew their neighbours and where social life, in many instances, was organised around the church, to new neighbourhoods where people were strangers to one another – to soulless townships across the Cape Flats: “abandoned communities on the far-flung sand dunes of the Cape Flats” (Steinberg, 2004a:10).

Arnold Smith (1994:74) sums up the situation as follows:

The removal of thousands of people to the open Cape Flats did not envisage any proper community. People were merely dumped and forced to develop some sort of community for themselves. In addition, Bishop Lavis was literally ‘culturally poor’ during the first ten years of its existence. There was no effective schooling, minimum church life and very little sport and recreational facilities. In brief, the people of the town did not ‘live’, they only ‘existed’. By the time thought was given to such facilities, social ills like poverty, unemployment, alcohol abuse, etc. had already taken root, hindering the positive influence of the home, the school and the church as community institutions.  
(*my translation, LLMM*)

One reason for an increase in crime was said to be the lack of facilities (with shebeens the only gathering place) and a feeling of displacement or uprootedness.

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<sup>28</sup> City and St Mark’s Church and District Six Museum celebrate Heritage Day. Media Release No 164/2004, 23 September 2004. [www.capetown.gov.za](http://www.capetown.gov.za) [Accessed 21/06/2007]

Many long and close friendships were broken up and extended family systems were destroyed. Traditional family structures were affected severely as people struggled to adjust to new circumstances and lifestyles. Apartheid succeeded in eroding the extended family networks that had played a major role in providing support and discipline. Children and young people in particular suffered from this breakdown of family life. Amanda Dissel (1997) summarises it as follows:

When the family becomes dysfunctional and discordant, the children leave the family home. They may either permanently abandon their home, or in some cases begin to spend more and more time on the street, which gradually draws them into criminal associations.

Steve Mokwena (1991) also emphasises this point:

The failure and inability of families to minister to the material and emotional needs of youths explains the ease with which youth easily slide into a life on the streets. It is here that many receive their orientation into a life of violent crime. Many marginalised youth found the acceptance that they longed for within the structures of the street gangs.

The economic consequences of the forced removals were far-reaching. Because of higher rent, both parents had to work in order to cope financially. Townships were now further from places of employment, which meant that people left their homes much earlier in the morning and returned later from work. This resulted in many young children being left on their own without adult supervision and few, if any, proper recreation facilities. As a result of all these factors, gangs increasingly substituted for the extended families in terms of providing a supporting function.

Gus Adams, a Coloured newspaper columnist, strikingly sums up the effect of the Groups Areas Act (Theron, 1997:40):

Suid-Afrika sal met baie trane nie die skade van die Wet op Groepsgebiede uitgewis kry nie. En ons kan maar verduidelik dat mense tog maar moes uitkring na die Kaapse Vlakte; die een woord wat onaanvaarbaar bly, is: verpligtend. Ja, maar julle moes ons nie verplig het nie. Vrye beweging, ja; die *group*, nee. (*Even with lots of tears South Africa will never erase the damage of the Group Areas Act. And although we can explain that people ultimately had to move out to the Cape Flats; the one word that will*

*remain unacceptable is “compulsory”. Yes, but you should not have forced us. Free movement, yes; the Group, no. LLMM)*

Joshua Louw, an Anglican priest in Manenberg, expresses the opinion that it seems that many of the residents have not arrived yet, especially the older people. “It is as if they are still somehow protesting against the forced removals, as if they are just not able to settle down.”<sup>29</sup> One may well ask whether this somehow filters through to the younger generations, affecting them subconsciously in a psychological way, resulting in a feeling of restlessness.

The displacement of people under the Group Areas Act has also affected established District Six gangs. These gangs were splintered into smaller gangs in the new townships. The new leadership did not necessarily adhere to the established rules and ‘norms’ maintained by the District Six leaders, resulting in different *modus operandi* in different areas.

By the time Don Pinnock wrote his book on gangs in 1982, the gang culture had been firmly established on the Cape Flats.

#### **2.6.1.4 Formation of gangs after 1986**

Before 1986, the formation of gangs was rather limited in black African communities as a result of informal methods of control over the youth by the older generation, parents and teachers. The rites of passage within the Xhosa culture, for example, helped to guide young men through the transition from childhood (adolescence) to adulthood. However, when these forms of social control were wiped away by the two States of Emergency and the subsequent political upheavals in the townships, the role of the youth in the political struggle changed. At around this time there also was a rapid increase in the formation of gangs (Schärf, 1990:235).

For some or other reason, 1986 stands out as the year during which gangs re-emerged in the Coloured townships, while gangs really appeared for the first time in the Black townships of Cape Town. Schärf (1990:237) provides three possible reasons, coincidental factors, for this phenomenon:

- the *crisis in education*, the lack of alternative instruction in schools, large-scale abandonment of schools and unemployment as a result of limited job possibilities (even for those who have completed their schooling)

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<sup>29</sup> Conversation, 14 November 2006.



- the call on the youth to become impromptu fighters or *Young Lions* (military populism), that led, inter alia, to an arrogant attitude towards the older generation
- the *politicising of sport* because of the policy of the South African Council of Sport (SACOS) causing many young people to stop playing almost any sport

This point could, of course, be debated. The question is whether gangs 're-emerged' in the sense that they were not present in the years before 1986, or whether it is a question of the media not reporting on gang activity during those years. The media normally focus on more severe cases of gangsterism, which does not mean that gang activity is not present. Another explanation may be the declaration of the States of Emergency by the government. With all the attention of the security forces focused on political activists (or 'terrorists'), 'ordinary criminals' could continue with their activities almost freely. Gangsters indeed have an eye for a gap and are very quick to identify new possibilities and opportunities to expand their membership, territory and activities.

Gangsters and 'comtsotsis' (as criminal elements were popularly known in the townships) abused political activities and protests for their own personal gain. The detention and arrest of respected leaders weakened organisations, which in turn led to decreased control over their members and over people who were not members but participated in the activities and campaigns of these organisations.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the political uprisings of the 1980s affected communities and families in more than one way. They heightened the political consciousness of thousands of young people, drawing them to political groupings where they found an alternative place of belonging. Pupils and students saw themselves as 'frontline soldiers' and 'young lions' in the vanguard of the struggle for social and political change, and thus also as protectors or defenders of their communities.<sup>30</sup> The political arena provided them with a home, a sense of belonging and purpose, which they were yearning for.

For most of the 80s, the political movement throughout the country provided an alternative learning environment. In the context where the family is relatively weak and the school is virtually inoperative, the political culture, which was so pervasive in this period, acted as a powerful alternative socialising agent. This, in turn, further eroded the efficacy of the family as stabilising force.... The virtual paralysis of the education system

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<sup>30</sup> See also Marks and Mckenzie (1995).

has pushed many youngsters into the streets where they acquaint themselves with the alternative norms and values, and the required survival skills. (Mokwena, 1991)

The apartheid policies indeed had a very negative impact on the people classified non-White in this country.

#### ***2.6.1.5 Marginalisation because of the negotiation process***

Hundreds of young people across the country, both Black and Coloured, were actively involved in the political struggle and dozens joined the armed struggle. These young people were focused in their objectives and were highly disciplined.

During the negotiations for a peaceful political settlement in the early 1990s there was a move away from revolutionary politics – the armed struggle was suspended and political leaders called on young people to scale down their resistance. The irony is that these young people became marginalised when their political objectives materialised. Many youth leaders were lost in the negotiation process and were also not taken up in the various levels of national and local structures. Some of the existing youth structures tried to redefine their objectives in the light of the changing political climate. From this flowed the establishment of defence units to protect communities against criminal elements. Unfortunately, these units became very controversial because of, amongst other things, their lack of coordination and their conflict with the police.

This ‘double marginalisation’ (combined with a broader historical ‘multiple marginality’) left scores of young people disillusioned, frustrated and feeling politically impotent. Despite the dream and promise of a better life, the primary experience in the townships was still one of inequality and injustice. Employment opportunities did not increase substantially, and hundreds of young people found themselves still on the streets rather than in educational institutions.

Frustration, resulting from the non-delivery of material benefits by the government, has led many youths and adults to seek opportunities to acquire wealth elsewhere. Crime is an obvious alternative. (Dissel, 1997)

Mokwena (1991) is also of the opinion that the marginalisation of the youth, coupled with the material impoverishment of their communities, was directly responsible for the growing violent and criminal youth culture as manifested in the increase in gang formation in Black townships.

The bellicose youth gangs which have multiplied over the past few years are a concrete index of marginalisation as they are a response to the economic and social constraints facing young Blacks.

At the same time there was a definitive increase in criminal syndicates that specialised in the trading of illegal drugs and firearms, vehicle theft, prostitution and money laundering.<sup>31</sup> Given the situation that we have sketched above, it is no surprise therefore that many young people were drawn into these illegal activities under the protection of powerful syndicate bosses. The availability of cheap, illegal firearms led to an increase in violent crime to obtain material possessions. Great numbers of youngsters who were previously involved in small-scale theft were now involved in more serious crime, like vehicle hijackings, armed robberies and murder.

## **2.6.2 Enticing Influence of prison gangs<sup>32</sup>**

The South African corrective system does not have a very high success rate regarding the rehabilitation of offenders. Gayton McKenzie (Cilliers, 2006) a reformed gangster/robber, refers to a “lock-up psychosis” in South Africa, with people being jailed for “paltry” reasons. He literally “opens up” prison life for us – overcrowding, rape and consensual sex, corruption, etc. creating new criminals out of many who are locked up for the most simple or common crimes. “Most gangs are formed in prison” (Cilliers, 2006:91). “The place is like an extreme, social experiment run amok.” (Cilliers, 2006:109). Don Pinnock (n.d. (b)) is of the opinion that putting young people in prison, the punitive attitude, is the best way to ensure that we have a continuing crime problem.<sup>33</sup>

A high percentage of former prisoners commit crimes once released – often for reasons of survival, because stigmatisation make it very difficult for them to find work. This fact is confirmed

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<sup>31</sup> Kinnes (2000:3) has shown how South Africa, after the democratic elections in 1994, ‘opened up’ to international criminal trade, with drug cartels under pressure from their own governments looking to South Africa as ‘an emerging market’. While the UN and Interpol had achieved notable successes in the fight against international crime syndicates, South Africa was relatively inexperienced in dealing with drug and other international syndicates. These international syndicates also exploited the inexperience of their South African criminal counterparts and ‘muscle in on the territory’, entering into deals with various local gangs. “Today, the Western Cape, and indeed the entire country, are dotted with Nigerian cocaine cartels, Chinese triads, Moroccan protection gangs and, to a lesser extent, Pakistani textile syndicates.”

<sup>32</sup> See the reference to the prison gangs on page 22.

<sup>33</sup> Most of the approximately 160 000 people in prison in South Africa are under the age of 25. These youngsters come from areas with widespread poverty, a destructive gang structure, an abundance of cheap drugs and few real opportunities. “The context results in ambivalence and confusion, as the boys attempt to gain status and respect. A response to this confusion is hyper-masculinity, characterized by violence, risk-taking, overcoming adverse conditions and subjugating others” (Pinnock, n.d.(b)).

by community workers like Pastor Henry Wood of Manenberg and Pastor Tom Klein of Ravensmead.<sup>34</sup> They emphasise how difficult it is for ex-prisoners to find decent work, especially if they carry the tattoos associating them with one of the prison gangs. Many times these men and boys are 'welcomed' back into the community by gang leaders or drug lords and provided with drugs, money and even a car to 'kick-start' a new life. It is very difficult to refuse such an offer if no organisation or faith community is there to provide an alternative, a safety net and a chance of a better alternative. Street gangs are one of the only places in which ex-prisoners are not pre-judged for their past sins. "Thus, recidivism is highly likely, especially for those returning to poor, marginalised communities" (Stander, 2005:23).

Former prisoners also carry with them a kind of mystique of the numbers gang, with their own unique language, hierarchical roles, rituals, tattoos and value systems<sup>35</sup> that give them a higher status than the other young people in the townships. One consequence of 'residential segregation' is that it fuels the emergence of social problems. Crane developed an *epidemic theory of ghettos* in which the propensity of youngsters to adopt socially deviant behaviour (for instance dropping out of schools or yielding to criminality) depends on the proportion of same-behaviour individuals in the neighbourhood. "This contagion is all the more prevalent when the adults in the neighbourhood are themselves unemployed and do not provide role models of social success with which youngsters could identify" (Crane, cited in Rospabe & Selod, 2006:264).

Many ex-convicts join up with youth gangs, with a definite influence on the activities of the gang. They are focussed more on the economic activities of the gangs and how to protect their income and their territory against adversaries.

There was already a reference to the fact that, unlike in the past, prison or numbers gangs are now working together. In the words of Jonny Steinberg: "The street gangs had finally 'stolen' prison: they have turned the institutions that punish them into pounts of inspiration" (2004b:40). Many new gang wars are also linked to the release of gangsters from prison – they either have

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<sup>34</sup> Interview, 28 November 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Jonny Steinberg has done extensive research on the number or prison gangs. His book, *The Number* (2004a), is an account of the life of William Steenkamp or William Magadien and his search for identity in the Cape underworld and prison gangs. The monograph Steinberg wrote for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), *Nongoloza's Children: Western Cape prison gangs during and after apartheid* (2004b) is a shorter version of his research.

some 'unfinished' business with one or other gangster, or are trying to re-assert or re-establish themselves and their authority.<sup>36</sup>

### 2.6.3 Economic Causes

Poverty is a social, economic and political problem of enormous proportions and complexity, and children are its most vulnerable victims. Poverty threatens and sometimes destroys valued relationships and denies the world the gifts of those whose lives never reach their potential (Kenneth L. Carder, cited in Couture, 2000:11).

This section deals with the economic factors that may lead to the formation and existence of gangsterism, while the next chapter deals with the question of how poverty and unemployment affect the lives of the people of the Cape Flats in general and challenge the faith communities in their ministry to the people.

It is not always easy to separate politics and economics. The researcher has already shown how the policy of apartheid was aimed at keeping Blacks and Coloureds economically dependent. The unemployment problem indeed has deep roots in the apartheid-era maldistribution of access to assets and skills (Butler, 2004:72). One result of this engineering was large-scale illiteracy, as well as unemployment.

In 1991, Mokwena wrote that young people comprised more than 30% of an estimated 4 to 5 million unemployed people in the country.

Under-educated black school leavers experience their marginalisation most acutely in their economic powerlessness when confronted by contracting job markets and virtual denial of any legitimate wealth creating capacity. In this context the creation of alternative criminal youth gangs, not surprisingly, provides an obvious and welcome substitute. (Mokwena, 1991)

Young people in the townships develop their own means of survival, amongst other things through the practice of *ukutabalaza*. Mokwena quotes a young man from Soweto:

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<sup>36</sup> This is illustrated in an article published in *The Argus* on 15 September 2004 under the title "**Cape Flats killings linked to gang turf wars**". There was an apparent attempt by the notorious 28s prison gang to extend its deadly tentacles out of prisons and across the Cape Flats through hijacking and armed robbery. "It is understood that 28s leaders met in prisons across the province earlier this year to discuss strategies for conquering territory beyond prison walls. The leadership decreed that free members had to increase gang membership, and work towards generating funds... The gang offers status, recognition and respect to recruits."

It is when you do all that is in your power to get money. You see, the world is bad place because it is built on money... when you don't have money you are just a dog.

*Ukutabalaza* may refer to honest ways of making money, but in the townships it generally refers to illegal and criminal methods. These methods include acts like theft, muggings and housebreaking. It may also include more serious deeds like vehicle theft and hijackings, bank robberies and transit robberies, in which more sophisticated crime syndicates are involved. Notorious criminals are often viewed as heroes and role models.

Not only are these economic factors part of the root causes of gangsterism, but they also play a major role in sustaining the gangs. Gangs operate within communities affected by poverty, and the gangsters become providers of the basic needs of many people in the form of food and the payment of rent and school fees. It therefore was not strange or surprising to have heard a woman from Valhalla Park clearly shouting on television with the arrest of the well-known leader of the Firm at the time, Colin Stansfield: *Wie gaan nou vir ons kinders sorg? (Who is now going to care for our children? LLMM)*. It is the same Stansfield who reportedly hired the local football fields in Valhalla Park after the African National Congress (ANC) won South Africa's first democratic elections, erected a giant marquee, bought thousands of litres of beer and truckloads of meat, and invited every resident of Valhalla Park to attend. He threw the biggest party in Valhalla Park's history (Steinberg, 2004b:43).

Kinnes also writes how Rashaad Staggie, leader of the Hard Livings, operated a loan scheme from a shop between 1998 and 1996.

He was able to provide bread and other basic necessities to people in need. As a blatant tactic, he would also drive through the streets and throw money that was illegally obtained from his moving car to ensure that people would continue to support him ... The act of providing for the community is a stepping stone in gaining control of the community to the point where gangsters are able to commit crime without fear of being reported. Gangs in the Western Cape have succeeded in doing this by effectively exploiting the economics of poverty. (Kinnes, 2000:16)

### ***2.6.3.1 The criminal economy of the Cape Flats***

With reference to these kinds of acts of 'philanthropy', André Standing, a PhD candidate from the criminology department at Middlesex University in London who spent some time during 2002

working with the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), wrote a thought-provoking paper to try to explore the significant degree of community support received by certain prominent members of organised crime on the Cape Flats. Standing (2003) speaks about “the criminal economy” of the Cape Flats that is “substantial, its various boundaries blur with other economic and social activities and it involves thousands of people”. The Cape Flats is home to a vast number of people and families who “precariously exist outside the formal economy, being socially excluded”, characterised by high levels of unemployment and poverty. These conditions provide the background to the operations of the so-called criminal elite, “roughly 10 to 20 men who lay claim to being in control of significant areas of the Cape Flats”. These men own one or several houses on the flats that operate as ‘shebeens’, but have also bought properties in some of the more affluent areas of Cape Town. The criminal elite control the distribution and sale of alcohol and drugs in their areas, while some control a local sex industry, export stolen cars, sell stolen firearms and also arrange the theft of goods from factories and warehouses that are to be resold in their domains. Their business portfolios further include hotels, night clubs, public transport, garages, shops and commercial fishing boats.

The activities of gangs represent an alternative economy with illegal drug-dealing alone valued at more than R700 million a year. This is more than is generated by legal economic activity in the affected areas. According to Senior Superintendent Jeremy Veary, provincial police intelligence commander, more money was being generated through illegal protection rackets, the retaining of stolen goods and other illegal operations than was paid to the state in taxes or spent in the formal economy. Cape Flats business people pay more to gangsters than they pay to the Receiver of Revenue. (Aranes, 1998)

Not all leaders of criminal economy are gang members, but members of numerous street gangs form the base of each criminal domain. Gangs generally would establish affiliations with prominent criminal elites, benefiting both sides.<sup>37</sup> Because some of these crime bosses have

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<sup>37</sup> Steinberg (2004b:41) provides some insight into how the street gangs have evolved since the late 1980s and early 1990s (see also Kinnes, 2000), and how the “underground economy”, as he calls it, has change substantially. “The major gangs of the previous decade – the Born Free Kids, the Mongrels, the Scorpions – all had a regional presence in the Western Cape, but they were, in reality, little more than regional affiliations of local groups. Gang leaders made money, but not that much money. They controlled turf, but not that much turf. The typical gang leader would control a few dozen blocks of ghetto. He would run its mandrax and marijuana trade, much of its liquor trade, extort protection money from its shopkeepers, control its commercial sex industry, buy and sell stolen electronic equipment. The underground market was static ... The gang leaders who came of age in the late 1980s did so in a very different world. The rapid insertion of South Africa into global markets brought new drugs into the

allegedly also developed close relations with members of the police force and even with politicians, they are seen by many people in the community as being untouchable.

Standing (2003:6) provides three reasons why organised crime gains support from people on the Cape Flats, namely “by providing income, via community governance and via acts of philanthropy”.

(T)he income of the criminal economy represents a rational response to an economic crisis. Cheap stolen goods and profits from activities such as drug dealing receive popular support because they cushion the effects of poverty. This leads to a situation in which the activities of organised crime are tolerated by a substantial proportion of the community and subsequently criminality loses much of its deviant anti-social connotations. Yet the dynamics of the illicit economy undermines and exacerbates the social and economic condition of the Cape Flats. It perpetuates gross inequalities and restricts mobility. (Standing, 2003:6)

It seems as if the new South Africa has not necessarily brought relief from poverty and crime for the Coloured population of the Western Cape. Wrestling with the question whether the crime problem in the Western Cape and the Northern Cape is rooted in the Coloured population, Ted Legget (2004:2) writes:

Coloured people are far more likely to be murdered than any other group ... Coloured people are also over-represented in the nation's prisons according to the Department of Correctional Services, making up 18% of the national prison population while representing only 9% of the national population ... Being incarcerated may also lead to life-long gang allegiances that keep inmates locked into criminal lifestyles even after release ... Since 1994, unemployment has increased only 19% in the black community, compared to 35% in the coloured community ... The Cape Flats are characterised by high concentrations of jobless people who need cash to pay rent, purchase food, and pay for services. Disadvantaged under apartheid, they may still feel disadvantaged

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country (crack, heroin, club drugs), new merchants, and above all, new markets ... The traditional street gangs of the Western Cape found not only that drug consumption was growing rapidly, but also that a sizeable proportion of the emerging drug market was located outside their traditional turf. With the prospect of their own clients deserting them for new drugs and new players, they knew they had to expand quickly or risk being swallowed ... It was a time of great risk and uncertainty for Cape Flats gang leaders, but at the same time great reward for those who succeeded. The late 1980s saw the emergence, for the first time in the history of the Western Cape underworld, of stinking-rich Cape Flats men, millionaires many times over.”



under democracy, and have no revolutionary hopes that the situation will change drastically in the future.

Some commentators are of the opinion that the gap between the rich and the poor in South African has widened and that township residents have become increasingly impoverished. The poor populations such as Coloured youth in Manenberg, who reside in the old apartheid townships, seem to be trapped in a web of deepening poverty ).

Demombynes and Özler (2006:289) point to some arguments regarding the link between the local distribution of economic welfare and the prevalence of crime. Criminals are more likely to come from the bottom end of the wage distribution. The lack of social capital and the lack of upward mobility may also be linked with the prevalence of crime. Merton, cited in Demombynes and Özler (2006:290), proposes that:

... when a system of cultural values emphasises virtually above all else, certain *common* symbols of success *for the population at large* while its social structure rigorously restricts or completely eliminates access to approved modes of acquiring these symbols *for a considerable part of the same population*, ... antisocial behaviour ensues on a considerable scale. Hence, the lack of upward mobility in a society results in anomie, a breakdown of standards and values.

Kemp came to the following conclusion after having travelled to different countries where he interviewed many gang leaders and experts on gangsterism:

What have I learned in the course of making the series (Gangs)? The wider the gap between rich and poor, and the more poverty it has, the worse a country's gang problem will be. (Kemp, 2007:278)

Crime bosses also derive community tolerance and respect by performing functions traditionally associated with the state, providing 'governance from below'. These functions include dispute settlement (for example brokering peace during conflicts among residents, gangs or local businesses), as well as providing a degree of social protection, which may be passive (merely the presence of a powerful man in the area) or more active (like ordering retribution against someone who has harmed or threatened a resident in his area).

Salo (2005:11-13) relates a story from Manenberg in 1997 that further illustrates this role played by crime and gang bosses. When the Naughty Boys accused one of the members of the Dixie

Boys of stealing wheels from a car that belonged to one of their members and vowed that they would extract revenge, they sent a delegation to Paul, the leader of the Dixie Boys, to inform him about their plans. Meeting them in the presence of some of the 'mothers' ("moeders") and a few older men, Paul negotiated with the delegation. The outcome of this meeting was that punishment was meted out to the member accused of the theft by his own gang, thus warding off a potentially ugly gang conflict and thereby averting a more serious threat to the wellbeing of the residents of that particular street. Salo, 2005:13 draws the following conclusion from this incident:

Residents preferred the gang's kangaroo style court to a formal investigation by the police. The police may have investigated the car theft, but they would also have learned of other illegal economic activities, that the impoverished township residents necessarily rely on to survive. The 'Boere' or the 'Boers', as the police were commonly called in the township, were considered to be part and parcel of the township communities' systematic denigration. Most residents acknowledged that theft was unpleasant. However they made a moral distinction between theft committed against the local poor (considered to be morally reprehensible), who could ill-afford any material loss, and the nameless wealthy who were safely insulated from the ravages of poverty and who seemed to care little about the less well-off township dwellers (considered unpleasant, but a necessary aspect of survival).

The third reason for community support, according to Standing, stems from the criminal elite's disposition towards acts of philanthropy. Residents turn to gang bosses for money to help them with their day-to-day costs of living. Gang bosses are reported to have assisted churches with projects, they sponsor many local football teams, as well as teams competing in the Coon Carnival. The ecumenical secretary of the Western Cape Provincial Council of Churches (WCPCC) articulates the frustration of religious leaders with this situation in the communities:

The church has responded to the economic and social crises of the Cape Flats *emotionally* where as the criminal elite have responded *materially* by providing the rudiments of an alternative welfare system. (Standing, 2003:9)

Standing argues that it is a mistake to consider the only motive of philanthropic criminals as being economic self-interest. It is also about community glory.

The random handouts, the ability to support families, the Church or the football team, are all activities that provide local celebrity status. In such case, we may concur that philanthropy may be symbolic of a depressing reality of life on the Cape Flats, for in impoverished communities that provide few cases of celebrated successes, the crass antics of the obscenely wealthy crime boss can easily assume centre stage. (Standing, 2003:9)

It is clear that the criminal elite on the Cape Flats operate within a context of undesirable socio-economic conditions where unemployment and poverty are daily realities. The fact remains that there are social contradictions inherent in the criminal economy that means that it is not a fringe activity, but rather a core dimension of the society.

Thus, the surface benefits of criminal income can be contrasted with exploitation and a gross polarisation of wealth. The benefits of philanthropy and community governance can be contrasted with criminal elite who have created an environment favourable for the continuation of their business empires. The overarching contradiction is that the criminal economy perpetuates the conditions it seeks to ameliorate – poverty, social fragmentation and a lack of efficient, just governance. (Stander, 2003:10)

One may conclude that, as long as large sections of the communities on the Cape Flats experience poverty and unemployment, gang leaders and drug bosses would find desperate and willing people prepared to do anything to survive. SA Statistics' extended definition of poverty helps us to understand the situation of many young people:

The denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and respect. (Western Cape Youth Commission, 2008:17)

It is clear from this extended definition of poverty that the environment has an effect on people's psycho-social development. Not all young people and children living in the townships of the Cape Flats are strong enough or have enough support to rise above these circumstances. Many are literally robbed of their innocence and of their ability and freedom to choose their destiny.

#### **2.6.4 Psycho-social Causes**

It should be reiterated here that the psycho-social factors or causes discussed below do not necessarily stand separately, nor are they listed in order of importance.

### ***2.6.4.1 Dehumanising effect of apartheid***

Underdeveloped townships with low-cost housing, inadequate housing, lack of proper housing, over-crowding; lack of resources and recreational facilities are some of the effects of apartheid experienced in many Black and Coloured townships

These factors correspond with studies of gangs in African American and Hispanic communities in the United States. In one such study amongst Hispanic communities in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties in the United States of America, Dr Francine Hallcom writes:

The sites all have in common definite manifestations: the era marks of a lower socio-economic area, characterized by unemployment, wide-spread deterioration, poverty, high crime rate, gang graffiti and violence. These communities in themselves provide virtually no opportunities. For most barrio youths life chances are severely limited to the point of being virtually non-existent. Consequently, many youths (and adult men in particular) simply 'hang out' ...

Children who live in perpetual poverty are traumatized, and even as adults they frequently suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder or other form of anxiety, fear, and emotional difficulty – sleeplessness, nervousness, confusion, grief, anger, and even rage ... The gang often understands the individual's pain and hopelessness far better than any family member or social worker ever could.(n.d.)

This is echoed by Joy D. Osofsky from the Departments of Pediatrics and Psychiatry of the School of Medicine, Louisiana State University:

For adolescents, particularly those who have experienced violence exposure throughout their lives, higher levels of aggression and acting out are common, accompanied by anxiety, behavior problems, school problems, truancy, and revenge seeking... many suffer considerable scars. Some report giving up hope, expecting that they may not live through adolescence or early childhood ... may become deadened to feelings and pain, with resultant constriction in emotional development. Or they may attach themselves to peer groups or gangs as substitute family and incorporate violence as a method of dealing with disputes or frustration" (1997:7).

### **2.6.4.2 Dysfunctional families**

The family unit has undergone tremendous and radical changes over the past decades – and many of these changes are not positive. The changes are the result of various factors, including social, economical, political and developmental one. At the same time, changes in the family unit have been the blamed for a perceived breakdown of morals, discipline and social order. One may list a number of the changes that have taken place that have impacted on family life. These include:

- the privatisation of family life, which has led to intensified conflict;
- the democratisation of family life, resulting in individual needs and rights dominating the dynamics of the whole (family system);
- the economic destabilisation of the extended family;
- the shift in authority – from respect to the me-generation (entitlement);
- the social disruption of family stability – poverty, as well as the schism between workplace and family life; and
- the absence of the ‘father’ and the identity crisis of the ‘traditional male’.

The eroding of traditional extended family structures, absent and busy parents, teenage pregnancies and single parent families may in one way or another contribute to children and young people joining street gangs. Families should basically provide three things to their members, namely protection, belonging and respect. When these are absent, children or young people may look to gangs as an alternative to fill the void.

Vigil (1996:1) employs the term “multiple marginality” to describe “the combined disadvantages of low socio-economic status, street socialization and segregation” that puts individuals more at risk of being street socialised and joining gangs. Lasting damage occurs when elements of a child’s environment – at home, at school, in the neighbourhood – multiply each other’s destructive effects.

Couture (2000:40) refers to the multiple risk factors that are concentrated in the lives of “economically poor and tenuously connected children”:

It is generally agreed that *multiple* risk factors, rather than the *nature* of the risk factors, create the likelihood that children will become troubled teenagers who remain “outsiders” to society. In some children’s lives, risk factors are concentrated. In others,

one or two may exist. Every child needs a cushion against the risk factors in his or her family or neighborhood. The poorer the child – economically, in family and social connections – the greater that need.

The effect of disintegrating family structures and systems has definitely played a role in the formation and establishment of the gang culture in communities on the Cape Flats. The research has continuously pointed out that gangsterism is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes. In the next section we briefly discuss a few more contributing elements.

### ***2.6.4.3 Other factors***

The following are a number of factors that may also contribute to the decision by young people to join gangs: alcohol and drug abuse; peer group pressure; inter-generational tensions; role of the media in terms of value-formation with regard to violence and materialism; secularisation (decreasing influence of religion). On the issue of children and youth violence, Joy D. Osofsky (1997:3-8) writes:

Children learn what they see – and, unfortunately, in our country through news reports, movies, television, and everyday life in many parts of our country ... children see violence, and they do not learn that violence is bad. Too often they learn that violence is an acceptable way to resolve conflict; furthermore, many children, because of their home and neighborhood environments, have little opportunity to learn about alternative ways to settle disputes.

These factors appear to be universal with regard to the phenomenon of gangsterism. (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996; Spergel, 1995). Various factors may combine in particular instances, and may also differ from situation to situation.

Nicro, (1990:4) has found that many young people in the townships want to take revenge on the community that is responsible for so much pain in their lives:

With very little opportunity of breaking out of the cycle of poverty, feelings of not belonging and of being unwanted grow. Because it is so difficult to get a job, people feel like failures and their self-esteem decreases. No wonder then that so many youth drift into gangsterism.

Eric Hofmeyer, a former gangster who grew up in Manenberg and Mitchells Plain, relates how he and other boys formed a street gang, the *Wanted Kids*, on the dusty streets of Manenberg to defend themselves from white policemen who drove into the township and smacked them around for playing in the street, calling them skollies (derogatory term for Coloured, implying a wastrel existence) (Hofmeyer, 1999:2). The *Wanted Kids*, a subsidiary of the *Hard Living* gang in Manenberg, provided Eric and his friends with a sense of solidarity; “they saw themselves essentially as political activists, throwing stones at cops and trying to retain ownership of their street. Eric’s mother became anxious about his involvement in the *Wanted Kids* and the gang wars in Manenberg at the end of the 1970s and they moved to the newly built Mitchells Plain, “which was in comparison more ‘posh’ than Manenberg”. This did not stop Eric from becoming more involved in gangsterism and he started recruiting other youngsters. This gave rise to a thriving gang in their new neighbourhood.

Eric (Hofmeyer 1999:3) sums up the reasons for them wanting to be gangsters:

First, the *Hard Livings* was basically formed out of the political situation in the country. We saw ourselves as fighting for the anti-apartheid struggle by stealing from whites, who lived on the other side o the tracks, to help the poor. We also wanted to be macho guys on the street, big guys, not like the *Wanted Kids*. Growing up in poverty as we did, we needed to feel big. We denied our own families for the brotherhood. Most of the guys there, about eighty percent, came from homes where fathers were not playing their roles responsibly. There was domestic violence, or sometimes fathers were absent, had walked out on their families. This was the key, this neglect made us want to be big men.

The *Mongrel Mob*, a New Zealand gang, was formed in 1968 by children who said they had been abused in the country’s childcare system.

Alienated by what they claimed to have suffered at the hands of their supposed carers, the kids formed the Mongrel Mob as a way of striking back, not just at the people they felt had ruined their childhood but at the country as a whole. Forty years down the track, the Mongrel Mob are still exacting their own unique form of revenge although not everyone in the gang knows exactly why and how the Mob got started. (Kemp, 2007:68)

Rashied Staggie also mentions poverty and a weak self-image as reasons for involvement in crime. He furthermore blames “oppression” for the establishment of his organisation, with

reference to his gang.(De Meyer, 1996) One of the founding members of the *Comando Vermelho (CV)* gang in Rio de Janeiro claimed that CV had not been set up as a criminal gang, but “as a means of fighting for social and economic justice. For the people” (Kemp, 2007:37).

## 2.6.5 Those Not Affiliated to Gangs

There is a myth in gang-infested townships: If you do not belong to a gang, you are nothing.

The reality is that not all young persons living under undesirable and negative conditions join gangs. It is also true that not all gang members come from broken homes.<sup>38</sup> A former member of the CV gang in Rio de Janeiro also expresses himself in this way:

Most people who live in Borel are not actual gang members. Many try to make an honest living. Like me. The problem? If you live in a *favela*, everyone assumes you are a criminal before you even open your mouth (Kemp, 2007:20)

This point is supported in the study by Hallcom (n.d.):

Many youths from the same ‘dysfunctional’ environments, sometimes from the same family as the gang members, do not affiliate with gangs although they live in the same crime-ridden streets. Many become productive citizens contributing to the community and general tax base. Others even have the spunk to seek out financial aid resources and get through college.... The surprising fact of the matter is that most young people growing up in barrios (= *neighborhoods*) do not join gangs!, only 4% to 10% actually do become gang-bangers.

This is an important fact to take into account when one discusses areas like Manenberg. The general opinion of outsiders, as well as media coverage, often paints the whole community as gangsters or connected to gangsterism. In this regard the Proudly Manenberg Campaign (PMC) is an important community project to counter this view.

Former and present Manenberg residents have joined religious groups, schools and community organisations in this campaign to shed the stigma of the township being a ghetto attracting

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<sup>38</sup> Quinton, an ex-gangster, for example, makes it clear that he came from a good family. He did not even know about gangs in the earlier part of his childhood. He started to fight back to defend himself against bullies at school and later started his own youth gang after continuously being harassed and threatened by youths in the neighbourhood where he visited a girl friend. He consequently joined one of the bigger gangs (Interview 12/06/2006, Addendum A).



nothing but negative publicity. According to a report in the *Cape Times*, (Hartley, 2005) PMC objectives include restoring the pride and dignity of residents, the development of opportunities and leadership skills among the youth, and stabilising crime and gang activity. Another initiative is the Manenberg Educational Trust, which awards bursaries to matriculants from Manenberg to study at the tertiary institutions of their choice in Cape Town.

The next section looks briefly at gang rituals and rites of passage. This discussion provides an important perspective for a possible proactive intervention to try to stop adolescents from joining gangs.

## 2.7 GANG RITUALS AND RITES OF PASSAGE

In order to acquire a better understanding of gangs and how they operate, it is necessary to have a look at gang rituals and how they link to natural rites of passage that have existed in most cultures for ages.

Don Pinnock's book, *The Brotherhoods: street gangs and state control in Cape Town* (1984), was one of the first books about gangs on the Cape Flats and is still considered one of the most important literature resources for a study of gangs. Another book by Pinnock, *Gangs, rituals & rites of passage* (1997b), is an equally important source for further discussion and research on a deeply-rooted and complex phenomenon in our communities. We are of the opinion that the insights in this book present important points of departure for communities and institutions wishing to work towards finding solutions to the problem of street gangs.

According to Pinnock (1997a:1), the important question that we need to ask is:

What is it about adolescence that makes gangs so attractive? Because only in answering this can we find what might motivate young people to escape them.

Pinnock's (1997a:1) quotation of Joseph Campbell forms the basic point of departure of the book:

Boys everywhere have a need for rituals marking their passage to manhood. If society does not provide them they will inevitably invent their own.

It is extremely important to understand what adolescence is and also to understand what adolescents themselves view as significant for them. Adolescence, "a rope bridge of knotted

symbols and magic between childhood and maturity, strung across an abyss of danger” (David Cohen, as cited by Pinnock, 1997a:7) is a period of confusion and intense feeling, but at the same time it is a time of creativity, anticipation and discovery. According to John Bly (cited in Pinnock, 1997a:8) adolescence is a time of risk for boys: “Something in the adolescent male wants risk, courts danger, goes out to the edge – even the edge of death”. These needs of adolescents should be handled by means of ritual guidance and initiation, not by means of punishment and prison sentences. In older, more socially-coherent cultures, the initiation process entails a break with the parents and a ‘journey’ into the woods, wilderness or desert. Adolescence is a process, a transformation, a “becoming, a time filled with danger, but at the same time filled with enough potential for growth” (Pinnock, 1997a:10). All this take place under the supervision and guidance of a mentor, a father or mother figure, the wise sage who channels the wildness to calmer waters.

While these age-old rituals have disappeared in our urban cultures as a result of migration, poverty or dilution, young people continue to have (and act on) the same needs. Where rituals are absent, they will create their own. On the Cape Flats, young gang members are required to break a bottle neck (i.e. to be the first person to smoke a broken bottle neck filled with dagga and mandrax). Elaine Salo (2005:18) shares the story of a 15-year-old boy’s initiation into the JFK\$ (Junky Funky Kids):

In 1998 he had entered his first year at the local high school, where he had befriended the members of the JFK\$. They had enthralled him with tales of their gang activities and then invited him to join them. When he agreed, he was invited to meet all the members at “The Green”, the only soccer field in Manenberg, one Sunday evening where he would be initiated into the gang. At this time the field would be deserted and they would not be disturbed as they carried out the initiation ceremony. He said that the members were armed with leather belts, wooden clubs and planks. They stood in parallel lines, facing each other. The leader then instructed him to run through the gauntlet of gang members who beat him with their assorted weapons. He had to do this because “You must demonstrate that you have strong bones. You have to display your ability to stand your man. When your brother is in trouble (in a gang war) you must be able to assist him”.

If the gang is satisfied with the new recruit's ability to withstand the severe beating,<sup>39</sup> he has to go through the painful process of receiving his 'tjappie' (the tattoo), which marks gang membership. His journey into manhood has begun. From that point onwards he has to take on the values and responsibilities that come with it, including the responsibility to defend his brother's life even under the most difficult circumstances.

New recruits may also be asked to perform a ritual killing or rape. This may involve members or associates of another gang, or completely innocent and unaffiliated people.

The one aim of these rituals is respect of adults.

In this painful and dangerous journey can be found echoes of African initiation ceremonies, Jewish *bar mitzvahs*, ancient hunting rituals, Boer *kommando* lore, images of Hollywood, Christian holy communions, Khoi trance dances, Arthurian legends and many other rituals through which, for millennia, young people have attempted to prove themselves worthy of adulthood. (Pinnock, 1997a:12)

The French anthropologist, Arnold van Gennep, identified various stadiums or phases that we go through and how ceremonies were created around these moments of individual life crises like birth, social puberty, marriage, parenthood and death – “those crucial moments when we shifted the gears of life” (Pinnock, 1997a:15). The following consequent phases constitute life:

- Rites of *separation* = to detach the subject from their old status or condition. Separation entails symbolic acts that indicate the individual's loosening from his or her fixed point in

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<sup>39</sup> The same type of initiation into the 18 Street and MS 13 gangs in El Salvador is described by Ross Kemp: “[I]nitiation involves getting savagely beaten by a circle of established gang members for eighteen seconds – or as long as you can endure it. The longer you can take it, the higher your ranking in the gang. For MS 13 the same rules apply. It's supposed to be thirteen seconds, but no one is standing there with a stopwatch. When people are hitting you as hard as they can, any seconds at all is a very long time. The initiation process is so vicious the gangs have a real problem recruiting young women ... So here's what some do to keep up the numbers: female gang members pick up a young woman from their local neighbourhood. She is usually strong and good looking – that's what the men like, and that's the type of person the gang needs. First, they go to the targeted girl and invite her politely to join the gang. If she refuses, the women surround the girl and invite her to choose between the same violent 'jumping' as the men, which can leave you with missing teeth, broken bones and/or facially scarred for life, and the train. The train is gang rape. Anyone can get on board and take a ride. If a girl chickens out of the beating and opts for the train, the rape does not end there: she has to make herself available for any gangster who wants to use her sexually at any time for as long as she lives. If she tries to resist, then the gang kill her. To make sure that she never leave the gang, the gangsters use a tattoo gun to etch MS 13 or 18 STREET across the victim's forehead and cheeks in great big glaring blue-black ink. Once she has the facial tattoos no other man will touch her: she belongs to the gang and can never again lead a normal life” (Kemp 2007:100-102).

the social structure (differentiation) and may be symbolised by death. The individual has to 'die' to his or her old life in order to be 'born' anew.

- Rites of *threshold* = transitional rites or *liminality*. In this condition, the individual is a 'traveller' who travels through an unidentified terrain. In this phase there is a suspension of rules and the individual is forced to do what is prohibited.

Ritualistic liminality employs structures of its own; but these are different from the structures of society, and they are often used to emphasise homogeneity, equality, anonymity and even foolishness when compared to with the heterogeneous, status-marked, name-conscious intelligence of the main-stream social order. (Pinnock, 1997a:15)

- Rites of *incorporation* = coming together, sharing ritual object use. Rituals are utilised here that symbolise the individual's re-entry into the community and the new group.

Pinnock's conviction is that an understanding of the use of rituals is essential for an understanding of adolescents and for establishing a new youth judiciary system in South Africa. In 1997, Pinnock spearheaded the formation of a broad-based rites-of-passage organisation called *Usiko* ("first ritual"). This was the consequence of a preliminary wilderness programme at Hogsback in the Amatola Mountains that involved some 60 tough youths (Pinnock, 1997a). The initial five-month programme included careful assessment of the young offenders; rites of passage; job skills and personal skills development; and a period of 'pay-back' to the people and community who were 'offended' by whatever crime had landed the children in trouble. Among *Usiko*'s founding principles are the development in youths of self-mastery, personal growth, environmental sensitivity, awareness of the effects of wrongdoing, accountability, collaboration, dignity and spiritual healing.

In an unpublished article titled, "Lifestories", Pinnock (n.d. (a)) posits the following:

- We need to know that adolescent behaviour is deeply ritualised, whether adolescents are imbedded in existing rituals or are inventing their own.
- We must be aware of the need adolescents have for having a story to tell, for telling it and being acknowledged for doing so. For this reason we must help young people to have lives that generate stories worthy of telling. These are what make their life meaningful.

- When we fail to do this (and we are failing), they create their own stories out of rituals and actions that tear down adult society around them.
- We need to realise that all life stories have a mimetic<sup>40</sup> understory. We must listen attentively to what is really being said and meant in all the bragging and posturing, and be sure to know the implications of the stories and rituals we impose.
- Our interventions, our programmes, need to take the first three points into account. We must realise that ritual is not merely the parent of programming, but the grandparent also. Without it, especially (but not only) working with adolescents, diversion programmes are spiritually empty and will probably fail.
- When we put adolescents in prison, we strip away their identity, their self-esteem, and we embed them in rituals of brutality and shame. What probably began as a quest for respect and peer recognition, however aberrant, ends in years of spirit sapping meaningless. And Aids.

This researcher is also convinced that the church and other communities of faith situated or working in communities where few or no traditional transformation rituals exist will have to look very seriously at this proposal. Most, if not all, of *Usiko's* founding principles could be theologically grounded and motivated, giving faith communities a basis from which to develop programmes. Another way of looking at such a programme is to form a partnership with an organisation like *Usiko* to work with young people from a specific religious perspective or point of departure, and adapt their programme according to the needs, aims and objectives of the faith community. In this way, we admit that faith communities are part and parcel of the broader society, and that we could and should learn from other disciplines and organisations in rebuilding lives and communities. For this to happen, we clearly need some open-minded and committed people within faith communities – people who realise that we need partnerships, time and financial resources if we are serious about making a significant difference in the lives of young people and the communities we serve. We indeed have a God-given window of opportunity with children and young people in our churches to help and equip them to deal with the stormy transitions in their lives.

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<sup>40</sup> *Meme* refers to the underlying message in the story. *Meme* is a word created by the biologist Richard Dawkins and is a unit of cultural information. In the same way that genes are handed on through propagation, memes can move from one mind to another as tunes, catch-phrases, stories, beliefs, ways of making things or viewing the world. Ritual, in its traditional form, is a mimetic story, according to Pinnock, a story that embodies cultural understandings learned over thousands of generations. It's a sheet-anchor against the storm of unprincipled, unsupported adolescence (Pinnock, n.d. (a)).

The final section of this chapter deals with the relationship between gangs and drugs. There seems to be enough evidence globally that there is an undeniable connection between gangsterism, drug abuse and the illicit drug trading. The increase in drug trafficking since the dawn of the democratic dispensation in South Africa has changed the face of gangsterism (cf. Kinnes, 2000).

## 2.8 GANGS AND DRUGS

Gangs and illegal drug trafficking have become synonymous over decades all over the globe. According to experts, gang shootings and killings in townships like Hanover Park in recent years were due to a fight for drug trade turf. According to Anti-Crime Forum chairman Llewellyn Jordaan: "It's about ... power and control over turf. The more control a gang can have on a particular community, the more viable it becomes for them. Things have been quiet for two years but authorities have underestimated the impact of the gangsters on their communities. You can't divorce drugs from gangs. The emergence of tik<sup>41</sup> had us asking when the next fight over territory and turf for this drug was going to take place" (Bailey, 2006).

Seven months later another article appeared in *The Argus* under the heading "Gang turf war rips through Cape Flats streets"(Bailey, 2006). It reported that residents in several Cape Town areas were living in the middle of a protracted gang battle over an alleged drug turf. Rival gangs the Americans and the Wonder Kids were alleged to be having a turf war and poaching drug clients before the festive season. It appears that gangs, just like 'legal' businesses also see the end-of-the-year festive season as a time to make extra money and push up their 'profits'. The *Argus* reports:

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<sup>41</sup> Tik, also known commonly as meth, tuk, speed or crystal, is a highly addictive methamphetamine drug, right up with heroin, although not quite as addictive. The white, odourless, bitter crystalline powder, which dissolves easily in water or alcohol, is a powerful stimulant that affects the central nervous system. In South Africa, users typically smoke the fumes after the powder or crystal, placed in a light bulb, is heated with a lighter. From the second half of 2004, the number of addicts seeking treatment for tik use (as their main substance of abuse) spiralled from just 2,3% of total users in treatment in Cape Town at the end of 2003 to nearly 20% at the end of 2004. According to the Medical Research Council's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Group, almost 60% of the patients seeking treatment for tik as their main drug of abuse in the second half of 2004 were younger than 20. The ages ranged from 13 to 46. Of the patients seeking treatment in Cape Town for tik as their main drug of abuse, 88% were coloured and 72% were male, with the majority coming from Mitchells Plain. Other problem areas for tik use include Retreat, Athlone, Bonteheuwel and Hanover Park. Pointing to the power of tik, and its particular popularity with adolescents, Grant Jardine, director of the Cape Town Drug Counselling Centre, has been quoted in the *Cape Argus* as saying the drug "gives adolescents what they want – confidence and a sense of power". See Caelers,(2005), Breytenbach (2006), Medical Research Council (2005), and Legget (2003).

According to police sources, gang leaders and drug lords have instructed their soldiers to stamp their authority on the drug market before the festive season...The gangs are now placing an added emphasis on making money, establishing a power base and winning territory from rival gangs. Several police sources pointed to a build-up to the festive season, with an influx of visitors to the city, as one reason for the fighting. Gangs are positioning themselves and their drug outlets in such a way that they cash in as the year draws to a close (Joseph, 2006).

These are just some of the reports from one of Cape Town's newspapers. It is possible to read about the ultra-negative effects of tik on people and communities as a whole almost on a daily basis.<sup>42</sup> Ryan (1997:10) warns about this:

Illicit drug-related violence, coupled with the incidence of other violent crime can have a detrimental effect on the overall well being of society by undermining the basic tenets of citizen's expectations of a safe and secure life.

According to the 'tripartite conceptual framework', a theory developed by an American researcher, Paul Goldstein (cited in Ryan, 1997), there are three dimensions according to which the relationship between illicit drugs and violence may be explained:

- The **psycho-pharmacological dimension**: suggests that some people may act violently or may become irritated or irrational because of drug intake. Drugs may be used to build confidence or reduce nervousness in order to commit crime. Anybody may be a victim of this psycho-pharmacological violence, including marriage partners, neighbours, strangers or the drug abuser self.
- The **economic-impulsive dimension**: refers to the economic violence committed to attain funds for the purchase of drugs for personal use. Violence in this case is not the primary aim, but might occur.
- The **systemic dimension**, which is intrinsic to the lifestyles and business methods of those in the illicit drug market. Amongst these are disputes over areas between merchants, assaults and murders by drug lords to enforce the elimination of informers

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<sup>42</sup> These are just a few examples: "Tik the Mother City's devastating teen time bomb", *The Argus*, 27 October 2004; "Tik Pandemic driving people 'insane'", *The Cape Times*, 14 June 2006; "Tik addiction blamed for increase in rapes", *The Cape Times*, 22 December 2006; "Cape Town's tik babies. Hundreds of children born to addicts may suffer life-long effects", *Weekend Argus*, 13/14 January 2007.

required by normative codes, punishment for selling fake drugs and punishment for non-payment of debt.

The intense competition for a stake in the illicit drug trade, and the accompanying violence, must be understood against the background that it is a “US\$ 100 billion a year transnational industry” (Ryan, 1997:1). Given South Africa’s unacceptably high unemployment figure, low wages and salaries in many job sectors, combined with human greed, many people are enticed by syndicates to become involved in the illicit drug trade with promises of easy money. The consequences of increased drug abuse are, amongst other things, increases in drug trafficking, shoot-outs between rival drug gangs, deterioration of social values, breakdown of the family unit and corruption (Ryan, 1997). This is confirmed by a daily scrutiny of Cape Town newspapers.

This link or connection between gangsterism and drugs needs to be kept in mind when a possible pastoral-theological contribution to attempts to find solutions is discussed. It is not enough for the church to preach and pray about societal evils. Pastoral carers need to take hands with various agencies in a holistic approach to a scourge that is literally eating away our future in our communities. Drugs are sowing havoc in communities on the Cape Flats, and faith communities are not bypassed or excluded. This is evident from the requests for intercession coming from members of various congregations where the researcher has been preaching.

## **2.9 SUMMARY**

Reducing the levels of violence in the Western Cape cannot be achieved by winning any ‘war’ against crime. In the short term, there is no practical alternative to constructive engagement between all those stuck in the current impasse of attack and counter-attack, crime and reaction – gangs, police and anti-crime groups. Over the longer term, something must also be done to tackle the roots of violence in the political economy of gangsterism and drug dealing and their devastating effects on economic and social life in neighbourhoods across the Cape Flats. (Dixon & Johns, 2001:7, 47)

It has been argued in this chapter that no singular solution can solve the problem of gangsterism on the Cape Flats. Dixon and Johns correctly states that a multi-pronged approach is needed involving every possible stakeholder in the affected communities.

It is important to list a few aspects of gangsterism that transpired from this chapter:



### **2.9.1 Gangsterism is a systemic phenomenon that affects not only the individual persons but families and communities as well**

Crime, and especially violent crime, impacts on almost everyone in society, although it is undeniably at its most relentless in poor urban communities, for women, and for children. (Butler, 2004:141)

We have clearly seen that gangsterism is a societal problem with many facets regarding its root causes. It affects an entire community, and not just individuals. Every person, every gang member, has family connections. What happens to that gang member affects his or her family in a direct or indirect manner. But, more than that, gangsterism has a severe impact on whole communities. Communities are stigmatised, disrupted and adversely affected in more ways than one by the existence of gangs in their townships.

In order to address gangsterism from a pastoral theological perspective, this structural and systemic nature of the phenomenon will have to be taken into account.

### **2.9.2 Gangsterism is rooted in historic socio-political and economic factors**

It is critical for pastoral care to bear this in mind when addressing gangsterism. Without this perspective there may be a tendency to simplify the issue or to try to propose superficial solutions to a very complex situation, e.g. to view gangsterism as something that is typical of the 'youth today'. Although apartheid cannot and should not be blamed for every single thing that went wrong in South Africa, the devastating effects of this form of social engineering can never be ignored or rationalised. Gangsterism found a favourable breeding ground in the socio-economic conditions created by apartheid on the Cape Flats. Once established, it became difficult to be rooted out despite various efforts, notably in the form of police operations and specialised units. Andre Standing (2005) argues that much of the thinking on gangs and anti-gang policy conforms to the "cosmetic fallacy", a simplistic understanding of crime.

The cosmetic fallacy conceives crime as a superficial problem of society, skin deep, which can be dealt using the appropriate ointment, rather than the chronic ailment of society as a whole. It engenders a cosmetic criminology which views crime as a blemish which suitable treatment can remove from a body which is, itself, otherwise healthy and in little need of reconstruction. Such criminology distances itself from the core institutions and proffers technical, piecemeal solutions. It thus reverses causality:

crime causes problems for society rather than society causes the problem of crime.  
(Jock Young, cited in Standing, 2005:26)

### **2.9.3 Gangsterism in South Africa occurs mostly within Coloured communities**

This aspect of gangsterism in South Africa is the topic of much debate. For the moment, however, we have to accept the fact that Coloured townships, especially in the Western Cape and more specifically on the Cape Flats, are affected more by gangsterism than other areas or parts of South Africa. When we ask why this is the case, no one has really come up with a compelling explanation or answer. Andre Standing puts forward at least thirteen causal factors that are generally listed as the reasons for the long history of gangs in Coloured communities, as discussed in this chapter of our research.

There is no doubt that many of these factors are important issues for the coloured community as well as explaining the behaviours of various individuals involved with gangs. However, we may wonder which of these arguments are more persuasive than others when it comes to explaining why the coloured areas of the Cape Flats are believed to have such a longstanding problem with gangs and gangsterism. (Standing, 2005:15)

Whatever the reasons may be, this study aims, among other things, to contribute to a discussion about pastoral care in faith communities where membership is predominantly from the Coloured population, and where the phenomenon of gangsterism has become a real part of their lives.

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

The discussion of the phenomenon of gangsterism has shown that it is very complex. The researcher is convinced that when **healthy family structures** are absent, young people and children may be predisposed to joining gangs. The concept 'traditional' family structures, meaning a household with a father, mother and children, is deliberately not used because the researcher recognises that these may be too restricted. It is a fact that not only children of single mothers join gangs, and that many single mothers provide a healthy environment for their families. On the other hand, many young people who grow up in a family with both parents find the gang to be much more of a family for them. To further complicate the matter, not every young person in a specific family experiencing the same socio-economic conditions joins a gang. It was also stated that not all young people within so-called gang areas are actually joining

gangs. It seems therefore that a combination of individual-personal and structural-systemic factors contributes towards a person's decision whether to join a street gang or not. Even though the research has tried to show in broad terms the underlying causes and structures of gangsterism, it recognises the danger of generalisations and over-simplifications.

Dysfunctional family systems create fertile ground for gangsterism. If this is combined with adverse socio-economic conditions, young people may look for spaces and places where they can try to make meaning of or find meaning in life.

Given the description of the phenomenon of gangsterism in its different facets, the researcher is convinced that faith communities are positioned well to provide an alternative to gangs. The theological nature of these faith communities, as well as lessons learnt from their history and traditions, equips them to offer a space and place of belonging to those young people searching and yearning for a place where they can belong and be affirmed and valued.

In the next chapter a practical-theological ecclesiology for the Cape Flats will be developed.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **ON BEING THE CHURCH WITHIN THE CAPE FLATS: TOWARDS A PRACTICAL-THEOLOGICAL ECCLESIOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this study we are grappling with the question: What do faith communities offer to people searching for a home, a family? What alternatives do faith communities provide to gangs who clearly act as 'surrogate' families for many young people, as well as older people, who are searching for a place of belonging? Is it possible for the church to act as a 'surrogate family'? It is important for us to probe whether the faith communities answer to their *raison d'être*, so to speak. How do faith communities understand themselves and their calling in this world? More specifically, what does it mean to be church on the Cape Flats, where the phenomenon of gangsterism is a reality of everyday life?

The chapter starts with a look at the resilience of faith communities on the Cape Flats throughout the period of oppression under apartheid. The researcher believes that this will help him to discover and appreciate some crucial elements of an ecclesiology, of the self-understanding of faith communities in a very particular context. Subsequently, the study will formulate a practical-theological ecclesiology that may enhance pastoral work on the Cape Flats.

#### **3.2 RESILIENCE OF FAITH COMMUNITIES ON THE CAPE FLATS**

The study has already referred to the socio-political history of South Africa in general and the Western Cape in particular, and how it impacted on the phenomenon of gangsterism in the Western Cape (Chapter Two). What follows is a discussion of the resilience of faith communities on the Cape Flats as a background to the search for a practical-theological ecclesiology.

The construct of resilience refers to a "a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity" (Luthar, et al, 2000:543). It is a term usually used to describe individuals who adapt to extraordinary circumstances, achieving positive and

unexpected results in the face of adversity. According to Luthar and her colleagues, ‘resilience’ has been receiving much attention since the 1970s amongst researchers in the fields of psychology and child development. Their paper presents a critical appraisal of resilience dealing with the conceptual and methodological pitfalls that have been noted by sceptics and proponents alike.

The use of the term “resilience” in this study is limited to a general understanding of resilience as the “ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like; buoyancy” (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/resilience>); or “the capacity of an individual or group to exhibit positive behavioural adaptation when they encounter significant adversity, trauma or tragedy ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological\\_resilience](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_resilience)).

### **3.2.1 The effect of Apartheid policies on Faith Communities on the Cape Flats**

Faith communities are part and parcel of the broader society; they are not islands unaffected by broader societal changes. As such, they experience everything that communities at large are experiencing. Coloured and Black people have always been people of faith. This point is argued very strongly by Allan Boesak, who takes issue with academics and politicians who do not recognize the power of the liberating gospel as reclaimed by the oppressed. Ignoring the importance and integral role of spirituality in the lives, political activity and struggles of the oppressed people of South Africa, according to Boesak, is the height of both academic and political dishonesty, a “grave insult” (2005:131).

Thus, when people were uprooted and forcibly removed from their communities, their religious practices were severely disrupted, as they were robbed, amongst other things, of places of worship and fellowship. Policies, not people, mattered more to the Nationalist government. In the case of the establishment of the township of Bishop Lavis, it is rather ironic that the Citizens Housing League, which planned and developed the new town, required a letter from a church minister as part of the application for a house, but at the same time apparently did not care much about people’s religious needs in the new township. People in the new townships had to find their own ways and means of establishing a sense of community; this was not easy and it would, in fact, take at least a decade for people just to settle down, if they ever did. Derrick Marco, writing with reference to Elsie’s River, reflects the experience of people across the Cape Flats:

As a result of prevailing conditions and the effects it has on the lives of people, it is difficult to detect an authentic community spirit i.e. a feeling of belonging, of appreciation and of respect. Attitudes have hardened and defensiveness, withdrawal, and individualism regulate social relations. This, while it cannot be condoned, is understandable in a community where 'the rule of the jungle applies i.e. the fittest survive. Trusting, caring relationships seldom exist. Love is a foreign phenomenon ... (Marco, 1992:16)

Residents in these new townships were strangers to one another and most probably did not have much faith in the place or in their new neighbours, except those whom they knew from their former residential areas. Their restlessness and mistrust somehow also influenced the children of the townships. According to Arnold Smith, financial considerations, such as minimum needs for comfort, inspiration and happiness, overshadowed human considerations in the minds of the planners of new townships. No provision was made for the education of children, for decent public spaces for recreation and relaxation, and for the practice of their faith (Smith, 1994:38). People in the newly established Bishop Lavis Township had to walk some distance to nearby Elsie's River to attend church services. They had to negotiate their way through bushes and were therefore at risk of being attacked by criminal elements, or otherwise they had to gather in houses to worship. The authorities also did not cater for the diverse religious affiliations of the people. Thirty-six different church denominations applied for building sites, but the authorities awarded land to only five: the Anglican Church, the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, the Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Despite the harsh circumstances under which people found themselves, faith communities played a very important and significant role in helping people to cope, to make sense of their lives, to find solace in the fact that 'God is not sleeping'. The researcher has found this expression to be the general way in which people of faith express their trust and hope when they find themselves in situations of wrongdoing or adversity. This God who is not sleeping is a God of justice and righteousness who would ensure that the 'wheel of justice' will turn (against the wrong-doers and in favour of the afflicted). It expresses a faith in a God who hears and sees. It is faith in the God who saw Hagar's flight from the abuse of Sarai [Genesis. 16:13 – "She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: 'You are the God who sees me', for she said, 'I have now seen the One who sees me'" (The Bible, New International Version)]; It is faith in the God who heard the cries of Ishmael in the desert [Genesis 21:17-18 – "God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, 'what is the matter, Hagar?

Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation” (NIV)]; the God who had “indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt”, and had “heard them crying out because of their slave drivers” and who was “concerned about their suffering” (Exodus 3:7, NIV).

### **3.2.2 The current situation on the Cape Flats**

#### ***3.2.2.1 For better or for worse?***

Reference was already made to the comment of Joshua Louw, Anglican priest in the township of Manenberg, expressing the opinion that it seems as if many of the residents “have not arrived yet”, especially the older people. “It is as if they are still somehow protesting against the forced removals, as if they are just not able to settle down”.<sup>43</sup> One may ask whether that feeling somehow filters through to the younger generations, affecting them subconsciously in a psychological way, resulting in a feeling of restlessness and hopelessness. The dawn of the new South Africa has not necessarily brought with it a feeling of comfort and hope for many Coloured people of the working classes. Feelings of marginality have been deepened by a perceived loss of status in the new South Africa (Adhikari, 2005:182). This is echoed the findings of by Dixon and Johns’ research and their specific interviews with reformed gangsters:

The broad picture that emerges from our meeting, and from informal conversations both before and after the interview took place, is of people uncertain of their and their (coloured) people’s place in the new South Africa, disillusioned with the way they have been treated by politicians who promised much but have delivered nothing...Compounding this is a sense of hopelessness of the ‘coloured condition’. Marginalised by the whites under apartheid, the coloured people have fared little better at the hands of a black government since 1994. (Dixon & Johns, 2001:36)

Nobody could deny that much was achieved in South Africa over the first decade of democracy. “There are signs of success everywhere”, writes Mamphela Ramphele (2008:14). She continues:

We have a national constitution that is widely acclaimed. We have a solid legal and judicial system. We have woven the fragments of our divided past into a nation that calls itself South Africa. We have accomplished some transformation feats in the public sector that were unthinkable. Welding together multiple government departments

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<sup>43</sup> Interview, 14 November 2006.

serving sectional interests into unified entities to serve all South Africans is a major accomplishment. Learning to live and work together as black and white South Africans is another achievement we can take pride in. We have a strong and growing private sector that is also increasingly coming to terms with the challenges of broadening the base of participation by black people in growing the wealth of the nation.

Allister Sparks is also of the opinion that “one can credit the new South Africa with many excellent achievements” (2003:3).<sup>44</sup> However, it is clear that, despite tremendous progress and giant steps already taken forward and away from our dreadful past, the net effects of apartheid will never be eradicated easily and definitely not in the near future. Bhorat and Kanbur, for example, point out that although South Africa’s formal baptism of democracy in April 1994 received international acclaim and recognition, the “greater struggle since the early post-apartheid days has been the attempt to undo the economic vestiges of the system of racial exclusivity...the first ten years have seen rising **unemployment**, rising **income poverty**, and rising **income inequality**, all in the context of a lacklustre performance in economic growth” (*my emphasis, LLMM*) (Bhorat & Kanbur, 2006:1).

### ***3.2.2.2 Economic perspectives – poverty and unemployment***

Poverty does not persist because there is a scarcity of resources, nor does poverty exist because some societies have inefficient economic systems, lack natural resources, or because poor people lack ambition. Poverty is a product of human social relationships because social relationships determine how people distribute resources. In fact, social aspects of relationships set the structure for economic exchanges. The way people assign and distribute things of value depends on both how integrated or segregated their relationships are and how powerful they are in relation to one another. (Lemieux & Pratto, 2003:147)

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<sup>44</sup> Allister Sparks continues: “We have entrenched a new democratic constitution, perhaps the most progressive in the world, and bedded it down through four national, provincial and local elections which have been manifestly peaceful and fair...Not least we have managed a smooth transition from the Founding Father of our new nation to his young successor in a continent where this is rare. We have scrapped all the old race laws, guaranteed freedom of speech and the press, abolished the death penalty, legalized abortion on demand, protected the rights of gay people, and advanced women in many spheres of life” (Sparks, 2003:3). Sparks then continues to list some of the achievements regarding the provision of clean water, telephones, free health to millions of children, as well as other positive developments on the economic side. He concludes: “It is indeed another country” (Sparks, 2003:4).



The “Annual Transformation Audit” published by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) “seeks to measure progress toward becoming a country growing sustainably both in prosperity and towards equity.” In the introduction to the 2006 Transformation Audit, Susan Brown writes:

The roadblock to effective transformation in South Africa is poverty. This is perpetuated by non-functioning local and national institutions, and by high unemployment, compounded by skewed growth, which is constrained by the skills mismatch bequeathed by inadequate education and skills provision, and by insufficient investment. (Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, 2006:xi)

Allister Sparks paints the situation as follows:

The crux of the problem is that South Africa has a double-decker economy – its First World sector and its Third World sector – and what is working for those on the upper deck of this economic bus is not working for those on the lower deck. So unemployment is increasing and the wealth gap is widening. (Sparks, 2003:332)

As such, Sparks argues, one-size-fits-all formulae are no good, and a single neo-liberal macro-economic policy is insufficient to deal with this dual economy. The government’s macro-economic policies are indeed “praiseworthy” and the top of the bus is doing well. “But there is no trickle-down effect” (Sparks, 2003:341).

Renier Koegelenberg (2003:1)<sup>45</sup> argues that “breaking the grip of poverty on a substantial portion of its citizens” is the “single most important issue facing South Africa” a decade after the transition to democracy. Stellenbosch University author and noted development economist Servaas van der Berg and his colleagues also state that “the majority of work suggests that poverty has become a greater problem since 1994” (Van der Berg, Louw & Yu, 2007). In their paper titled “Post-transition poverty trends based on an alternative data resource”, the Stellenbosch economists come to the conclusion that:

Money-metric poverty has declined since the turn of the century, in large part due to a dramatic expansion in social assistance expenditure from 2002 onwards. This improvement is mirrored in access to basic services: in fact, the most rapid decline in asset poverty preceded the later but equally noted fall in income poverty. The

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<sup>45</sup> Koegelenberg says that there is consensus amongst most economic and political analysts that “approximately 40% of South Africans are living in poverty – with the poorest 15% in a desperate struggle to survive” (2003:1).

individuals on whom poverty reduction policy should arguably focus greatest attention now are those that live in more remote rural areas, located a long distance from both economic opportunity and government assistance (Van der Berg, Louw & Yu, 2007:16).

Van der Berg warns, however, that while you can use grants to reduce the poverty of those people who remain poor, you cannot eliminate poverty through the grant system – for that you need jobs. Ramphela (2008:154) calls the increase in social assistance to cover 12 million people on social grants, representing 3.2% of the GDP, a “double-edged sword”, and warns that the potential to entrench dependency with all its negative social consequences is real.

It is estimated, for example, that the Western Cape, together with the Northern Cape and Free State, has experienced significant declines in poverty. In 2000, the Western Cape had the lowest poverty head count rate in South Africa, while its neighbour, the Eastern Cape, already the poorest province in South Africa in 1995, had experienced an increase in its extreme poverty rate, from 49% to 56% (Hoogeveen & Özler, 2006).<sup>46</sup> According to Statistics South Africa (2009:ix), the Western Cape has the second lowest unemployment rate in the country, namely 20.5% after Kwazulu-Natal with 19.3%. The South African unemployment rate for the second quarter of 2009 was 23.6%, compared to 23.1% in the first quarter of 2008. However, researchers point out that the so-called growth incidence curves (GIC) are “upward-sloping”, meaning that the non-poor benefited more from growth than the poor and that “inequality among coloureds has risen” (Hoogeveen & Özler, 2006:71)<sup>47</sup>. According to Butler, unemployment is currently the major force behind widening inequality in South Africa “and there is no panacea for this problem” (Butler, 2004:85).

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<sup>46</sup> This point is of importance given the debate about the socio-economic effects of thousands of people moving to the Western Cape annually. Political opponents of the African National Congress (ANC) see it as a deliberate ‘scheme’ by the ANC to bolster its support in a province that has never been completely under ANC governance.

<sup>47</sup> Considerable financial resources have been deployed by the state to advance the so-called redress agenda. These are directed through various institutions to a diverse set of historically disadvantaged groups (Bentley & Habib, 2008:21). These include financially supporting black economic empowerment (BEE) initiatives, the National Bursary Scheme for historically disadvantaged tertiary students, and housing subsidies to address the housing shortage of designated groups. The welfare budget has been increased so that grants can be extended and equalised across all racial groups. Whilst the redress initiative has had significant effects, enabling citizens from the historically disadvantaged groups to get resources and privileges from the state, there is broad consensus that “the benefits of redress have not been equally shared within the identified communities” (Bentley & Habib, 2008:22). The conclusion that redress was skewed in favour of the advantaged sectors of the disadvantaged communities has been borne out by a number of independent studies

The effect of globalisation on nations is a point of much and heated discussion. In the words of Allister Sparks (2003:202):

There are few things in the modern world that whip up such intense emotions as the new phenomenon of globalization. There are the theological free-marketeers who believe this is the one true faith, the ultimate solution to the eternal happiness of the human race ... And there are the equally passionate opponents to whom globalization is an epithet for a new form of capitalist colonialism that enables the rich countries and companies to exploit the poor, an eclectic coalition of environmentalists and socialists, radicals and anarchists, who have mobilized their forces to launch violent demonstrations against those they see as its demon creators at meetings in Seattle, Washington, Prague and Genoa.

The downside of incredible wealth generated through new-liberal capitalism, held in place by the G8, the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, is “incredible poverty” (De Gruchy, 2007:2).

What the globalized neo-liberal economy seems to do is to suck money up through the system, and leave in its wake closed factories and mines, unemployment, the casualisation of labour, and the survival economics of the informal sector. And as ever, the health of the poor, which serves as a powerful lens for the state of society, constantly deteriorates.

De Gruchy continues (2007:3):

What comes as a surprise then is that there are many who look to the current global economy to solve our crises of poverty, unemployment and under-development. A good many of these are the architects of our own economy in South Africa. It is hard to understand this, for this economy breeds violence, exclusion, a growing gap between rich and poor, and more and more military intervention to safeguard the rich, with a concomitant reaction from those who are marginalized and excluded.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) poses a direct challenge to the prevailing neoliberal economy, by contrasting it with “God’s economy”: “whereas today’s neoliberal economy is exclusive, God’s economy is inclusive. Whereas the neoliberal economy is an exploitative economy of the poor, God’s economy is a protective economy in favour of the poor. Whereas in the neoliberal economy the flow of wealth is from the poor to the rich, in God’s economy it goes from the rich to the poor. Whereas in the neoliberal economy the poor is invisible, in God’s economy the vulnerable are before one’s eyes.

Tony Ehrenreich, general secretary of COSATU (Congress of South Africa Trade Unions) is also of the opinion that the gap between the rich and the poor has grown since 1994 – making SA the most unequal society in the world! He criticises the ANC's leadership for legitimising apartheid's patterns of ownership by giving 25% of this ownership to the new political elite. The new political elite created a system of favouritism from top to bottom at the cost of democratic political processes. Unemployment levels, according to Ehrenreich, have soared from 16% in 1996 to 40% in 2007. Poverty levels have increased, and public delivery in terms of health, education, transport and housing have deteriorated. Macro-economic policy works to the benefit of the elite. In line with the World Bank's structural alignment programmes, the government has budgeted for a surplus, while 'our people' experience severe poverty, according to Ehrenreich. He understands liberation as including the breaking down of apartheid's patterns of ownership and power relations, as well as the establishment of a more equal and socially just society, and the generation of hope for the future (Ehrenreich, 2007).

This is clearly the concern of COSATU and the South African Communist Party (SACP), and is being voiced as a constant criticism of government economic policies. In his address to the 20th anniversary celebrations of the SA Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU), the general secretary of COSATU, Mr Zwelinzima Vavi (2007), lashed out at these policies:

The main reason why workers and the majority of our peoples have not reaped the fruits of liberation has been the government's disastrous economic policies, typified by privatisation and GEAR, which have led to the scandalous situation of a supposedly 'booming' economy that still leaves almost 40% of workers unemployed, 40%-50% of the population facing grinding poverty and one of the highest levels of inequality in the world. As a result, the rate at which jobs are being created is nowhere near what is needed to meet even the modest ASGI-SA target of halving the 2004 levels of unemployment and poverty by 2014. Added to this is the continuing problem that far too many of the new jobs that are being created are casual, temporary, insecure and low-paid, especially in construction and retail. As if this negative impact of the interest rate hikes was not serious enough, they have also directly cut workers' standard of living by raising repayments on bonds and on goods bought on credit. Yet meanwhile, inflation,

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Whereas the neoliberal economy is based on greed and profit-making, God's economy is based on community and mutual support. Whereas the neoliberal economy is based on limitless competition, God's economy is an economy of cooperation" (Ross, 2007:86-87).

the very problem that the Reserve Bank claims to be tackling, is skyrocketing upwards, particularly the costs of most basic foods, like bread, milk and maize meal.

Criticism of the government's economic policies has, as expected, not gone without response from government officials, refuting claims that poverty and unemployment have increased. What is clear is that there indeed are different and very diverse experiences of the economy in South Africa. It may well be that many people are impatient with the situation, because of expectations created by the ruling party's promise of a better life for all – which they cannot yet experience.<sup>49</sup> What they do see and hear is the fact that a relatively small section of the previously disadvantaged citizens are benefiting through black economic empowerment (BEE) deals.

In order to make poverty history, many people and institutions have embarked on the so-called 'brown agenda'. De Gruchy (2007:5) describes this agenda as follows:

The brown agenda is concerned with poverty. It is the agenda of many, many people in South Africa, and in the global south. It is the public agenda of the government, of business, of civil society, of the churches, and of the vast majority of our citizens, as well as being the agenda of a whole host of global players – from World Vision to the World Bank. Given the absurdly high levels of poverty on this country, and given the dehumanisation that poverty entails, the brown agenda needs no further legitimisation. Certainly from a Christian perspective we are correct in speaking of God taking sides with the poor and the oppressed in Jesus Christ; and therefore of the moral obligation of Christians to join others in the quest to overcome poverty.

For the people of the Cape Flats, life remains a struggle. Adhikari (2005:179) points out that “only a relatively small section of the Coloured proletariat has experienced any improvement in living standards that can be attributed to the coming of the new order”. Under white domination, the apartheid regime had, by and large, provided services to Coloured communities, but now social services and welfare payments have been extended to the African masses that were neglected under apartheid, resulting in benefits received by Coloureds being “diluted”, dropping below the relatively privileged levels of the past.

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<sup>49</sup> The global economic meltdown that hit the world in 2008 has caused even bigger despair for the poorest of the poor. The full impact of this economic crisis has not yet been calculated fully. There has been a significant increase in protests in towns across South Africa about the lack of service delivery, with poor people clearly becoming impatient with the government's promises of a better life for all.

A very common perception within the Coloured working classes, as well as elements within the lower-middle-income group, is that they are worse off under the new dispensation than they were under apartheid. They cite shrinking employment opportunities especially as a result of affirmative action, escalating crime, deteriorating social services, and the rapaciousness of corrupt government officials, among other reasons, to support the view that they were 'better off under the white man'. (Adhikari, 2005:180)

Another factor that fuels the perception that Coloured people are being marginalised is the migration of people to the Western Cape, especially from the Eastern Cape. Although this migration is a common global phenomenon as people search for a better life for themselves<sup>50</sup>, many people in the Western Cape see it as a deliberate attempt by the ANC to bolster their electoral strength. In a paper titled "A comparative trend analysis of poverty between the indigenous people and in-migrants in the Western Cape Province", two lecturers from the Department of Statistics at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), Philip Serumaga-Zake and Danelle Kotze, discuss the internal migration of people from the rural provinces (Northern and Eastern Cape), resulting in at least 48 000 people entering the province every year.<sup>51</sup> The main reasons for the in-migration are reported as "perceived better job opportunities, more accessible and effective infrastructure (including housing and health services), and superior quality of life available in the province" (Serumaga-Zake & Kotze, 2003:2). The researchers point

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<sup>50</sup> Bekker and Swart (2002:2) give the following definition of migration and describe the three models of migration:

**"Migration** in its generic sense relates to people who leave the community where they were born. It relates to movement from one spatial area to another, from a sending area to a receiving area. Further moves need also to be considered. There exist three models that often appear in analyses of migration in South Africa – Circulatory migration, Oscillating migration, Gravity flow migration. Each is closely tied to the notion of **urbanisation** and to the fact that jobs and income dominate people's reasons for moving. *Circulatory migration* typically refers to a person who moves to town fairly early in adult life, either with a family or to establish a family soon after arrival. At retirement, this person (possibly with family members) returns to the rural home. *Oscillatory migration* typically refers to labour migration: an adult moves in search of a job, returns to the rural home after this job has been completed and then repeats the cycle. This form of migration is often undertaken by individuals without their families. The third model of migration is *gravity flow* where people migrate permanently and move typically toward urban places. For African migrants, it was noted that labour migration in South Africa has diminished substantially during the past decade and that gravity flow migration has been picking up. In the Western Cape (though not necessarily elsewhere in South Africa), there has been a significant drop in circulatory migration."

<sup>51</sup> According to Bekker and Swart (2002:6), "in-migration toward the Province and its Unicity (Cape Town) is comparatively large and out-migration small in comparison. These migration streams moreover are ethnically distinct. African in-migration streams are the largest and comprise young households of rural (Eastern Cape) origin; White migration, though smaller, is also large and comprise older individuals and couples (many of whom move on to other destinations). Finally, among the majoritarian ethnic group in the province, the Coloured group – net migration streams are smaller".

out that migration into the province has demographic, social, as well as economic consequences. They continue:

Migration can be an obstacle to problem solving in many policy areas, particularly, poverty alleviation, health, education, public transportation and housing. The phenomenon may have exacerbated the problems pertaining to public social services in the Western Cape province. (Serumaga-Zake & Kotze, 2003:4)

Serumaga-Zake and Kotze (2003:16) come to the following conclusion:

The results have shown that in general, the indigenous households live in better houses and have better sources of clean water than in-migrant ones. On average, household earnings are decreasing but the earnings gap between the two groups are increasing with time. Poverty levels of in-migrant households seem to be slightly higher than those of the indigenous households. Poverty seems to be increasing, which might partly be explained by the rising unemployment in the province and increasing backlog of government social services. One of the causes of this might be in-migration...It seems that in-migration is, in part, impoverishing the community of the Western Cape.

The non-governmental organisation, the *Proudly Manenberg Campaign* (PMC)<sup>52</sup>, has revealed the following statistics regarding the Manenberg township on the Cape Flats:

Manenberg has [an] estimated population of about 70,000 people of which approximately 37% are younger than 17 years old. About 40% to 50% of the people are unemployed with around 44% of the households living on an annual income of less than R25,000. More than half (57%) of the residents live in rented state-owned houses or flats. Not one of the 11 primary and 2 high schools have proper assembly halls or sport fields. Only 30 out of 200 Grade 8 learners reach Grade 12, and less than 1% of the population has a university qualification (*Naweek Kaapse Son*, 2007).

This does not present a very positive and encouraging picture and says something of the daily realities and challenges of people on the Cape Flats and the conditions within which faith

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<sup>52</sup> The PMC was established in 2000 by a group of activists from the 1980s who decided to plough back into the community where they grew up. They initially concentrated on academic bursaries for students from Manenberg, but decided to expand their activities after the killing of a learner outside the Manenberg High School in July 2005. Their organisational plans now focus on 11 sectors – businesses, safety, education, environment, faith, women, housing, arts and culture, sport, health and the youth.

communities operate. There is a growing body of evidence that the living standards of the Coloured working class have suffered significantly since the early 1990s (Adhikari, 2005:180).

It is clear that there is much debate about poverty, how to define it, how it is measured, etc. (compare for example Landman, Bhorat, Van der Berg & Van Aardt, 2003).<sup>53</sup> What cannot be denied is that many thousands of people in South Africa are still experiencing severe poverty, making it extremely difficult for them to celebrate the fruits of the new South Africa. This is especially true if we employ Ochoa's definition of poverty as "social vulnerability resulting from the absence of one or more assured capacities which permit individuals and their families to carry out basic responsibilities and enjoy fundamental rights" (Eyber & Ager, 2003:231). The notion of social exclusion is central to the experiences of poor people (Eyber & Ager, 2003:230).

The EFSA report makes it very clear that the quest to roll back poverty and inequality requires multidimensional analysis and thinking from all.

Dealing with complexity is the name of the game. The enormous moral capital of the church should not be squandered on one-dimensional analysis and thinking. Preferably, it should be used to push the debate forward towards a more holistic approach (Landman et al., 2003:15).

This is very sound advice. Too often people, and in particular Christians, claim to have solutions to socio-economic challenges based on a superficial analysis of the situation. Understanding the causes of poverty and inequality is a prerequisite for effectively reducing them (Butler, 2004:70). For faith communities to be taken seriously as meaningful role players and contributors to finding solutions, they will have to move away from superficial and easy analyses.<sup>54</sup> Not doing this

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<sup>53</sup> Anthony Butler (2004:65) rightly points out that income per head tell us only a little about the quality of human experience in a society. He continues: "To explore the ability of households and individuals to command resources necessary for a 'reasonable' standard of living, it is necessary to use more complex multi-factor measures of poverty that include non-monetary elements in fields such as health and education". The United Nations Development Programme's 'Human Development Index' (HDI) is widely used by policy makers to compare human well-being in different countries. The HDI measures a population's ability to develop its three 'most basic capabilities': to be able to lead a long and healthy life; to be knowledgeable; and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living. Life expectancy is used as a proxy for the first capability, literacy and school and college enrolment for the second, and GDP per head for the third (Butler, 2004:66).

<sup>54</sup> The response of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) to the economic crisis facing the world is an example of acknowledging the enormity and complexity of the situation, on the one hand, but also boldly tackling neoliberal economic globalisation on the other hand. The WARC's 23rd general council in Debrechen, Hungary invited member churches to enter into a process of "recognition, education, and confession (*processus confessionis*)", reflecting on Isaiah 58:6 ("... break the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free"), as they heard the cries of people



responsibly will only add fuel to the negativity and pessimism of people, resulting in a general sense and feeling of hopelessness and disillusionment.

What is true is that the church has always been “disturbed and challenged” through the cries, pain and suffering of the poor (Villa-Vicencio, 1990:131).

Many decades of oppression and deprivation have left deep scars and bleeding wounds on the people and communities of the Cape Flats. The South African Council of Churches (SACC) expresses this very aptly:

In the aftermath of apartheid we are a nation of wounded people who need healing. We need a way to expiate the horrors we have inflicted upon one another. So much blood has flowed that fear and resentment is high; the rich and the poor, the elites and the masses, the workers and the jobless still vie each other. The church has been damaged and divided by the struggle, people are shattered and confused, and society comes into the transition limping and stained from the depravations of apartheid. We need the good news of a healthy life of reconciliation and tolerance (Mayson, 1993).

Ramphela (2008:15) also refers to these wounds:

(W)e still struggle to find closure on many issues related to (our) past. This is in part because the wounds are still raw. It is also because we have difficulty acknowledging the depth of or trauma. Our wounds are partly as a result of our denial of their extent and their impact on attempts to transform society. Past wounds have a long history. The road to healing will also be long.

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around the world and witnessed God's gift of creation under threat. The WARC does not shy away from depicting the situation in the world as “scandalous” in which the annual income of the richest 1% is equal to that of the poorest 57% and 24 000 people die each day from poverty and malnutrition. “We recognize the enormity and complexity of the situation. We do not seek easy answers. As seekers of the truth and justice and looking through the eyes of powerless and suffering people, we see that the current world (dis)order is rooted in an extremely complex and immoral economic system defended by the empire. In using the term ‘empire’ we mean the coming together of economic, cultural, political and military power that constitutes a system of domination led by powerful nations to protect and defend their own interests” (World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 2004:169-174).

These wounds manifest themselves in the numerous social ills. A few of these social ills will now be highlighted, but should also bear in mind that South Africa's problems are "dialectical: they interact with each other and feed off one another" (Sparks, 2003:331).<sup>55</sup>

### ***3.2.2.3 Crime and violence***

"Crime is among the most difficult of the many challenges facing South Africa in the post-apartheid era. The country's crime rates are among the highest in the world<sup>56</sup> and no South African is insulated from its effects" (Demombynes & Özler, 2006:288). Shaw (1997) points out and reminds us that the crime problem in South Africa is not recent – the society has always been "crimo-generic", given the levels of inequality and political conflict. It is necessary to remember that South Africa is still a country in transition and increases in crime are consistent with the experiences of other countries undergoing the transition to democracy. "As change proceeds, society and its instruments of social control – formal and informal – are reshaped. The result is that new areas for the development of crime, which are bolstered by the legacies of the past, open up" (Shaw, 1997). This is echoed by Kinnes, who refers specifically to countries such as the former Socialist Soviet Republics (Russia, for example), East Germany, Poland and Argentina (Kinnes, 2000:1). Although the Western Cape is one of the most developed provinces of the country, it is regarded as the most crime-ridden (Legget, 2004a). According to the 2002/3 crime statistics it had the nation's highest rate of murders: 85 murders per 100 000 citizens in 2002/3, against the national average of 47.<sup>57</sup> There has been a significant decline in the number of murders in the Western Cape which has for many years been the so-called 'murder capital' of South Africa. According to the South African police Service annual crime statistics 60.7 murders per 100 000 citizens were committed in the Western Cape, against the national average of 40.7. This has declined to 44.6 murders per 100 000 citizens in 2008/2009, against the national average of 37.3. Nyanga, on the Cape Flats, has recorded the highest number of murders for 2006/7 (303, up from last year's 284) with other Western Cape areas namely Khayelitsha, Harare and Gugulethu taking the fifth, sixth and seventh spots. (Powell, 2007) The homicide rate among Coloureds has almost always been higher than of other race groups, exceeding 60

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<sup>55</sup> "Each of the critical issues has powerful implications for the others. Poor education leads to a low skills level, which deters investment, which slows growth, which aggravates unemployment, which increases the crime rate, which deters investment, and so on" (Sparks, 2003:331).

<sup>56</sup> See page 1

<sup>57</sup> According to the United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network ([www.uncjin.org](http://www.uncjin.org)), Russia's murder rate was 21 per 100 000, Brazil was 19, the USA had a rate of 5,6, and most of Europe was under 4 homicides per 100 000 people (Thomson, 2004).

murders per 100 000 since 1980.<sup>58</sup> Coloured people are also over-represented in the nation's prisons – they represent 9% of the national population but make up 18% of the national prison population (Legget, 2004b). Among the findings of a city victim survey conducted by researchers of the Institute of Security Studies (Camerer, Louw, Shaw, Artz & Schärf, 1998) were the following:

- Almost half of the citizens of Cape Town (49,6%) had been victims of crime over a five-year period (1993-1997).
- Black and Coloured residents of Cape Town were affected mostly by violent and property crime. Coloured men between the ages of 21 and 35 carried the greatest risk of becoming victims of crime.
- 61% of crime victimisation took place over weekends – especially violent crimes such as murder, assault and robbery or street robbery.
- People who visited places of recreation or were busy with recreation were most likely to become victims of crime; there also seems to be a close correlation between assault and alcohol intake.
- The biggest percentage of murders take place at home, while 18,7% take place in the streets of residential areas.
- 17% of the respondents were victims of the same crime more than once. Coloured respondents had the greatest chance (more than 40%) of being repeat victims.
- Black and Coloured people viewed their residential areas as the most unsafe in Cape Town.
- 96,7% of the residents in former Coloured residential areas north of Cape Town believed that gangs were operating there, while 81% of people in Black residential areas believed that.

All of these have a direct or indirect effect on the functioning of faith communities on the Cape Flats (cf. MacMaster, 2001) whose members are exposed to crime and violence almost on a daily basis.

The next section will briefly discuss a specific manifestation of this violent crime, namely the scourge of violence against women and children.

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<sup>58</sup> Thomson, 2004.

### 3.2.2.4 Violence against and abuse of women and children

The past couple of years have seen an alarming increase in the occurrence of abuse of women and children.<sup>59</sup> South African women and children experience “exceptional levels of sexual and physical violence” (Butler, 2004:83), which Altbeker (2007:84) calls “a national disgrace”. Cape Town is statistically the most dangerous city for children to live in, according to a recent study by Professor Sebastian van As, head of the Red Cross Children’s Hospital Trauma Unit.

The results of this study revealed 200 violent deaths of children for every 100 000 city residents (Cape Argus, 2007). Western Cape Minister of Safety and Security, Leonard Ramatlakane, revealed in his 2007 budget speech that “as many as 73.4% of murders committed in the province (the Western Cape), are committed by perpetrators who know their victims” (Ramatlakane, 2007). The Minister continued:

57% of these murders occur within our communities, on our street corners close to our homes. Our reports further reveal that from this, 62% of females murdered, were murdered in private homes or residences. Of the 62% females, it is reported that only 6.8% of the victims did report the crime or have laid a complaint of domestic violence prior to the murder.<sup>60</sup>

Violence against women is a serious and widespread problem in South Africa (Boonzaier, 2003:178). The country has the reputation of being one of the world’s most deadly environments for women (Amina Mama, cited in Ackermann, 2001:9), and has the unenviable record of having the highest prevalence of violence against women (Ramphela, 2008:103).<sup>61</sup> The Domestic Violence Act (Act 116) was introduced in 1998 with the aim of affording women protection

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<sup>59</sup> Boonzaier (2003:178) uses the following definitions: “*Women abuse*” refers to a form of violence aimed at women in particular, which occurs in the context of intimate heterosexual relationships. Women abuse is asymmetrical, perpetrated mostly by men against women. This form of violence includes emotional, verbal, physical, sexual and economic abuse, stalking, harassment and damage to property. The use of the term “women abuse” is intended to acknowledge the gender-specific nature of the violence and the power disparities between perpetrators and victims. “*Domestic violence*” is used to refer to violence encompassing any domestic relationship and may not be directed at women in particular. This violence may include violence against the elderly. “*Violence against women*” is used to refer to the broader context of violence which occurs in both the private and public spheres. This type of violence is gender based and may include women abuse, dowry-related violence, femicide and sexual harassment.

<sup>60</sup> Definition of terms: Intimate femicide: The killing of a female person by an *intimate partner* (i.e. her current or ex-husband or boyfriend, same sex partner or a rejected would-be lover); Non-intimate femicide: The killing of a woman by someone other than an intimate partner; Female homicide: Intimate and non-intimate femicide (MRC, 2004).

<sup>61</sup> Boonzaier (2003:178) points out that women abuse is indeed a global problem that affects all societies.

against domestic violence by creating obligations on law enforcement bodies to protect women (victims) as far as possible. Amanda Dissel and Kindiza Ngubeni (2003:3) acknowledge that the Act is “an indication of the seriousness with which domestic violence is now viewed in South Africa”, offering women who are victims of domestic violence one form of protection. The Act, however, does not necessarily offer remedies for the problem. Dissel and Ngubeni (2003:4) suggest the following:

A criminal trial, or an alternative process, such as a victim offender conference, or an enquiry by the traditional authority, may be additional mechanisms that women may turn to for assistance.

Despite this positive development with regard to legal recourse for abused women, there still is a frightening level of tolerance of violence against women and children in our society, according to Ramphela (2008:108). Poor women in this country are more vulnerable to rape than are those coming from privileged classes.<sup>62</sup> “This is not surprising, as poor women do not have private transportation, need to walk long distances and live in areas plagued by crime, gangsterism, overcrowding and poverty, and in order to work, are often required to leave and return home in the dark” (Ackermann, 2001:10).

Rape is a specific overt form of violence against women.<sup>63</sup> Ramphela (2008:106) states it very clearly that rape has become a major epidemic that blots our post-apartheid track record as a society. In a recent study by the Medical Research Council (MRC) conducted in three districts in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces, it was found that 27.6% of the men interviewed admitted to having raped a woman or girl (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell & Dunkle, 2009). Even more shocking is that nearly one in two men who raped (46.3%) said that they had raped more than one woman or girl. “In all, 23.2% of men said they raped 2-3 women, 8.4% had raped 4-5

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<sup>62</sup> Pillay (2005:5), however, points out that one of the contributing factors to the state of desperation that some women are driven to in killing their batterers is the failure of the criminal justice system in providing adequate legal protection to abused women. She quotes from a Constitutional Court judgment: “The ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system in addressing family violence intensifies the subordination and helplessness of the victim. This also sends an unmistakable message to the whole of society that the daily trauma of vast numbers of women counts for little. Patterns of systemic sexist behavior are normalized rather than combated. Yet it is precisely the function of constitutional protection to convert misfortune to be endured into injustice to be remedied”. Dissel and Ngubeni (2003) indeed point out that, while the Domestic Violence Act criminalises the breach of a protection order obtained against an abuser, it does not create an offence of domestic violence. This leaves a loophole and leaves abused women still vulnerable.

<sup>63</sup> Albeker (2007:90) echoes the views of many social scientists who point out that rape is not about sex. “It is a crime of violence and power. The brute fact that the sexual organs are involved doesn’t alter the fact that the primary purpose and effect of the rapist’s act is to make his victim suffer.”

women, 7.1% said that they had raped 6-10 and 7.7% said that they had raped more than 10 women or girls” (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell & Dunkle, 2009).

Robertson (1998) suggests three reasons why the rape figure is so high in South Africa. These reasons correspond with other views on gender violence put forward by South African academics (cf. Gibson 2004:4).

- *Sociological reasons* – the fact that South Africa is traditionally a male-dominated and patriarchal society. Callaghan, Hamber & Takura (1997) add factors such as over-population, broken family life, a dependent mentality and socialised acceptance of violence as a way of solving problems.
- *Societal attitudes* – certain attitudes, which include, among others, that people accept and believe certain ‘rape myths’, e.g. that men rape because they cannot control their sexual urges, that women encourage rape, that rapists are strangers, and that women actually enjoy being raped.<sup>64</sup>
- A “*culture of violence*” that was established in South Africa over the years. Today’s violence is rooted in apartheid and the struggle against apartheid (cf. Vogelmann & Simpson, 1991). Recurring violence in South African communities is viewed as a kind of dysfunctional response to an extended period of oppression under apartheid and to the political struggle (Gibson, 2004:4). It is widely assumed that institutionalised violence, as well as the peaceful political transition, may have left many men with a sense of powerlessness and perceived emasculation (cf. Salo, 2005). Violence against women and children is viewed as a displacement of aggression in which men of all races feel able to reassert their power and dominance against the perceived ‘weaker’ individuals in society.<sup>65</sup> Gibson (2004:13), however, also refers to the “complexity of interpersonal violence” as reflected in the frequent use of violent language or threats of violence.

It is often asked: Why don’t these battered women simply leave their abusers? Pillay (2005:5) gives the following reasons:

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<sup>64</sup> The pronouncements by the ANC Youth League president, Julius Malema, about the woman who has accused Mr Jacob Zuma of rape is a case in point.

<sup>65</sup> Ramphele is also of the opinion that the current spate of domestic violence and killing of women by their intimate partners can be traced back to the tensions generated by the inability of vulnerable men to accept women as equal partners in relationships and in the home. “Uncertainty that comes with social change can produce unusual behaviour, which tends to be directed at those closest to the vulnerable person” (Ramphele, 2008:104).

Poor social security systems, limited economic opportunities, the fear of being pursued by their abuser, as well as the fear of losing their children are some of the most obvious reasons for not separating from their abusive partners. Research also indicates that women's own accounts reveal emotional ties that have been developed over a long period of time with their abusers which further renders separation difficult.

Other contributing factors that make separation from abusers difficult include low self-esteem, traditional beliefs about the home, the family and female sex roles (very often based on a certain Biblical understanding), tremendous feelings of guilt that their marriages are failing, and a tendency to accept responsibility for their batterers' actions.

It is important to note that there is more than one perspective on the understanding of violence against women. Boonzaier (2003:196) points out that "recent scholarship has shifted away from earlier individualistic preoccupations with the psychological conditions of women and men". Concluding her chapter on women abuse, she writes:

Recent theorising has acknowledged that, although violence against women operates in a patriarchal system of power inequity, women display agency and adopt various positions of resistance by negotiating personal, social and cultural boundaries. By recognising the confluence of culture, class, race, religion, sexuality and other forms of difference, we can avoid homogenising the experiences of women and open up avenues for the inclusion of multiple discourses of violence. (Boonzaier, 2003:196)

Mercader, Houel and Sobota (2003:213) also point to the complex interplay of social, intra-psychic and inter-generational factors in the development (or in consequence, the prevention and treatment) of violence in the sphere of gender and family relationships. The MRC researchers (Jewkes et al., 2009) also plead for a "much broader approach" given the high prevalence of rape in South Africa, and the fact that its origins are too deeply embedded in ideas about South African manhood. They suggest that intervention should entail "the key drivers of the problem which include ideas of masculinity, predicted on marked gender hierarchy and sexual entitlement of men" (Jewkes et al., 2009:2). Efforts to change these require "interventions on structural dimensions of men's lives, notably education and opportunities of employment and advancement" (Jewkes et al., 2009:2).

These stark statistics on violence against women and children are indeed very alarming. Clearly, faith communities cannot continue to practice ‘ostrich politics or theology’ with regard to this scandal.

Another manifestation of the violent culture in South Africa and in particular in the Western Cape is that of gangsterism. Faith communities are faced with this challenge as they minister to people in the townships of Cape Town.

### ***3.2.2.5 Organised gangsterism***

The phenomenon of organised gangsterism has been discussed in the previous chapter and it was concluded that organised gangsterism is concentrated more on the Cape Flats than in any other part of South Africa. Gangsterism is listed here merely as part of this chapter’s focus on the current challenges faced by faith communities as the study moves towards the developing a practical-theological ecclesiology appropriate for the Cape Flats.

The close link between gangsterism and the illicit drug trade, as well as drug abuse has also been discussed in the previous chapter. The focus on the alarming increase in drug abuse here is intended to draw a picture of the context within which faith communities operate on the Cape Flats.

### ***3.2.2.6 Drug abuse***

The researcher is convinced that the extent of drug abuse in the Western Cape constitutes a crisis of epidemic proportions. The extensive destructive effects of the popular drug commonly known as tik are well documented and reported in the newspapers and tabloids in Cape Town almost on a daily basis.<sup>66</sup>

Crime statistics released by the South African Police Services (SAPS) in 2007 show that Mitchell’s Plain on the Cape Flats has the highest number of drug-related crimes in the country.

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<sup>66</sup> As an expression of his own strong feelings about the devastation caused by tik, the researcher has written a letter to the editor of the local tabloid *Die Son* (16 May 2007), calling the manufacturers and distributors of tik murderers. “Mense wat Tik en ander dwelms maak en verkoop is moordenaars, finish en klaar! Hulle is niks anders as kindermoordenaars en volksmoordenaars. Hulle is gewetenloos en dink vir geen enkele oomblik aan die skade, vernietiging en uitwissing wat hulle dade veroorsaak nie ... Hierdie moordenaars moet van volksmoord, moord, of poging tot moord, of strafbare manslag, of sekondêre medepligtigheid aangekla word – maak nie saak wat nie, solank hulle net uit die gemeenskap gehaal word en op 'n plek gehou word waar hulle nooit ooit weer ander lewens kan vernietig nie.”



That 39% of the country's drug-related crimes in 2006/7 were committed in the Western Cape shows a shocking increase of 205.8% to a rate of 865 crimes for every 100 000 people. Drug abuse, and especially the abuse of crystal methamphetamine, has reach pandemic proportions on the Cape Flats, with coloured residential areas the hardest hit. A few years ago, Ted Legget warned that the use of crystal methamphetamine, commonly known as 'tik' in the Western Cape, "a drug with a high addiction potential that can elicit bizarre and aggressive behaviour", may be growing on the Cape Flats. "If so," he wrote, "this is an issue for law enforcement to watch, because speed and violent criminals are not a good combination" (Legget, 2003:3). Crime statistics released by the SAPS reflect this alarming increase, measured in this instance by the reported drug-related crimes at a few police stations on the Cape Flats: Mitchell's Plain, where 829 cases were reported in 2003/4, has the highest number in the country for 2006/7 – 3 683 cases – this has increased to 5 705 in 2008/9. Other examples of this steep increase are: Bishop Lavis, from 499 in 2003/4 to 1 430 in 2008/9; Ravensmead, from 191 to 975; and Elsies River, from 348 to 2 030 cases in 2008/9. Tik, also known commonly as meth, tuk, speed or crystal, is a hugely addictive methamphetamine drug, right up there with heroin, although not quite as addictive. The white, odourless, bitter crystalline powder, which dissolves easily in water or alcohol, is a powerful stimulant that affects the central nervous system. In South Africa, users typically smoke the fumes after the powder or crystal, placed in a light bulb, is heated with a lighter. From the second half of 2004, the number of addicts seeking treatment for tik use (as their main substance of abuse) spiralled from just 2,3% of total users in treatment in Cape Town at the end of 2003 to nearly 20% at the end of 2004. According to the Medical Research Council's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Group, almost 60% of the patients seeking treatment for tik as their main drug of abuse in the second half of 2004 were younger than 20. The ages ranged from 13 to 46. Of the patients seeking treatment in Cape Town for tik as their main drug of abuse, 88% were Coloured and 72% were male, with the majority coming from Mitchell's Plain. Other problem areas for tik use include Retreat, Athlone, Bonteheuwel and Hanover Park (MRC, 2005:2). Pointing to the power of tik, and its particular popularity with adolescents, Grant Jardine, director of the Cape Town Drug Counselling Centre, has been quoted in the Cape Argus as saying the drug "gives adolescents what they want – confidence and a sense of power". (Caelers, 2005).<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> **"Tik addiction soars at an alarming rate"**, *The Argus*, 7 April 2005; **"Tik is taking over, say shocking drug stats"**, *The Argus*, 7 November 2006; *Fact Sheet – Methamphetamine*, Medical Research Council (MRC), November 2005.

At the moment the tik beast seems unstoppable. Not only is it wiping out parts of the memory of individual users, it is also wiping out large sections of our next generation and leaving behind young babies severely damaged and scarred – leaving them with the prospects of a dark future. And while this is taking place one somehow gets the feeling that most faith communities are not paying enough attention to it, or at least not showing enough commitment to tackle the issue in partnership with one another and other stakeholders.

### ***3.2.2.7 Conclusion***

It is true that many or most of the aspects discussed in the previous section are not entirely unique to the Cape Flats. The purpose of the discussion was not to try to give that impression either. The aim was to focus on some of the major challenges facing communities on the Cape Flats and to describe the social context in which the church and other faith communities exist (as part of those communities), and operate (as important stakeholders and role players of civil society, as agents of change and transformation, and as part of the social capital in those communities).

Although the statistics show a very bleak picture of life in the communities on the Cape Flats (and definite reasons for concern), there is also enough evidence to suggest that a very large percentage of the people on the Cape Flats still have a deep enough sense of self-belief and faith in God to refuse to accept the fatality of the situation. The work of organisations like the *Proudly Manenberg Campaign* and community mobilisation against drug abuse and gangsterism in areas like Mitchell's Plain and Hanover Park are examples of the communities' refusal to accept these phenomena as normative. These campaigns are normally driven by people who have strong faith and/or political convictions; people who have a sound and holistic understanding of the bigger picture as influenced by psycho-social factors in which individual as well as systemic issues have to be addressed in the search for solutions. This has contributed in no small measure to the resilience that has helped people on the Cape Flats to survive against many odds.

The next section will evaluate the role of faith communities throughout these years of dispossession and displacement, reinvention and re-establishment, and remarkable resilience. Drawing strength from these historical lessons will contribute to mapping key ecclesiological elements that may enable the church to continue playing a significant role in society and on the Cape Flats in particular.

### **3.2.3 Vital elements of congregational ministry and care on the Cape Flats: survival, re-invention and resilience**

People of faith on the Cape Flats have been practicing pastoral care towards one another within the context of congregations, often with very few resources. Edward Wimberly's description of pastoral care in the black church in the United States of America brings into focus the type of caring that we have witnessed among people on the Cape Flats.

Pastoral care in the black church has a history. Many persons may have the impression that pastoral care does not exist in the black church because very little has been written about it ... But, to the contrary, any ministry of the church that has as its end the tender, solicitous care of persons in crisis is pastoral care. Pastoral care exists when the hungry are fed, when the naked are clothed, when the sick are healed, when the prisoners are visited. Therefore, it can be concluded that pastoral care has always existed in the black church because the needs of persons are ministered to by others all the time. (Wimberly, 1979:17-18)

Wimberly's assessment and understanding of pastoral care in the African American context is of great value for the situation on the Cape Flats. The aim of this section is indeed to show that pastoral care, and in particular congregational care, has existed among faith communities on the Cape Flats right from the beginning. Another point of intersection with Wimberly's view is the biblical foundation revealed through his reference to Jesus' words in Matthew 25:31-46. Wimberly subscribes to a broader understanding of pastoral care "as the bringing to bear upon persons and families in crisis the total caring resources of the church" (Wimberly, 1979:18). It is about "the total caring resources of the church", not only about the pastor's role in carrying out the four traditional/classical functions of pastoral care as described by Clebsch and Jaekle, namely healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling (Wimberly, 1979:18-19). This is important for the situation under discussion, because many congregations or parishes have been without a full-time pastor for longer or shorter periods, but have been able to sustain the life and ministries of that particular faith community very effectively and efficiently.

Faith communities, as part of the broader society, experienced the same trauma resulting from the Group Areas Act in particular, and the apartheid policies in general. Faith communities also suffered financial losses when their properties were disowned, and they found it extremely difficult to rebuild in the new townships.

The first few years of this congregation's existence (the Dutch Reformed Mission Church Goodwood in Elsies River) was marked by tremendous upheavals and psychological traumas experienced both on a personal, family and congregational level. Families who owned property and were not willing to move voluntarily were forced to move. Most families moved to Elsies River where they had to start from scratch. Many were left penniless and, raped of their pride, had to find homes in the bushes of Elsies River, by then declared a slum area. (Marco, 1992:49)<sup>68</sup>

Despite the pain and trauma, faith communities had to provide spaces of affinity amid the confusion of the forced removals. These would later become spaces of struggle and the expression of alternate thinking as the communities faced hardship through different periods of the Nationalist regime's experimentation with policies. These policies were always meant to entrench white minority political and economic power and privilege, with little regard for the negative effects on Coloured, Black and Indian families and communities. When the human dignity of other groups of people is denied through racism, it becomes much easier to objectify those people – they become objects in your political manoeuvres.

What is suggested here is obviously not the complete picture, but the researcher's perspective on the people of the Cape Flats.

### ***3.2.3.1 Safe spaces, places of refuge***

Faith communities provided safe spaces, places of refuge,<sup>69</sup> places of community and affinity amid the confusion of the forced removals and general effects of the apartheid policies. The

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<sup>68</sup> Marco ministered in the Goodwood congregation of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, now known as the Uniting Reformed Church, in Elsies River between 1987 and 1994. This congregation decided to keep the name "Goodwood" as a reminder and symbol of the fact that they were forcibly removed from their original homes and area of residence.

<sup>69</sup> Dale Andrews says this metaphor depicts the African American historical model of ecclesiology. "The image includes concerns for the survival, nurture, and growth of African Americans through the Christian faith. The church fulfilled the emotional, spiritual, and sociological needs of an alienated people. It provide a community that affirmed, even nurtured, black humanity and worth in an otherwise hostile and degrading social existence ... Historically, this refuge image arose from a corporate identity established in response to oppression (Andrews, 2002:34). This image of the Black church as refuge which focused more on pastoral care instead of prophetic voice, thus became an integral part of that church's identity. In the second chapter of his book, Andrews elaborates on this African American church ecclesiology by discussing four biblical tenets that are "commonly distinguished as defining revelation for black churches and black theology" (2002:40). They are: 1) creation and *imago dei*, 2) the Exodus narrative, 3) the suffering of Jesus and conversion, and 4) eschatology and the Kingdom of God. Through this discussion Andrews demonstrates how the Black church facilitates the faith identity of African Americans both as persons and as a people.

church kept people rooted, connected, and brought people from different places together to find sanity in their state of displacement.

The church choir, the youth movement, the brigade, the Sunday school were all pillars that reflected the resilience of the faith community expanding and linking its spiritual experiences to their everyday struggles to make sense of their lives. And indeed the conversation of displacement remained alive, not in a disgruntled sense, but in a sense of reshaping and rebuilding and taking pride in who they are and where they came from.<sup>70</sup>

In this regard one has to take note of many new faith communities that have grown on the Cape Flats. Apart from the so-called more traditional or mainline churches, numerous other denominations or ministries (“bedieninge”) were established. Whatever one’s opinion or criticism of these groups, they have been able to provide places of fellowship and worship for many people – and are still doing so today. The type of theology of many of these groups is sometimes frowned upon as ‘escapism’, ‘emotionalism’, or ‘fundamentalism’, but the reality is that they attract hundreds of people and are in fact growing at a time when most of the so-called mainline denominations are experiencing a decline in numbers. In some instances these churches or groupings bought former cinema buildings and dance spots and converted them into places of worship, attracting many people of the Cape Flats with their freer style of worship, which was typified by the presence of a gospel band or praise and worship group. Reggie Nel, a minister in the Uniting Reformed Church, is of the opinion that these groups “became the glue that held the townships together as a sort of cultural social movement”.<sup>71</sup> On the other hand, one cannot ignore the downside of some of these church groupings, or more specifically the role of some pastors in exploiting people through the so-called ‘prosperity theology’ that most of the time, if not always, benefits only an elite group, and particularly the pastors themselves. More research needs to be done on this phenomenon and its effects on poor and ordinary people on the Cape Flats.

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<sup>70</sup> Conversation with Derrick Marco (12 June 2007).

<sup>71</sup> Conversation, 14 June 2007.

### **3.2.3.2 Social capital**

The social and human capital that exists within faith communities is acknowledged by social scientists, as well as by governments.<sup>72</sup> Swart (2006: 347), for example, writes:

In the international academic debate about the relationship between social capital and development increasing interest is shown in the role of churches and other faith-based organisations as agents of social capital formation. In the proliferating corpus of literature on the theme strong empirically founded arguments are being presented about the strategic role that faith-based traditions and their associated organisations – such as churches – are playing in mobilising the kinds of social capital that lead to communal actions of collective social outreach and caring. In a nutshell, it is postulated that these traditions and their organisations are not only a necessary source of the social capital values of cooperation, social connectedness and trust that are required, but in some instances could also be regarded as the single most important factor of social capital formation and activity in certain communities.

Social capital is a relatively new concept, bringing together three major disciplines: sociology, political science and economics (Bayat, 2005:2). Social capital can be defined in numerous ways, according to Cilliers and Wepener (2007:40), who opt for Nancy Ammerman's definition of social capital as "those connections of communication and trust that make the organization of a complex society possible". Cilliers and Wepener also refer to a "rich tapestry of nuances and perspectives".<sup>73</sup>

Social capital has been called (1) the degree to which a community or society collaborates (through such mechanisms as networks, shared trust, norms and values) to achieve mutual benefits; (2) the value of social networks (associated with trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation) that people can draw on to solve problems; (3) the attitude spirit and willingness of people to engage in collective, civic activities; (4) skills and infrastructure that aid in social progress; (5) a composite measure which reflects both the breadth and depth of civic community

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<sup>72</sup> "Faith-based organisations and their agencies possess extensive and effective networks throughout our country. They are committed and closest to the disempowered and most vulnerable members of our society" (South Africa's Minister of Social Development, Dr Zola Skweyiya, cited in Greyling, 2001:13).

<sup>73</sup> According to Ostrom (2009:17), a multitude of definitions currently exist. "Almost all reflect two basic assumptions: social capital is a resource that is available to members of a social network, and social structure is often the type of capital that all members of a group can access to promote their interests. Social capital is a set of relationships and shared values created and used by multiple individuals to solve collective problems in the present and future" (Ostrom, 2003:22).

as well as the public's participation in political life; or (6) the degree of social cohesion that exists in communities (Cilliers & Wepener, 2007:40).

According to Bayat (2005:1), "social capital", simply put, refers to "networks of relations linking individuals for mutual benefit".<sup>74</sup> Social capital is not an end in itself, but a means to an end.

The purpose of this section is not to go into a detailed discussion about social capital. It is merely to recognise the specific resources that exist within and amongst faith communities and how these resources have contributed to a very significant extent to the resilience of these communities on the Cape Flats, benefiting not only their own members, but also the broader communities in which they are situated. Community capital and social capital are built and maintained through churches, as they both are recipients of social capital resources in the community and generators of community and social capital. Researchers David Everatt and Geetesh Solanki (2004:4) have found that South Africa appears to be a nation of givers.<sup>75</sup> According to their survey, about 54% of the respondents gave money to charities or other causes, 31% gave food or goods to charities or other causes, while 17% volunteered time for a charity or cause. 'Giving' is also not the domain of the wealthy, according to Everatt and Solanki; it is part of everyday life for all South Africans, rich and poor alike. They also found that religion is clearly an important motivating factor where social giving is concerned, and that the influence of religion on giving is functional as well as ethical.

Church buildings have been significant in developing social capital, as places where people can cross boundaries, meet others, share activities and build trust. In townships that lack basic communal places for recreation and meeting, church buildings often provide the only place where the community can gather. They provide the space for celebrations (e.g. birthday parties and wedding receptions), and are also the places where people come together for their schools' parent meetings, political protest meetings and service groups (e.g. women and senior citizens).

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<sup>74</sup> Three types of social capital can be identified – bonding, bridging and linking social capital. **Bonding** social capital represents the construction of social networks with those like us (intra-group ties, within the close networks of family and friends) in other words, the social capital stays localised. **Bridging** social capital denotes the construction of such networks with those unlike us (extra-group networks, such as being part of a community forum or neighbourhood watch) – bringing different communities together. **Linking** social capital refers to a vertical relationship between heterogeneous social groups, characterised by the connections between those with differing level so power or social status, e.g. links between the political elite and the general public or between individuals from different social classes (Bayat, 2005:8-9).

<sup>75</sup> "A nation of givers? Social giving among South Africans." Findings of a national survey. Researched and written for the Centre for Civil Society (CCS), the South African Grantmakers' Association (SAGA) and National Development Agency (NDA) (Strategy & Tactics).

Haddad sees church buildings as “a strategic asset” (Haddad, 1992:79). This physical capital was therefore significant in developing and sustaining social capital in neighbourhoods where community buildings were and still are scarce. “Most immediately, faith buildings are a home where people can share a common life and form bonds with one another. But they can also be the means of contributing bridging and linking social capital to wider community networks.” Haddad lists some of the community initiatives that have been started by churches, such as the distribution of food parcels, clothing, soup kitchens, social activities for the aged, crèches in halls/homes, education bursaries, care for homeless, advice office work (Haddad, 1992:50). The work of congregational groups and of denominational organisations needs acknowledgement. The *Diakonale Dienste* (Diaconal Services) of the Uniting Reformed Church and the Board of Social Responsibility of the Anglican Church are examples of faith-based organisations that, over many years, have rendered critical services to the poor people on the Cape Flats. Other organisations that have made significant contributions include the Child Welfare Society, the Black Sash, the Red Cross, the Peninsula Feeding Scheme, St John’s Ambulance and the Haven Night Shelter (Haddad, 1992:82).

Faith communities are indeed in a unique position to make a difference with regard to the social challenges in our communities. They still enjoy the trust of people at grassroots level – “more than any political party, labour union or community organisation” (EFSA, 2002:16). Faith communities are also a locus of multiple community roles and may access ‘hard-to-reach’ areas where even government agencies cannot reach or simply do not care to reach.

People in faith communities on the Cape Flats have a strong sense of caring for one another. Even in the poorest of communities, you would find support in the form of food parcels and financial contributions, even if as just once-off contributions. Support in times of sickness and death is almost ‘natural’ and comes in the form of emotional support through visits and taking over household tasks that the afflicted cannot attend to, as well as prayer meetings for spiritual support. This has been the researcher’s personal experience during nine years of ministry in the township of Bishop Lavis.

The particular contribution of *women* in this regard cannot be overemphasised (see e.g. MacMaster, 1994). In most congregations across the spectrum of the Christian religion, women form the majority. Although this is not always reflected in the composition of the leadership in faith communities, women are indeed the backbone of these communities (e.g. Haddad, 1992:88). Their commitment to their respective communities, and their diligence in building and



maintaining organisations and support structures cannot be denied. While only a few churches, for example, would have a men's organisation, most of them, right across the denominational spectrum, would have a women's organisation or society. These women also lead prayer groups that, amongst others, support members in need and in times of distress, sharing the little they have with one another. They play a pivotal role in congregational care in their support for members of congregations, often extending this role to people in need beyond denominational boundaries. Women's significant role in the broader communities on the Cape Flats is described by Elaine Salo (2004; 2005) in her study of the meanings of personhood and agency in Manenberg .

Clearly, huge social capital is present and readily available in faith communities across the Cape Flats. Through these faith communities, the ministry of presence is concretised to reach more people than government agencies could. When churches and other faith communities free themselves from the constraints of denominationalism and sectarianism, the impact of faith communities could be felt even more and they could see even greater results in addressing systemic social ills.

Linked to the social capital inherent in faith communities is believers' faith in their God.

### ***3.2.3.3 The piety of so-called ordinary members***

The researcher has already referred to the spirituality and faith of the people in their God – a God who does not sleep, who sees their hardship and hears their cries. Michael Weeder, an Anglican priest who grew up in Elsies River, remembers how:

[T]he fault lines of our communion were nurtured by the simple piety of the lay persons, mainly male but not exclusively so, who led us in the Wednesday evening *bid-uur* (prayer meeting). It was ... the intimacy evolving from small group meetings clustered around the Word that allowed for a deepening and growth of community. Support emerged as information was shared around a biscuit and a cup of tea.... We were members of St Andrews Anglican Church, part of the broader historical colonial church. That it was and we were often burdened by the ministry of a ceaseless flow of priests from England. We were hereby exposed to Du Bois' 'double consciousness' in that our

faith formation took place in the belly of that colonial institution while we lived a reality far removed from that distant 'green and pleasant land'.<sup>76</sup>

The Holy Scriptures played a tremendously empowering role in the lives of the people throughout the years of oppression. One can still clearly hear this during meetings when people pray the words of psalms such as Psalm 23 ("The Lord is my shepherd") or 121 ("I lift my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."), or 27 ("The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?"). This is what African Americans call "soul theology":

The core belief-system that gives shape to the world; that shows how African American people have come to grips with the world in a meaningful way. These core beliefs are embodied in narratives and stories that permeate the church life of African Americans.... These narratives suggest ways to motivate people to action, help them recognize new resources, enable them to channel behavior in constructive ways, sustain them in crises, bring healing and reconciliation in relationships, heal the scars of memories, and provide guidance when direction is needed. (Wimberly, 1991:11)

The faith of individual believers and churches has been strengthened by the strong sense of ecumenism. Faith communities have been united across confessional lines by the common purpose of caring for oppressed and marginalised people. Dogmatics took a back seat in people's commitment to realise the kingdom of God through active witness (*marturia*) and sacrificial service (*diakonia*).

### **3.2.3.4 Ecumenism**

This section will briefly discuss the particular role of *ecumenical bodies* and the spirit of *ecumenism* that have contributed to forging a strong unity amongst faith communities, and most specifically amongst the leaders and members of different churches that have played a leading role in actively resisting apartheid. Although ecumenical relations between churches have not always and at all times been very positive, it was the collective voice and protest of churches and leaders of faith communities during times of deep crisis that helped displaced and dispossessed communities to garner enough strength to face life under apartheid's oppressive policies. The Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) kept the church alive and kept

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<sup>76</sup> Interview, 2 June 2007.

faith communities rooted, and its contribution cannot be underestimated. The Inter Church Youth (ICY) was a “formidable movement that was set up in 1982-3 as one of the flagships of the United Democratic Front (UDF). The roots of this movement cut across denominational lines and brought the rhythmic singing of youth in line with critical theological underpinnings to promote progressive change”.<sup>77</sup> Ecumenical bodies played a vital role in public pastoral care (cf. MacMaster, 2007b) by leading community protests, supporting people when their dwellings in informal settlements were destroyed by the government, paying fines and bail money for people arrested during protests, etc. These ecumenical organisations also helped people to think and reflect theologically with others outside the, at times more narrow, own denominational confessional framework.

The spirit of ecumenism has also helped Christians and Christian leaders to cooperate with people of other faiths in building a democratic culture (De Gruchy, 2004:446).

In the struggle against apartheid people of different faiths discovered not only that they could work together for justice, but also that they shared similar values and concerns in doing so. Even though believers disagree on many things of importance, all the great religious traditions affirm the dignity of human beings, the need for justice, equity, and compassion in society. These values (and there are others) are of considerable importance in shaping a truly democratic and civil society. In fact, such a society cannot come into being or exist without them.

This did not occur without controversy within and among religious groupings. The more conservative and evangelic or Pentecostal churches were not prepared to become involved in “politics”, choosing to accept the status quo. This was used strategically by the apartheid government to their own benefit, with the more conservative churches and religious leaders being used as part of their campaign to win the hearts and minds of black South Africans, and to chastise ecumenical bodies like the South African Council of Churches (SACC) for siding with communists and terrorists.

Ecumenism remains a powerful instrument for communities at large, as well as for the individual churches. Churches of differing denominational connections ought to be able to call on the resources of each denomination to strengthen their shared ministry and mission. There is no doubt that, by its witness and combined influence, an ecumenical shared ministry can help move

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<sup>77</sup> Derrick Marco, Conversation, 12 June 2007.

a community to greater commonality and cooperation. This is especially true in the post-apartheid era, where it has become extremely difficult for religious communities to access resources for community projects. The fact that too many individual denominations have become so self-centred should encourage all ecumenically-minded leaders to build bridges and partnerships that would enable them to pool resources and reach more people, and make a significant difference in the lives of these people.

### **3.2.4 Conclusion**

The trauma and pain that resulted from the effects of the oppressive apartheid policies in the lives of thousands of people on the Cape Flats could never really be measured or adequately expressed in words. In so many cases, the scars and open wounds remain evident and manifest in some of the social ills that communities on the Cape Flats are still facing and struggling to overcome.

The important role of faith communities in helping people cope with the trauma of displacement, and to create spaces of safety and affinity in new townships where they were virtual strangers to one another, needs to be recognised. Besides caring for members and non-members, faith communities also had the extremely difficult task of re-aligning and re-inventing themselves in the light of the new challenges brought about by the forced removals, while working with very limited resources. In this regard, these faith communities, despite their own brokenness and fragility, have been crucial in taking care of people through a ministry of presence, showing remarkable resilience. The work and ministry of many non-prominent leaders and caregivers cannot be appreciated too much, and should be honoured. They were the ones in the trenches of many struggles, who were prepared to go where most would not and were not willing to go – even to the point of laying down their own lives in some cases. They did not always have the proper theological or pastoral training, did not always follow the prescribed pastoral process, and did not have the correct theoretical and methodological framework, but their sense of calling, their love for people, and their refusal to give up on God's promises for a better life kept them going. To these men and women we have to show gratitude for sowing the seeds that allowed the church to continue to grow and faith communities to keep on playing a significant role in communities on the Cape Flats.

From the discussion of the vital elements of congregational ministry and care the researcher now concludes that, within the context of the Cape Flats, a new church structure or system has

developed which may be called **a social-systemic ministry of inter-contextual presence**. This structure is dynamic and not static; it is responsive to the context and kept alive by the context, with a huge emphasis on orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy. In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, in the daily quest for survival and a decent living, people do not always have the luxury to theorise, rationalise or intellectualise their life issues. They respond, or have to respond, to the issue in the best possible practical manner. They expect their church and its structures to understand the realities of their context (social systems), not in a superficial way, but in a way that help them to give meaning to and make sense of their lives. In order to do this, ministers, pastors and theologians need to ground their ministry theoretically and practically in such a way that the Gospel becomes alive, that the historical traditions of the church are effectively utilised, and that the present context and challenges facing the people are addressed and responded to in a manner that helps give meaning to the lives of the people.

This ministry requires that the systemic nature of the challenges facing the church be calculated and considered, in contrast to an individualistically exclusive approach. As such, this ministry requires a multidisciplinary orientation, an openness to cooperate with others, knowing that without it only the surface would be scratched, with little impact. This ministry takes context very seriously. Theology is not practiced as eternal truths floating above the concrete realities of people's lives, but is contextualised in order to contribute to the transformation of lives, relationships, structures, and society as a whole.

Chapter Four will deal more extensively with the model of pastoral care that the researcher is proposing for this social-systemic ministry of intercontextual presence.

In the following section, a practical-theological ecclesiology for faith communities on the Cape Flats that may respond effectively to the context described above will be discussed.

### **3.3 TOWARDS A PRACTICAL-THEOLOGICAL ECCLESIOLOGY**

#### **3.3.1 Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda**

The ways in which the Christian community understands and reflects upon its nature, roles, and functions change. It responds to a variety of influences, including the particular context within which it exists. (Woodward & Pattison, 2000:173)

The discussion of the resilience of faith communities almost inevitably brings the question of a practical-theological ecclesiology to the fore. As with any other context in which the church exists, it is profoundly important for us to keep returning to the foundations of what it means to be the church of Jesus Christ in the world. This involves the issue of ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is the branch of theology that looks at the church's self-understanding – it is the theological theory of the church (Ploeger & Ploeger-Grotegoed, 2001:187). Ecclesiology is about exploring the nature of the church, understanding its creation and continuing formation, and carefully examining its purpose and ministry (Van Gelder, 2007:1). Some of the questions that need to be asked are the following: What does it mean to be the church of God in the world at this particular point in time and within this particular context – within the communities of the Cape Flats? What do biblical metaphors like 'the Body of Christ' or 'the people of God' mean in practice? Does our understanding of being church differ from that of the people of the New Testament? In what sense do developments in theology or social sciences influence our self-understanding? What is the calling or task of the church today? How does the church relate to its ministry?

An extremely important question would be: What does an ecclesiology of inclusive and inter-contextual presence mean within the focus of this study?

These are just some of the questions that form part of a quest for a practical-theological ecclesiology.<sup>78</sup>

The ecclesiology we are referring to is much more than studying the history of the church. In the words of Bradbury (2000:179):

Ecclesiology continues to be important because it's the discipline where discussion about the church of the future occurs. It helps to connect the past appropriately with the present and to distinguish between gospel and culture. It helps develop a critical eye for what is merely prejudice, jargon and tribal thinking. Most important, it equips us to go forward, in a chosen direction, and to become the best church we can.

Indeed, we want to be equipped to move forward. Ecclesiology is more than just church history. History means little if it does not help us to better understand our present and to respond to the present context adequately and effectively – to develop a critical eye.

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<sup>78</sup> Feminist theologians believe that they cannot only ask: *what* is the church? But also *who* is the church? (Watson 2002:9).

The last three decades have seen an “ecclesiological renaissance” (Kärkkäinen, 2002:7). Kärkkäinen attributes this revived interest in the church to the ecumenical movement. He furthermore acknowledges two other developments that have challenged thinking about the church, namely the rapid growth of Christianity outside the West (so much so that the majority of Christians currently are in the Two-Thirds World), and the rise of non-traditional forms of the church, both in the West and elsewhere – the so-called ‘free churches’.

The expression *Free churches* involves two primary meanings. It designates first those churches with a congregationalist church constitution, and second those churches affirming a consistent separation of church and state. (Kärkkäinen 2002:7)

New congregational models are emerging, especially in the Two-Thirds World, but also in the West, and many specialists are of the opinion that the free church congregational model will be the major paradigm in the third millennium. Kärkkäinen (2002:9) warns that it would be “both dangerous and useless” for older churches just to discard the enormous potential and force of non-traditional churches “by classifying them as something less than a church”.

Younger churches have shown their vitality in their lives, and it is left to theology to catch up with these developments. This has always been the main task of theology: to reflect on and make sense of what is happening in Christian life and churches. (Kärkkäinen, 2002:9).

It indeed would be a very big mistake to discard any model of the church that does not fit into our particular understanding and ecclesiological thinking or paradigm. Part of this study, and of this chapter in particular, is aimed at finding a theological methodology that reflects the context of the Cape Flats. The researcher is not suggesting that what is being written here is entirely new. The specific contribution of the study is that it recognises that not much has been written from the perspective of faith communities on the Cape Flats. In the first part of this chapter the existence of faith communities over a very long period of time are acknowledged and recognised. Members of these faith communities have indeed inherited much of the theology and ecclesiology from the European settlers and missionaries, but the ‘home-bred’ theology or theologies, ecclesiology or ecclesiologies should also be acknowledged and recognised. These may not have been recorded in academic literature, but it does not mean that they do not exist. The researcher hopes that these will continued to be ‘unearthed’, so to speak – to appreciate or

re-appreciate the heritage of the people of faith on the Cape Flats.<sup>79</sup> This is of critical importance, and the researcher concurs with Hendriks that theology is not only about God, about the church, and about Scripture and tradition, but also about a contextual situation, about interpreting your situation, about a vision and about a strategy (Hendriks, 2001:6-16). It is his understanding that the church is not only a spiritual entity (one, holy, catholic and apostolic) but also, and at the same time, an institution divided into 'denominations'. And denominations are "particular historical and political manifestations of church in particular historical, cultural, social and political contexts" (Watson, 2002:8).

Leonardo Boff's (1985:1) understanding of ecclesiology, where he declares that "[t]rue ecclesiology is not the result of textbook analysis or theoretical hypotheses; it comes about as a result of ecclesial practices at work within the institution" is very relevant at this point.

In his book, *Ecclesiogenesis. The base communities reinvent the church* (1986), Boff reiterates this point:

The basic communities are generating a new ecclesiology, formulating new concepts in theology ... Pastors and theologians, take warning! Do not seek to box this phenomenon within theological-pastoral categories distilled from other contexts and other ecclesial experiences. Instead, assume an attitude of those who would see, understand, and learn ... The history of the church is genuine history: the creation of never-before-experienced novelty. Even in the New Testament, like the history of the church, presents a pluriform institutional incarnation of the faith. (Boff, 1986:2)

Liberation theologian José Comblin agrees with Boff when he says that "it is one of theology's tasks to give name to realities" (1989:xiii).

In an essay entitled "Towards an African Church", Kenyan theologian Douglas W. Waruta attempts to demonstrate the "never-ending theological tension between the static and dynamic views of the Church, between tradition and innovation, between particularity and universality of the Church" (Waruta, 1990:30). It is Waruta's contention that, when Jesus declared to his followers that he would 'build' his Ecclessia, it was never clear what form or structure that Ecclesia would take (Matt. 16:18). "There are those", he continues, "who throughout the history

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<sup>79</sup> Henri Nouwen (1978:31) reminds us that preachers should be wary of their own theological preoccupation, thinking that their theological ideas would make all their listeners excited. "The main reason is not that their theological ideas are not valid or meaningful, but rather that not only those who preach but also those who listen have their own 'theologies'."



of the Church have assumed exactly what type of church Christ had in mind. Christians in Jerusalem thought that the Church should be founded on the cherished practices of Judaism and demanded that Gentile Christians accepted that fact. The first Council of the Church in Jerusalem rejected that static view and opted for the more dynamic" (Waruta, 1990:31). Waruta furthermore describes the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation of the Church as "perhaps the most important event in the never dying dynamism of the Church" (1990:32). Waruta identifies "at least four major types of churches in African Christianity", which he classifies as the "dominant types, the popular types, the distinctive types and the indigenous types" (Waruta, 1990:34).<sup>80</sup> Waruta contends that the indigenous churches are the best examples of the dynamism of African spirituality. The indigenous churches "experience the presence of God not through some documents or traditions but in the context of their community life and existential realities, with little regard or reference to external validating authorities. Indigenous churches have been very creative in their forms of worship, music, organization and self-support" (Waruta, 1990:37).

Within the South African context these types of churches are also recognised, and on the Cape Flats in particular one finds a variety of churches and a free blending of different church traditions. In the Uniting Reformed Church (of which the researcher is a member), for example, the way of worshipping and preaching would vary greatly from congregation to congregation.

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<sup>80</sup> The **dominant types** are those with strong links to their metropolitan origins, e.g. the Catholics, Anglican, Presbyterians and Lutherans. "They are characterized by centralism, formalism and a commitment to influence civil order, claiming a mandate as the 'conscience' of the general society to be involved in the secular affairs of the state. These are the churches which seek ways and means of shaping the destiny of their societies. They will often be very keen to ceremoniously observe special national days and are often invited to lead prayers on such occasions and even the opening of parliaments" (Waruta, 1990:34). The **popular types** are those churches that break from or modify certain forms of the dominant types but maintain basic orthodox beliefs of historical Christianity. "They are characterized by incredible enthusiasm and a very strong sense of mission. They tend to reject the formalism and centralization of the dominant type and encourage more spontaneous and participatory forms of worship. Sometimes they may exhibit pietistic and legalistic tendencies ... [they] tend to win many followers who are enduring emotional and physical crises particularly in urban areas where persons uprooted from the security of their rural group are starving for a meaningful identity. Such persons find in these popular churches an acceptance and identity otherwise lacking in the established churches and the general society" (Waruta, 1990:35-36). The **distinctive types** "are usually small churches which quietly but effectively carry out their mission in ways that are most wholly distinct to them" (Waruta, 1990:36). Waruta places groups and churches like the Quakers, Salvation Army, Seventh-Day Adventists and Baptists in this category. "They tend to lean on the side of the popular type churches when it comes to methods of evangelization and missionary efforts", and have a very high claim for what they call 'Biblical Christianity' (Waruta, 1990:36). The fourth type of churches is the "**indigenous**, otherwise called **independent churches**" (Waruta, 1990:37) which split from the historical missionary churches or from earlier independent ones, rejecting foreign attacks or domination of the African people and their culture, and creatively blending African beliefs and cultural norms with Christian teachings. There is great emphasis on healing, dreams, prophecy and communalism within the believing community.

One could dare to say that the average member of this church would know very little, if anything, about the teachings of Calvin or any other Reformed theologian. What is important to them would be their own faith perspective based on their life and personal experiences and their understanding of the Scriptures. These may be informed by reformed teachings, as taught and preached by the ministers that serve them from time to time and over the years. Most people would therefore be members of a certain church or theological tradition because they have grown up in that particular church, which means they have become ‘used to it’. This has actually changed, and is changing, as people migrate or move to another church where they feel ‘at home’, spiritually as well as socially. Bradbury helps us to grasp something of what ‘church’ means to many people, or alternatively, what many people are looking for when they come to or look for a church:

We are called first to *be* the church, to be God’s people, to be in relationship with God. This is a matter of spirituality. Only from there are we called to do, to collaborate with God in plans we hope are worth it for eternity. We need to learn freedom: to be unblocked, unlocked, open-armed and vulnerable. That way, not the way of infallible pronouncements and institutional certainties, lies the church’s road. (Bradbury, 2000:179).

In this fragmented world of ours, many people are looking for their roots and for meaning, for a community with purpose and hope for the future, a *koinonia*, a fellowship of the Spirit. “How well – or poorly – the Christian church is able to fulfil this basic task determines to a large extent how relevant the church is going to be for the third millennium” (Kärkkäinen, 2002:231). As such the church cannot be culture- and context-neutral without losing its relevance (cf. our proposal for a social-systemic ministry of inter-contextual presence).

What is referred to here is indeed a ‘dynamic’ ecclesiology (Nel, 1996:138). Liberation theology in its different contexts, such as Black Theology and African theology, as well as Feminist and Womanist Theology, helps us to understand the dynamic nature of ecclesiology – as a critical, creative and constructive reading and rereading of theology and ecclesiology.<sup>81</sup> De Gruchy, citing Cornel West, contends that liberation theologies are “the predominant forms of critical consciousness within the Christian church that respond to the dangers of class, racial, and

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<sup>81</sup> Watson, with reference to Rosemary Radford Ruether, contends that the church always finds itself in a dialectic tension between an established historical institution and a spirit-filled community that works on its constant renewal (Watson, 2002:70).

sexual privilege, and project the possibility of class, racial, and sexual equality” (1991:35). He continues:

Liberation theology is equally challenging to all the historic traditions because it radically questions the social location, material interests, and consequences of those traditions and their theologies, and not simply their intentions ... What distinguishes liberation theologies from others is not the introduction of new dogmatic themes, but the way in which dogmatic and ethical tradition is reinterpreted within the struggle for liberation. Theology then becomes a socially committed discipline on the side of those who are disadvantaged and socially oppressed. (De Gruchy, 1991:37).

By first having looked at the resilience of faith communities on the Cape Flats the research has also attempted to trace some practices, and from there the researcher is hoping to arrive at the theoretical premises and formulations behind these practices. He has said that faith communities also had the extremely difficult task of re-aligning and re-inventing themselves in the light of the new challenges brought about by the forced removals, while working with very limited resources. This is all about socio-historical praxis. The “earthly church” is integrally related to and dependent on sociological, historical and political conditions (Kärkkäinen, 2002:231). This socio-historical praxis is not fixed or static. This means that, in our discussion of a practical-theological ecclesiology, we should always bear in mind that we cannot approach it with a ‘one size fits all’ mindset. Louw (2008b:16) also challenges us to “move away from schematised theological paradigms with fixed confessional answers and depictions of God”. Louw (2008b:16) formulates the task of theology as follows:

The task of theology is not to keep God going. God does not need our theological schemata as scaffolding so that he can be maintained as an ecclesial idol and a liturgical and decorative icon in a baroque cathedral. The task of theology is to keep humans going and to instil a vivid hope that fosters meaning and significance in life.

In the light of our discussion, it is possible to pose another question: Is an ecclesiology that is based merely on creation and incarnation dynamic enough for a ministry of presence? In this sense, pneumatology, with its implication of inhabitation, becomes very central to a discussion of a relevant ecclesiology that has developed within the context of the lives of the people of the

Cape Flats.<sup>82</sup> Louw's proposal for a "theology of affirmation within the theological parameters of an eschatological approach to life and our human quest for meaning" (Louw, 2008b:16) is an important contribution to this search for an "authentic" theological ecclesiology that speaks to the particular context of people on the Cape Flats.

### 3.3.2 Developing a practical-theological ecclesiology

Nel (1996:138) points out that there has been a growing interest in and discussion of the necessity of an ecclesiology of practical theology since the early 1990s. Leading South African and Dutch practical theologians who have started this quest include HJC Pieterse, Coenie Burger, Danie Louw, Jurgens Hendriks, Gerben Heitink and Johannes van der Ven. The purpose of this section is not to go into all the aspects of a practical-theological ecclesiology, but to draw some lines that will help us realise the importance of a practical-theological ecclesiology as base theory for doing pastoral work on the Cape Flats.

It was already pointed out that studies of the church were usually done from a systematic theological perspective. Practical theology has 'wrestled' itself free and is no longer regarded merely as an auxiliary science of systematic theology.

Nu de praktische theologie een zelfstandig vak is geworden, maken we onderscheid tussen praktisch-theologische en systematisch-theologische ecclesiologie. (Ploeger & Ploeger-Grotegoed, 2001:187).

Most Protestant churches have for too long undervalued the importance of practical theological reflection on the church (Burger, 1999:19). The result was that correct and good dogmatic insights about the church were not translated sufficiently into practical terms. Burger (1999:19-22) postulates six points that he views as crucial in a practical-theological contemplation of the church:

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<sup>82</sup> José Comblin (*The Holy Spirit and Liberation*, 1989) has also argued strongly against a "christomonism" a theological system placing exclusive value on Christ's mission in the salvation of humanity to the detriment of the Holy Spirit. It is an accusation leveled against Western theology by some Orthodox theologians, (1989:187). The origins of Christianity stand on two events of equal importance, namely the "Jesus event" (from His birth to His death and resurrection) and the event of the experience of the Holy spirit (1989:2). "Scripture and tradition endlessly repeat St Irenaeus' phrase: 'Where the church is, there too is the Spirit of God'. The Spirit dwells in the church. The presence of the Spirit does not exclude the material, institutional, historical aspects of the church. The Spirit is present in the human body – individual and social – to be as it were its soul, as a traditional theological concept would put it (1989:185). The Holy Spirit inspires the church in its three offices: it confers its strength and sheds its light on the office of the word, the liturgical office and the office of service to the community (1989:186).

- It focuses on real congregations
- It wants to have a better understanding of congregations
- It does not only want to think critically about congregations, but also concretely
- It wants to understand the congregation in all its complexity, as a unitary system
- It should be formulated in terms of possible points of intervention (“ingreepunkte”)
- It wants to learn as much as possible from the social sciences, within a Biblical-theological framework

There has been a move away from the so-called clerical paradigm (“clerocentrisme”, Van der Ven, 1993:9), where the focus primarily was on the role and work of the offices, especially the minister (Hendriks, 2001:8).<sup>83</sup> Hendriks argues that the new emphasis on the role of the faith community as a whole, with special attention to the laity that constitute the church, has highlighted the importance of a practical-theological ecclesiology. Paradigmatic shifts in theology mean that it is not enough to preach and apply systematic theology in ministry.<sup>84</sup> Louw (1992:119) describes this as a shift in emphasis away from theology as ‘faculty’ towards theology as ‘habitus’ (condition, habit, style, nature, state of being). In this regard, ‘praxis’<sup>85</sup> (not only of the pastor, but also that of all members of the faith community; Pieterse, 1993:41-44) becomes important – implying an acting reflection and a reflective action aimed at the transformation of society. In this sense, practical theology becomes a communicative action science<sup>86</sup> and the church becomes an agent for change in society. In this approach, a kingdom perspective becomes very important and the church (in its broadest sense) is viewed as part of society.

The context has changed and the basic principles of ecclesiology have to find new institutional design and pattern for ministry. How to be the church in a new era and context requires a process under the guidance of Scripture and the Holy Spirit. It also requires a new theological methodology. (Hendriks, 2001:9).

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<sup>83</sup> “‘Clericalism’ is a form of power structure which attributes all power of sacramental celebration, theological knowledge and decision-making to experts – in other words, to members of the clergy on whom this kind of power is imparted by ordination” (Watson, 2002:68).

<sup>84</sup> This point is crucial for a “feminist reconsideration of ecclesiology”, which “needs not only to be in dialogue with other theological topoi such as Christology, theological anthropology and the doctrine of the Trinity, but needs to draw on subjects such as practical theology, church history, sociology of religion, religious studies and women’s studies. Feminist ecclesiology recognizes the ambiguity of male-defined boundaries for women and their discourses of faith, theology and spirituality, transcends them and also seeks to find new ways of working constructively within them” (Watson, 2002:10).

<sup>85</sup> See footnote 15.

<sup>86</sup> “n Kommunikatiewe handelingswetenskap”.

In a practical-theological ecclesiology, attention is paid to the functional dimension of ecclesial action. There would therefore be greater emphasis on the life of the church, rather than on its nature (Louw, 1992:121). This does not mean that the nature of the church is of no importance, but rather that the nature of the church is interpreted in terms of the *function* of the church.<sup>87</sup> This is also the view of Ploeger and Ploeger-Grotegoed (2001:187), who describes practical-theological ecclesiology as “de praktisch-theologische theorie van de kerk, in bijzonder van het kerkelijk handelen van de kerk als geheel en van de gemeenten voor zich, in hun onderlinge samenhang”. There is, in other words, a shift from an ontological paradigm in the direction of a hermeneutical paradigm (Louw, 1992:122). This means a move away from a one-dimensional, rational, subject-object approach, which leads to a deductive style and a positivistic, even triumphalistic attitude in doing theology (Hendriks, 2001:2). In a hermeneutical paradigm we focus on an understanding and interpretation of God’s acts of salvation in history with the aim of helping people find meaning in their lives through faith. In a practical-theological ecclesiology, it is about the praxis of God in the world; it is about function, action, praxis and operationalisation, without abandoning the theological character of the church (Louw, 1992:125).

For Ploeger and Ploeger-Grotegoed (2001:189), the difference between practical-theological ecclesiology and systematic-theological ecclesiology lies in the fact that the latter looks from the Bible and tradition (i.e. deductively) to the character and nature of the church. Practical theology, on the other hand, looks in the first instance to the praxis (inductively) and asks the question: How can one ecclesiology, which moves from the empirical reality of the church and modern society, do justice to the theological-ecclesial tradition, based on the word of God and openness towards the Spirit of God, and how can it correct this tradition from her knowledge? While the systematic-theological vision is and remains purely theological, it is not the case with practical theology, which would also make use of social and cultural sciences, starting with interpretation (therefore hermeneutics). In essence, a practical-theological ecclesiology wants to focus on the life and function of the congregation (church; faith community), bringing the theological and empirical views of the congregation into creative tension with each other.

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<sup>87</sup> “In die prakties-teologiese ekklesiologie gaan dit dan nie net om die waarheid van die kerk in terme van sy oorsprong nie, maar ook om die waaragtigheid van die kerk (waarmaking van die kerk) in terme van sy diensgestaltes. ’n Prakties-teologiese ekklesiologie ignoreer nie die konfessionele basis van die kerk nie maar wil die konfessionele basis van die kerk krities toets aan die gehalte, kwaliteit en volwassenheid van lidmate wat in die wêreld gestalte moet gee aan die boodskap van die kerk” (Louw, 1992:121).

Ultimately, Louw argues, a practical-theological ecclesiology focuses on the understanding of the church in terms of its theological goal function: the church as agent of conservation, caring, change and renewal (Louw, 1992:134) – dynamically directed at the world (Louw, 1992:135).

Similarly, Andrew Root (2006:53) argues that “practical theology, unlike the other theological disciplines, specifically directs itself toward the contemporary moment”. According to Root, practical theology “puts the church’s historical theological confessions in conversation with the present conflicts and contemplations of the contemporary church and the larger society in which it is found, opening lines of mutual conversation and critique” (2006:54). Understood in this way, theology is in continual and constant development, “moving and advancing within this convergence of past reflection and present confrontation” (2006:54). Root asserts that “the context for constructing Christian theology can only be the church’s ministry in the world” (2006:55), and that this ministry provides both the context and the material for intentionally constructing theology. Root concludes that “if we are willing to see social action as a paradigm for practical theology, we will be thrust out into the bright light of the lived world, to construct theology together in our ministry, as a collective community, alongside the other who calls, together serving and suffering for the world” (Root, 2006:75).

This relationship with the world has always been a point of contention among theologians and members of the broader church. What cannot be denied is that the church does not exist in a vacuum. How should we understand and deal with ‘the world’?

### **3.3.3 In the world, but not from the world?**

In his so-called High-priestly prayer for his disciples, Jesus prays:

I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. (John 17:14-19, NIV)

*“They are not of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world.”* One of the first ‘lessons’ given to young Christians after their conversion experience is that they should always remember that they are in the world but not from the world. The clear instruction contained in

this phrase is that Christians should not engage in ‘worldly’ things or practices, because they were to “live by the Spirit” and “not gratify the desires of the sinful nature” or “flesh” (cf. Galatians 5:13f). This dichotomy has been a point of dispute and the grounds of much fierce debate amongst Christians, and has led to categories like ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’, ‘evangelical’ and ‘political’, etc.

Jesus’ depiction of his disciples, the church, as ‘the salt of the earth’ and ‘the light of the world’ (Matt. 5:13-16), has through the ages become a powerful symbol of the church’s self-understanding of her relationship to, as well as her calling in, the world – as a missional church (cf. Hendriks, 2004:70). History and experience have shown that religious leaders as well as members of different faith communities have always understood Biblical passages like this differently, resulting in tensions and accusations of misinterpretation, and even charges of heresy. Without trying to enter into the debate about the relationship ‘church-society’, we wish to state that it is very important in any discussion of a practical-theological ecclesiology. Campbell (cited in Nel, 1996:155) makes the following remark:

It seems that the articulation of the nature of practical theology is intimately related to one’s understanding of the relationship between the life of the Church and the life of the world ‘outside the Church’. Practical theology’s concern for operations and its relatedness to specific situations needs to be grounded in some systematic conceptualisation of the church-world relationship.

A practical-theological ecclesiology should be aware of the continuing tension that has existed and will always exist between being church and being in the world. Many Christian believers maintain a dualism between “this age” and “the age to come” in a very absolute way. Because believers are strangers in this world – sojourners – they are not called to engage in working for peace, justice and reconciliation among people. Discussing the issue of apocalyptic and ethics, David Bosch (1991:149-150) writes the following:

Their exclusive focus on the *parousia* is an invitation to ethical passivity and quietism. There is no concern for the here, only for the hereafter. Social conservatism and apocalyptic enthusiasm go hand in hand. Waiting for God’s imminent kingdom, people are drawn out of society into the haven of the church, which is nothing but a lifeboat going round and round in a hostile sea, picking up survivors of a shipwreck. Moreover, apocalyptic enthusiasts usually display a peculiar self-centredness. They see themselves as a favored elite. The world is the stage for their own striving for



sanctification; the dualism between spirit and body devaluates the created order to a testing ground for heaven – or to a vale of tears. Where they do get involved with others, this usually happens in a condescending manner. They practice an “ethic of excess”, in which the “have-nots” become the target of the charity of the “haves”.

These apocalyptic enthusiasts could indeed be found in every denomination or faith community on the Cape Flats.

Bosch (1991:150) argues that Paul’s apocalyptic is different – Paul perceives the church in a way that fundamentally modifies standard apocalyptic thinking:

The church already belongs to the redeemed world; it is that segment of the world that is obedient to God. As such, it strains itself in all its activities to prepare the world for its coming destiny. Precisely because of this, the church is not preoccupied with self-preservation; it serves the world in the sure hope of the world’s transformation at the time of God’s final triumph. The small Pauline churches are so many “pockets” of an alternative lifestyle that penetrates the mores of society around them. In the midst of a “crooked and perverse generation” the Christians are to be “without blemish” and shining “as lights in the world” (Phil 2:15) – sober in judgment, cheerful in performing acts of mercy, patient in tribulation, constant in prayer, practicing hospitality, living in harmony with all, without conceit, serving those in distress (Rom 12). Passion for the coming of God’s reign goes hand in hand with compassion for a needy world.

The church and the world, in Paul’s thinking, are therefore joined together in a bond of solidarity.

The church, as the already redeemed creation, cannot boast in a “realized eschatology” for itself over against the world. It is placed as a community of hope, in the context of the world and its power structures. And it is as members of such a community that Christians “groan inwardly” together with the “whole creation,” which is “groaning in travail” (Rom 8:22f). Paul thus resists a narrow individualistic piety and a view that restricts salvation to the church. As long as the creation groans, Christians groan as well; as long as any part of God’s creation suffers, they cannot as yet participate in the eschatological glory.

Russel Botman titled his inaugural address as professor of missiology at Stellenbosch University in 2001 *“The end of hope or new horizons of hope? An outreach of those in Africa who dare to*

*hope*". Botman points out how modernity was born out of the enthusiasm of a certain messianic hope expressed in terms of natural elements and the theology of the orders of creation. The Renaissance turned the European human being into 'the measure of all things' and, under this European subject, their rationality became the instrument of domination (Botman, 2001:3). In contrast to the relationship that Paul envisages between the Church and the world/creation as described by Bosch, Botman argues that the enthusiastic, European messianic hope deprived human beings of their ecology and the environment of their authentic being as it was given in their relationship with the Creator. This led to the "unmaking of hope" (Botman, 2001:3). But it is exactly at the end of secular hope that we see a new religious horizon opening up, and the challenge for Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is "to remake the Christian hope by basing it anew in the new acts that God is doing in the world today"(Botman, 2001:3). As opposed to Christians who look at certain world events as signs of the nearness of the second coming of Christ, and therefore as a justification for apathy and a lack of action (see Bosch's reference to apocalyptic enthusiasm on previous page), Botman is of the opinion that the mission of the triune God calls for action in terms of the Imitation Dei (the following of God).

The hope of a disciple is never based on one's own agency but on one's following of the acting God who has acted then in Jesus Christ and now in and among us all in the world. (Botman, 2001:5)

Botman challenges Bosch's notion of *mission as action in hope*, which he finds too restricted to mere acts of anticipation, and proposes *mission as hope in action*. Botman continues:

We are not merely called to act in anticipatory hope. Our mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to confess hope in action following God's actions in our times. We take our point of departure the notion that God is acting in history, at this point in time, in this place, in this country, on this continent and in this world. Our mission is to confess this hope. However, confessing this hope passively is not a following of God in this world. We are called to confess hope in action on the African continent. This confession is far removed from the idea that we can save the world and ourselves by our own works. Such Christian hope is understood as an action<sup>88</sup> that is: (a) based on the new actions of God in history; (b) rooted in the promises of God; (c) a conscious break from the frame of a natural causality; (d) a critical challenge to Christianity and the church in the world. In

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<sup>88</sup> It remains a question whether an eschatological understanding of hope has, in the first place, its foundation in action (ortho-praxis), or in an ontological understanding of being human – 'onthicity' (oncho-praxis).

short, such an understanding of mission will extend the idea of the Mission Dei to that of the Imitation Dei. (Botman, 2001:5)

We believe that Botman and Bosch are on the same page with regard to their ultimate understanding of the task at hand for the church, and for Christians in the world. Both warn against a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of eschatology that leads to an ethical passivity in the present.

Bosch criticises both the eschatologisation of mission (with its fixation on the *parousia*, resulting in a neglecting of the problems of this world and a crippling of Christian mission) and historicisation of mission (with its preoccupation with this world to the exclusion of the transcendent dimension, robbing people of ultimate meaning and of a teleological dimension).

We need a way beyond both. We need an eschatology for mission which is both future-directed and oriented to the here and now. It must be an eschatology that holds in creative and redemptive tension the already and the not yet; the world of sin and rebellion, and the world God loves; the new age that has already begun and the old that has not yet ended, justice as well as justification; the gospel of liberation and the gospel of salvation. Christian hope does not spring from despair about the present. We hope because of what we have already experienced. Christian hope is both possession and yearning, repose and activity, arrival and being on the way. Since God's victory is certain, believers can work both patiently and enthusiastically, blending careful planning with urgent obedience, motivated by the patient impatience of the Christian hope ... There is no choice, then, between becoming involved in *either* salvation history *or* profane history ... There are not two histories, but there are two ways of understanding history ... The Christian is not preoccupied with a different set of historical facts, but uses a different perspective ... Christian eschatology, then, moves in all three times: past, present, and future ... eschatology is taking place right now ... If we turn off the lighthouse of eschatology we can only grope around in darkness and despair. (Bosch, 1991:508-509)

Both Bosch and Botman refer to Christ's resurrection and the fact that it is God who makes all things new – emphasising God's initiative and grace, his surprising divine acts in this world.

Having briefly engaged with Bosch's *mission as action in hope* and Botman's *mission as hope in action*, the researcher is very comfortable with a conclusion that Christians are indeed part of

this world, because it is the world that God has created, that He loves, that He has redeemed and has never given up on.

Nel's choice of the terms "society" and "community" rather than "world" may be the best way out of a paralysing debate on the church-world issue that saps our energy and takes our focus off the important calling and task at hand (Nel, 1996:155).

The term 'society' is used to describe the interrelatedness between church and what sociologists call society. This is because the term 'society' is expatiatory and give expression to the idea that the church's interrelatedness is not limited to certain spheres only. The word 'community' gives expression to the type of interrelatedness between the church and society. It is a word often used in the Bible and brings with it something of closeness and caring.

Thus, we are called to active participation in God's redemptive will in this world. The transcendent message of God's sure triumph gives us the necessary distance and sobriety in respect to this world, as well as the motivation to involve ourselves in the transformation of the status quo (Bosch, 1991:510).

If we agree that the world belongs to God and that we are called to active participation in God's redemptive will in this world, our understanding of the church should point to a missional ecclesiology. The church can never become so self-focused that it closes its eyes and ears to the joys and pains, the positive and negative developments in the world.

### **3.3.4 A Missional Ecclesiology**

The identity of the church is missional by its very nature. (Hendriks, 2004:24)

This chapter began with a look at the resilience of faith communities on the Cape Flats and it was concluded that there were important lessons to be learned from looking at the history of the church in this particular context. It was also pointed out how the challenges confronting faith communities today are presenting themselves in the form of poverty, unemployment, gangsterism, drug abuse and a general struggle to sustain a morally healthy society. Recognising a tendency among so many faith communities to focus on their own internal needs, a sort of ecclesio-centrism, denominationalism or parochialism, one may indeed ask the critical question: Are faith communities making an impact on society? Is it not true that faith

communities have generally become so self-centred that they have no, or not enough, influence to be agents of transformation on the Cape Flats?

Andria and Saayman (2003:503) argue that the church in Africa has not made an adequate impact on African societies in general, due (among other things) to a defective ecclesiology, despite the huge human resources and a vibrant spirituality. One may ask the question: How applicable and valid is Andria and Snyman's thesis or argument with regard to the church on the Cape Flats?

One can look at the current situation, any situation for that matter, from different perspectives resulting in different approaches. Practically this might lead to some faith communities arguing that the socio-economic conditions are so overwhelmingly negative that it would be a waste of time and energy to try to change it. It is in any case in the hands of politicians, who wield the power and ultimately take political decisions that count. It would therefore be much better to work within your own denomination or church, concentrate on building your own members and draw people to come to your faith community or place of worship. Other faith communities might have a different understanding and perspective and see the socio-economic conditions as challenges presented to them, as opportunities to exercise their calling. They would base their approach on their understanding of God's universal reign, the kingdom of God that has already broken into this world, but has yet to be fully realised. They would have no doubt that the church could never withdraw from this world, whatever the socio-political and economic conditions.

The researcher subscribes to the second view and see our current situation on the Cape Flats as an opportunity for the church to revisit her theological foundations and ask questions like: How can we be church on the Cape Flats today? What lessons have we learnt from our past struggles? What tools do we need at this point in our history to indeed have a significant and adequate impact on society? In the first part of this chapter we have seen that there definitely has been resilience amongst faith communities on the Cape Flats. However, it is not enough to dwell on past 'successes', so to speak.

In this regard, the researcher agrees with Andria and Saayman and, with application to the Cape Flats, contends that faith communities would continue to have an insignificant influence, unless the church addresses her mandate by rethinking and reformulating her practical-theological foundations. This requires a re-imagining of church and society, re-imagining a new future with new possibilities based on God's promise of a new future. It calls for a profound reflection on

mission and church, missiology and ecclesiology (Andria & Saayman, 2003:504). This is also what Guder (2000:150) refers to as “the continuing conversion of the church”.

The continual conversion of the church happens as the congregation hears, responds to, and obeys the gospel of Jesus Christ in ever new and more comprehensive ways.

It also has to do with what Hendriks calls a fundamental shift that is taking place in our method of doing theology:

Previously, theology was done in a way that boils down to “obediently analysing and systematising” our faith tradition. We now realise that, while this approach is not without merit, another way to do theology is to “participate obediently” in God’s missional praxis. (Hendriks, 2004:24)

Craig van Gelder (2007:26) describes how a new conversation has emerged over the past decade, stemming from the work of Leslie Newbigin “that is beginning to capture the attention of many congregations across diverse confessions and theological positions” (Van Gelder, 2007:26), namely the missional church conversation. This conversation is “finally making a clear connection between missiology and ecclesiology in developing what has become known as a ‘missional church’, or what has also been identified as a missional ecclesiology, or missiological ecclesiology” (Van Gelder, 2007:27). God is a “missionary God” (Guder, 1998:4). Thus we have learned to understand the church as a “sent people”. God’s mission is calling and sending us, the church of Jesus Christ, to be a missionary church in our societies, in the cultures in which we find ourselves.

Pat Keifert (2006:28) refers to the Apostolic Age when local congregations understood themselves to be “mission outposts within the mission of God; communities called, gathered, and sent in God’s mission, the very movement of God toward the world”. These congregations were obedient to their Lord, who has declared: “Even as the father has sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21). They saw themselves as being part and parcel of God’s movement and life.

They did not imagine mission as something or somewhere other than their primal activity as a called, gathered, centered, and sent people of God. This is the core characteristic of a missional church: being, not just doing, mission. (Keifert, 2006:28)

This view is echoed by Barret (cited by Dames, 2007:2):

A missional church is a church that is shaped by participating in God's mission, which is to set things right in a broken, sinful world, to redeem it, and to restore it to what God has always intended for the world. Missional churches see themselves not so much as sending, as being sent. A missional congregation lets God's mission permeate everything that the congregation does – from worship to witness, to training members for discipleship. It bridges the gap between outreach and congregational life, since, in its life together, the church is to embody God's mission.

The new movement described by Van Gelder is much more explicit about bringing the connection of the mission Dei with the kingdom of God into conversation with particular congregations with respect to the emerging postmodern context (Van Gelder, 2007:27). Van Gelder furthermore points out how the adjective “missional” reframes the whole discussion of what had previously been referred to as “church and mission”, which introduces a dichotomy from which it is impossible to escape without tending to give precedence to one over the other. “But the missional church invites a different conception: it sees the church as missionary in its very nature” (Van Gelder, 2007:27).

Guder (1998:11-12) lists the following characteristics of a missional ecclesiology: A missional ecclesiology is biblical, historical, contextual, eschatological, and can be practised. These same elements are present when Van Gelder develops a missiological framework for congregations in context. For this purpose, he shows how the missional church conversation has drawn deeply from significant developments in Trinitarian studies concerning an understanding of mission. Informed by these studies we have come to a fuller understanding of the missionary nature of congregations. Van Gelder also contends that missional congregations minister for the sake of the world, that congregations are responsible for translating the good news of the gospel along with their own organisational reality into every cultural context they encounter.<sup>89</sup> “To do so requires that congregations plan strategically for this work even as they seek to discern the leading of the Spirit” (Van Gelder, 2007:34). The church that is led by the Spirit recognises that any tradition must be a living and dynamic reality, and that it must take account of new realities. As such, missional congregations are always forming and reforming. The ‘forming’ part pertains to the missional challenge of the congregation, that of recontextualising its ministry in the midst of a changing context; while the ‘reforming’ part points to the confessional aspect of the

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<sup>89</sup> A congregation is the local manifestation of the church in society. Congregations are faith communities that endeavour to be faithful effective witnesses and God's servants in this world where they proclaim the Good News in word and deed (Hendriks, 2004:19).

congregation – the challenge of continuing to maintain the truths of the historic Christian faith as understood by the congregation. The issue, according to Van Gelder, is really of finding the right balance between the two logics of *outside in* (forming) and *inside out* (reforming) (2007:38).

Van Gelder (2007:38-42) proposes the following aptitudes for missional congregations as they engage in ministry:

- Missional congregations learn to read a context as they seek their contextuality
- Missional congregations anticipate new insights into the Gospel
- Missional congregations anticipate reciprocity
- Missional congregations understand that they are contextual, and thus also particular
- Missional congregations understand that ministry is always contextual, and thus also practical
- Missional congregations understand that doing theology is always contextual, and thus also perspectival
- Missional congregations understand that organisation is always contextual, and thus also provisional

It is abundantly clear to us that every congregation exists or lives and ministers in a particular context. The relationship between a congregation and its context usually works between the two polarities of, on the one hand, being *under-contextualised* (leaning toward privileging the congregation) or, on the other hand, being *over-contextualised* (the congregation tends to become subsumed under its context) (Frederickson, 2007:44). The missional congregation should not become like the context. In the words of Frederickson, (2007:63):

It must be able to live in the context in a way that is mutually beneficial to itself and the context, at times supporting it, and perhaps at other times battling it. Understanding the key components of the context will help the missional congregation live out its calling.

### **3.3.4.1 Conclusion**

Being, not just doing, mission, focused not so much on bringing people to church – some identified building – but being church in, with, and under the friends, neighbors, co-workers, and strangers of people's everyday lives. (Keifert, 2006:28).



The researcher believes that a missional ecclesiology captures the essence of the tradition of faith communities on the Cape Flats. He has shown how these communities were forced to make meaning under very difficult and challenging conditions in the wake of the forced removals and related social engineering methods under apartheid. Dames (2007:2) is correct in his observation that “poor black church communities” seemed to be more “missional” than some of the rich “white” churches. These communities are not experiencing existence on the periphery of society for the first time “today” – they were “schooled” in “what and how it should be church in the face of the then predominant (Apartheid) culture” (Dames, 2007:2).

Part of the practical implications of a missional ecclesiology is for faith communities to practise hospitality. The next section will discuss hospitality in a hostile society where the natural thing to do is to actually close and lock up your doors rather than opening them up to strangers and outsiders.

### **3.3.5 Practising Hospitality: Opening doors when it is natural to lock up**

I've come to see that in God's remarkable economy, as we make room for hospitality, more room becomes available to us for life, hope, and grace. (Pohl, 1999:xiii)

Hospitality is one of the most intriguing themes in philosophy, sociology, political science and theology, as well as in art, literature and movies (Vosloo, 2006:10). Hospitality has to do with some of the most urgent challenges facing people, communities and cultures today. Meeting people that are different from us more often than not bring to the surface our prejudices, lack of knowledge and suspicions. Within our South African context, where high levels of violence and spiralling crime have caused people to live in fear, promoting or proclaiming hospitality may be frowned upon as being completely out of touch with reality. All around us we experience high security alert at all times and places. Places of worship have been left with no choice but to bolt up in order to protect property and people, or to face being burgled or vandalised, and even robbed during services. The question of hospitality within a context of crime and violence, and specifically with regard to gangsterism, is therefore quite relevant to and important for this research.

The question could even be asked: Is it even responsible to talk about or proclaim hospitality? Is hospitality not potentially subversive and countercultural (Pohl, 1999:15), an antiquated practice, a relic from an earlier time? (Pohl, 1999:7). Is it not more responsible to protect what is precious to you – your life and your possessions? Many good-hearted Samaritans or institutions have had

bad experiences of being robbed or stolen from, and some Samaritans have even been murdered after having welcomed strangers in their homes or properties.

During the month of May 2008, South Africans across the spectrum of the population were shocked by the so-called xenophobic<sup>90</sup> violence that started on the East Rand of Gauteng province and rapidly spread to other parts of the country. In these horrendous acts of violence, not less than fifty foreign Africans had lost their lives, scores of others were injured, hundreds of houses belonging to immigrants were destroyed and thousands were displaced after fleeing for their lives. Government and civil society collaborated in providing shelter and material assistance to those affected. While hundreds of South Africans showed their solidarity with the foreign nationals in many different ways, the question of hospitality was raised in many debates, discussions and conferences.

Without doing a deep analysis of the reasons for the outbreak of xenophobic violence, we agree with many commentators who highlighted the pandemic poverty in sections of the South African society due to the extremely high level of unemployment, coupled with illiteracy and lack of proper schooling, which lead to a general sense of hopelessness and deep despair. It is therefore a struggle for access to scarce resources among the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable sectors of our society.

The researcher will now briefly describe what Christian hospitality is, informed by the way it was practised by the early Christian communities.

### ***3.3.5.1 What is Christian hospitality?***

Hospitality is a practice that integrates respect and care. Finding ways to respond to the needs of persons while simultaneously respecting their dignity is an ancient concern. (Pohl, 1999:69)

Hospitality, a virtue common to all human cultures, implies the gracious sharing of a meal with a stranger and often includes giving shelter. The host creates a space where non-members can feel temporarily at home. (Smith & Carvill, 2000:84)

Hospitality is part of the Christian tradition, in fact “fundamental to Christian identity” (Pohl, 1999:x). It seems that in most religions and cultures, hospitality is a virtue that is highly

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<sup>90</sup> People like UCT academic Neville Alexander refers to *negrophobia* instead of xenophobia, because in all the reported cases *black* foreign nationals were targeted.

acclaimed. The philosopher Jacques Derrida (cited in Vosloo, 2006:14) writes “Not only is there a culture of hospitality, but there is no culture that is not also a culture of hospitality ... Hospitality – this is culture itself.”

Christian hospitality is much more than social get-togethers of family and friends. Christian hospitality is not easy; in fact, it may be very painful (Vosloo, 2006:15) because of its emphasis on the other and the stranger. The Greek word used to refer to hospitality in the New Testament is *philoxenia*, which indicates ‘love for the stranger’, and stands in contrast to *xenophobia*, the fear or hate of the stranger. For Amy G. Oden (2001:13), hospitality, “at the very least”, is the welcoming of the stranger (*hospes*). Hospitality includes meeting social as well as physical needs. “An important component of hospitality is helping the outsiders or the poor feel welcome, which at times requires more than food and drink – a recasting of social relations ... Acts of inclusion and respect, however small, can powerfully reframe social relations and engender welcome” (Oden, 2001:14). Hospitality also encompasses spiritual needs. This includes prayers of healing, safe travel and gratitude. Hospitality sometimes means including the stranger in worship, Eucharist, or other liturgical acts, as well as listening to the stories of strangers or receiving them into the larger community. The practice of hospitality lies close to the centre of a Christian’s life before God, and welcoming the stranger is not an option; it is a central dimension of being human, since God has given humankind the gift of and call to connection (Smith & Carvill, 2000:84).

Arthur Sutherland (2006:xiii) offers the following definition of Christian hospitality:

In the light of Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and return, Christian hospitality is the intentional, responsible, and caring act of welcoming or visiting, in either public or private places, without regard for reciprocation.

Sutherland unpacks the definition with five considerations:

- Hospitality is not merely ‘entertaining’.
- Hospitality is not the domain, or obligation, of women alone. “Hospitality is at the very center of what it means to be a Christian and to think theologically” (Sutherland, 2006:xiv).
- The reason we do not consider hospitality is that we think too little of responsibility and too much of reciprocity.

- If we cannot act consonant with the gospel in small things, even the inconveniences of life, we will be ill-equipped for the larger matters.
- Hospitality needs to be distinguished from notions of civility and honour.

The researcher concurs with Oden, who views hospitality as a feature of Christian life – “not so much a singular act of welcome as it is a way, an orientation that attends to otherness, listening and learning, valuing and honouring ... Hospitality, then, is always a spiritual discipline of opening one’s own life to God’s life and revelation” (Oden, 2001:14).

It seems, then, that there is broad consensus that Christian hospitality should not be mistaken for the secular hospitality business or an entertaining of other people, normally family and friends. Hospitality is the welcoming of others in their strangeness and otherness (Vosloo, 2006:47). At the beginning of this section we quoted Pohl, who says the following:

I’ve come to see that in God’s remarkable economy, as we make room for hospitality, more room becomes available to us for life, hope, and grace. (Pohl, 1999:xiii)

It is an issue of faith and does not subscribe to the norms of secular economy and mathematics. The mindset required for this kind of hospitality differs from that of the secular world and the industry of hospitality it promotes.

In Chapter Four the aspect of hospitality will again be discussed through the lens of pastoral ministry. Before we discuss hospitality within the context of gangsterism, it may be helpful to take into consideration Pembroke’s contention that, implicit in the concept of hospitality, is a dialectic of openness and limitation that is central in relation to pastoral ministry. Openness (acceptance or unconditional positive regard) does not mean that one must condone all the attitudes, values and behaviours of the one being welcomed. “The theory of acceptance makes room for a challenge to values and actions that militate against health and well-being” (Pembroke, 2006:31). So, although the invitation to share in the community of God is open and all persons are welcome, certain *behaviours* are not – indicating both unbounded and bounded openness (Pembroke, 2006:33). The researcher finds this helpful, as it may pre-empt questions from members of a faith community regarding the degree of hospitality they have to show and practice, and whether the hospitality we refer to is an unconditional acceptance of the other, the stranger – in this case gangsters.

Hospitality should not be seen as an abstract, timeless value or quality – just another concept in our list of praiseworthy virtues and values (Vosloo, 2006:129). Hospitality always has to do with good discretion about how to practise, or live, hospitality in a specific time and in a specific place – it is about an embodiment of hospitality. This is very relevant with regard to the context of gangsterism on the Cape Flats.

In the next section the researcher will discuss the dimension of place and space in a practical-theological ecclesiology. He regards this as extremely important because it places a few critical questions on the table: What is the nature of the space we have as faith communities? Are we owners or merely stewards of the places of worship, which actually belong to God? How can we creatively utilise our places of worship as spaces of therapeutic healing, reconciliation and affirmation?

### ***3.3.5.2 Who's space is it anyway?***

One of the radical tenets of Christianity is that we are called to lay down our lives for the sake of Christ. This is the call of discipleship. The One who expects us to lay down our lives, to die to ourselves, has set the example for us. He emptied himself for the sake of the people He has come to serve. Fundamental to this call is the Biblical teaching that who we are and what we have are gifts of grace – we have received them freely, and should therefore give them to others freely. “That is the way of all ministry” (Nouwen, 1978:52).

Expanding this notion of self-emptying and self-sacrifice to the congregation, one may indeed ask the question about our spaces and places of worship: Who's space is it anyway? This is indeed a radical question, in line with the radical nature of the call to discipleship. This is exactly our point of departure as we explore the question: How can we creatively utilise our places of worship as spaces of therapeutic healing, reconciliation and affirmation?

Louw (2008a:104; 2008b:26) points out that, surprisingly, the Greeks had already discovered the importance of space and place for the human being (see also Cilliers, 2008:3). Louw (2008b:26) continues:

The Greek word *chora* originally referred to space or place. *Choreo* is a verbal derivative of *choros* or *chora*, indicating an opens space or land. As an intransitive it means “to give room”. In an extended and metaphorical sense it can refer to the intellectual and spiritual capacity of being able “to understand”.

Plato understood *chora* as a nourishing maternal receptacle – as womb, as giver of life, nurturing, cherishing – a *chora* that overcomes the chaos and as such enables life space (*topos*). Within this context, *chora* has developed the ethical meaning of “giving or creating space for others” (Cilliers, 2008:3). Space in this sense is described by the French philosopher Derrida as “a hermeneutic dynamics of interacting discourses” (Cilliers, 2008:3). As such, *chora* becomes an indication of how humans fill space with values, perceptions and associations in order to create a dynamic relational environment and systemic network of interaction where language, symbol and metaphor shape the meaning and discourse of life (Louw, 2008b:26).

These meanings of *chora* open up wonderful and exciting possibilities for pastoral care and the search for strong theological foundations for a ministry in communities on the Cape Flats. For this reason, Louw’s (2008b:27) application of *chora* to the discourse on healing in pastoral care describes it well:

*Chora* shifts the debate from performance and production to care and nurturing in order to support, surround, protect, incubate and to give birth to life. The feminine and mothering dimension strengthens the notion of the fostering of life: *chora* is the condition for the genesis of things and being.

In a pastoral, as well as a practical theological sense, space determines the quality of place, and therefore our experience of meaning and dignity. “In order to be healed, we need to change the space so that we can live in a very specific place. Even if that place is a hospital, a frail care unit, or a family home” (Louw, 2008a:106). The implication for a practical-theological ecclesiology is that the *ekklesia*, the fellowship of believers, should create such a space, *koinonia*, in order to support people to be healed and to discover meaning in their *topos*.

Louw’s following thesis provides us with an important grounding for the practical-theological ecclesiology language we need to utilise in the context under discussion in this study:

Within the events of understanding, verbalising, care and comfort (*paraclesis*), edification (*oikodomein*) and believing, fellowship (*koinonia*), service (*diakonia*) and sharing, witness (*marturia*) and outreach (all functional dimensions of the spiritual praxis of the *ekklesia*) the space of being church within a local setting is established. (Louw, 2008a:109, 111)

It is important to understand the importance of space and place (territory) in relation to with the gang-culture. This will help us to think theologically about how to respond in hospitality to gangsters or ex-gangsters who may come to our church. In this regard, the element of power in determining space is important (Louw, 2008b:27). We have seen that territory (space and place) and power are central to the functioning of gangs. Most of the time, gang warfare is about protecting territory or operational area. On the other hand, gang members feel safe in their own space (territory) – they would normally not venture outside their territory unprotected or without the backing of fellow gang members. The place of their headquarters is also a place where they are being taken care of by the gang leader. The leader provides for them, protects them and disciplines them – the power hierarchy is maintained strongly. Those who choose to enter this space are expected to submit to the rules of the gang, follow the chain of command, serve the gang, and should be prepared to lay down their lives for the gang.

When people join our community of faith as ex-gangsters, we should take into account where they come from, what they are used to, what factors determined their lives up to that point. We do not have to match the gang. The traditional understanding of the church, all the functional dimensions of the spiritual praxis of the *ekklesia*, provides us with more than enough to welcome these new members and minister to them. But we offer more. The church is a spiritual realm, a sacred space and place, and this spiritual realm is determined by eschatology – that is how human beings are being affirmed and constituted by grace, love and salvation, and how this space can heal human beings and beautify life (Louw, 2008a:111) – tattoos and all!

Most of these ex-gangsters would have been involved, whether directly or indirectly, in murder and other crimes against rival gangs and community members. Many of them have their internal struggles with bad memories. We will have to help them find liberation through forgiveness, healing, and even restitution where necessary and possible.

At this point we find Louw's proposal for a **theology of affirmation**, based on an inhabitational and pneumatological understanding of praxis, very appropriate.

An inhabitational theology of space and place is about a theology of affirmation, that is the constitution of human identity in terms of an ontology of salvation (corporate reality of our new being in Christ and our transformed status as children of God). Affirmation theology is therefore about the implication of Christ, the Yes and Amen of God, for an understanding of human identity and our being functions as determined by the

indwelling Spirit of God, and as exhibited through and in the fruit of the Spirit of God.  
(Louw, 2008a:112)

Within the framework of a theology of affirmation, the old language of ex-gangsters is given new meaning. In order to join a gang they had to show that they could be strong and withstand pain (*“sterk bene maak”*), and have courage when challenged or tested by enemies. While a theology of affirmation takes cognisance of and even links with recent developments in psychology, specifically positive psychology and its variant fortology, the emphasis shifts. The emphasis on strength (fortigenesis) points more in the direction of existential and ontological categories than mere inner emotional strength and positive behavioural attitudes.

A theology of affirmation refers to an ontic state of being, that is to be affirmed in your very being qualities by eschatology. To be a new being in Christ means to be strengthened by the charisma (fruit) of the Spirit in order to live life in courage and by means of vivid hope (Louw, 2008a:115)

Now that having discussed the question of space and place, and accepting Louw’s proposal for a theology of affirmation in a practical-theological ecclesiology, the next section will deal specifically with gangsters or ex-gangsters as strangers or outsiders within the call to hospitality. Our understanding of the liturgical space is very crucial here (cf. Cilliers, 2008).

### ***3.3.5.3 Gangsters as strangers or outsiders***

Hospitality also implies that the stranger not only be greeted, but also will be given loving attention. The stranger not only will be fed and given drink; his or her voice also will be granted space. His discomfort will be met with concern, her stories will be heard and responded to. The fact that those stories may be new and different enriches, rather than threatens, the host’s task. (Smith & Carvill, 2000:91)

Talking about or discussing hospitality and treating it as an academic exercise is one thing; practising hospitality in a concrete manner in the real world is the real test. To this end, faith communities on the Cape Flats are challenged to practise hospitality towards gangsters and ex-gangsters. Are we prepared to grant space to the voices of these strangers and outsiders? Are we willing to listen to their stories and allow these stories to enrich our lives? Are we willing to take the risks involved?



Christine Pohl makes us aware of the fact that there are different kinds of strangers (1999:86). We may debate whether gangsters may be depicted as strangers in the sense of “people without a place” (Walter Brueggemann, cited in Pohl, 1999:87). When Pohl continues to describe these people without a place as being detached from basic, life-supporting institutions – family, work, polity, religious community, and to be without networks of relations that sustain and support human beings, we may well make a case for viewing gangsters as strangers to faith communities. It also comes closer to the title of this research: *In search of a family*. We believe that despite the fact that gangs provide some sort of an alternative family structure for many young people, the negative elements within such a structure outweigh the positive aspects. In the light of our discussion of the various reasons why young people join gangs, we could also suggest that they are “people without a place” who have joined gangs because there they have been welcomed and given a sense of belonging. Belonging to a gang, however, means that they become disconnected from the rest of the community; they are still living in the community, but have become strangers and outsiders.

When a faith community might decide to welcome gangsters into their places of worship, they would be well aware of the risks involved in this kind of hospitality. Pohl (1999:93) is right in stating that we frequently look back to the old days as a time when hospitality to strangers was easier and safer. Even Martin Luther and John Calvin thought that the Old Testament patriarchs and their children had found it easier to offer hospitality to strangers than was the case for the Christians of the sixteenth century (Pohl, 1999:93, 94). Recognising the fact that there were more vagabonds and scoundrels in the world in his time than in the time of the Old Testament, Luther warned households to be cautious “lest through a lack of discretion they invite dangers for themselves” (Pohl, 1999:94).

If there is doubt about the risks involved in hospitality towards gangsters in our homes, Pohl’s (1999:94) suggestion is to make hospitality more public, that is, that the welcome be initiated in a more public setting where the community gathers regularly.

Hospitality begins at the gate, in the doorway, on the bridges between public and private space. Finding and creating threshold places is important for contemporary expressions of hospitality. Several communities of hospitality approach this issue in creative ways. In one household they established a large urban household easily accessible to strangers ... Another community uses its main house to welcome homeless people; after a person has lived with them for a month or two, he or she might

then be invited into a more intimate family setting in which to live for several years.  
(Pohl, 1999:95)

Faith communities on the Cape Flats who would like to practise hospitality to gangsters will have to be creative, taking into account the risks, but also the opportunities to make a difference in the lives of disconnected and displaced people.

The researcher would suggest that the role that ex-gangsters can play as “bridge or threshold people” should be explored. Pohl (1999:95) describes “bridge or threshold people” as people who understand both the world of the stranger (gang) and the world of the welcoming faith community. “Such person can interpret and discern situations, needs, and resources effectively” (Pohl, 1999:95). “Bridge or threshold people” should be ‘bi-lingual’ – possess the ability to understand the language of the stranger or outsider on the one hand, and the language of the faith community on the other hand. They should also be ‘streetwise’, that is, be able to interpret and discern situations and needs.

It is important that we “find and create contemporary equivalents of the gate, community rituals, and small group meetings in which we can build preliminary relations with strangers” (Pohl, 1999:97). In this regard, the smaller faith communities or “bedieninge” and their pastors, as represented by people like Pastors Henry Wood (from Manenberg) and Tom Klein (from Ravensmead), have shown the way. Freed from denominational constraints and restrictions, these groups are indeed finding and creating contemporary equivalents of the gate and community rituals, making it more possible to build relations with gangsters. They are also more at ease to speak the language of the street, of the gangster, allowing them to break through (formal) communication barriers much easier.

Christians, who form the church, the *communio sanctorum* and *familia dei*, should recognise that the stranger was created in the image of God (*imago dei*) and was made of the same flesh. Matthew 25:35 (“I was a stranger and you welcomed me”) reminds us in a forceful manner that Jesus Christ, the most desired guest, comes in the form of the vulnerable stranger.

Reflecting on the role of religion towards the end of the struggle for liberation in South Africa, Charles Villa-Vicencio (1990:140) writes:

Places of worship need to become centres of alternative cultural renewal, and liturgy a source of imagination and anticipation of a new and transformed spiritual, mental and social sense of reality.

The challenge for “households, churches, and intentional communities” today is “to cultivate a countercultural identity that nurtures a distinct way of life, a vibrant and welcoming environment, and clear reasons for welcoming strangers” (Pohl, 1999:124). This will require open, honest and courageous conversations within the faith communities themselves, and cannot be something that only the pastor or congregational leadership feels strongly about. Part of these conversations is recognising the power of stereotypes, which are closely linked with prejudices and generalisations (Vosloo, 2006:135). When members of a faith community engage in these types of difficult conversations and cultivate a culture of hospitality, they reveal signs of spiritual maturity.

Welcome is one of the signs that a community is alive. To invite others in is a sign that we are not afraid, that we have a treasure of truth and of peace to share...A community which refuses to welcome – whether through fear, weariness, insecurity, a desire to cling to comfort, or just because it is fed up with visitors – is dying spiritually. (Jean Vanier, cited in Vosloo, 2006:144)

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

The focus in this chapter has been on developing a practical-theological ecclesiology that might help us to understand what it means to be church on the Cape Flats. The researcher has argued that a missional ecclesiology provides us with theoretical tools to grasp our calling as a church in the very specific and particular context described in the earlier part of the chapter.

What is undoubtedly clear is that if the operationalisation of faith communities on the Cape Flats is based on a social-systemic ministry of intercontextual presence, the theological principle of hospitality needs to be introduced in order to:

- (i) create space for people; and
- (ii) affirm strangers, and specifically gangsters and ex-gangsters. Gangsterism causes alienation and a crisis of identity and value. A theology of affirmation that respects the personhood of those who cross our doorsteps, and welcomes them with Christ's

unconditional love will help them in developing a new identity, reclaiming their dignity as people created in the image of God.

The next chapter will start focussing on the development of a theoretical framework for practicing pastoral care in communities that experience gangsterism. An overview of how pastoral care and counselling have developed over many centuries will be presented. History is full of very valuable lessons for the present, and we need to acknowledge that. It would be of tremendous help to see how pastoral carers have responded to the needs of people over time and how these pastoral theological models and methods could be applied to our Cape Flats context.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **A BASE THEORY FOR PASTORAL CARE ON THE CAPE FLATS: FROM INDIVIDUAL CARE AND THE FOCUS ON THE HUMAN ‘SELF’ TO A HERMENETICS OF SYSTEMIC, PUBLIC CARE AND COMPASSIONATE PRESENCE**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the pastoral care component of the research. In the previous chapter the researcher discussed a practical theological ecclesiology that would be relevant to the specific context of the Cape Flats. With this in mind, the key question with regard to the caring dimension of the church is: What base theory for pastoral care would enable the faith communities to deal with societal phenomena like gangsterism and related challenges like poverty, unemployment and drug abuse?

In order to do this, the researcher is convinced that a brief critical examination of a few traditional approaches to pastoral care should be undertaken. Looking back at the development of pastoral care and counselling over the past centuries should present the research with some valuable lessons. It should also provide some sense of groundedness for pastoral caregivers today as they reflect on their roles within the situations where they are being called upon to provide care.

The following section we will be looking at how pastoral care has developed over time. The idea is not to provide an in-depth discussion of these developments, but rather to pick up on the major developments that would eventually influence our understanding of pastoral care in a context of gangsterism. It is also of critical importance that we recognise the historical roots of pastoral care in order to appreciate and learn from it. For this purpose the researcher will use Gerkin’s tracing of the history of pastoral care as set out in his *An Introduction to Pastoral Care* (1997). Gerkin not only describes the historical development of pastoral care, but also draws lines towards twentieth-century pastoral care practices. The lines will be drawn a bit further, setting up ‘flags’ or ‘markers’ that will help with the development of a theoretical framework for the context under discussion in this research.

## 4.2 MAJOR HISTORICAL MARKERS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING

### 4.2.1 Earlier Chapters in an Old Story: Shepherd of the flock

Gerkin (1997:23) rightly points out that “pastoral care as we know it today did not spring forth out of the shallow soil of recent experience”. Pastoral care has a long history that reaches back as far as the collective memories of the Christian community can be extended. Gerkin traces this history back to biblical times, pointing out that our earliest pastoral ancestors are to be found among the leaders of the ancient people of Israel (1997:23). A holistic understanding of pastoral care requires that we recognise and acknowledge that the metaphor of care has multiple origins. While some would ground the practice of pastoral care in ancient Israel primarily in the wisdom tradition, we should, rather, reclaim all three Old Testament role models (i.e. the prophetic, priestly and wisdom models). From the early Christian times to the present, another image has persisted as a prototypical image applied to both pastors and leaders of the institutional church, namely the “shepherd of the flock” as “the organizing metaphor *par excellence*”<sup>91</sup> for the work of the pastoral leader (Gerkin, 1997:27). The relevance of this metaphor will be discussed later.

### 4.2.2 The development of the Classical Paradigm<sup>92</sup> for Pastoral Care

Gerkin leads his readers on “a reflective journey” through several periods of Christian history to show how current issues and problems in the discipline of pastoral care indeed have historical roots.<sup>93</sup>

4.2.2.1 In his reference to *the primitive church*, Gerkin (1997:28) points out how Christian care was influenced by the anticipation of the immanent and cataclysmic *parousia*, the arrival of the risen Lord and the ushering in of God’s kingdom. Sustaining the faith at both

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<sup>91</sup> In many Afrikaans-speaking congregations the minister is commonly referred to as ‘die herder en leraar’ (the shepherd and teacher).

<sup>92</sup> The researcher follows John Patton on this point. He distinguishes three major paradigms for the ministry of pastoral care: the classical, the clinical pastoral, and the communal contextual. “Briefly stated, the *classical* paradigm for pastoral care extended from the beginning of Christendom beyond the Reformation to the advent of modern dynamic psychology’s impact on ministry. Its major emphasis has been upon the *message* of pastoral care, the caring elements in Christian theology and tradition” (Patton, 1993:4)

<sup>93</sup> In this regard Gerben Heitink (1993) dedicates a chapter of his book on practical theology to ‘The history of pastoral theology’ and points out that “from the earliest days of the Christian church, elementary and more elaborate forms of pastoral theology did exist” (1993:90). This tradition of pastoral theology contains a centuries-old treasure of experiences, with Scriptures as the guiding principle of faith and practice.

communal and individual levels was the major mode of pastoral care.<sup>94</sup> He rightly says that we who exercise pastoral care in our time are still under the influence that lives in hopeful anticipation of the rule of God.

4.2.2.2 The next period is depicted as *the age of persecutions*. Pastoral care during this era is characterised by reconciling those who had remained steadfast to the faith despite and in the midst of cultural conflict and uncertainty, with those who failed to do so, as well as disciplining members who failed to follow the church's rules of worship and behaviour. We also see how two important aspects inherited from Greek cultural thought greatly affected pastoral practices during this time, namely the concepts of *metanoia* (repentance) and *exomologesis* (confession). Quintus Tertullian (160-220), a native of Carthage in North Africa and the earliest known Latin theological writer, strongly developed the concepts of repentance and confession as pastoral requirements of the Christian community that would make reconciliation possible. Pastoral care focused on discipline, casuistry, and the exercise of penitential authority. The role of the pastoral leader was to set and enforce behavioural boundaries for members of the community, and at the same time to act as reconciler and healer of the wounds of the people. In the fourth century, John Chrysostom, Bishop of Antioch and Constantinople,<sup>95</sup> writes about the qualities of the pastoral caregiver based on the priestly and wisdom models of pastoral practice – “the shepherd needs a lot of concentration, perseverance, and patience” (cited in Gerkin, 1997:31) to lead people back to the appropriation of the faith. Concerning the contributions of Tertullian and Chrysostom, Gerkin (1997:32) concludes:

In meaningful ways, when we in our time work at the task of informing pastoral care practice with non-theological insights, we follow in the footsteps of Quintus Tertullian and John Chrysostom.

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<sup>94</sup> Heitink calls this belief in the impending return of Christ the ‘first major crisis’ of the young Christian community. “The early Christians were firmly convinced – as is clear from, for example, 1 and 2 Thessalonians – that Christ would soon return and that the end of time was nigh. In this limited time frame there was little need to pay much attention to church organization. But when the second coming did not materialize, they had to look for a way in which the tradition of Christ’s death and resurrection – that ‘dangerous memory’ (J.B. Metz) – could be transmitted to the following generations, while maintaining a balance between ‘remembering’ and ‘expecting’” (Heitink, 1993:91).

<sup>95</sup> Purves refers to Chrysostom as the foremost preacher of the Greek Church, but also a pastor of the highest reputation”(Purves, 2001:33). Purves (2001:31-54) highlights three issues that emerge from Chrysostom’s *Six Books on the Priesthood*, namely the nature of the pastoral office; the tasks and problems of preaching; and the piety of the pastor.

4.2.2.3 The Roman Emperor *Constantine's* tolerance of Christians ushered in the era of **the Imperial Church**, resulting in Christianity's enculturation into the thought forms of imperial Rome. According to Gerkin (1997:34), "Christian pastoral guidance was informed by contextual wisdom alongside or integrated into biblically based Christian wisdom". The entire ministry of the church was undergoing changes, with the conduct of public worship becoming the main clerical occupation, formalised along the patterns of the imperial church. Other aspects of ministry, like reconciliation and pastoral care of the sick, the bereaved and the dying, were also included in the routine practices of priests of the church. One major effect of the privileged position that the church acquired during the reign of Constantine was that the traditional boundaries of the Christian community had become indistinct. As a reaction to this, many deeply religious Christians fled to the desert to live as hermits for the faith, and the monastic tradition was established.

Gerkin asks the question: "Has this tension – of accepting that the church is part of the broader society resulting in an appropriation of ideas and values with non-Christian origins on the one hand, and trying to draw sharp boundaries around the Christian community withdrawing from the society on the other hand, ever been resolved?".<sup>96</sup>

Gerkin makes another very crucial point regarding the importance of **liturgy and ritual practices** for care and healing, which he says "have tended to be neglected in recent times. Their significance is given less attention as pastoral care practitioners have been preoccupied with psychologically grounded modes of pastoral guidance" (1997:35). Gerkin continues, "The recovery of liturgy and ritual as primary ways in which the Christian community cares for its own is one of the creative growing edges of pastoral care practice in our time" (1997:35).

4.2.2.4 The situation in Europe changed dramatically after *the fall of the Roman Empire*. The fourth and fifth centuries were a time of "considerable fomentation and controversy" in the church regarding "the proper care and interpretation of the Christian theological tradition" (Gerkin, 1997:38). All the theological controversies, debates and decisions had their effect on the ways in which pastoral and communal care developed. During this time, the order of Benedictine monks played a huge role in the Christianising of Europe.

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<sup>96</sup> Even in our age we experience this tension, resulting either in over-, under- or non-involvement of pastors in the broader society.



The Benedictine monk, Gregory the Great (540-604 C.E.), is said to have established the basic patterns of pastoral practice in the post-patristic Christian community. Gerkin lists the following aspects as “two central themes” of the pastoral care that flowed from the work of Gregory the Great: “his emphasis on individualized guidance of the souls of the faithful, and his stress on the regulation of ordinary life through the practices of prayer, meditation, and spiritual discipline” (Gerkin, 1997:38). Gregory’s *Pastoral Care* became the most widely read manual for pastoral practice in the Middle Ages. “In the history of the church Gregory’s (*Pastoral Care*) is the most widely read book, after the Bible, on pastoral care” (Purves, 2001:56). Gerkin believes that through his concern and care for the poor, together with his sophisticated understanding of human psychology and his emphasis on the particularity of human individual needs, Gregory anticipated many of the emphases and issues that have marked the twentieth-century renaissance of pastoral care (Gerkin, 1997:39). For Heitink, a central aspect of Gregory’s work was that of being shepherd, but also the work of the Holy Spirit. “The Christian minister was not primarily a theologian, or a professional, but one who was filled with the Spirit” (Heitink, 1993:93).

Gerkin (1997:39), however, identifies two flaws with regard to Gregory’s methodology, namely the authoritarian role of the priest in his pastoral relationships (“Pastoral authority for him meant authority over the people”); and, secondly, the overly mechanistic and prescriptive nature of Gregory’s methodology (“It was not adequately flexible to meet the peculiar needs of individual supplicants”).

When one reads Purves’s chapter on Gregory the Great, it is almost the exact opposite of Gerkin’s view. Under the heading, ‘The Faithful Pastor’, he posits that, for Gregory, pastors must be especially fit through education and maturity for office.

Sadly, however, he reflects, people who are untrained as physicians of the soul are not afraid to aspire to pastoral office. They are driven by vanity and remain unfit to be pastors, aspiring to the *magisterium humilitatis* for the sake of the honor it confers. They long to rule over others, hear their praises sung, enjoy the position of honor, and rejoice in the affluence of gain (I.8,35) ... When the mind has begun to enjoy, in a worldly fashion, the office of superiority which it has got, it readily forgets all the spiritual thoughts it had ... for a man is quite incapable of learning humility in a position of superiority ... Therefore, let everyone discover from his past life what manner of man he

is, lest the fantasy of his thoughts deceive him when he craves for superiority (I.9, 36-37). (Purves, 2001:64)

Purves also discusses Gregory's understanding of 'The Practice and Complexities of Pastoral Work' by referring to Gregory's adopted dictum, namely "that the same pastoral practice is not suitably applied to every person. People are complex, and to each must be given what is necessary and appropriate" (Purves, 2001:73). Purves continues:

The abiding theme throughout the discussions of the polarities is that above all else God's love must be communicated amid varied responses. Gregory amply illustrates that he is a student of people and the manifold issues that life produces. In every circumstance he is a skilled physician to their souls, a faithful father in Christ to those given into his charge. (Purves, 2001:74)

It seems as if Purves detects nothing of the 'flaws' in Gregory's methodology alluded to by Gerkin. As a matter of fact, he ends this particular chapter praising Gregory's work as "admirably equipped to guide the church through the Middle Ages and into the Reformation" (Purves, 2001:65) and summarises it as follows:

Gregory shares with the classical writers before and following him the themes that define the classical tradition, especially the sense of call to moral, spiritual, and theological maturity; the sense of accountability before God for the faithful exercise of pastoral care; a conviction that pastoral work must deal with people in their lives with God; and an awareness of the complexity of the pastoral task. He is especially distinguished in his attention also to small and ordinary areas of life's experience. In this sensitivity to and care for personal detail, Gregory shows himself to be truly a pastor of the flock of Christ. (Purves, 2001:75)

Thomas Oden (1983:192) seems to concur with Purves's positive assessment of Gregory's methodology:

Since the time of Gregory the Great (and implicitly before him, in Cyprian, Nemesius, and Augustine), the study of the care of souls has often proceeded by means of something resembling a case study method, showing patiently, as Gregory does, how one case is to be treated differently from another ... The physician of souls, like the

physician of the body, does not apply the same spiritual remedies to all patients, but listens carefully to different symptoms of emotional, moral, or spiritual malady.

Gerkin picks up one more important point with regard to the period of the Middle Ages that we reckon to be a vital marker for our development of a framework of pastoral care within the context under discussion in this dissertation.

Although Gregory gave significant attention to the physical needs of the poor and to their moral instruction, he and other pastoral leaders of his time generally did not dispute the social system that victimized the poor. (Gerkin, 1997:40)

Gerkin (1997:40) posits a very important point when he writes that:

the tendency to unquestioningly accept unjust social systems remains alive and well in the pastoral care movement of the twentieth century. Much work needs to be done before care of the poor and care of the society are congruous.

The life and work of Francis of Assisi, whose pastoral care “became a model of life among and on behalf of ordinary folk” (Gerkin, 1997:41) raise the question of how the Christian community should care for the poor and downtrodden.

### **4.2.3 The Era of the Reformation**

The dawn of the Reformation showed a significant and radical shift away from, among other things, “the primacy of sacramentalism and priestly exercise of penitential discipline, and toward the care of souls in their individual search for salvation” (Gerkin, 1997:41). Care of people became highly individualised, with Luther emphasising individual confession and complete personal involvement – “reconciliation of the individual soul to God and guidance in the spiritual life of members of the community of faith” (Gerkin, 1997:42) becoming the central pastoral tasks. Luther’s pastoral care also involved a primary concern for those in special need. This pastoral concern, however, was not only the responsibility of the clergy, but of all Christians – Luther’s emphasis on the priesthood of all believers. This shift towards individualism and humanism that was evident amongst the Reformers was also found in Roman Catholicism, and more specifically in the teachings of Ignatius of Loyola (*Spiritual Exercises*) and Thomas à Kempis (*Imitation of Christ*).

Gerkin (1997:43) identifies three issues that are widely debated in contemporary pastoral care that have their roots, or at least close parallels, in the Reformation period:

- (a) Conflict between the priorities of individualism and the need for the corporate or communal ordering of life.
- (b) Linked to the previous point is the question: Where should we place our focus? Should we concentrate on the salvation of individual souls, or on the care of those who suffer under the conditions of the times ('the duties of humanity' – care of the sick and relief of the downtrodden?).<sup>97</sup>
- (c) A third contemporary issue with roots in the Reformation is the age-old issue of discipline. The Reformers strongly disputed the pastoral practices that had developed out of the paradigm of pastoral authority, which saw the pastoral duties or responsibilities of the priest primarily as that of the administrator of discipline, by which individual members either remain within the community of faith or are excluded from it. A pattern of mutual discipline by means of small-group interaction began to take shape in Protestant churches, particularly through the work of the pastor-theologian Martin Bucer.<sup>98</sup>

4.2.3.1 In the spirit of *the Enlightenment*, pastoral care “turned in rationalistic directions” (Gerkin, 1997:45). The book by the English Puritan and Presbyterian pastor, Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (1656), still has force and conviction for pastors many centuries later (Purves, 2001:96). Baxter’s book focuses on two primary concerns: sustaining people through the difficulties and pitfalls of earthly life in the quest for eternal salvation, and upholding personal morality. “His care was directed toward the preservation of the faith among the people, countering the secularizing tendency of the times” (Gerkin, 1997:46). Baxter and other pastoral leaders of this period in many ways combined the ancient priestly, prophetic and wisdom roles of the pastor by being acutely sensitive to issues of morality in the lives of those in their care. They were very directive in their approach, giving advice as well as directing the spiritual life of their parishioners. According to Frank Wright, Richard Baxter saw the priest or minister as the only pastor – “and omniscient at that, able to solve and resolve any or all of the human problems

<sup>97</sup> These two points are of particular concern for our own discussion of or search for a model of pastoral care in the context of gangsterism.

<sup>98</sup> According to Purves (2001:76), “Martin Bucer’s *On the True Pastoral Care* (Von der waren Seelsorge) is the principal Reformation text on pastoral theology”. Two aspects of Bucer’s pastoral theology bear critically on the practice of pastoral care today (Purves, 2001:83): his biblical and christological emphases, and his understanding of the broad tasks of pastoral care, with special emphasis on evangelism and pastoral disciple understood as submitting to the yoke of Christ.

and dilemmas to which members of their congregations would be subject. Doctor, counsellor, solicitor, teacher, clergymen and friend – all to be found in one person” (Baxter, 1996:5).

4.2.3.2 The years following the Enlightenment saw the dawn of *the age of voluntarism and religious privatism*. “The leap of the church of the Middle Ages as the official arbiter of cultural values for the society to the church as private community made up of volunteer believer participants had been completed” (Gerkin, 1997:47). The pastoral approach during this time was much more concerned not to offend, while yet trying to speak the truth. With the development of a “growing interest in self-culture”, pastoral care practitioners “became even more concerned for the psychological processes by which the self could simultaneously achieve a healthy, balanced sense of self and an experience of salvation” (Gerkin, 1997:49).

Gerkin (1997:50). identifies two highly significant developments that had taken place by the end of the nineteenth century, namely the style of pastoral presence – within a virtual cult of vitality, Christianity was promoted as a source of power for living; and secondly, the transformation of churches from primarily centres of worship to social centres hosting a wide variety of organisations and activities.

#### **4.2.4 Reflection**

The short journey through the history of pastoral care, tracing its development from Biblical times till the end of the nineteenth century was done based on a positive regard for history. It is acknowledged that ‘we stand on the shoulders of our predecessors’, finding strength and encouragement in the work of pastors and pastoral theologians who had to read the signs of their own times, while endeavouring to care faithfully for the people of God in a changing world and culture. The influence of the dominant culture on pastoral practice and the inherent tension between culture and theology cannot be denied.

We became aware of the priestly, prophetic and wisdom roles as Biblical models for pastors as ‘shepherds of the flock’, consisting of individuals, families and communities. Having noted the functioning of the classical pastoral modes of healing, reconciling, sustaining and guiding at different times and within different contexts, the researcher agrees with Gerkin that “our models of care must be adapted to our changing situation” (1997:37).

The researcher will now critically discuss the main historical markers and its relevance for this study and the quest to develop a framework for doing pastoral work on the Cape Flats.

#### 4.2.4.1 *Shepherding*

The image of the pastor being the shepherd of the flock has drawn a lot of discussion because of its importance and centrality for the church and the caring provided by the church and believers over centuries. It is seen as both a positive image and a negative way of expressing pastoral care. According to Louw (1998:39), this metaphor implies sensitive and compassionate caring. Campbell identifies “courage” as “a much neglected quality” of the shepherd whose character possesses “a mixture of tenderness and toughness” (Campbell, 1981:26, 27). Campbell is critical towards Seward Hiltner’s<sup>99</sup> account of “the shepherding perspective” based on the shepherd’s attitude of “tender and solicitous concern”, which he describes as “remarkably flat and uninteresting” (Campbell, 1981:32). Employing ‘courage’ as a vital quality of the shepherd, Campbell is aware of the ‘tough man image’ imbedded in it, but argues that the corrective comes from the Biblical understanding of God’s steadfast love incarnate in Jesus. In Jesus we see courage that is both strong and gentle – “it is a courage *for others*, not a courage for his own defence and aggrandizement” (Campbell, 1981:33).

The shepherding motif originated for the role of the king during the monarchical period of Israelite history and was later appropriated as a metaphor with reference to the care of Yahweh as captured in the imagery of Psalm 23. The positive attributes of the good shepherd are given prominence in the Old Testament. “The shepherd leads, guides, nurtures, heals, seeks out the lost, brings the scattered flock back together and protects it from harm” (Campbell, 1981:27). The image of Yahweh as shepherd of his people in the context of grace, love and faithfulness was in contrast to the earthly rulers, who ruled their people with an emphasis on authority and status. With the coming of Jesus, who identifies himself as ‘the good shepherd’, the shepherding image takes its place as a primary grounding image for ministry. “A pastor is literally a shepherd who looks after a flock” (Woodward & Pattison, 2000:1).

This metaphor, however, has also drawn criticism and has been challenged as “dangerously one-sided, misleading and unhelpful in the egalitarian atmosphere of the twentieth century” (Pattison, 1988:8; see also Woodward & Pattison 2000:3; also Campbell, 1981:1; Purves, 2004:xxvi-xxx; and from a feminist perspective, Moore, 2002:1 & 15). Thomas Oden, under the heading “Is shepherding a fit analogy for contemporary society?”, warns against prematurely ruling out pastoral images as meaningless to modern consciousness, and says that we would do better “to listen carefully to them so as to ask how they resonate vitally with contemporary

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<sup>99</sup> Hiltner, 1958; Hiltner, 1959.

human aspirations” (Oden, 1983:51). Oden is of the opinion that the shepherding analogy found in John 10 is filled with contemporaneity with images that are “powerful, moving and straightforward” (1983:51), and applicable to women as well as men.

The feminist pastoral theologian Zoë Bennet Moore finds the use of the term *pastoral* problematic in its “uncritical association with shepherding and in particular with sheep” (2002:1). She explains that the serious critique of the ‘shepherd’ image is not that it is outmoded and irrelevant to much modern life, but “that it has been associated with, and may tend to perpetuate, an inappropriate model of pastoral care” (Moore, 2002:15).

Such a model sees the individual carer, a professional and possibly an ordained person, as the protector, guide, decision-maker and authoritative expert within a pastoral situation. The fact that such individuals have in history normally been (and often still are) men, exacerbates the problem of women. Women wish to be acknowledged and taken seriously both as recipients and as agents of pastoral care. This acknowledgement needs to go beyond the stereotyping of women as needy, weak and neurotic recipients of pastoral care on the one hand, or women as by nature loving and caring on the other. (Moore, 2002:15-16)

Moore suggests a model of pastoral care that reflects on the intentional practices of the whole faith community.

The image of the pastor as shepherd of the flock of God entrusted to his or her care clearly has deep roots and will remain an important way of describing the work of pastoral care. It may be helpful to look at and apply the image in a more nuanced way that will put more emphasis on the intentional caring inherent in shepherding, rather than to focus on the sheep image of people as recipients of the care. Wright (1996:5) finds the value of the Good Shepherd image from John 10 in the following: “Our readiness in our pastoral work to be known as a person without any façade (‘they know my voice’); our readiness to be available, and fully committed (‘I lay down my life for the sheep’)”.

The metaphoric value of the concept is to be seen in and linked with God’s care for His people in the context of grace, love and faithfulness (Louw, 1998:40). Louw continues:

The significance of the shepherd metaphor for pastoral care lies in the fact that it connects what pastoral care involves – compassionate and loving charity – to Jesus

Christ's sacrificial and redeeming love for humankind. The shepherding function of pastoral care represents the way in which God cares and supports people in distress. The shepherding function also accommodates social and political needs. (1998:41)

John Patton's view of the classical paradigm is worth noting at this point:

The central feature of the classical paradigm, which must be preserved and reinterpreted for today, is the message of a God who caringly creates human beings for relationship and who continues to care by hearing and remembering them. (Patton, 1993:5)

#### ***4.2.4.2 Liturgy, ritual and pastoral practice***

From a Black perspective, one has to say that the significance of liturgy and ritual has always been and remains an integral part of pastoral practice. Within the African American context, Wimberly (1979:23) describes the sustaining ministry within the black church, pointing out that sustaining has not been the function of the pastor alone, but that the whole community provided sustenance for persons and families in crisis situations during the time of slavery. The particular theological worldview that projected God as the ultimate source of life and in control of the matters of the world, who will in his own time make things right in the world, held the community together. In addition to this worldview, the ritual of baptism and the 'therapeutic nature of black worship' were important resources.

... the slaves had to find an outlet for their frustrated feelings. The black church provided an avenue for the expression of their shattered dreams. Black worship served as a catharsis by which the slaves could release pent-up emotions. It served as an important avenue of expression for the whole personality. (Wimberly, 1979:28)

Thus, the black church was an extended family for the slave, providing surrogates to replace the slave's relatives who had been sold away, as well as community resources for sustenance, like symbols, rituals, and social groups. In present day African American communities, these small groups would include "small groups gathered for Bible reading, exhortation, and prayer and song services to heal physical ills, emotional wounds, and relational hurts" (Wimberly, 1991:23).<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Anne E. Streaty Wimberly (2004) also looks at Black worship from the perspective of Christian education, arguing that faith and hope are nurtured in an 'evocative' manner through worship in Black churches. She calls the worshipping community the 'nursing mother'.



These views correspond with the researcher's experience as a pastor on the Cape Flats. The experience in the reality of congregational worship is at times completely different from and almost contradictory to the view of worship that was taught in the theological seminary, which was based on a white, Western theological worldview. According to the latter, the worship service was to be a formal, official event focussed so much on God that the people of God and their needs were almost ignored, or at best relegated to the subjective, individualistic sphere. This may be one of the main reasons why so-called mainline churches on the Cape Flats have not been able to draw gangsters or reformed gangsters into their fold. The liturgy and the rituals have become so 'mechanistic', formalistic that people do not experience the warmth of the family of God. On the other hand, so-called Pentecostal and charismatic churches seem to have a greater ability to provide a 'spiritual home' or 'family' for people in general.

Writing about "pastoral care as ministry" as one of five models, Emmanuel Larrey (2003) lists worship (*eucharistia*) among the classic activities – the others being proclamation (*kerygma*), teaching (*didache*), service (*diakonia*), fellowship (*koinonia*) and administration (*oikonomia*). His description of worship is important with regard to our understanding of worship:

Worship (*eucharistia*) offers the opportunity to communities of faith to express their spiritual longings and aspirations before God in meaningful and appropriate forms relevant to their beliefs and life experience. Most communities of faith would conceptualize worship as giving time, honor, space and recognition to God as the ultimate source of life. Worship is given to God within the context of social encounter as well as in private communion. In both cases, the object of worship is God. However, it is recognized that the love of God means that God cares for and engages with those who 'draw near to God'. The tasks of the leaders of worship include fashioning the structure of time and activity in such a way befitting and bespeaking the nature of God, so as to allow encounter with God whilst paying attention to the worshippers as people of differing phases of faith and psychosocial circumstance. (Larrey, 2003:57)

#### **4.2.4.3 Eschatology and pastoral care**

This aspect is of particular importance in Louw's (1998) development of a theological design for a basic theory of pastoral care in which eschatological hope is central, giving pastoral theology its unique character.

Eschatology functions as a critical and normative factor in pastoral theology to direct pastoral events to the future of the Kingdom of God. Without eschatology, pastoral care becomes a victim of the empirical method, and pastoral care pales into insignificance within the multiplicity of phenomenological analyses. (Louw, 1998:119)

“Sustaining individuals in their efforts to lead faithful lives while under the strain of everyday life in a predominantly secular world” (Gerkin, 1997:29) may be equated with what Louw would describe as “the ultimate purpose of the entire pastoral encounter and pastoral therapy”, namely “the fostering of a mature faith and spirituality”(1998:19).

Another word that captures this function may be ‘nurturing’ of the faithful, and of the church. The New Testament has a number of key terms for nurturing: *episkopein* (to oversee), *stērizien* (to strengthen), *katartizein* (to equip), *nouthetein* (to discipline), *elenchein* (to defend), and *oikodomein* (to build).<sup>101</sup>

An “eschatological plot, one that envisions hope in the midst of suffering and oppression, because God is working out God’s purposes in life on behalf of persons” is, according to Wimberly (1991:13), the dominant plot that gives meaning to life for the African American Christian. Despite the prevalence of suffering and oppression, God’s story of hope and liberation is unfolding. “A goal of the narrative approach to pastoral care in the black church has been to link persons in need to the unfolding of God’s story in the midst of life” (Wimberly, 1991:14).

In an earlier work, Wimberly argued that “a sustaining ministry” in which “the whole caring community provided sustenance for persons and families in crisis situations” (1979:23) has been part of black pastoral care tradition from the onset. The caring community “developed an important theological worldview that enabled the black person to find hope to endure the mundane problems of living in a hostile world” (Wimberly, 1979:24).<sup>102</sup>

The researcher would like to concur with Gerkin that “we who exercise pastoral care in our time are still under the influence of a Christianity that lives in hopeful anticipation of the rule of God” (1997:28). Every time we celebrate the Eucharist or Holy Communion as people of faith, we look

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<sup>101</sup> Bolkestein (1964), cited by Heitink (1993:92).

<sup>102</sup> The work of Edward Wimberly and contributions of numerous other African American pastoral theologians, e.g. Carroll A. Watkins Ali (*Survival & Liberation*, 1999) and Homer U. Ashby, Jr. (*Our Home is over Jordan*, 2003) provide very important and helpful insights for our development of a theoretical framework or model for pastoral care among the people living on the Cape Flats because of some similarities or commonalities in contexts.

forward to the return of Christ Who will bring an end to the struggles and strife of His people, and invite them to join Him in the heavenly feast that He has prepared. The pastoral significance of this liturgical event should be recognised and utilised to help people to practise a realistic hope and live with hopeful realism.

#### **4.2.4.4 Pastors and social action**

During the apartheid years in South Africa, theologians, pastors and Christians in general were sometimes categorised as those who practiced a type of 'state theology' (in other words accepting the socio-political status quo), and those who adhered to a 'prophetic' theology (in other words, those who challenged the status quo).

In this regard we note another model of pastoral care, described by Larney as "pastoral care as social action" following the rise of liberation theology, and which has become "very much the shape and form pastoral care takes in many parts of the so-called Third World" (Larney, 2003:58). This model of pastoral care is prophetic in nature and is essentially based on a socio-economic and political analysis of a specific social context with the aim of transforming societies and persons. Its goal is a more socially just and equitable distribution of the human and material resources found on the earth.

Wimberly's book, *African American Pastoral Care and Counseling: The Politics of Oppression and Empowerment* (2006), aims to provide an alternative view of pastoral care and counselling, and to reverse "the explicit individualism that undergirds much of counselling psychological thinking by instead presenting a holistic view of human beings – that they cannot be understood without their social context" (2006:13). Wimberly views pastoral counselling as a political process that enables human beings to participate "in all life at all levels" (2006:21). He further believes that "separating the public and private aspects of our lives distorts the nature of what it means to be a whole person" (2006:91).

According to this understanding of pastoral care and counselling, the pastoral counsellor becomes a public theologian and social critic who "offers alternative visions of human worth and value in public discussions that challenge market-driven and commodity-oriented images of self-worth" (130).

Many of the lessons learnt from this historical overview will be of great value in the search for an appropriate model of pastoral care for the particular context under discussion in this research.

In the next section the researcher will briefly discuss and evaluate the clinical-pastoral model of pastoral care as an important development during the twentieth century.

### **4.3 THE CLINICAL-PASTORAL MODEL**

One of the major developments in pastoral care and counselling at the beginning of the twentieth century has been the impact of psychology on this theological discipline. One could argue that the growing interest in 'self-culture' as a result of the privatism of the nineteenth century has laid the foundation for this development. In the words of Charles Gerkin: "Religion became closely associated with self-development" (1997:53). The work of psychologists like Wilhelm Wundt and William James had considerable influence on the 'psychologising' of pastoral practice.

Psychology, particularly psychology seen as therapy for the beleaguered self, offered the possibility of enhancing pastoral ability to minister to troubled persons in Christian congregations. (Gerkin, 1997:55)

There is no doubt that the work of Sigmund Freud and specifically Freudian psychoanalysis has had, and continues to have, a major influence on the establishment of pastoral care as a psychologically oriented discipline since the early twentieth century. According to Daniël Louw (1998:27),

the rise of psychology in America has put pressure on pastoral theology to renounce its deductive approach and to revert to an inductive (client-centred) approach. This approach to pastoral care insists that the dominant emphasis should not be on the Word, but on the needs of the person.

#### **4.3.1 T. Boisen: Father of the Clinical Pastoral Education**

Boisen, "a significant transitional figure in the history of pastoral care" (Gerkin, 1997:62), was a Congregationalist pastor who suffered an acute mental illness and was consequently hospitalised in a psychiatric hospital. This experience left him with a deep conviction that there was a "profound connection between religious conversion and mental anguish" (Gerkin, 1997:61). As chaplain of Worcester State Hospital in Massachusetts he could later develop his case-study method of research and teaching, allowing him to bring his earlier conviction into dialogue with theological inquiry. Boisen also introduced so-called verbatim reports of

conversations between pastoral care students and those whom they were seeking to care for. The clinical pastoral education movement spread across the United States and later throughout the world “as a generally accepted, standard approach for the socialization of clergy into the role of pastoral care with not only the sick and troubled persons, but also with prisoners, the aging, children and youth, and others with particular needs for pastoral care” (Gerkin, 1997:62).

#### **4.3.2 Pastoral Care in the Twentieth Century: Further developments**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will look briefly at the most important people and developments in pastoral care that will ultimately contribute to our understanding of the pastoral theological methodology that is relevant for the context being researched.

The essential ingredients of pastoral activity have been described by two church historians, William Clebsch and Charles Jaekle (1964), as healing, guidance, sustaining and guiding. Howard Clinebell (1984) supplemented these elements with that of nurturing. The organising theme of Clinebell’s approach was ‘growth’, positing that pastoral care aims to assist people in growing personally, relationally and spiritually, in other words, a holistic liberation growth model of pastoral care. Clinebell’s ‘therapy of wholeness’ proposes that a person grows in an integral way along six dimensions that include all of his/her relations – with self, others, nature and God. Based on these anthropological presuppositions, Clinebell declare that the purpose of pastoral care and counselling is ‘self-other-society-wholeness’ and that ‘growth occurs in covenants-of-wholeness with others’.

An important aspect of Clinebell’s contribution is his critique of the so-called Rogerian pastoral method for pastors as being “too passive to meet the needs pastors encountered”, proposing that pastors needed “to be more versatile” (Gerkin, 1997:71).

The specialisation and particularisation of pastoral counselling have increased since World War II, with many pastors referring people to so-called pastoral psychotherapists. However, we also notice many pastoral care leaders beginning to turn away from “the heavy influence of individual psychology and psychopathology ... toward a renewed concern for and interest in the care of the community of Christians” (Gerkin, 1997:73).

This development under the heading ‘communal contextual paradigm’.

#### 4.4 THE COMMUNAL CONTEXTUAL PARADIGM

Patton (1993:5) describes the communal contextual paradigm as offering both an old and a new understanding of pastoral care:

It is old in that it is based on the biblical tradition's presentation of a God who cares and who forms those who have been claimed as God's own into a community celebrating that care and extending it to others. It is new in that it emphasizes the caring community and the various contexts of care rather than focusing on pastoral care as the work of the ordained pastor. In the communal contextual paradigm, pastoral care is understood to be a ministry of a faith community which reminds members of God's scattered people that they are remembered.

The communal contextual model "reacts against the clericalization, clinicalization and individualization of pastoral care and pastoral theology" (Lartey, 2006:123). This approach wants to re-emphasise the biblical fact that the church is a relational and corporate community, and that this community is both the base and the agent of pastoral care. It is 'contextual' because it pays much more attention to the historical, social and cultural contexts of the community that mediate pastoral care. "It argues that attention needs to be paid to the wider social environment for effective care of persons to occur" (Lartey, 2006:124).

Patton's premise is the creation narrative in Genesis. 1:26-28, which he not only sees as the church's classic text for the doctrine of the *imago Dei*, but also as an important biblical basis for pastoral care. Whereas the traditional interpretation has focused on the dominion or power implicit in this concept, more recent interpretations have strongly argued that humankind's responsibility and vocation is care over the earth. For Patton (1993:17), "[t]he image of God may be seen in relationality and responsibility – one's response to God expressed through care for self and others. The doctrine of the *imago Dei* serves as one of the cornerstones of a model or framework for understanding and doing pastoral care in the context of gangsterism. The researcher concurs with Patton that we have in it a fundamental and integral part of pastoral care.

Patton's reference to Martin Heidegger and his understanding of care is also crucial for an understanding of the choice of the topic of this research. Heidegger views care as "the basic constitutive phenomenon of human existence, and the clue to its interpretation"; and further,

“Care is what makes the human being human. If we do not care, we lose our humanity” (Patton, 1993:17).<sup>103</sup>

Patton concludes his section on ‘the meaning of care’ as follows: “To care is central to being human, from the perspective of theology, philosophy, or ethics” (Patton, 1993:19).

Patton’s understanding of community is grounded in the fact that “God is the author of community, creating it as a dimension of human relationality and being involved in it by enabling the mutual personal relationships that take place within it” (Patton, 1993:26). Patton makes a few other important points about community that are worth noting as the study moves toward a framework for pastoral care in the context under discussion (Patton, 1993:26-27):

- Relationality is not a passive condition. Action is the means of encountering the other. Human beings risk themselves in acting on behalf of themselves and of others and in that process engage persons who are different from themselves.
- Even though God is the author and sustainer of any genuine community of human beings, the community is and is not expressive of that relationship to the divine. That persistent problem has been expressed theologically in a variety of ways. One way has been in terms of the tension between *basilea* and *ecclesia*, or dynamic and form, each judging and challenging the other. The ongoing task of the church is to witness to the possibility of community, but also to recognize that often it is not expressive of it and that genuine community may exist elsewhere.<sup>104</sup>
- The clinical pastoral paradigm emphasized the person of the pastor and the inseparability of the person and the message. The communal contextual paradigm enlarges the clinical pastoral by emphasizing the Christian community and its members as the messengers of care. In emphasizing human relationality, the communal dimension does not look at the ordained pastor apart from the community but in relation to it and as a leader and facilitator of the relationships that take place as a part of it. Pastoral care is

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<sup>103</sup> The contribution of ethicist Nel Noddings, who identifies caring as “the moral virtue necessary for reducing alienation and guiding moral action” (Patton, 1993:17), provides a very interesting perspective on our own South African debate on moral degeneration and regeneration, and the specific centrality of violence in general, and gangsterism in particular, in this debate. Noddings argues that the “highest” stage of moral judgment is “not so much concerned with the rearrangement of priorities among principles”, but “with maintaining and enhancing caring” (cited in Patton, 1993:18). From a feminist perspective, she argues further that women “do not abstract away from the concrete situation those elements that allow a formulation or deductive argument; rather they remain in the situation as sensitive, receptive, and responsible agents” (cited in Patton, 1993:18).

<sup>104</sup> The factor of dis-continuity.

an action of the community which may be nurtured and led by the ordained pastor, but which is first a responsibility of the community – herein rests the power of pastoral care.

It is obvious to Patton that 'care' and 'community' are related, but, he asserts, "it is memory that brings them fully into relationship" (Patton, 1993:27).

Remembered means to re-member. It means to put the body back together. The opposite of remember is not to forget, but to dis-member...Because I remember I can care. Because I remember I can experience community in celebrating a God who remembers. Moreover, in the strength of knowing that I am remembered I can express care for others through hearing and remembering them...We remember because God remembers....As a community of anamnesis, of remembering, the church is challenged to remember as an act of caring. (Patton, 1993:27-30)

Communities on the Cape Flats have their own particular stories; the families and individuals that make up these communities have their own personal stories; and the gangsters and ex-gangsters have their own life-stories (cf. Pinnock's reference to mimetic stories). One of the biggest mistakes that we can make is to treat these stories with disrespect, to regard them as not important, to reduce these communities and people to objects of our mission, evangelism, or even care. The researcher therefore concurs with Patton when he says that:

[w]e care as we remember and enable others to remember and, as Nouwen suggests, "connect" their story to the larger one. The most useful, though it is not necessarily the most efficient, memory device is learning to hear hurts that need healing as part of a story...a good pastoral carer listens for the times, places, and particularities that give a person's story meaning and allow it to be held respectfully in memory. (Patton, 1993:36)

Edward Wimberly also emphasises the narrative approach as central to pastoral care within the African American context.

From a narrative perspective, pastoral care can be defined as bringing all the resources of the faith story into the context of caring relationships, to bear upon the lives of people as they face life struggles which are personal, interpersonal, and emotional. (Wimberly, 1991:18)



Wimberly adds that “story-listening”,<sup>105</sup> that is “emphatically hearing the story of the person involved in life struggles”, is also an important dimension of African American pastoral care, “to avoid the trap of shifting the focus from the needs of the person facing life struggles” (Wimberly, 1991:18-19).

Focusing on the ‘contextual’ element of the ‘communal contextual’ paradigm, Patton asserts that “neither the classical nor the clinical pastoral paradigms for pastoral care have given much recognition to context” (1993:40).. We should, however, appreciate the fact that there are ‘multiple contexts’ to be taken into account. A central part of the ministry of pastoral care today is “discerning the contexts most relevant for understanding a pastoral situation” (Patton, 1993:40). Patton’s depiction of the pastoral carer as “mini-ethnographer” (Patton, 1993:43) is very appropriate for our particular research context.

The task of ethnography is to discover the story of a particular group of people. The ethnographer attempts to understand their myths, rituals, daily activities ... The pastoral carer, lay or clergyperson, who accepts the image and task of the mini-ethnographer must be deeply involved in observation and description. (Patton, 1993:43)

There is certainly something very particular about gangsterism on the Cape Flats, as it has already been argued in Chapter Two. Pastoral carers working on the Cape Flats need to understand the culture of the Coloured people as a specific group in the South African context, which in the words of Clifford Geertz (cited in Patton 1993:43), will “expose their normalness without reducing their particularity”. “Contextually sensitive pastoral care”, therefore, implies that we attend to the particular in pastoral caring (Patton, 1993:43). Patton continues:

If the pastoral carer is one who remembers, he must be a keen observer who becomes able to tell a story of the persons cared for that include their myths, rituals, daily activities, and problems. The pastoral carer ‘believes in the primacy of experience’ and, ‘like the poet and the painter,’ is strongly drawn to the details of a person’s life, perhaps respecting and seeing in them far more than the person herself sees and values. (Patton, 1993:45)

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<sup>105</sup> Louw (1998:13) identifies the move away from the so-called kerygmatic proclamation towards interpretative story-telling, listening and assessing (a narrative approach) as one of the four major shifts that has taken place in the field of pastoral care over the last half century or so.

This corresponds to the experiences of a number of people interviewed – Pastor Wood in Manenberg, Pastor Klein in Ravensmead, Llewellyn Jordaan in Lavender Hill and Janette Olivier in Stellenbosch. All of them underline the importance of respecting gangsters as human beings with their own stories. Gangsters have “sacred identities” and should be helped to “edit their lives”, “to edit or re-author the negative internalized stories and identities” (Wimberly, 2006:22).

## 4.5 SUMMARY

The communal contextual paradigm is one of two new paradigms in pastoral care and counselling, together with the intercultural paradigm, that has emerged since the 1980s. The communal contextual paradigm “draws on the ecological metaphor of a web to describe tensively held dual *foci*” (Ramsay, 2004:1). These two foci are ‘the ecclesial contexts’ that sustain and strengthen community practices of care, as well as ‘the widened horizons’ of the field that conceive care as including public, structural, and political dimensions of individual and relational experiences.

The communal-contextual paradigm for pastoral care ties in with the the type of ministry for that is described in this research as a social-systemic ministry of inter-contextual presence.

This research has already concluded that gangsterism, as it presents and manifests itself on the Cape Flats, is a systemic phenomenon that is rooted in historic socio-political and economic factors, which not only affect individuals, but families and communities as well, especially in Coloured communities.

Pastoral care can therefore not only be done in the comfort of a consulting room with an individual without addressing the context within which the individual find him or herself. The pastoral caregiver’s own views and understanding of the greater context also determines the type of pastoral action that he or she will ultimately follow.

With reference to Gerben Heitink’s distinction of six different forms and types of pastoral action,<sup>106</sup> Russel Botman says that:

it is clear from his categories that a particular worldview and a particular understanding of how the church relates to the broader society determines the way in which we identify and define different types and forms of pastoral action. (Botman, 1997:9)

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<sup>106</sup> The six forms are “onderlinge pastoraat, wykspastoraat, pastorale dienste, pastorale opbouwerk, stadspastoraat, en kategoriale pastoraat”.

On the basis of this conviction, Botman proposes “Community Forum Pastoral Action” as “one of the contextual forms of pastoral care”, given the dynamics of the Western Cape.

At this stage the researcher would like to formulate the following thesis with regard to pastoral care on the Cape Flats in a context where gangsterism presents itself as a social phenomenon:

**The “communal contextual paradigm” is best suited for pastoral care on the Cape Flats, where gangsterism presents itself as a systemic phenomenon.**

The elements of this paradigm will be discussed as the researcher understands it. Another important theological qualification needs to be added:

**In order to link an eco-systemic and social hermeneutic paradigm to the theology of the presence of God within communal and contextual systems, a pneumatological approach to theory formation in pastoral care is proposed.** This will be dealt with later in the chapter.

A bias for the communal contextual paradigm does not imply a total ‘rejection’ or discarding of the so-called classical and clinical pastoral paradigms. The historical overview of the development of pastoral care has helped the researcher to understand and appreciate a number of aspects of these two paradigms and their relevance to the particular context and situation under discussion in this research. Thus, these three paradigms function interdependently, as they include attention to the faith perspectives offered, the persons receiving the care, the context in which the care is offered, and the community authorising the care (Patton, 1993). “Patton’s schema calls attention to a shift in understanding care that reclaims it as a ministry of the church while recognizing the importance of the context with its political, cultural, and embodied character” (Ramsay, 2004:3).

The communal-contextual paradigm needs to be unpacked and developed into a base theory that will be able to assist and guide pastoral carers and faith communities in their work on the Cape Flats and similar contexts.

#### **4.6 ELEMENTS OF A COMMUNAL-CONTEXTUAL MODEL FOR PASTORAL CARE ON THE CAPE FLATS**

The discussion thus far leads the researcher to suggest the following as core elements of a communal contextual paradigm for doing pastoral care on the Cape Flats, where faith communities face the challenge of gangsterism:

**To be effective, pastoral care on the Cape Flats needs to be:**

- contextual
- ecosystemic or psychosystemic
- hermeneutical
- anthropological
- relational
- public
- interdisciplinary

It is important to note that these elements are not and cannot easily be divided into neatly packaged separate entities – they overlap and are in actual fact intertwined, interlocking and interdependent – multiple sides of the same model or paradigm. These elements are also not presented in order of importance or priority.

#### **4.6.1 Contextual**

In pastoral care one should always reckon with the fact that human problems are embedded within a socio-cultural context. (Louw, 1998:75)

“Context,” writes Edward Farley, “names the ways in which human life and action are subject to the pushes and pulls of an environment ... But ‘environment’ itself mean different things – background, situation, or location. Any of these three spheres of influence can determine the meaning of ‘context’ and ‘contextual’, and these may mean different things to different people” (Farley, 2002:15).

Speckman and Kaufmann (2001:4) is of the view that:

Contextual theology is sometimes known as situational theology because it begins with the real situation or context. It is this context, and its analysis, that informs the theological method.

In his definition of theology, the South African practical theologian Jurgens Hendriks says that theology, amongst other things, is about a specific time and place (Hendriks, 2004:27); in other

words, it has a contextual nature. He quotes John Douglas Hall, who postulates that contextual theology is a tautology, because Christian theology is by definition contextual.<sup>107</sup>

In this research the researcher focuses on faith communities on the Cape Flats, thereby indicating that he takes seriously the specific experiences of the church in a particular time and place where believers have been called to witness and care for one another and for others within the confines of their world. It was therefore necessary for the researcher to first describe the situation of gangsterism as part of the real context of the people of the Cape Flats (Chapter Two). It helps to concretise an understanding of what it means to be the Church of Christ on the Cape Flats – a practical-theological ecclesiology (Chapter Three), and what it means to care for people in very particular circumstances. The voices of feminist, womanist and liberation theologians have made us aware of the importance of the hidden dynamics of power within each interpersonal encounter, and the crucial impact of wider social and political structures that underlie and impact deeply on our attempts to care for others and to enable people to care for one another. The researcher has become aware that to successfully enable care will necessarily involve pastoral participation in each of these realms: the individual, the spiritual and the collective socio-political (Swinton, 1999:25). Swinton argues that the “vast majority” of those who are writing and reflecting on contemporary pastoral care do so “from a perspective that is fundamentally a-contextual” (Swinton, 1999:25).

In other words, the care carried out, whilst perhaps successfully meeting the *perceived* interpersonal needs of people, pays little or no attention to the impact which the wider social context has upon individuals and the development and maintenance of their problems (Swinton, 1999:26).

Ghanaian-born pastoral theologian Emmanuel Y. Larney points out that one of several important epistemological shifts that occurred in the twentieth century was the realisation of how context and social location influence all knowledge (Larney, 2006:38). While this, in one sense, is new therein that it is a departure from traditional understandings of theology as an objective science declaring universal truths, Larney asserts that it is in another sense a rediscovery of the particularity of the incarnation. Context, according to Larney, shapes and informs practice to a very large extent. The following statement from Larney is of great significance for this research:

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<sup>107</sup> Cochrane, de Gruchy and Petersen (1991:26) refer to the “social context of ministry” – “In order to understand how one’s ministry and the mission of the church is affected by, and effects, the specific situation in which it is practiced, one logically needs to understand that situation”.

The very nature of pastoral theology urges attention to context. The experiences, world view and perspectives of persons domiciled within poor, urban ghettos within the slums of a city in a Two-Thirds World will significantly differ from those of persons living in the affluence of suburban western villas. Careful contextual analysis, whether it is of social, cultural, economic or political circumstances, enables pastoral theological work to be more relevant and 'true'. (Lartey, 2006:39)

As such, pastoral care cannot simply be private and interpersonal. Human beings are whole creatures who are inextricably bound to history and deeply involved within specific contexts, contexts that can impact greatly on the caring process. Pastoral care must inevitably include a critical awareness of the social and political context in which it seeks to minister in order that it can discern those forces that lie beyond the interpersonal encounter, yet impact upon it deeply (Swinton, 1999:26).

The need to be contextual is central to V.V. Msomi's discussion of the future of pastoral work in South Africa (1993:74):

Concrete realities of the experience of the people need to be addressed as these are indeed the raw material for contextual pastoral work and practical theology.

Msomi sees the relevance of Anton Boisen for the South African context. Boisen's "living human document" implies a "careful and systematic study of the lives of persons struggling with different issues in their own specific contexts" (Msomi, 1993:74). There is a perception that the African pastorate was a "carbon copy of an European, British or North American one" (Msomi, 1993:75). This perception could only be corrected "if we are to achieve contextuality" (Msomi, 1993:75). In order to achieve this, "the political, social and ecclesiological realities which have characterised and continue to characterise the South African context" (Msomi, 1993:75) need to be analysed.

Discussing the "problem of contextual relevancy" in the teaching of pastoral care and counselling in an African context, De Jongh van Arkel argues that the modern pastoral care and counselling movement is "primarily a Western-dominated enterprise" with theories generated for the field influenced by "the individualistic and affluent lifestyles of Western Europe and North America". "These pastoral theories", he continues, were uncritically "imported" into Africa "without adaptation for our context and culture" (De Jongh van Arkel, 1995:189). It is important to understand 'context' and 'culture' as dynamic, forever changing, and not as nouns that can be coagulated.

Another South African theologian, OA Buffel, follows the same line of argument as De Jongh van Arkel in an article called “Deliver us from individualism and clericalism: liberating pastoral care from Western individualism and clericalism”. Buffel views “relevance” and “contextuality” as “imperatives that have to be achieved” and not “optional extras for pastoral care” by Buffel (2004:37). Buffel is convinced that pastoral care must be liberated to be “effective and true to its nature” – and this can only happen through a paradigm shift “away from Western worldview to a systemic approach, which is closer to the African worldview” (Buffel, 2004:37).

All three of these South African writers recognised the inevitable influence of Western European and North American influences on the South African pastoral care field, but view the need for contextuality as vital for the development of pastoral care and counselling in a South African context. It is abundantly clear that an understanding and appreciation of ‘contextuality’ does not imply a sort of ‘going it alone’ or ‘we do not need others’ approach. It does mean a more serious recognition of a particular context or situation and its influences on the people, epistemologies and methodologies functioning and being employed. However, we need to recognise historical influences and the interaction between different contexts and methodologies.

Lartey dedicates a whole chapter to “Pastoral Theology as Contextual Theology”, moving from the basic premise that “pastoral theologies by their very nature arise out of particular contexts” (Lartey, 2006:42). The contextual nature of pastoral theology is not understood in a narrow sense, but encompasses a global view. He defines contextual analysis as:

a way of discerning and seeking to hear what God may be saying out of the different exigencies of the human condition as experienced in different contexts. It is also a means of understanding the reality of the human experience that pastoral theologians seek to care for...Contextual analysis includes an examination of social, cultural, economic, political and religious factors at work in given geographical locations (Lartey, 2006:42).

The importance of contextual analysis for this research is illustrated first of all by the fact that the researcher chose to address the phenomenon of gangsterism (Chapter Two). Before proceeding with a discussion of a practical-theological ecclesiology, he also thought it important to reflect on the resilience of faith communities on the Cape Flats. In other words, he first described the context before asking the questions: “What does it mean to be church on the Cape Flats?” “What type of pastoral care is needed in this particular context?”

There seems to be broad consensus amongst pastoral theologians that the wider context in which the care of individuals and groups takes place cannot be ignored. Gerkin (1997:90), discussing new directions in pastoral care, asserts that:

Pastoral care at the turn of the twentieth to the twenty-first century must find new ways to give equal emphasis to concern for the individual and concern for the larger social environment that surrounds the individual

Pastors who are serious about the individual as well as the community cannot do without two crucially important observational capacities – the art of listening and the capacity to observe. The art of listening, listening empathetically and sensitively, invites self-disclosure and thus communicates acceptance and non-judgmental care. The capacity to observe fully “asks that we look around in addition to looking within” (Gerkin, 1997:91). This will lead us into a ministry of social and cultural transformation that will involve advocacy on behalf of oppressed and injured individuals. This aspect will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter on the public nature of pastoral care.

Gerkin also proposes that the pastor of a congregation leads the people in the construction and enactment of a “local theology” (1997:121).

Theology will become real and relevant for members of a local congregation as it is related to the concrete realities of the people in the congregation. Tending the process of contextualization of theology is an important aspect of the pastor’s care of the congregation ... Said in another way, pastoral care of a congregation of God’s people involves the construction of a particular, context-relevant theological awareness on the part of both pastor and people.

What is being called for here is the development of a new consciousness that reveals the necessary complexity of the pastoral task as it is worked out in a world of conflict and change. We need to see the world differently (Swinton, 1999:27). Swinton refers to Paul’s words in Romans 12:2, where he impresses upon the congregation to no longer conform to the pattern of this world, but to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind”. This will enable them to “test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will”. Swinton interprets these



words as pointing towards an inner change which enables people to, in a sense, “see the world through the eyes of God” (1999:26).

The South African-born pastoral theologian Howard Eybers (1991:207), proposing an “ethical-psychological model” for “Pastoral Care to Black South Africans”, also emphasises the (moral) context of this pastoral care. He writes:

... the kind of care that is given to black adults in South Africa should be governed by the fact that problems that have traditionally been labelled personal are usually linked to and have a larger ethical context ... The large context in which modern pastoral care is located in South Africa governs its specific goals and procedures. If relevant pastoral care that will meet the needs of the needs of the ungenerative and irresponsible person is to take place in South Africa, pastors should pay serious attention to matters relating to context. (Eybers, 1991:207)

It is undoubtedly clear that pastoral caregivers on the Cape Flats should therefore be continuously aware of the context in which we are required to care for people. Although life on the Cape Flats could be described as largely Western, in terms of customs and norms there is an undeniably “Cape Flats” sub-culture that defines the people of the Cape Flats in more ways than one.

The discussion of an eco-systemic or psycho-systemic approach to pastoral care in the next section emphasises the importance of the broader context in which pastoral care takes place.

#### **4.6.2 An eco-systemic of psycho-systemic approach to pastoral care**

The shift from “an individualistic approach”<sup>108</sup> to a “psychosystemic approach” is viewed as one of the four major shifts in pastoral care by Louw (1998:9-17). In *Pastoral Care and Social Conflict (Essays in honor of Charles V. Gerkin)*, Pamela Couture and Rodney Hunter refer to Gerkin’s “sophisticated new understanding of pastoral counseling” developed out of Anton Boisen’s concept of the ‘living human document’ as a “retelling of the human story in ways that expand social horizons and liberate persons from oppressive forms of consciousness and destructive patterns of interpersonal relationship” (Couture & Hunter, 1995:9). This is indeed one of the “new directions in pastoral care” at the turn of the twentieth to the twenty-first century for

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<sup>108</sup> Chinula calls it a “hyperindividualistic model” (1997:xvii).

Gerkin, namely to “find new ways to give equal status to concern for the individual and concern for the larger social environment that surrounds the individual” (Gerkin, 1997:90).<sup>109</sup>

Donald Chinula, in his book *Building King's Beloved Community*, examines aspects of the psychological and theological insights of Martin Luther King Jr. applicable to the practice of pastoral caregiving, which Chinula calls “community caregiving”. Community pastoral caregiving has two aspects: ecological and public policy pastoral caregiving (Chinula, 1997:67). He uses ‘ecological’ in a broader sense than its twin concept of ‘environment’, which usually carries a spatial-static connotation as the “sum total of external conditions and circumstances affecting the existence and functioning of life” (Chinula, 1997:67). ‘Ecology’ is used to connote the “dynamics of the environment, the relationship between organisms and their environment” (Chinula, 1997:67).

#### **4.6.2.1 South African perspectives**

In South Africa, a number of authors have applied eco-systemic or systems thinking in their theological thinking. **Julian Müller** (1991:186) understands an ecosystem as “the widest possible system or network of systems”. According to **De Jongh van Arkel** (1991:69), the term ‘ecosystem’ refers to more than just nature, although it includes a sensitivity to nature. The basic principle of ecology is that a surviving unit never consists only of an individual organism in a static environment. An ecological system is a whole of organisms in reciprocal relationship with their natural environment. **FBO Nel**, a student of De Jongh van Arkel, wrote his doctorate in

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<sup>109</sup> E. Mansell Pattison's book, *Pastor and Parish – A Systems Approach* (1977), has already pointed the way in helping us move away from atomistically individualistic thinking towards understanding pastoral care as involving both the nurture of each individual and the care of the whole congregation. He reminds us that “behavior (is) a total system which is itself the product of the several subsystems which coalesce in it. Each subsystem influences, interacts with, and is reciprocal to every other subsystem. Thus no one subsystem determines what we do; our behavior is rather the result of a complex of forces” (Pattison, 1977:4-5). I find his reference to one of the characteristics of a health-grown system of particular importance for this discussion, namely that the system is “semipermeable with community life, so interpenetrating community life – and interpenetrated by it – that the system enhances the members' capacities to function in the community” (1977:16). “The church is not the same as the community or neighborhood or area in which it exists. Nor can the church be a self-contained community, complete and sufficient unto itself. There must be a flow of interaction and influence – there must be connection – between the church system and the community system. Effective systems enable their members to relate more effectively to the larger community experiences – the other systems- in which its members are caught up. A church system that is out of touch with its community will inevitably fail to prepare its membership for life in the outside community.” (1977:27). While the church consists of various subsystems, it is itself a subsystem of the larger community system. “The pastor needs to be aware of how the functioning of the church relates to the functioning of the larger community. The pastor's role in the church is not directed exclusively to the church but to enabling the lives of all members for their inevitable participation in the community” (1977:47).

pastoral theology on community pastoral work from an ecosystemic perspective in 1996. He summarises eco-systemic thinking as follows (Nel, 1996:50, 130):

- It is a move away from atomistic, mechanistic, reductionist, Cartesian, linear, and static thinking to dynamic, evolving thinking.<sup>110</sup>
- It means to look at the whole and know that it is more than the parts.
- It is a way of thinking and a way of looking at the universe.
- It means to look at interrelatedness in and between systems.
- It refers to a new epistemology (intersubjectivity) and ontology (relativism) away from objectivism and resolution.
- The distinction between a system and its environment is in the mind of the observer, who is also part of a system.
- The term ecosystem refers to dynamic and not closed systems.
- Action or change in one part may lead to change in other parts as well.
- A move away from linear-causal explanations to circular understanding of behaviour or actions.
- A change from a linear to an evolving understanding of reality is paralleled by a shift in therapeutic focus from isolated individual units to ecological relationship systems.

Nel further views the movement away from Newtonian/Cartesian thinking to ecosystemic thinking as important for practical theology. “An ecosystemic perspective is by implication, a move to more integration. For practical theology it implies an integration between people and their social and natural environment; an emphasis on the connectedness between people, their needs and feelings, and society” (Nel, 1996:67).

De Jongh van Arkel (1991:63) argues that an ecosystemic approach in practical theology becomes important when one takes into account that the systems studies in practical theology are often complex, living and dynamic systems. It is important for us to emphasise that an ecosystemic approach does not imply that we ignore the individual or individual persons, but rather, that we recognise the reciprocal relationship and ties between individual and wider

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<sup>110</sup> Louw (2005:23) describes systems thinking as a paradigm shift away from analytical thinking to holistic thinking. “Analytical thinking is interested in the character of the parts, while systems thinking pays attention to the way that the parts are linked to one another within the dynamics of interaction and mutuality...It focuses more on interrelatedness and interconnectedness than on separateness.” Louw makes a second important point regarding systems thinking, namely that it implies a shift away from substantial metaphysical thinking to hermeneutical thinking (2005:24).

system. In this research, we recognise that gangsterism needs to be addressed systemically or structurally, but that we have to pay attention to individual gangsters in our pastoral work. In an article on community psychology, Seedat, Cloete and Shochet (1988) refers to the position of the poor in society and the role of social action, which aims to make more social resources available to the poor. Traditional psychology, with its individualistic orientation, is criticised for not taking cognisance of the structural inequities of society, like inadequate housing, overcrowding and political powerlessness. In a social action approach there is a shift from 'blaming the victim' to 'implicating the social arrangements in society' – social action programmes are initiated to address issues like finance, power, education and community development. In other words, the focus is not only on prevention, but on empowerment as well. This approach encourages community participation and draws on non-professionals in the community who play an important part to encourage and motivate people. Seedat et al. further recognise the tension between individual and community and state that "it is imperative to combine individual and community processes to arrive at an integrative perspective of community" (Seedat et al., 1988:45).

Nel (1996:111-118) evaluates and appreciates the developments in the field of community psychology and the lessons for practical theology and the pastoral work of the church, arguing that it is impossible for pastoral work to function in isolation from developments in other fields, especially in the field of psychology. The interdisciplinary aspect of the model will be discussed at a later stage. The important point to make now is that ecosystemic thinking 'forces' us to recognise that many different systems operate within one particular community and that these systems are described by the different disciplines from their own particular vantage points. Pastoral work, argues Nel (1996:118), must be aware of the worldview, mind frame, underlying metaparadigm associated with psychology (or sociology or philosophy, etc.) and its influence on the praxis.

The researcher concurs with Nel that an eco-systemic meta-paradigm opens up new worlds for pastoral work, because it helps us to ask new questions and to ask questions in a different way, "pushing pastoral care beyond its small world into a bigger world" (Nel, 1996:120).

#### **4.6.2.2 Larry Graham's Psycho-social perspective**

Larry Kent Graham's book, *Care of Persons, Care of Worlds*, has played a major role in helping pastoral theologians and practitioners understand the nature of human beings in "contextual rather than individualistic terms" (Louw, 1998:13).

Graham (1992:40) summarises systemic thinking as follows:

(S)ystemic thinking is a view about the universe, or a picture of reality, that affirms that everything that exists is in an ongoing mutual relationship with every other reality.

The term, "psycho-systemic", refers to "the reciprocal interplay between the psyche of individuals and the social, cultural, and natural orders" (Graham, 1992:13). Graham continues:

The character of persons and their worlds come into being by the mutual influences of each upon the other. The concept of psychosystems orients pastoral caretakers in particular ways to our past concern for individual healing and offers a promising way of conceiving our future relationship to the multiple environments influencing care. Psychosystemic theory enables us to position the ministry of care more prominently among larger social and political interpretations of the pastoral situation without losing focus of the healing, sustaining, and guiding needed by individuals, groups and families. It joins microsystemic with macrosystemic arenas of experience. It attempts to resolve, both conceptually and practically, the ongoing tension between concern for individual psyches and the increasing awareness of the ecological or systemic connection between all living things (Graham, 1992:13)..

This approach to pastoral care is clearly not negating the importance of the individual, the micro-systemic, personal and interpersonal arenas of life, but connects these to the broader, macro-systemic network. Graham states that his "more comprehensive theory of care" is based in "process theology, liberation and feminist theology, family systems thought, and the interactional dimensions of personality theory" (1992:13).

The discussion of gangsterism in Chapter Two has shown that focussing on the individual gangster alone will not be enough to eradicate the problem of gangsterism in the Cape Peninsula. We will have to visualise our ministry "through longer lenses" (Graham, 1992:29). We need to bear in mind what Graham points out, namely that:

[s]ociologists, feminists, and liberation thinkers, along with a host of others, have made it abundantly clear that our personal identities and our social fabric are fundamentally ordered by a variety of oppressive social systems. Whether we are aware of it or not, these systems organize our psyches and our behaviors into patterns of domination and subordination. (Graham, 1992:17)

Graham admits that pastoral care and counselling “often cannot directly affect the larger oppressive social orders”. However, “it has become unthinkable that pastoral care and counselling can proceed in its self-understanding without a grasp of the horrible ubiquity and devastating consequences of such patterns as they appear in our ministries” (Graham, 1992:17).

It therefore is clear from what Graham says that it would be impossible to render effective pastoral care and counselling on the Cape Flats without taking into account the specific history of this part of South Africa. Even though the socio-political scene has changed in more ways than one, from the time of colonisation – accompanied by genocide and slavery – through the times of the oppressive and repressive apartheid system, into the so-called new South Africa, the net effects of history cannot be undone in a couple of years of democracy. The gangsterism on the Cape Flats, as well as other forms of social ills, can only be addressed adequately if we are honest about all the factors involved. In this regard the researcher concurs with Graham that:

social and cultural realities are not merely out there, but are in every setting where pastoral care seeking and caring take place. It is the caretaker’s role to understand this, and to respond accordingly in keeping with the dynamics of the situation...It will result in alternate modes of intervention and a modified language of care. (Graham, 1992:18)

Graham credits a number of authors in the field of pastoral care and counselling for opening up the thinking out of and away from the then dominant individualistic model of care. Pastoral theologians like Don Browning, John Patton, Brian Childs and Charles Gerkin have each played important roles in this development. Another frontrunner of Graham’s thinking has been Howard Clinebell (Graham, 1992:13). In an address to pastoral counsellors entitled “Toward Envisioning the Future of Pastoral Counseling and AAPC” in 1983, Clinebell painted the challenge they were facing:

An important expression of the systemic orientation in psychotherapy is the growing awareness of the complex interdependence of individual healing and growth with the

wider social context. Behind every personal problem is a cluster of societal problems. Including these issues explicitly in our counselling goals is the most difficult challenge we face in moving toward more holistic, socially responsible pastoral counselling. Reclaiming our prophetic heritage in pastoral care by developing ways of integrating personal and social healing is critical if our field is to be the power-for-transformation which it can be in a world drowning in injustice and social oppression.

To respond effectively to this challenge, we must rethink the interdependence of power and love, theologically and psychologically, and make *empowerment*<sup>111</sup> (not adjustment) a central goal in all our counselling, therapy, and growth work. Liberation theology should become a major conceptual resource in both our theory and practice. Hyperindividualistic, privatized pastoral care can cut the nerve of prophetic awareness and motivation to action. For persons who are economically exploited, and persons oppressed by the social malignancies of racism, sexism, ageism, classism, materialism, speciesism, militarism, and tribal nationalism, such pastoral care can be misused as a therapeutic tranquilizer. The recovery of sight by the blind must never be separated from releasing the captives and enabling the broken victims of societal pathology to go free through counselling. Since sound pastoral counselling must include consciousness raising, we need to incorporate more insight and methods from the radical therapies, including feminist therapy, in our work. Pastoral counselling must become much more countercultural than it has been in the past. We should learn to do our clinical skills to do pastoral care *of* institutions (to make them more wholeness-nurturing) and pastoral care *through* social action. The goals of counselling should include enabling persons to claim their inner power and use it in cooperation with others to liberate themselves and others from the systemic roots of diminished wholeness (Clinebell, 1983: 190).

While Graham acknowledges the expansion in the thinking of Clinebell, he criticises him for still being “fundamentally ordered by the existential-anthropological model, and its underlying ethical

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<sup>111</sup> Louw (2008b:31, 223) refers to this kind of empowerment as *fortigenesis* = a strengths perspective, which relates wellness to the positive components of human behavior (linked to a school of thought in psychology, psychofortology). *Fortigenesis* concentrates on those components in human wellness that create strength, courage and a positive approach to life demands. “In theological terms fortology and a strengths perspective are the equivalent of what is meant by the courage to be in the language of existential theology (cf. Paul Tillich)” (Louw, 2008:31). The equivalent in Scripture of *fortigenesis* is *parrhesia*, that is, a courage that is not a human quality but a quality that comes from God and Christ (Ps. 8; 1 Thess. 2:2). *Parrhesia* is a pneumatic function as part of the fruit of the Spirit (Louw, 2008b: 32).

egoism” (Graham, 1992:37) grounded in “humanistic psychology” and “organized around the goal of self-realized and fulfilled individuals” (1992:38).

Clinebell is not alone in his struggle to move beyond the problem of ‘ethical egoism’. The tension between the individual and the systemic components of care has been felt even within faith communities on the Cape Flats and has been the cause of many instances of conflict between pastors and congregations, pastors and church councils, socially-conscious individuals or groups and congregations of pastors. In many cases the difference of opinion is not so much in the area of theoretical understanding, but in practically applying the principles of psychosystemic thinking to concrete acts of pastorate and diakonia. Put differently, most people would agree that Jesus is Lord, that the Kingdom of God is greater than the church, and that the Gospel should be preached and spread to every corner of the world; but many find it difficult to apply this belief in concrete terms that might include challenging oppressive and unequal power structures. This is often a result of the fear of persecution or alienation that might lead to sacrifices on their part. Consequently, for many people of faith it is better to limit their involvement with care seekers to the individual level – playing it safe, by not challenging the socio-political status quo.

Graham (1992:45-48) proposes **five principles of psychosystemic caregiving** that guide its practice, namely the principle of *organicity*, the principle of *simultaneity*, the principle of *conscientisation*, the principle of *advocacy*, and the principle of *adventure*. How would these principles be applied to the situation on the Cape Flats?

- The principle of *organicity* implies that “the pastoral caretaker must discern and respond to the patterns of interconnectedness accounting for the pastoral situation” (Graham, 1992:46). We assume that “all reality is embodied and socially located in a pattern of reciprocal influence”. According to this principle, there is, in most cases, a link between the reason(s) someone is involved in gangsterism and the lack of a healthy family environment that may even go back a generation or two. In addition, there inevitably are social pressures from the neighbourhood and peer group upon the young person “that diminish his or her capacity to respond more freely”. In a situation like this, and for change to occur, “the pastoral caretaker must become an organic part of this situation and help persons recognize that more than individual symptoms are determinative” (Graham, 1992:46).



- The principle of *simultaneity* means that “the pastoral caretaker must recognize and strategically respond to the inter-systemic consequences of and resistances to his or her efforts” in order to promote change (Graham, 1992:46). In terms of the principle of simultaneity, we assume that changes in either the parts or the whole of the system, or between interlocking systems, affect one another. “Psychosystemic pastoral caretaking responds to the organic relationship between persons and their worlds simultaneously” (Graham, 1992:46). Applied to our context, this principle implies that a pastor who counsels a gangster and encourages him to turn his back on gangsterism will at the same time be faced with, and face the gang member with, familial, occupational, and possible legal challenges. Another challenge may present itself if this person is to be integrated into a faith community (see 3.3.5. on hospitality).
- Graham describes the principle of *conscientisation* as follows: “In order for pastoral caretakers to transform symptomatic situations, they must help care seekers combine an awareness of the impact of the social order upon their personal difficulties, and assist them to fashion strategic actions to neutralize, change, or transform the destructive elements in the social order. This principle rests on the assumption that therapeutic insight and awareness must be expanded to include social analysis and political action for change to be in keeping with the goals of ministry” (Graham, 1992:47). This action-reflection mode of ministry seeks to empower persons to “strategic, accountable action”. Not all persons involved in gangsterism are aware of the larger systemic environment or social order and how it impacted or impacts on their personal difficulties. It is also true that they would sometimes use apartheid as an excuse for their actions, without showing the insight that their gang activities contribute to the continuous ‘oppression’ and impoverishment of their communities. Through the principle of conscientisation, pastors and faith communities could address issues of systemic or structural violence, the culture of violence and its adverse affects on the community, not only in the present, but also in the future. Issues of social justice and responsible citizenship may also be included under this principle.
- The principle of *advocacy* becomes an important element in psychosystemic caregiving. It is stated as follows: “To transform symptomatic behaviors the pastoral caretaker lends his or her voice, and the voice of the caretaking community, to shaping public policies that promote a positive environment for the careseeker” (Graham, 1992:47). Pastoral caretakers become ‘the voice of the voiceless’ by challenging their faith communities and their societies to develop policies and procedures that serve rather than impair human

development and welfare. “The pastoral caregiver, as advocate, uses her or his power position to share the risks of changing the social order, and lends voice to the directions of necessary change” (Graham, 1992:47). The principle of advocacy will be discussed under the heading ‘public pastoral care’.

- The last principle is that of *adventure*, which Graham describes as follows: “To help symptomatic situations change, the pastoral caretaker assists persons to recognize that God is present as an ally on the side of transformation and liberative change, and that such change is an expected but unpredictable gift of grace and fruit of hope...This principle underscores the creativity and ‘messiness’ which in fact exist in the world and in the process of caregiving, and demonstrates that our achievements are never cause-effect outcomes. As adventurers of the spirit, and as participants in the creation of new worlds, we are discoverers more than architects, and witnesses more than contractors” (Graham, 1992:47).

Recognising the presence and work of God in this world brings an important element of realism on the one hand, but also relativism on the other hand. It helps us to place our pastoral caregiving within a faith perspective in relation to God’s activity in this world – long before we become involved in the work of the kingdom.

Graham reminds us that the ministry of care is a subsystem of the ministry of a larger faith community (Graham, 1992:48). As such, the five principles should be part of the total ministry of the faith community. There can be no conflict between different ministries within a community of believers regarding a base theory. Everybody or all groups may not necessarily be involved with the same activities, but there has to be complementarity based on a common understanding of the calling and mission of the faith community.

#### ***4.6.2.3 The Living Human Web***

Another way of speaking about the eco-systemic, eco-hermeneutic or psycho-systemic nature of pastoral care is the image of the ‘living human web’ as articulated by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore (1993). In her own words, “Anton Boisen’s wonderful 1950s metaphor of the ‘living human document’ as a prime text has mutated into the ‘living human web’” (2004:45).

Liberation and feminist thinkers, amongst others, are credited for highlighting the fact that “our personal identities and our social fabric are fundamentally ordered by a variety of oppressive social systems” (Graham, 1992:17). These systems organise our psyches and our behaviours

into patterns of domination and subordination. These systems are “pervasive, and mightily influence the definitions and practice of care” (Graham, 1992:17). “The feminist perspective,” writes Miller-McLemore (1998:79), “demands an analysis of structures and ideologies that rank people as inferior or superior according to various traits of human nature, whether gender, sexual orientation, color, age, physical ability, and so forth.” Hence, to think about pastoral theology and care from this vantage point requires “prophetic, transformative challenge to systems of power, authority, and domination that continue to violate, terrorize, and systematically destroy individuals and communities” (Miller-McLemore, 1998:80). Liberation theology, which began as a Roman Catholic movement in Latin America in the early twentieth century, has played a major role in a stronger focus on many kinds of social oppression besides poverty.

Problems previously defined along private lines as signs of personal weakness and moral turpitude such as drugs, alcoholism, depression, poor academic performance, and even failed marriages or delinquent children, are redefined in broader public and political terms as a result of unjust patriarchal social structures and racist ideologies. Recent feminist, post-structuralist, and postmodernist theory takes the premise that the “personal is political” to a new level: The personal is not only political, it is socially-constructed. That is, power relationships in history and society construct the self. (Miller-McLemore, 2004:50)

Thus, the image or metaphor of the web brings into focus public issues that determine the health of the web, as equally important as issues of individual emotional well-being. The result is that other social sciences such as economics or political science, together with psychology, become powerful tools of interpretation.

In a word, never again will a clinical moment, whether of caring for a woman recovering from hysterectomy or attending to a woman’s spiritual life, be understood on intrapsychic grounds alone. These moments are always and necessarily situated within interlocking, continually evolving threads of which reality is interwoven and they can be understood in no other way. Psychology alone cannot understand this web. (Miller-McLemore 1996:18)

“A ‘living human web’,” asserts Miller-McLemore (1996:21), “cannot simply be ‘read’ and interpreted like a ‘document’.” The identity and cultural or social location of an author or

congregant cannot be ignored, and the voiceless, the silenced or oppressed within the web must speak for themselves.”

What are the implications of an eco-systemic approach to pastoral caregiving on the Cape Flats? For faith communities facing the challenges of gangsterism, it means moving beyond the small world of my particular faith community into the bigger world of my particular community, suburb or township and even the still bigger world of the Western Cape, South Africa, and, indeed, of the global village. In the discussion of the phenomenon of gangsterism in Chapter Two, the researcher became aware of the influence of socio-economic and political developments on the formation and development of gangsterism in the Western Cape, as well as the impact of a globalised world on gang activities in the Western Cape, typified by the operations of international crime syndicates.

#### ***4.6.2.4 Practical application of Müller’s eco-hermeneutical model***

The researcher will now apply Müller’s proposal for eco-hermeneutical pastoral care (1991:187-191) based on David Tracy’s hermeneutical model to the situation on the Cape Flats, with special reference to the phenomenon of gangsterism, the pastoral process may develop through the following stages:

- (a) The interpreter (pastor)<sup>112</sup> should be aware of the existence of a “Vor-meinung”, a “Vorverständnis” in regard to the ‘text’ (people). Such a “Vor-meinung” can even develop into a prejudice. We have to acknowledge that everyone is formed by his or her own socialisation and culture. As such the interpreter (pastor) is burdened by the traditions in which she/he grew up. It would be an illusion to think that one can be totally free from these things and take a neutral stance. The solution is to bring “Vorverständnis” and prejudice to the conscious level.

Given the situation on the Cape Flats, where people have been exposed to gangsterism and gang-related crime and violence for decades, most people have their own perceptions. These perceptions flow from their analysis of the situation, the perspective they have, the glasses through which they look at the situation, as well as the experiences (sometimes subjective, direct or indirect) they have or had. This applies to both the pastor and the congregation or faith

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<sup>112</sup> We understand pastoral care not only as the task or calling of the individual pastor, but more as ‘congregational care’. In other words, the whole congregation and its particular resources are involved, and that may or may not include a pastor or pastors.

community. Many perceptions about gangsterism are based on superficial or simplistic analysis or understanding of the phenomenon, locating it only in individual choices. In Chapter Two the researcher gave a much broader description of gangsterism, emphasising the historical and systemic or structural causes that have led to gang formation and the sustenance of gangsterism on the Cape Flats.

To help people and faith communities bring their prejudices to the surface in order to deal with them, pastors can organise conscientisation sessions (e.g. open discussions). Reformed gangsters or family members of gangsters, as well as victims of gangsterism, can be invited to share their stories, while at the same time listening to the faith community. The role of the minister/pastor as “teacher-enabler-pastor” (Marco, 1992) is of major importance here. It is of critical importance that the minister/pastor is also aware of his/her own prejudices. Only when we are willing to talk to one another from the centres of our personalities, and honestly bring our prejudices in the open, can a true pastoral situation of understanding develop (Müller, 1991:188).

- (a) The interpreter (pastor) should open him-/herself to the stimuli of the text (people). A positive effort should be made in order to let the ‘text’ speak to you. This may bring about even a negative reaction. Like shock. But this kind of reaction is necessary in order to bring prejudice to the conscious level. To allow the ‘text’ to speak to you according to its own unique message is a risky business, for it may demand change from oneself. The natural inclination is generally to avoid stimuli from the ‘text’. (Müller, 1991:188).

While institutions of the State are, understandably, not very willing to talk to or negotiate directly with gangs or gang leaders out of fear that they may give legitimisation to gangs, it is questionable whether this should be the attitude or position of faith communities. It is also quite understandable that even people of faith are sometimes sceptical or suspicious of reformed gangsters and the genuineness of their change or conversion. The most prominent example surely is that of Rashied Staggie, the former leader of the *Hard Living Kids (HLs)*, who has publicly declared his conversion to Christianity. His subsequent trial, conviction and sentencing for rape have not helped to break down prejudices against gangsters. While serving the sentence for rape, Staggie was also charged with conspiracy to murder one of the alleged murderers of his twin brother Rashaad. However, he was found not guilty of this charge. One person who is convinced that the conversion of Rashied Staggie is genuine is Pastor Henry

Wood, who now leads a church and community organisation housed in the previous headquarters of the *HLs*, handed over to him after the conversion of Staggie.

- (a) At this stage (and only now!) it becomes possible to have a true “Gespräch” between the interpreter (pastor) with his/her conscious “Vorverständnis” and the text (partner) with its theme (Müller, 1991:188). It is important that these discussions should move beyond the personal level with personal problems in mind. Part of the pastoral task of the church is to bring about discussions (“Gespräch”) on all levels between conflicting groups.

If pastoral care on the Cape Flats is to play any significant role in helping people to find meaning in their lives, which are caught up in ‘a culture of violence’ (see Hamber, 1999<sup>113</sup>), the whole eco-system of politics and social life will have to be brought into play. We should also not fool ourselves into thinking that “Gespräch” will be ‘a walk in the park’. Realistic expectations and knowledge of the successes and failures of past efforts will be helpful for interpreters as they facilitate these discussions between different groups.

- (a) In the fourth stage of the pastoral process, Müller refers to the *hermeneutics of suspicion*. In the communication process, one has to be aware of distortions caused by ideology, racism, sexism, etc. In the interpretation of the ‘text’, these distortions, which occur on both sides, should be considered carefully in order to establish good communication (Müller, 1991:189). Stereotyping may be detrimental to efforts to establish an open dialogue or discussion. Pastoral conversation has to expose and challenge ideological or other distortions, and this can only happen if all parties involved in the “Gespräch” become consciously aware of these distortions.

With reference to the crime in our country, Hamber and Lewis (1998) caution against over-reaction because of the media’s extensive coverage of crime, which may have created a “skewed picture” in the minds of many South Africans. Hamber (1999) correctly points out how the political rhetoric of opposition political parties rides on the fears of people feeding into simplistic understandings of the causes of violence and appropriate solutions. Both black and white South Africans naively believe that reintroducing the death penalty will seriously curb violent crime. While fear of violence may dis-empower people on the hand, it may lead to drastic

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<sup>113</sup> In a ‘culture of violence’ people or the community subscribe to violence and accept it as an acceptable and legitimate way to solve problems and reach goals (Hamber).

and extreme forms of intervention on the other hand. So-called 'People's justice', as well as cases of police brutality, is grounded in feelings of fear. Miller's warning is appropriate:

Each time we refer to criminals as animals at the dinner table in front of our children, and give them the message that violence towards some people is acceptable, we perpetuate the cycle of violence. (Miller, 1997:12)

- (a) The last stage entails the structure in which the text exists. "Content and structure form such a unity that it is only possible to understand when these two elements are equally valued and handled" (Müller, 1991:190). When we deal with communication, the structure in which someone is wrapped up is of the greatest importance and must be taken seriously. This would include aspects such as non-verbal language, clothing, makeup, etc. This structure or packaging to which Tracy refers can be interpreted as the whole ecosystem within which a person or even a community exists (Müller, 1991:190). "The interaction between any community and its environment should not be viewed or treated as a chance encounter, but as an integral part of the community's existence. The environment affects, and is affected by the particular uses the people make of the particular space and natural resources that are present. These continuing uses bring about a spatial organisation which could be called the ecology of the community" (Müller, 1991:190).

A community is viewed as consisting of a population in a geographic area made up of a human, manufactured and natural component. The human component, as the principle organic system, consists of the population within a geographic area, the social structure, organizations, and interaction among individuals and organizations. The manufactured component is made up of buildings and other structures, materials, services, roads and bridges. Finally, the natural component consists of the land, water, minerals, climate, rainfall and the geographic features of the area. (Kotze & Swanepoel, cited in Müller, 1991:190)

#### **4.6.2.5 Summary**

Pastoral care on the Cape Flats, according to an eco-hermeneutical model, should therefore be involved actively in social, economical, political and environmental issues. This is of vital importance in our understanding of care that is to play a meaningful role. Faith communities and

pastors may find that their encounter with a person or a family starts with what may at first seem to be an individual problem or issue. However, the pastoral process may soon develop into a much broader involvement in the whole network of that person or family's life. The work of the Proudly Manenberg Campaign comes to mind as an example of this. This campaign started off as the Manenberg Education Trust, established by a group of people who grew up in the township to raise money for bursaries for deserving young students and learners. This group of professional people felt that they wanted to plough back into the community where they had grown up as children and youth. After one of many incidents of violence in which a learner was killed, the Trust realised that they would have to become involved in addressing the issue of violence and help creating a safer community for learners in particular and the people of Manenberg at large. The initiative evolved into a full-blown community programme that facilitates empowerment and transformation, or "agency and efficacy" (Wimberly, 2006:11) and involves community action against gangsterism, violence and drugs; and negotiating with authorities on behalf of the community. An office has been opened and they have drawn up their own socio-economic analysis of the township. This campaign has also become involved in the planning of a so-called "waterfront" development – a recreational space where the people of Manenberg can gather to enjoy the outdoors close to their homes.

#### **4.6.3 Towards a praxis of hermeneutics of care and counselling**

Although the previous section has already discussed the importance of hermeneutics, this is such an important aspect in theology in general and pastoral care in particular that we will focus on it more specifically in this section.

Hendriks (2004:19) defines practical theology as "a continuing hermeneutical concern discerning how the Word should be proclaimed in word and deed in the world". Anderson (2001:37) also sees practical theology as "essentially a hermeneutical theology".

[T]heological reflection that begins in the context and crisis of ministry seeks to read the texts of Scripture in light of the texts of lives that manifest the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit as the truth and will of God. Present interpretation of Scripture must be as faithful to the eschatological reality and authority of Christ as to scriptural reality and authority. That is why the hermeneutics of practical theology is a theological hermeneutic and not merely a spiritual hermeneutic. (Anderson, 2001:37)



It is about the congregation as local manifestation of the church in society endeavouring to be faithful witnesses and servants of God in the world. This implies that faith communities should grapple with and try to answer questions such as: What is happening here? How should we react to what confronts us? (Hendriks, 2004:28). We concur with Hendriks that these are indeed some of the most central and vital questions for faith communities in any given context or situation. Without this hermeneutical question, faith communities become so self-centred and inwardly-focussed that they completely miss their original purpose, which is missional – for the sake of others and the world.

Interpretation is a primary and constitutive form of any theological exercise. Pastoral theology throws the light of the gospel on the situations and circumstances of human life and seeks to understand and act in response to these situations in the light of this interpretation (Lartey, 2006:15)

#### **4.6.3.1 *Daniël Louw's Pastoral Hermeneutics of Care and Encounter***

The title of leading South African pastoral theologian Daniël Louw's work, *A Pastoral Hermeneutics of Care and Encounter*, indicates his understanding of practical theology in general, and pastoral care and counselling in particular, as being hermeneutical in nature. The researcher finds it necessary to spend some time on this work and engage with it, especially because Louw is a South African theologian and this research focuses on gangsterism as it manifests itself in the South African context, and more particularly in the Western Cape.

On the very first page of his book, Louw (1998:1) states:

The challenge facing pastoral theology is to develop a model which not only takes the salvation of the Gospel seriously, but also tries *to understand and to interpret our human existence within the contexts and relationships*. What is at stake is *the communication of the Gospel in terms of the life experiences of human souls, and vice versa*. This challenge is essentially a hermeneutical one ... The issue that is currently central in a theological approach to pastoral care as a theological approach to the discipline of pastoral care is this: *how the good news of the Kingdom of God and salvation should be interpreted in terms of human experience/reality and social context so that the substance of our Christian faith may contribute to a life of meaning and quality* (my italics).

Louw (1998:97) finds Fowler's definition of practical theology a good description of his own approach:

Practical theology is critical and constructive reflection by communities of faith carried on consistently in the contexts of their praxis, drawing on their *interpretations* of normative sources from Scripture and tradition in response to their *interpretations* of the emergent challenges and situations they face, and leading to ongoing modifications and transformations of their *practices* in order to be more adequately responsive to their *interpretations of the shape of God's call to partnership*.

Louw's theoretical understanding of practical and pastoral theology should be appreciated. He helps us to see the importance of the wider social context and appreciate the reality of human experience when engaging ourselves with pastoral care. Louw's central thesis provides a very solid platform for the type of research being done in this study. In no uncertain terms, Louw has unwrapped and loosened pastoral care from the safe, but restricting or limiting, casing that causes it to operate within a politically safe theoretical field or framework. Throughout his book, Louw emphasises the centrality of hermeneutics in pastoral care. He cautions against a reduction of pastoral care to a "homiletic event of proclamation – the so-called kerygmatic model" (Louw, 1998:62), stating that the Word of God should be communicated through a process of emphatic understanding, as pastoral care concerns the people and their needs.

In the choice of a model for doing pastoral care in a context of gangsterism, the researcher fully subscribes to this understanding. One very common method used by many groups and churches in townships on the Cape Flats is the so-called 'open air' or 'tent' services. From time to time, a well-known evangelist is also 'brought in' to conduct a series of services. While one should appreciate all efforts to address community concerns like drug abuse and gangsterism, and indeed acknowledge heart and life changes resulting from individual conversions, our discussion of gangsterism clearly showed that this phenomenon is systemic in nature and needs to be addressed holistically. Not only do these evangelistic campaigns follow the kerygmatic model, they also mirror the directive and confrontational model propagated by people like Jay Adams (cf. Louw, 1998:23f).<sup>114</sup> This method is indeed very popular and very appealing to many

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<sup>114</sup> In our theological criticism of this approach by some churches, we should also take note of Dale P. Andrews's work *Practical Theology for Black Churches* (2002). The subtitle of the book, *Bridging Black Theology and African American Folk Religion*, indicates Andrew's effort to bridge the chasm, rift or gap between black theology, with its social and political concerns, and black churches, with their emphasis on pastoral care and piety. Andrews employs the theological metaphor of covenant and an

church members. However, no one single method could be regarded as the only solution to address complex social and individual problems or issues.

The researcher has not ‘tested’ or applied Louw’s understanding of metaphorical theology and God images (1998:82-86, 330f) in this study. It would, however, be very interesting to analyse the God images of people on the Cape Flats based on Louw’s point of departure that “theology is concerned not so much with a declaration of the being of God and of creation, but with understanding and interpreting the meaning of the God-human encounter” (Louw, 1998:83). How do people on the Cape Flats view or understand God within the concrete realities of their lived experiences? How appropriate or relevant are existing God images, e.g. God as Father, for this context where we find economic and political emasculation of men on the one hand, and large-scale absence of fathers or father figures?<sup>115</sup> The researcher supports Sally McFague’s suggestion for a new metaphorical theological concept and agrees with Louw that it is difficult to choose a metaphor (Louw, 1998:84). Louw’s choice of ‘God as Soul Friend’ as a metaphor for the pastoral encounter, “because it takes into account both the grace of God and the human need for salvation and intimacy” (Louw, 1998:86), definitely has merits for the situation under discussion in this research. One question that lingers, however, is whether this metaphor captures the essence of people’s needs on the Cape Flats. It seems to the researcher that the need for protection, security and safety, as well as the need for basic means to live, to survive,<sup>116</sup> given the historic marginalisation and continuing economic hardship, could well be foremost in the minds of many people if probed about their understanding or experience of God. In the discussion of the economic factors that contribute to the formation and continued existence of gangsterism on the Cape Flats, reference was made to the so-called ‘criminal economy’ and saw how gang leaders and drug lords exploit the conditions of economic deprivation to assert or enforce themselves as ‘providers’ and ‘protectors’ for many people – at a price. It was also pointed out how reformed gangsters struggle with the issue of providing for their families, to ‘put something on the table’. The image of God as Provider, or God as Breadwinner (Bread-giver?), seems not to be far-fetched in this context. The researcher concurs with Gerkin who, with reference to postmodern theologians, suggests that a new way needs to be found “whereby the traditional language of the Christian community could be asserted and

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interdisciplinary approach to ministry, constructing a holistic practical model of ministry that embraces both local ‘refuge’ theology and socio-political liberation theology.

<sup>115</sup> See Louw’s (1998:84) discussion of this metaphor.

<sup>116</sup> Compare Watkins Ali (1999), who argues that African American people have sustained a struggle for *survival* and *liberation* for nearly four hundred years. She develops a conceptual framework for a new paradigm in pastoral theological method that will take seriously these specifics of the African American context.

given credence in open and public dialogue with other ways of speaking about the human condition” (Gerkin, 1997:76).

For pastoral theologians, that meant finding ways to open dialogue between Christian ways of speaking and the ordinary language of people. Pastors needed to become more proficient interpreters: interpreters of the Christian language and its ways of seeing and evaluating the world of human affairs, and interpreters of the cultural languages that shape much of everyday life. Christian communities needed to become more self-aware in their Christian identity as they lived out their lives in a world of many languages. (Gerkin, 1997:76)

This may be a one of the challenges facing the researcher as he endeavours to research, discuss and describe the practice of pastoral care on the Cape Flats. Up to this point, nothing has really been written that interprets the cultural languages from a practical or pastoral theological perspective. The result may indeed be new interpretations, new metaphors that will reflect the religious and cultural experiences of people on the Cape Flats.<sup>117</sup>

Interpretation cannot take place without a proper analysis of the situation or context. Pastoral caregivers should therefore make sure that they understand all the factors that contribute to the formation and continued existence of gangsterism on the Cape Flats.

It is also of critical importance that pastoral caregivers always keep in mind that they are working with people, human beings. A sound theological anthropology should therefore be part of the theoretical base from which pastoral care is executed.

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<sup>117</sup> Streaty Wimberly (2004:13-16) also refers to the metaphor-rich God language in African American worshiping congregations. She talks about “evocative nurture” in the black worshiping congregation that has “multiple dimensions that focus on our formation of a head and heart awareness of God and the nature of Divine-human relationship” (2004:12). Streaty Wimberly argues that the content of this evocative nurture reveals the black cultural notion that God may be known in widely varying terms. “Moreover, God may be named in ways other than hierarchical, imperialistic, and dualistic terms that stress the distance between God and the world” (2004:13). She lists almost seventy names and metaphors for God appearing in collections of black prayers, sermons and songs. “What is important here is that these diverse metaphors come out of the very real experiences of the people who have used them. They represent the God revealed to black people in their everyday journeys; and they speak of a God in people’s concrete experiences whose nature is boundless and about whom human expression cannot be bound” (2004:16).

#### 4.6.4 Anthropological

Man is the image of God in several different ways, one of which encourages us not to want to say too much about it: in the image of an incomprehensible God, man is also a being that we know without understanding. Man is also *homo absconditus* (Moltmann). (Jérôme de Gramont, 2005:56)

A general definition of anthropology would be that it is the social science that studies the origins and social relationships of human beings. “It entails mainly a phenomenological description of human beings through perception and empirical analysis” (Louw, 1998:141). This science is studied by scientists, biologists, philosophers, sociologists and theologians. In the field of theology it was mostly systematic theologians who paid attention to and wrote about a theological anthropology. This has changed, with practical theologians paying more and more attention to theological anthropology as a base theory for practical theology (cf. Nel, 1996:188-189). In the words of Daniël Louw:

Pastoral ministry is ministering to *people*. Thus any model or strategy must ultimately be determined by our view of who and what a person is. How pastors deal with people, as well as the therapy they employ, depend not only on the basic theological theory, but also on their perspective on the nature of humankind (anthropology). Knowledge of God, apart from an understanding of humans, can easily become abstract and speculative. Similarly, a pastoral theology without clearly outlined theological anthropology, runs the risk of becoming ‘docetic’. As such it becomes alien to life, and does not allow for the historical context of human beings. (Louw, 1998:123)

A theological anthropology goes further than knowledge of human behaviour, physiology and psychology, and includes “an understanding of humans as moral and spiritual beings in terms of their awareness of the ultimate, and their relationship with God” (Louw, 1998:141).

In the search for a model or base theory for pastoral care on the Cape Flats, the researcher subscribes to the view that pastoral ministry is ministering to people. This research is about the caring ministry to specific people within a specific context. The contextual aspect of pastoral care has already been discussed. This section will be focus on the anthropological nature of pastoral care and the significance it has for our understanding of caring for people in the context of gangsterism. In the next section the researcher will take a look at Louw’s proposal for a

pastoral anthropology and see how it may help us in the quest to develop a base theory for pastoral care on the Cape Flats.

#### ***4.6.4.1 Theological anthropology: towards a system of “habitus” and “life”***

Daniël Louw is correct in cautioning against a pastoral theology without a clearly outlined theological anthropology. In the past we have so often found that any talk of or reference to anthropology or human aspects in theology has been rejected as liberation theology, humanism, or even Marxist, and therefore bad, un-biblical, not pure.

Louw points out that very little attention has been paid by pastoral theologians to an anthropology. The attempt by Jay Adams (*More than Redemption*, 1979) focussed too much on the human condition before and after the Fall, resulting in a rather narrow soteriological perspective. This is indeed a very popular approach in many churches on the Cape Flats, especially the so-called Pentecostal and Charismatic groupings, but also in all other denominations. Many people believe that all the societal problems would be solved if we preach personal salvation and people ‘turn to the Lord’, because if more and more people ‘are converted’, the community will be changed. While the researcher does not reject the personal aspect of evangelism or salvation, and indeed view it as a vital aspect of a holistic understanding of salvation, this represents a too narrow understanding of theological anthropology.

The Dutch practical theologian, Gerben Heitink, designed a more comprehensive anthropology, combining knowledge from other human sciences with the biblical view of the human person (Louw, 1998:123). Criticising the traditional reformed doctrine of the human person, namely *simul justus et peccator*: the human person is both evil and justified, Heitink proposes a more holistic approach that may be summarised as follows:

- (a) The human person is a unity of body, soul and spirit. The traditional dualistic approach is rejected.
- (b) The human person does not have relations, but is a relation. As human beings, we exist within the network of different relationships and contexts.
- (c) Our being is constituted of conscious and unconscious levels.
- (d) Developmental psychology reveals that the human person is a dynamic entity in search of self-realisation.
- (e) Norms and values play an important role in our quest for human and personal identity. (cited in Louw, 1998:124)

Although Heitink's contribution goes much further than that of Adams, Louw is of the view that it lacks a clear pneumatological perspective. In this regard the work of another Dutch scholar, J.J. Rebel (*Pastoraat in pneumatologisch perspectief*, 1981), is important. Rebel's basic presupposition is "that categories which function in psychology and psychotherapy attain their theological meaning within pneumatology" (Louw, 1998:124). Rebel's aim is to prove that, in pastoral care, psychology influences pastoral ministry through the work of the Spirit. He is furthermore convinced that the neglect of pneumatology, with its understanding of the human being within a theological anthropology, leads to an emphasis on psychology and therefore a psychologising of pastoral care. The challenge of pastoral care is "the application of salvation to the human being, in all relations" (Louw, 1998:125), and one of the most important tasks of pastoral theology must be to give attention to the theme of what it means to be human.

Of particular importance for our research is the following statement:

Our humanity and personhood are dynamic entities and arise from within a systemic network of relations. (Louw, 1998:125)

In order for us to understand something about the lives of people involved in gangs, as well as the members of different faith communities, we need to recognise that they are human beings, people who are influenced and shaped by their environment and the network of relations that constitute their lives.

Pastoral care cannot ignore the important question: what does it mean to be human – to be human in a particular context? Theologically, we realise immediately that this is not enough. As a matter of fact, it would be very limiting, reducing humans and their potential to mere social beings. Understanding and interpreting human beings from a specific perspective – the human person in relationship with God – helps us to help people look beyond the context and the limitations of the situation and their own human potential, to enhance the quality of their lives – to see a bigger picture, *the* bigger picture, namely God's purpose for our lives. Another point needs to be made here – because of the violent behaviour of gangsters and the generally negative view and perceptions we have of them, it is very normal, almost 'natural', for us to strip them of their humanity, to even refer to them as 'sub-human' or not human, as animals. A clear and sound theological anthropology reminds and helps us to view people 'through the eyes of God'.

In this regard, Louw's convergence model, with its focal point in the eschatological perspective, becomes a crucial component of a theological anthropology. It helps us to deal with the "reality of sinful brokenness and transient fallibility (death) that underlies all human problems" (Louw, 1998:129), but without ignoring the inner potential of human beings and the importance of human responsibility, helping people to "discover their true humanity before God and to cope with painful life issues" (Louw, 1998:146). "What we are told is that the destiny of the human is under divine determination, even as the origin of the human was through divine agency" (Anderson, cited in McGrath, 1993:6).

In our dealing with human beings from a theological anthropological perspective, we recognise the value and importance of a phenomenological approach in helping us to concretise human knowledge and identify human needs. (The section on the interdisciplinary nature of pastoral care will focus on the importance of the fields of psychology, sociology, medical science, criminology, etc. for effective pastoral work.) "A phenomenological approach", however, "deals only with fragments and certain perspectives on the human being" (relative knowledge), cautions Louw (1998:144-145) – it cannot offer final knowledge about the ultimate meaning of life.

*a. Created in the Image of God, imago Dei*

There is no doubt that Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 2:7 are the *loci classicus* (the principal resources) for a biblical doctrine of the human persons (Louw, 1998:147). "The image of God is foundational to the biblical concept of humanness" (Johnston, 2000:564).

Anderson (1993:5) defines Christian anthropology as follows:

The doctrine that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, subject to temptation and fallen into sin, redeemed through Jesus Christ and destined to share in God's eternal glory. A Christian doctrine of human being has its foundation in the OT account of the creation of the first human beings out of the dust of the ground and their endowment by the Creator with the divine image and likeness.

Louw, however, doubts whether this scriptural information intends to develop an extensive and systematic doctrine regarding a theological anthropology. He summarises the value of the concept 'image of God' for a pastoral anthropology with the following points (Louw, 1998:148-149):



- *Qualitative dissimilarity.* Human existence is unique and this uniqueness is encompassed in the term *nèfèsj*,<sup>118</sup> which indicates that humans, as living beings, differ qualitatively from other creatures (the ontic dimension). The 'image of God' simply implies that the human person is *essentially dependent upon God* and has an eternal destiny.
- *Relational interpretation.* The term 'image of God' implies that the destiny of human beings can be understood only when viewed from the perspective of their being dependent on God. Weber (cited in Louw, 1998:149) concludes that this term describes human beings in terms of their relationship with God (the noetic dimension).
- *Purposefulness and the dimension of the ultimate.* The term 'image of God' designates to human beings the facilities of responsibility and responsibility (obedience and accountability). Human beings are commissioned to represent and glorify God in all that they are and do. Life becomes a vocation and existence becomes meaningful. The fact that the human person, despite the Fall, still remains an image of God, cannot be ascribed to any human quality. The continuity does not reside in our humanity, but in God's faithfulness.
- *Christological dimension.* Jesus, as the image of God, is not a prototype for perfect humanity, nor for a new type of person. That Jesus Christ Himself is also described as the image means that a person acquires a new status in Christ. Christians are transformed so that they resemble more closely the image of Christ (2 Cor 3:18), and increasingly reflect the glory (doksa) of God. Christ, the image of God, thus reverts human beings back to their original destiny, so that they too represent God. Representation does not imply single function, but places the entire creation within the new order of God's kingdom.

All these points have extremely important implications for our study, and specifically for our quest to describe and formulate a base theory for pastoral care in the context of gangsterism. It

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<sup>118</sup> "The Hebrew word for soul, *néfesh* (Gen 2:7), means breath, exhalation, the principle of life. *Néfesh* denotes a principle of life which makes a body, whether human or beast, into a living being. When *néfesh* is translated as *psyché*, it signifies that which is vital in a human being in the broader sense. In combination with heart (*kardia*) and mind (*nous*), soul in the New Testament describes the seat of life or even life itself. It represents the person in the broadest sense and indicates the quality of life experiences. Soul therefore does not refer in the first place to a different anthropological category, but to a different mode of being ... According to Acts 2:41, soul refers to the whole of our human existence. To understand *néfesh* as an embodied principle for purposeful life, as an embodiment of a life force, can be very near to the original intention of the authors of the Bible ... The Bible does not view the human person as an isolated individual. One can say that 'soul' refers to a collective identity within the corporate structures of life, i.e. marriage, family, clan, society. Soul reflects a network of social systems and spiritual forces, and designates a qualitative stance in life" (Louw, 2004:11-13).

was already said that it is at times very easy or natural to typify gangsters as 'sub-human' or not human.<sup>119</sup> The concept of 'image of God' underlines the uniqueness of our human existence (qualitative dissimilarity), and that includes all human beings – even gangsters. Without a sound pastoral anthropology, human beings (in this case gangsters) may become mere objects of our pastoral work. Without linking people belonging to gangs to their "fundamental structuredness" (Louw, 1998:147), we strip them of the relationship with God and the ultimate purpose and meaning of their lives. If we merely view gangsterism from a phenomenological perspective, we take the faithfulness of God out of the equation, and limit ourselves to a view of human beings that does not take into account the Christological dimension whereby a person acquires a new status in Christ. Thus, when we can link people to their original destiny, we may help them to look beyond the 'now' of their situation and existence, proclaiming, pointing them to the salvation in Christ, and providing them with a 'new eternal destiny' (telic dimension) and a 'horizon of meaning' (Louw, 1998:154).

The classical formula for care, *cura animarum* (the care of souls), is appropriate here. The aim of *cura animarum* is to heal people by helping them discover whole-ness and soul-fulness (Louw, 2005:9).

Wholeness in the Christian tradition implies more than healing and a condition of well-being. Wholeness refers to a new condition of being, to a radical transformation of our existence. It refers to a new direction, to life as determined by God's grace and defined by the justification in Christ. Wholeness refers to God's unqualified "Yes" in Christ and implies the renewal of one's relationship with God, one's self, one's body, with other human beings and with creation. It represents a re-creation in terms of re-conciliation and forgiveness. Wholeness is the outcome of salvation (healing = *heil*) and indicates healing in the sense that the past (guilt) is wiped out and a new future begins (Louw 2005:10).

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<sup>119</sup> What is distinctive about human beings is not that they have a 'soul' which animals do not possess, but that, as 'ensouled body' and as 'embodied soul', the 'spirit' of that existence is opened towards God in a unique way as the source of life. The whole of human life is oriented towards a destiny beyond mortal and natural life. This endowment of life is experienced as the image and likeness of God. While the physical body is not held to be in the image of God, human beings as 'embodied souls' are in the image of God (Anderson, 1993:7).

Another extremely important dimension in the founding of a pastoral anthropology is the notion that a person is a pneumatic being (Louw, 1998:167). The dimension of *pneuma* in the person who has acquired a new status in Christ is described by Louw (1998:167) as:

A total submission, transformation and focus upon God. Such a person is moved and motivated by God in a way that transforms the person's volition and thoughts and enables the person to experience new life each day.

Louw refers to the “pneumatological point of contact for an encounter between God and the human spirit” – an association that emerges in the *pneuma* of the new person between the believer and Christ (the indwelling presence of God, Gal 2:20), which “indicates that the continuity between the earthly and the eschatological life is not situated in inner psychic abilities, but only in the faithfulness of God and in his transforming actions through the renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Louw, 1998:167). “The *pneuma* makes the person a ‘telic being’ – a person focused on the ultimate and eschatological dimension of the new life in Christ” (Louw, 1998:168). “Only through pneumatology can people find their healed and transformed *humanum*”, which is a gift of the Spirit (Louw, 1998:171). It is the in-dwelling presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit (inhabitation *Spiritus*) that enables human beings to be transformed to full humanity. This takes place within the reality of our earthly existence. Psycho-physical and social potential are not ignored or bypassed, but are being transformed – releasing new possibilities (*charisma*) in the person and changing their objective and destiny. People are turned away from selfless selfishness towards service (*diakonia*) and love (Louw, 1998:172). Through the process of sanctification the Holy Spirit applies the implications of the new reality of salvation to our daily behaviour (Louw, 1998:179), labelling us as moral beings. Sanctification involves an ongoing process of development in which the believer (new person in Christ) grows towards a mature faith (the telic dimension of a pastoral anthropology).

Louw's theological anthropology helps us to move beyond the phenomenological perspective on gangsterism and people involved with gangs. It helps us to present to people a different perspective of themselves. People are not merely the product of their circumstances or the consequence of socio-political and economic forces and conditions, but persons created in the image and likeness of God, re-created by the salvific work of Christ, transformed and empowered by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and destined to a new future. This is not always easy for people to grasp and accept, because of the negative experiences that are so overwhelming and overshadow their perceptions. However, we believe that without a sound

pastoral or theological anthropology, we would not be able to make a significant difference in the lives of people caught up in the reality of gangsterism on the Cape Flats, helping them to discover whole-ness and soul-fulness (The pneumatological dimension will again be discussed later in the chapter).

Heitink was already quoted as stating that “the human person does not have relations, but is a relation. As human beings, we exist within the network of different relationships and contexts”. In the next section the researcher will discuss the relational aspect of pastoral care.

#### **4.6.5 Relational: Towards a relational approach in caregiving**

Our humanity and personhood are dynamic entities and arise from within a systemic network of relations (Louw, 1998:125).

Our identity grows continually through our interaction with other individuals...Gone is the image of the self-defined and autonomous individual, the island of personhood standing over against society (Ted Peters, cited in Pembroke, 2006:11).

*Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (isiZulu expression, meaning “A person is a person through other persons”).

The people of the Cape Flats are very focussed on the relational aspect of their lives. One of the things that the researcher has picked up during his ministry in Bishop Lavis is the emphasis placed on family ties. This is demonstrated, for example, through the celebrating of the birthdays of family members, especially that of parents, and also the gathering of family and friends at events like baptism, confirmation, and even the installation of someone as a deacon or elder of the church. The researcher views this as important and as a sign that the sense of community forms a crucial part of pastoral care on the Cape Flats. Despite the pressure and influence of Westernisation, with its inherent individualistic tendencies, the people have generally held on to the aspect of relationality as an important value.

It is important for this research to ground the aspect of relationality theologically as part of our quest to build a pastoral-theological base theory for pastoral work on the Cape Flats.

#### **4.6.5.1 Relationality and the Doctrine of the Trinity**

The notion of relationality and interdependence in God paves the way for the understanding of human beings as relational and interdependent creatures. (Koopman, 2003:197)

The relational aspect of humanity, less developed though not ignored in older studies, has been emphasised increasingly in recent biblical study and has several important aspects, viz. sexual, communal and spiritual (Johnston, 2000:565). Jérôme de Gramont (2005:56) is also of the opinion that “all anthropologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century seem to have one point in common: the recourse to the concept of ‘relation’, understood in a narrow sense of an intersubjective or interpersonal relation, as a key category”.

Neil Pembroke wrote a very interesting and refreshing book, *Renewing Pastoral Practice*, (2006) in which he discusses the relationship between the doctrine of the Trinity and pastoral care and counselling, focussing in particular on the relational dynamics of the Godhead. The relational aspect, according to Pembroke, is at the very centre of pastoral work. Pembroke refers to theologians such as Jürgen Moltmann, Catherine Mowry LaCugna, Ted Peters and David Cunningham as ‘leading lights’ who have begun to focus on relationality with regard to trinitarian reflections<sup>120</sup> (Pembroke, 2006:3). Vosloo also refers to a “revival or renaissance in trinitarian theology” (2004:72; see also Koopman, 2003). We would like to highlight some aspects of Pembroke’s book that have particular relevance for this study.

Pembroke has found that “there has been a significant turn to the practical by theologians as they develop their trinitarian thinking” (2006:1). What has been the common concern among theologians that have begun to explore and renew this doctrine is the aspect of relationality.

At the heart of the mystery of the triune God is the fact that the Three indwell each other in love and reach out to humankind, calling us to share in their loving communion. (Pembroke, 2006:1)

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<sup>120</sup> Cunningham asserts that the category of ‘relationality’ is the single issue on which recent trinitarian theologians have achieved the greatest degree of consensus. “The traditional claim that God was ‘a single divine substance’ tended to evoke an image of an isolated, passionless monad – thus obscuring both God’s internal relationality and God’s loving relationship with the world” (Cunningham, 1998:25).

Showing briefly how the language of the early trinitarian debates was drawn from a metaphysics of substance, with words such as *homoousios* (of one substance) and *hypostasis* (reality) at the centre of theological arguments, Pembroke postulates that “we have moved on from here” with relationship having replaced substance as the central theme (2006:7). Two images that have played a major role in trinitarian theology are God as supreme substance and God as absolute subject. It was the Cappadocians (Basil the Great, his brother Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus) who introduced a new approach to the doctrine of the Trinity, relating the ontological dimension in God to the personhood of God. While theologians in the West located the ontological principle of God in the substance of God (*una substantia, tres personae* – the one indivisible, homogeneous divine substance exists as three individual persons), the Cappadocians turned to the *hypostasis* – the triune God as one *ousia* (substance) but three *hypostases* (realities). According to the Cappadocian theologians, the Trinity consists of ‘persons in communion’ (*hypostases en koinonia*). “It is God as Father, not as substance, who begets the son and breathes out the Spirit” (Pembroke, 2006:9).

For the Cappadocians, *hypostasis* or personhood was not an addition to being; personhood or relation is ‘how’ being exists. If God were not personal, God would not exist at all. (LaCugna, 1991:244)

Pembroke further contends that the “modern European metaphysic of subjectivity” (God as Absolute Subject) allows for the idea of a person-to-person communication, but ultimately it leads away from the interpersonal relations of the triune God (2006:10). In this regard, Pembroke credits Jürgen Moltmann for pointing to the mutual indwelling of the Three that binds them together in fellowship and communion of a new and unique kind.

The fellowship of the triune God is so open and inviting that it is depicted in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit which human beings experience with one another – ‘as you, Father, are in me and I in you’ – and takes this true human fellowship into itself and gives it a share in itself: ‘that they may also be in us’. (Moltmann, cited in Pembroke, 2006:10)

Introducing the concept of “God as Open Communion”, Pembroke acknowledges LaCugna as a central figure in the renewal of the doctrine of the Trinity who builds her relational theology around the notion of persons in communion. The opening sentences of Catherine Mowry LaCugna’s book *God for Us: The Trinity & Christian Life*, reads: “The doctrine of the Trinity is

ultimately a practical doctrine with radical consequences for Christian life.<sup>121</sup> That is the thesis of this book” (LaCugna, 1991:1). She continues:

The doctrine of the Trinity is ultimately therefore a teaching not about the abstract nature of God, nor about God in isolation from everything other than God, but a teaching about God’s life with us and our life with each other. Trinitarian theology could be described as *par excellence* a theology of relationship, which explores the mysteries of love, relationship, personhood and communion within the framework of God’s self-revelation in the person of Christ and the activity of the Spirit. (LaCugna, 1991:1)

In contrast to Aquinas and others who construe person as an individual who is self-possessed in self-knowledge and self-love, LaCugna, incorporating the notions of intersubjectivity, ecstasis and catholicity, argues that persons are not isolated, self-contained entities.<sup>122</sup> Pembroke (2006:11; cf. LaCugna 1991:288-292) describes *ecstasis* and *catholicity* as follows:

*Ecstasis* refers to the human capacity for self-transcendence. To be a person is to reach beyond oneself, to go out to others in love. To exist as a person is to be referred to others; the negation and dissolution of personhood is total self-reference.

*Catholicity* has two aspects. First, the true nature of a person is expressed in her desire to be inclusive of everything in the world. Secondly, the inclusive, catholic person expresses the totality of a nature; each human person exemplifies what it means to be human.

Persons exist for communion. Human life expresses its true nature and meaning when persons come together in a fellowship of love. The essential meaning of the Trinity for LaCugna is that God reaches out to the world in Christ and through the power and presence of the Spirit, calling all creatures into a loving communion of human and divine persons.

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<sup>121</sup> David S. Cunningham also picks up on the *practice* of Trinitarian theology with his book, *These Three Are One. The practice of Trinitarian theology* (1998). In the preface of the book, he writes: “My use of the word *practice* is an attempt to express my conviction that the doctrine of Trinity – despite the abstract language which it often must employ – is not just something that Christians think; it is also something that they do. It should thus be more than just a device for arranging the Tables of Contents in volume after volume of systematic theology. Our belief in the triune God shapes us in profound ways – affecting what we believe, what we say, how we think, and how we live” (Cunningham, 1998:ix).

<sup>122</sup> According to LaCugna (1991:266), the rich reflections of John Macmurray (the Scottish philosopher) and (contemporary Greek Orthodox writer) John Zizioulas clearly break away from the extreme individualism of the Cartesian framework. Person as relation-to-another is the basic given of existence, experience, and identity.

The perfection of God is the perfection of love, of communion, of personhood. Divine perfection is the antithesis of self-sufficiency; rather, it is the absolute capacity to be who and what one is by being for and from another. The living God is the God who is alive in relationship, alive in communion with the creatures, alive with desire for union with every creature.

LaCugna (1991:292) ends her section on “Toward an understanding of persons in communion” with the following words:

The doctrine of the Trinity stresses the relational character of personhood over and against the reduction of personhood to individual self-consciousness, and also emphasizes the uniqueness and integrity of personhood over and against the reduction of personhood to a product of social relations. Thus it can serve as a critique of cultural forms of personhood, whether that of ‘rugged individualism’ or ‘me first’ morality, as well as patterns of inequality based on gender, race, ability, and so forth.

Pembroke is concerned that LaCugna goes too far when she argues that there is no need to reflect on the immanent Trinity – the mystery of God (*theologia*) is simply what we know of God through God’s self-communication in Christ and the Spirit (*oikonomia*). He asserts that “there is a communal God apart from the God who calls us into communion” (2006:12).

Pembroke wants to maintain the notion of the immanent Trinity, but not as divine life locked up inside itself. “God reaches out in love to the world through Christ and the Spirit and invites us to share in communion of God’s love” (Pembroke, 2006:12). Pembroke turns to David Cunningham’s use of the metaphor of “producing” to capture the notion of an interlocking connection between the inner life of God and God for us. *Producing* for Cunningham (1998:58) is “a complex, fully-engaged process of superabundant love and willing donation” that encompasses both ‘God producing God’ and ‘God producing the world’ (Pembroke, 2006:12).<sup>123</sup> Pembroke’s search for a more dynamic understanding of the triune God takes him to Paul Fiddes’s reference to the idea of God as ‘an event of relationships’ that communicates the idea of participation. “God reaches out to us in love through Christ and in the power of the Spirit inviting us to participate in the event of the divine relations” (Pembroke, 2006:13). When

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<sup>123</sup> “First, *God produces God*; more specifically, God (the source and origin of divinity) gives birth to the Word and issues the Spirit. In addition, *God produces the world* – not merely creating it, but caring for it, redeeming it and sustaining it. Finally, *God produces our knowledge of God* – through the definitive revelation in Christ, but also empowering us to receive this revelation (through practices of the Church, and in providing us with the tools and materials to make this knowledge clear and persuasive to others” (Cunningham, 1998:58).



Cunningham uses the term *participation* he indicates that the divine life is first and foremost an event of mutual indwelling (Neil Pembroke, 2006:13). *Participation* is a virtue that we as humans are also called to enact. If the doctrine of the Trinity has anything to teach us about authentic existence it is that communion rather than individualism is the goal of human life.

The focus on participation suggests that human beings are called to understand themselves, not as “individuals” who may (or may not) choose to enter into relationships, but rather as mutually indwelling and indwelt, and to such a degree that – echoing the mutual indwelling of the Three – all pretensions to wholly independent existence are abolished. (Pembroke, 2006:13)

The trinitarian ‘virtue’ of *participation* marks our human existence. It can help us begin to think about what it might mean to dwell in, and be indwelt by, the lives of others. “It encourages us not simply to value ‘relationality’ in the abstract, but to think about the *character* of our relations. After all, such relations are not good in themselves; they can be trivial, insincere, abusive, or worse” (Cunningham, 1998:165).

Cunningham’s use of the word participation goes beyond the standard definition of *participate* that refers to an activity in which we are joined by others, or bringing together human beings for the purpose of performing some activity, *something*. He is interested in those instances in which we take part in *someone*, an *other*; therefore, not merely of working alongside others in a common activity, but of dwelling in, and being indwelt by, one another (Cunningham, 1998:166). The notion of “a pure, isolated ‘individual’ is a highly disputable human construct” (Cunningham, 1998:169).

In God, there are no individuals; the Three dwell in each other so completely that we cannot divide them, one from another. And so we too are called to live lives of mutual participation – relation without remainder. Admittedly, our status as created beings rules out any perfect imaging of God’s internal participation. But we should not underestimate the power of the Spirit, working in us, to do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine – such that we too might dimly reflect, however inadequately, the complete mutual participation within God (Cunningham, 1998:169).

Cunningham quite rightly posits that modern individualism poses significant challenges for the Christian faith – “calling into question the ideal of mutual participation both within the believing community and within God” (1998:171). Christians have understood themselves as called into

communion with each other because they bear the image of the triune God. According to the assumptions of the Enlightenment, on the other hand, 'persons' are autonomous, fully self-determined, and fully distinct from one another – they determine their own goals and need only consider their own desires. This has led to a glorification of the isolated individual and we are almost discouraged from allowing our lives to become too tightly intertwined with those of others. Cunningham makes reference to "modern Western hyperindividualism" (1998:171). One way of countering this 'individualism running amok' is the reading of the biblical narratives and allowing our lives to be formed by the trinitarian virtue of participation. Such formation may take place through the practice of the Lord's supper (communion or Eucharist, as it is also called), in which Christians gather around a common table in order to give thanks to God and to come into fellowship with God and with one another (Cunningham, 1998:172). The eucharist is "a centrally determinative practice for the trinitarian virtue of participation" (Cunningham, 1998:195).

For Cunningham, therefore, participation is a trinitarian 'virtue' that marks our human existence (Pembroke, 2006:13) – the relationships among human beings, created in the image of God, participating in one another's lives vis-à-vis the modern obsession with individualism (Cunningham, 1998:183).

Cunningham captures this fact with the metaphor of 'paralleling' – the "construal of God's triune marks" (1998:90) that we develop on the basis of the character of God (which has already been revealed to us). Our human life parallels in a certain sense the divine life (Pembroke, 2006:14), as we become more aware of the ways that our lives bear the image of God's Tri-unity, and we learn to live into that image in ever more faithful ways, leading us into ever deeper communion with God (Cunningham, 1998:119).

In older theologies, the triune God was presented as locked up inside itself. Those who have been at the forefront of the renewal of the doctrine of the Trinity, however, have focussed on the Trinity as an open fellowship of love that invites humans to share in its communion. Theologians such as Cunningham point out that the notion of paralleling is another way of developing the practical dimension in trinitarian theology (Pembroke, 2006:15).

Cunningham (1998:119) sums it in the following words:

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches us that the God whom we worship is not a merely theoretical deity, remote and disengaged, but is rather the Living God who created us, who became incarnate and dwelt among us, and who dwells among us still in the

communion of the church. A God so intimately involved in our lives can never be of purely theoretical importance; for in this god we live, and move, and have our being.

#### ***4.6.5.2 Neil Pembroke's application of Relational Doctrine of the Trinity to Pastoral Care***

We will now discuss Pembroke's application of the relational doctrine of the Trinity to pastoral care by looking first at pastoral care as polyphony, followed by a discussion of hospitality in pastoral ministry (this should be linked with our discussion of hospitality as a mark or characteristic of a missional church in Chapter Three), and ending with a discussion of community and spiritual friendship.

##### *a. Pastoral care as polyphony*

Pembroke builds on this relational understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity and attempts to show "how thinking about the Trinity has the capacity to renew our vision of the ministry of care" (Pembroke, 2006:1).

In his depicting of pastoral care as "polyphony", Pembroke wants to explore how to manage relational space in the ministry of care.

*Polyphony*<sup>124</sup> is a musical term which denotes the simultaneous singing and playing of two or more melodic lines that fit together as equally important parts in the overall structure of a piece. (Pembroke, 2006:21)

In relation to the Triune God, polyphony refers to the way in which simultaneous difference exists as a homogeneous unity. The Trinity is a polyphony in which three distinctive notes are sounded without any one note muting the other (Pembroke, 2006:21). Taking the lead from Cunningham,<sup>125</sup> Pembroke suggest that "authentic pastoral relationships constitute a reflection or a paralleling of the polyphonic relationality in the Godhead" (Pembroke, 2006:21). Pembroke finds a connection with Alastair Campbell's three images (*shepherd, wounded healer* and *wise*

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<sup>124</sup> *Poly* (many) + *phonē* (voice, sound) = any simultaneous sounding of different notes (Cunningham, 1998:128).

<sup>125</sup> Cunningham deals with "polyphony" in Chapter 4 of his book. Cunningham (1998:128) contends that, too often, theology has operated with false dichotomies, in which it is assumed that increased attention to one element necessarily decreases the significance of the other. A theology perspective informed by polyphony, on the other hand, would seek to examine, in a critical way, any claim that two categories must necessarily work against one another.

*fool*) for pastoral ministry to develop his view of pastoral care as polyphony. Campbell refers to the *toughness* and the *tenderness* of the shepherd, to the *woundedness* and the *health* of the wounded healer, and to the *wisdom* and *folly* of the wise fool (Pembroke, 2006:24) – notes that need to be expertly played in the polyphony of care (Pembroke, 2006:25).

The reflection on polyphony and its application to the ministry of care brings Pembroke (2006:26) to the aspect of interpersonal space in pastoral relationships. It is critical to achieve the right kind of space.

When there is a compression of the interpersonal space there is a failure to respect otherness. Too much space, on the other hand, means that there is no possibility of communion (the problem of individualism). (Pembroke, 2006:21)

Pembroke suggests that effective pastoral visitation involves “a polyphony of *communion*, *nearness* and *distance*” (2006:21). We usually associate communion with coming close to the other, but unless there is also appropriate distance there cannot be a real meeting between us. “It is judging when to move in close and when to make some room that is central in pastoral relationships” (Pembroke, 2006:27). Reflecting on personal experience as a pastor, Pembroke has learned that providing personal space is allowing the other to be herself, to be the fullness of her personhood (2006:28).

We can therefore conclude that, while personhood cannot be divorced from relation (Cunningham, 1998:27), we need the ‘virtuosity’ to hold together toughness and tenderness, woundedness and health, and nearness and distance.

#### *b. Hospitality in pastoral ministry*

To offer hospitality to another person is to create a space in which she feels welcome, ‘at home’. A guest feels at home when she is allowed to be truly herself ... she does not have to act in a certain way in the company of the host to be accepted by him. She is given the freedom to come as she is. (Pembroke, 2006:31)

This section links with our discussion on hospitality in Chapter Three, where we argued that hospitality should be an integral part of a missional ecclesiology, and a concrete expression of what it means to be church on the Cape Flats. In this section we will be looking at hospitality as a specific part and expression of the type of pastoral care that is required on the Cape Flats.

Implicit in the concept of hospitality is a dialectic of openness and limitation that is central to pastoral ministry. Openness (acceptance or unconditional positive regard) does not mean that one must condone all the attitudes, values and behaviours of the one being welcomed. “The theory of acceptance makes room for a challenge to values and actions that militate against health and well-being” (Pembroke, 2006:31). So, although the invitation to share in the community of God is open and all persons are welcome, certain *behaviours* are not – indicating both unbounded and bounded openness (Pembroke, 2006:33).

We can recognise the trinitarian structure in the hospitality of God – Christ comes in the power of the Spirit to invite people into communion with God (Pembroke, 2006:32). Jesus (who is both the model and bearer of this healing and liberating communion) comes to call people to full humanness through the offer of a saving relationship. Through the Spirit’s power, people are freed from sin and conformed to the person of Christ.<sup>126</sup>

Life in a community constituted by the Spirit and conformed to Christ is shaped by a radical openness and acceptance – all those who come are welcomed and affirmed as children of God. LaCugna (1991:299) articulates it very well:

The goal of Christian community, constituted by the Spirit in union with Jesus Christ, is to provide a place in which everyone is accepted as an ineffable, unique, and unrepeatable image of God, irrespective of how the dignity of a person might otherwise be determined: level of intelligence, political correctness, physical beauty, monetary value. The communion of persons, however, remains the context of personhood. The community of Jesus Christ is the one gathering place in which persons are to be accepted and valued unconditionally, as equal partners in the divine dance.

Those who take up the offer to share in the community of God need to respect the core values of the Gospel, indicating an openness and limit dialectic in God’s hospitality.

Quite rightly, Pembroke points out that hospitality involves something deeper than the practicalities of preparing a space and offering food and drink – the giving of oneself. This entails receiving the full attention of the host to the guest, offering self, rather than performing a task.

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<sup>126</sup> LaCugna refers to a “deification” of the human. She writes: “The Spirit deifies human beings, makes them holy, sets them free from sin, free from conditions of ‘biological *hypostatis*’, conforms them to the person of Christ. The deified person’s way of being in relationship with self, with others, with goods of the earth, with God, corresponds to Jesus’ way of being in relationship ... The *telos* of human nature is to be conformed to the person of Christ who hypostatically unites human and divine natures” (LaCugna, 1991:297).

“Hospitality requires preparing a place, our home for the one invited. If our guest arrives and finds instead of a ready available space a hive of activity he will feel like an intruder” (Pembroke, 2006:35).

Henry Nouwen makes a very important point when he writes that a host, in order to help others feel welcome, not only offers his full attention, but also creates a space in which guests feel free to be themselves.

The paradox of hospitality is that it wants to create emptiness, not a fearful emptiness, but a friendly emptiness where strangers can enter and discover themselves as created free; free to sing their own songs, speak their own languages, dance their own dances ... Hospitality is not a subtle invitation to adopt the life style of the host, but the gift of a chance for the guest to find his own. (Nouwen, cited in Pembroke, 2006:35)

Pembroke contends that Nouwen’s image of empty space is not an adequate metaphor for pastoral practice. Empty space is unbounded; it is a space in which people can be free without limit. Because hospitality has its limits, Pembroke suggests bounded openness as a guiding metaphor for the ministry of care. Love, respect, mutuality and justice (which are at the heart of Christ’s teaching) form the boundaries in the community conformed to Christ. When persons step beyond these bounds, they need to be challenged (Pembroke, 2006:39).

*c. Community and spiritual friendship*

We are made for communal life. Humans are created in the image of God. God’s life is expressed through the intimate relations of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The *imago dei* is also the *imago trinitatis*. It is not only as individual persons but also as a community that we mirror the divine life. Our life together, then, is a reflection of the mutual indwelling in love that is the Trinity. (Pembroke, 2006:43)

To develop an understanding of what is required to build Christian community, Pembroke draws upon the concepts of kenotic love and perichoretic relationality. *Kenosis*<sup>127</sup> refers to the fact that authentic relational life requires emptying of the self in order to be receptive to the other.

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<sup>127</sup> *Kenosis* comes from the Greek verb *kenoo*, meaning ‘to empty’. It refers to leaving a place or deserting it, to pouring out or making void. The classic text in this regard is Phillipians 2:6-8, referring to Christ Jesus who emptied himself in order to take on human form: “(Christ Jesus) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Revised Standard Version, 1971).

*Perichōrēsis*, or mutual indwelling, points to the fact that there is both closeness and open space in the triune God (Pembroke, 2006:43).

Kenotic love involves making a space for the other. We can only be receptive to the joy and the pain, the disappointments and hope of others, if we are empty ourselves of self-concern and self-interest. *Kenosis* also speaks to our relationship with God – If we are to participate in God's grace, we need to make space for divine action in our lives. Being filled with self (self-reliance, self-importance, and self-concern) can therefore also close us off to grace – there is no space for grace to enter. It is only through God's action that we are able to open ourselves to other people. Kenotic love involves a clearing out of self, as well as a donation of time and energy. As such, Pembroke describes kenotic love as a discipline (2006:47).

The Christian liturgy and worship play a vital role in forming us in the practices required in the establishment of authentic relationships.

When we come in a spirit of emptiness to praise God and to break open the Word, the conditions are in place for God's grace to flow into us. We begin in this way to learn the grammar of communal life. The building-blocks in this grammar are receptivity, self-loss, justice, love and affection, and good will. It takes time to master a language as complicated and as intricate as the language of authentic relationality. In worship, we rehearse the vocabulary and syntax of love until they become second nature. (Pembroke, 2006:48)

Another important term that is used to describe the dynamic relational character of the Trinity is *perichōrēsis*. The Greek theologian John Damascene employed the term to highlight the dynamic and vital character of each divine person, as well as the coinherence and immanence of each divine person in the other two.

Effective as a defense both against tritheism and Arian subordinationism, *perichōrēsis* expressed the idea that the three divine persons mutually inhere in one another, draw life from one another, “are” what they are by relation to one another. *Perichōrēsis* means being-in-one-another, permeation without confusion. No person exists by him/herself or is referred to him/herself; this would produce number and therefore division within God ... *Perichōrēsis* provides a dynamic model of persons in communion based on mutuality and interdependence. (LaCugna, 1991:271)

Other terms that describe this notion of being-in-one-another are interpenetration, mutual indwelling, or mutual reciprocal participation (Pembroke, 2006:48). The metaphor of dancing is commonly used to express the meaning of *perichōrēsis*. “The Three flow together in a continuous movement of love” (Pembroke, 2006:48). In the light of this dynamic communion where there is also open space, Pembroke argues for “the perichoretic practice of intimacy-with-space” (2006:50), or what he calls “spiritual friendship”. This spiritual friendship is not easy to attain or achieve given our modernistic valuation of autonomy, freedom and individuality. “We moderns prize our personal space and we tend to be fearful that others will trespass on it” (Pembroke, 2006:50). Members of a group need to open themselves to Christ and to each other, making a genuine commitment to help each other grow in faith, hope and love on the basis of openness and honesty. Authentic communal life also requires a commitment to “launching out into the deep waters” (Pembroke, 2006:50), which in turn requires courage and a readiness for risk. Pembroke (2006:53) sums up his understanding of this perichoretic spiritual friendship as follows:

The trinitarian dynamic of *perichōrēsis* involves both absolute intimacy and closeness on the one hand, and an open space on the other. It reminds us that claims to spiritual friendship are counterfeit unless there is an intimate sharing of life. It is only when people are prepared to draw close enough to face the truth – the truth about themselves and about God – that communion is established. Attending to *perichōrēsis* also highlights the importance of maintaining a respectful distance in the Christian community. In order to pay due regard to individuality and personal autonomy, others must be offered an open space in which to live.

As has been stated in the case of kenotic love, the liturgy and worship of the Church offer a significant opportunity for Christians to learn the grammar of relationship, while small-group life provides an important avenue for putting this learning into practice.

#### **4.6.5.3 Reflection**

The church is in a unique situation to use the Christian symbol of community as revealed in the Trinity to bring about a “newness of mind” regarding relationships among its members. (Pillay, 2003:157)

We started off this section by referring to my observation that the people of the Cape Flats are very focussed on the relational aspect of their lives. We then continued to ground this aspect of



relationality theologically by a selective discussion of the contributions of a few theologians on the subject of relationality and the doctrine of the Trinity.

We are of the contention that Neil Pembroke's work in particular helps us to develop a framework for practising pastoral care on the Cape Flats building upon the existing focus on close relationships. Another angle to this aspect may well be the fact that the gangs operate strongly on the basis of relationships of mutual trust between the members. If, therefore, faith communities would offer an alternative to the sense of community that is offered by gangs, they need to renew and deepen their focus on relationality. This should lead to a deeper understanding of communion and fellowship among the members of the faith community. But it should also remind us as pastoral carers that caring for others cannot take place without involving oneself in the life of those who seek care or whom we have been called to care for. Pembroke is convinced that "a tender participation in the life of the other is at the heart of healing relationships" (2006:67).

This is risky business, very scary indeed.

#### **4.6.6 Pastoral care as public care**

Most of us never suspected that pastoral care would be a significant discipline in the movement to 'publicize theology.' Ethics, of course; theology, yes; but pastoral care? No way! (Robert Franklin, cited in Wimberly, 2006:8)

This seems to be the general response of people we have spoken to about public pastoral care. It is true, on the one hand, that the public theology agenda has been dominated up to now by the contributions of ethicists and systematic theologians.<sup>128</sup> Our own opinion is that there can never really be a total separation of theology into watertight divisions; specialisation in particular fields should never have resulted in a fragmentation of theology. Experience in ministry has taught us that life is one whole and dealing with a single life issue requires knowledge of all theological disciplines. It is also true, on the other hand, that pastoral care has been dominated for many years by the so-called clinical pastoral paradigm (Patton, 1993:4; Ramsay, 2004:1), or what Daniël Louw calls "the so-called client-centred or empirical model" (1998:27).

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<sup>128</sup> A local example is the Beyers Naude Centre for Public Theology, which is 'situated' within the Department of Systematic Theology and Ethics of the Faculty of Theology at Stellenbosch University. Most, if not all, of the contributions in terms of publications, speakers, seminars and conferences have been from the fields of ethics and systematic theology. There is indeed cooperation with other academic fields, but not enough from other theological disciplines, like pastoral care.

Two new paradigms emerged towards the end of the twentieth century that are gradually eclipsing the clinical pastoral paradigm, namely the communal contextual and the intercultural paradigms (Ramsay, 2004:1; Patton, 1993:4). The communal contextual paradigm draws on the ecological metaphor of a web to describe tensively held dual foci – the first being the ecclesial contexts that sustain and strengthen community practices of care; the second being the widened horizons<sup>129</sup> of the fields that conceive care as including public, structural, and political dimensions of individual and relational experience (Ramsay, 2004:1).

The late Charles Gerkin is credited for:

the way in which he has turned our attention beyond the intrapsychic 'therapeutic metaphor' to the social context for the work of pastoral care ... We must listen at many levels.... If we attend to the social context, we are likely to discover that the practice of pastoral theology cannot avoid wider public implications. Individual healing does not happen apart from social remedies...In a time of radical transition, those who engage in pastoral care not only need to sustain persons and communities through conflict and upheaval; they need to engage in efforts toward social transformation as well. (Miller-McLemore & Anderson, 1995:99-113)

Pastoral theologians and counsellors today are more accountable in study and in practice to the political and social factors that impinge on people's lives on local and global levels than previous definitions of the field have acknowledged and allowed.

We concur with Allan Boesak, who says that "the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord over all of life forms the heart of our Christian faith"Boesak, 2005:3). Flowing from this, Boesak continues:

It has always been my belief that Christian theology, if it is to be anything, is a public theology. It is public, because it is a theology of the kingdom of God which is God's public claim on the world and the lives of God's people in the world. It is public because of Jesus of Nazareth, who took on public form when he became a human person, and because his life was lived in public servanthood and public vulnerability in obedience to God. It is public because He was crucified in public, for all to see. And it is public because He rose from the grave in the light of day and defied the power of death for all

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<sup>129</sup> Cf. Charles Gerkin's *Widening the Horizons: Pastoral Responses to a Fragmented Society* (1986), a follow-up on his previous work, *The Living Human Document: Re-visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode* (1984).

to see. Hence, Christian theology is public, critical and prophetic in our cry to God; public, critical and prophetic in our struggle with God and in our stand against the godless powers of this world; public, critical and prophetic in our hope in God (2005:3).

Like the African American pastoral theologian Edward Wimberly, we are of the contention that pastoral care and counselling understood and practiced from the perspective of the oppressed and marginalised people are “inherently political processes” (Wimberly, 2006:11), because of our holistic view of human beings. An integrated, holistic spirituality has been part of the oppressed people in South Africa and their historic struggle to reclaim their God-given human dignity (Boesak, 2006). In writing a book on black pastoral theology, another African American pastoral theologian, Homer U. Ashby, Jr., uses five measures of the status of African Americans and comes to the conclusion that the struggle for them continues. The five measures are: economics, politics, health, cultural identity, and vision for the future (Ashby, 2003:2). These measures are applicable to the situation of the people living on the Cape Flats. We have already shown how the phenomenon of gangsterism cannot be viewed or discussed apart from the role of a specific socio-political and economic context. In the same manner we cannot ignore the cultural history of the people in the Western Cape. The strong feeling of exclusion from the current political developments impacts on Coloured people’s vision for the future. It is within this particular context that we are called upon to do pastoral work.

What is called public pastoral care here may be equated with what Russel Botman calls “community forum-based pastoral care” (1995:9). Writing at a time when South Africa was in the thick of socio-political transition, Botman (1995:9) argues for a significant shift in pastoral care:

A society in transition calls pastoral care into the open Community Forum where it has to go beyond the missionary and evangelism bias (both of which are based on a particular construction of the relationship between the church and the society) to the Forum Care process (caring with the community).

We will subsequently wrestle with the question concerning the role of clergy in the public arena in South Africa over the last decades, and particularly with the question whether their role has diminished to the extent that they have disappeared below the public radar. This section should be read against the background of what we discussed in Chapter Three regarding the history of the resilience of faith communities on the Cape Flats. Our discussion of the roles of faith communities and the pastors or clergy in the past help us to wrestle with the response from faith communities today as they face challenges such as gangsterism. It is also true that, in many

cases, these roles are inter-linked and impact on each other. In other cases, a pastor or spiritual leader may take a different stand or approach to broader social matters than the congregation or faith community that he or she serves. Whatever the case may be, we argue that pastoral care cannot just be restricted to the private domain of the faith communities, but needs to be practised in the public sphere. We therefore find it necessary to view the roles of pastors within the broader South African context vis-à-vis the struggle for social justice.

#### ***4.6.6.1 Where have all the pastors gone?***

There are voices in South Africa who mistakenly calls for the churches' withdrawal from political matters. They do so because they have had bitter experiences of the ways in which politicians can use other institutions of society merely to legitimize their causes and even their criminality as in the time of apartheid. (Botman, 2000:101)

There is a strong feeling amongst many people, both the general public as well as some academics,<sup>130</sup> that the voice of the church has become very quiet since the dawn of the new democratic South Africa, introduced by President FW de Klerk's now famous speech in the South African parliament on February 2 1990, and culminating in the first democratic general elections on April 17 1994. This argument is generally built upon the assumption that the public face of the church is represented first and foremost by the leadership, the clergy.

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<sup>130</sup> John de Gruchy, for example, refers to a "growing lack of ecumenical enthusiasm" and a "growing spirit of denominationalism" (De Gruchy, 1995:12). Dirk J. Smit also talks about "a remarkable silence on the part of the church" in two spheres of public life critical for the formation of public opinion, namely the public media and education, stating that "the impression is overwhelming that the church has either retreated or has shifted to the margins" (Smit, 2007:57-74). Former SA finance minister Trevor Manuel is reported to have expressed his personal disquiet at the inactive role of the church after 1994. "What worries me the most of the church in the past ten years is that it became silent. The challenge to the church for the next ten years is to incarnate God in the context of South Africa" (cited in Boesak, 2005:133). Neville Richardson also makes the following statement: "In these years of national reconstruction following the end of apartheid, the prophetic voice of the church in South Africa has become mute" (Richardson, 2007: 96-115). Boesak (2005:156) proposes five reasons for the silence of the church "at this critical juncture in South African history": (a) Since 'liberation' has been achieved, the church's public role is now over and the church should now revert to its 'proper' calling. (b) Many of the issues that the churches have raised are now being recognized, and addressed, by the new government. (c) Now is not the time for confrontation, but for (re)conciliation. Opening up old wounds would make it harder for "people to realize the ideal of the 'rainbow nation'". (d) Nation-building is a difficult and sensitive process ... the churches would do better to modestly step aside and let the 'democratic forces' do the job. (e) Many of us, the descendants and remnants of the struggle tradition in the churches, regard the liberation movement as 'our' movement. The government is now "our" democratically elected government. They epitomize our own political and personal achievements ... Besides, we do not want to be identified with what most of us consider hypocritical and unnecessarily strident opposition."

Whatever our views on this point, it was clear that the role of the church – and here we refer to the institutionalised church – had to be redefined after the unbanning of organisations like the ANC and PAC, the release of many prominent leaders, like Nelson Mandela, and the return of others from exile, like Thabo Mbeki. This issue was placed on the agenda almost immediately in February 1990, when Archbishop Desmond Tutu was interviewed by journalists after the De Klerk announcement and expressed the opinion that he expected the Church's role to change. Two weeks after the release of Mandela, the Anglican Church's Synod of Bishops resolved to ban licensed clergy from belonging to political parties. In an interview during that time, a Danish journalist asked the Archbishop whether he was pulling out of politics. He responded:

“I have said that I am going to adopt a lower profile ... But that does not mean we will not still be wanting to be vigilant and seeking to be prophetic, to say whether something is right or wrong.” The journalist further wanted to know if Tutu was to stay active in politics, as he viewed the Archbishop as a politician. Tutu's response was: “No, I am a pastor, I am a pastor, no I am not (a politician). I am a church person who believes that religion does not just deal with a certain compartment of life. Religion has a relevance for the whole of life and we have to say whether a particular policy is consistent with the policy of Jesus Christ or not, and if you want to say that that is political, then I will be a politician in those terms. But it won't be as one who is involved in party politics ... It is the role of lay people to become deeply involved in how things are run in their country. But ... not for a church leader in the same kind of way. My role, the role of church leaders, is to be able to say: ‘Thus saith the Lord’” (Tutu, 1994:196).

This caused quite a lively debate amongst theologians and clerics, with some agreeing with the Archbishop, while others saw his views as totally misplaced.<sup>131</sup> The party membership ban was reportedly unpopular with many young priests of the Anglican Church who had been at the forefront of political activity. Defending the Synod's policy, Tutu told a meeting of the Anglican Students' Federation in Pietermaritzburg that the decision did not imply political neutrality, but was taken “out of very real pastoral concern” (Tutu, 1994:196).

A quick analysis of Tutu's response brings us to a few preliminary observations:

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<sup>131</sup> See also Dirk Smit's reference to the views expressed by Dr Manas Buthelezi in 1990. His hope at that time was that the churches would achieve an early end to apartheid so that they could redirect their attention to their true mission (Smit, 2007:46).

- Tutu draws a distinction between politics in general and party politics as such. Non-involvement in party politics does not imply political neutrality. While church leaders should not become involved with party politics, lay people should indeed involve themselves in it.
- The prophetic and pastoral roles of the church (leaders) cannot be separated.<sup>132</sup>
- Religion is viewed holistically in terms of its relevance for our lives.

It is necessary for us to take a brief look at how spirituality influenced and motivated the clergy and laity's involvement in the struggle for liberation. Spirituality has always been seen as an integral part of their lives by the majority of South Africans, even though this spirituality takes different forms and expressions. Throughout our ministry in communities on the Cape Flats, we have found that people of faith want to understand how a call to action is linked to their spirituality. Social action cannot merely be based on some sort of humanistic reasoning or motivation or an ideological or political conviction.

#### ***4.6.6.2 A tradition of integrated public spirituality***

Spirituality is that exercise by which people reach beyond themselves to draw on what Max Weber calls the 'life forces' of existence. It is story, memory, symbol, language, poetry, song and places. It is the soil, the blood and the history which constitutes our identity. It is the experience of the *mysterium*, the poetic, the holy – of God, in the midst of life. It is that within which we live, move and have our being. It is the food of our soul. (Villa-Vicencio, 1995:69)

One of the remarkable facts of our time has been the rebirth of a Christian spirituality which is able to integrate the traditional spiritual disciplines and means of grace with social and political praxis. (Cochrane et al., 1991:76)

Allan Boesak (2005) argues very strongly for the recognition of the role religious faith played in the struggle for liberation in South Africa. Contrary to the views of some academics and politicians, Boesak posits that religion, "even more, religious faith" was seen as central throughout the struggle for freedom and human dignity by the oppressed themselves (Boesak,

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<sup>132</sup> See e.g. Gustav Bam, 1991. Dale Andrews is also convinced that "the prophetic and the pastoral should not be considered mutually exclusive. Pastoral events often sustain the prophetic. In turn, the prophetic reflects back on the pastoral and religious folk life with correction and direction" (Andrews, 2002:11). Kathleen Billman also sees pastoral care as "inseparably connected with prophetic witness" (Billman, 1996:13).

2005:103). He is convinced that the role of the church in the struggle for liberation brought to that struggle a spiritual dimension without which we would have been much the poorer (Boesak, 2005:58). When reflecting on our own experiences of detention without trial as a student leader and theology student at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) during the 1980s, the following conclusion by Boesak echoes our own conviction – “We were, in the final analysis, not inspired by Lenin, or Stalin, or the lofty ideals of ‘democracy’ or ‘freedom’, but by our faith” (2005:58).

John de Gruchy puts forward three reasons why he reckons theology in South Africa is not a matter of indifference but of social consequence:

the all-pervasive role which the Christian church has played and continues to fulfil in society; the fact that since the European colonisation commenced in the seventeenth century conflicting socio-political and economic interests have been sanctioned by religious conviction; and the significant though ambivalent role which Christians and churches play in the struggle both for and against apartheid. (De Gruchy, 1985:85)

In general, the people of South Africa have very strong convictions regarding their spirituality and religious beliefs. When Boesak takes issue with people who try to omit this fact from their historiography, he certainly voices the feelings and opinions of millions of South Africans. Boesak labels the effort by some “to rewrite history by omission and commission” as “unremembering”.

But we are not speaking of forgetfulness here. We are speaking of what I shall call *unremembering*. Unremembering is a deliberate political act for reasons of domestication and control. A people’s history, or their memory, is falsified, rewritten or denied. The process is not a confluence of accidental political factors, neither is it the result of inevitable political ‘shifts’. It is an act of appropriation. Although it may serve psychological ends, as an act it is deliberately ideological and serves a political agenda (Boesak, 2005:103).<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Robert McAfee Brown (1997:35-38) reminds us that memory is indeed *selective*, together with two other characteristics, *communal* and *a challenge*. The fact that memory is selective is “the pitfall and the greatness”. We readjust our memories “in ways more convenient to our egos that the facts would warrant, and we block out memories too painful to live with. But the greatness is that we can nurture other memories, cultivate them, live with them ever before us, and let them redefine who we are” (Brown, 1997:37). Leith (1990:13) points out that “Remembering is closely related to the integrity of the church’s witness. When theology becomes preoccupied with relevance and frantic search for concepts

The point that we want to make is that, for millions of South Africans, the struggle for a free, democratic South Africa was based on their religious convictions. This involvement took place on different levels – through church institutions [denominational, ecumenical, para-church or faith-based organisations (FBOs)] and church leaders, as well as millions of ‘ordinary’ church members or laity. There are many prominent church leaders who played leading roles at different levels and at different times throughout the history of oppression and struggle – Albert Luthuli, ZK Matthews, Trevor Huddleston, and very prominent leaders during the 1980s were Desmond Tutu, Beyers Naudé, Allan Boesak, Frank Chikane, Khoza Mgojo, Peter Storey, Stanley Mogoba, Ron Steele, Buti Thlagale, Smangaliso Mkhathshwa, Lawrence Henry, Stephen Naidoo, David Russel, Tshenuwani Farisani, Makhenkhensi Stofile, Chris Nissen – to name but a few.

The 1980s saw church leaders literally putting their bodies on the line (Chikane, 1988:26), leading protest marches and being arrested, but recommitting themselves upon their release to effective non-violent action in solidarity with ‘our people’ to ‘share in their pain and suffering’. The Nationalist government, in the person of the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Adriaan Vlok, viewed this as “illegal actions of clergy who chose violence and communism above Christianity”,<sup>134</sup> hiding behind the “cloak of sanctimoniousness” (Chikane, 1988:9-11) “Funeral services,” writes Chikane, “which are part of the ministry of the church, have been restricted and at times disrupted” (1988:13).

One of the central theological themes for Christian involvement in the socio-political and economic arenas is their understanding of the nature of *the kingdom of God*, or the reign of God. Denise Ackermann, for example, states that her hermeneutical point of departure is that all theology should be done in the service of the fulfilment of God’s reign on earth.

The reign of God brings good news to people in terms of their life situations. It speaks of love, peace and wholeness, of the flourishing of righteousness and shalom. The praxis of Jesus discloses the critical and transforming vision of what it would mean if the

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and language that will appeal to modern people, it is in danger of losing its identity and therefore its power.” Therefore the church cannot choose to forget the past for the sake of political favouritism, or deny the reality of her history or minimise her own historical role in fear of upsetting the political regime.

<sup>134</sup> During the researcher’s own detentions and interrogations by security police in 1985 and 1986 while a student leader of the University of the Western Cape (UWC), this was a constant ‘theme’: Why are you involved with politics? You are a theology student and should not support the communists and Marxists. Do you know that when they rule the country, you will not have work, because they will not allow any churches?



fullness of God's presence were to be known on earth. It calls us, like Jesus, to a radical activity of love, to a way of being in the world that deepens relation, embodies and extends community and passes on the gift of life. This challenge to live by mutuality and reciprocity is never free from risk. Theological reflection and theological praxis arise within the everyday messiness of Christian lives, because what we believe and how we act, embody our efforts to meet the problems that inevitably arise when we are challenged by the values of the reign of God in our particular contexts and time in history. Furthermore, those who profess the Christian faith are called to be God's agents for healing this world. This means that the reign of God, as embodied in the ministry of Jesus Christ, demands the practical realization of justice, love, freedom, peace and wholeness. As such it is a very public affair. (Ackermann, 2006:188; see also Boesak, 2005:3)<sup>135</sup>

Brown refers to what he calls "a long and unnecessary controversy among Christians over the relationship between the creation of the kingdom of God and the creation of human utopias" (Brown, 1997:71). The creation of the kingdom of God is seen as totally the work of God, a gift of God, undeserved and unattainable through the exertion of human power. The proposal of a human utopia, on the other hand, rests on a human rather than divine construction.

The two proposals [to 'build the kingdom of God' and to 'create a human utopia'] thus seem to cancel each other out. To opt for the kingdom leads to human passivity, whereas to opt for the utopia is to set goals that are incapable of achieving. And to combine them does not seem possible, since they have different premises (Brown, 1997:71).

Brown credits liberation theologians like Gustavo Gutiérrez for helping us out of this "quandary, and [providing] a frame of reference in which human striving and divine action can be related to each other" (1997:72).

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<sup>135</sup> Ray S Anderson (2001:233-249) sees the kingdom of God as therapeutic context. "The kingdom of God is a social reality over which and through which God exercises his power and presence, rather than merely a realm over which he reigns. God promised Jacob's descendants a land, but he established a people before he gave them a land" (Anderson, 2001:233). "Thus again the kingdom of God is a culture with its own social and religious life that takes form in existing world cultures. The culture of the kingdom uses existing cultural forms and corrects and adapts these forms to the content and reality of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God understood in this way has a therapeutic aim that seeks the health and wholeness of individuals in the context of the community that provides their identity. God enters into the personal, social and historical life of people in order to release a motive power of wholeness (shalom), righteousness, faith, and love of God and neighbors" (Anderson, 2001:234).

Gutiérrez talks, for example, about the human task as one of ‘preparing the way’ – preparing the way, ultimately, for God to establish the divine kingdom in all its fullness. Gutiérrez is quite explicit that we do not ‘create’ that kingdom, nor do we ‘bring it in’. What we *are* to do is to create little foretastes, here and now, of what God will to be the ultimate expression of human life and community under God, places where signs of the nature of the kingdom are present, at least in embryo (1997:72).

It is clear that different sides of the political divide in South Africa had different understandings and interpretations of the kingdom of God. On the one hand, we had what the Kairos Document (1985) described as “state theology” – “the theological justification of the status quo with its racism, capitalism and totalitarianism; by misusing theological concepts and biblical texts for its own political purposes” (World Council of Churches, 1985:13); and on the other hand, we had “prophetic theology” – a Christian response to the crisis at the time, that is “bold and incisive”, and prophetic “because it speaks to the particular circumstances of this crisis, a response that does not give the impression of sitting on the fence but is clearly and unambiguously taking a stand” (WCC, 1985:23). Prophetic theology is a theology that is socially critical and “world transformative” (De Gruchy, 1991:19), that is one that explicitly relates the Word of God to the social and political context within which it is proclaimed. In line with the Kairos Document, De Gruchy postulates that it is inevitably a risky business taking prophetic responsibility seriously, because it entails consciously taking sides, eschewing neutrality, and making value judgments. “Prophetic responsibility is thus not avoiding conflict, but participating in it in a way consonant with God’s kingdom” (De Gruchy, 1991:20).

Most, if not all, of the church leaders who were prominently on the forefront during the struggle against apartheid could be regarded as proponents of or adherents to liberation theology. It is because of that understanding of theology that church leaders could describe the ban on the activities of the 17 organisations in 1988 as “a blow directed at the heart of the Church’s mission in South Africa” (Chikane, 1988:33). These organisations were “organisations of and for our people, the majority of which belongs to our churches” and that “the prohibited activities of these organisations were in fact central to the proclamation of the Gospel”, and thus the churches were compelled, irrespective of the consequences, to take over these activities insofar as they believed they were mandated by the Gospel. “Our mandate”, continues the church leaders’ statement, “to carry out these activities comes from God and no man and no government will stop us. If the state wants to act against the Church of God in this country for proclaiming the Gospel, then so be it” (Chikane 1998:34).

In summary, there can be no doubt that spirituality or religion has played an integral part in people's stance for or against apartheid in South Africa. The people of the Cape Flats, in particular, are also very religious. This is evident in the many different denominations of Christian churches, as well as a strong Muslim presence. On the other hand, we need to be aware of the "obvious popularity of the spiritual industry" (Smit, 2007:63) and should therefore not in any way idealise the picture.

The Christian religion is also a dangerous power, and has been such and still is, in South Africa. Scholars have shown, and particularly in South Africa, how in fact 'liturgy has been used to prevent the gospel from taking hold,' – in the words of John de Gruchy. The impact on society may therefore not be the one that particular Christians and theologians may prefer to see. The impact of a specific type of worship and congregational life may even be that believers lose all interest in public life, in serving others, in a sense of common calling and civil virtues – but it will still be an important impact, to discern and understand. (Smit, 2007:63)

We need to be acutely aware of this danger as we hear more and more stories about the negative influence of the so-called theology of prosperity on the Cape Flats. Inherent in this theology is, amongst other things, a promotion of individualism through a strong emphasis on individual salvation, "a kind of privatized faith with very little social relevance and emphasizing individual moral values at the expense of collective moral responsibility" (Goba, 1995:78). There is also a very strong emphasis on materialism as an expression of God's goodness and blessings. When this happens, people of faith may indeed ask whether religion is not used as opium or as another way of enslaving people, as opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ which liberates people.

The perception that the public pastoral role has diminished since the dawn of the new South Africa has been discussed, and it was argued that a tradition of integrated spirituality has provided the basis for the involvement of the church in public spaces. It is now important to look at different elements or characteristics of what could be called public pastoral care. These include a ministry of presence and compassion, empathetic listening, discernment (reading and understanding the will of God), advocacy and hope-generating and, lastly, the relationship with the State (the question of critical solidarity).

#### 4.6.6.3 *Elements of Public Pastoral Care*

The researcher is convinced that people of faith are presented with windows of opportunity wherever they may find themselves as expressions of the Church of Jesus Christ in South Africa. In the next section a ministry of presence and compassion will be discussed as a means of utilising the windows of opportunity and making a meaningful contribution to people's lives.

##### a. *A ministry of presence and compassion*

The ministry of presence has come to mean a form of servanthood (*diakonia*, ministry) characterized by suffering, alongside of and with the hurt and oppressed – a *being*, rather than a doing or a telling. (Fackre, 1994:950)

A ministry of presence and compassion<sup>136</sup> implies 'being there' for God's people where they are, especially those who are suffering, the marginalised, the poor and powerless, the voiceless masses. John H. Leith makes it clear that pastoral care is "an expression of the church's ministry of compassion for those in and out of the church. There is no substitute for this" (1990:157). Following Calvin's view that the ministry of compassion is "a sign of the church's existence", Leith (1990:158) continues to point out the varied nature of this ministry of compassion:

It gives bread to the hungry, finds employment for those out of work, advises and helps those in financial difficulty. The church does what needs to be done. Yet it serves human needs not as a welfare agency but as a community of faith in which members share their wisdom of the world as well as their human graces and their faith.

The church must give real help to real people and must develop an imagination that opens up new ways to do so.

John Patton describes pastoral presence as follows:

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<sup>136</sup> "Compassion: From a Latin word meaning to bear, to suffer. In common use it suggests sympathy or pity for the plight of another, to be moved emotionally by the other's tragic situation or distress. In current pastoral care usage the desire to relieve suffering, implicit in pity, is present, but without the condescension that pity may connote. Compassion is more like empathy (feeling with) than sympathy (feeling for)" (Ezhanikatt, Hand & Skwerer, 1990:207). Brown (1997:67) explains *compassion* as follows: "The root meaning of 'compassion' is relatively clear: it comes from *cum-passio*, and means 'to suffer with,' to 'suffer alongside the other,' 'to enter into and share the condition of another.' Some dictionaries offer 'pity' as a synonym, but my own feeling is that compassion is stronger than that, for it often involves *action* on behalf of the other, which is rooted in closeness, rather than in some abstract kind of concern that is manifested at a distance. In compassion, both geographic and psychic distances are overcome."

The pastoral carer, whether laity or clergy, is present to the person cared for in a particular kind of relationship – one that “re-presents” the presence of God through relationship to the person cared for. Pastoral carers “re-present” or remind persons of God by remembering and hearing, and affirm by their action that God continues to hear and remember them. (Patton, 2005:22)<sup>137</sup>

The ministry of presence is not about the church or the pastor in the first place, but about the presence of God expressed in a concrete way in and through our acts or deeds of care, our being there for others.

In his discussion of the prophet Habakkuk, Bam identifies four characteristics of his pastoral style, the first being ‘presence’. “Habakkuk was present amongst his people. Their lived experience was his lived experience. The situation of his nation affected him deeply (3:16)” (Bam, 1991:57).

The ministry of presence, according to Fackre, is grounded in the doctrine of Incarnation,<sup>138</sup> “sometimes in its kenotic form, and/or the doctrine of the Atonement, especially the priestly office” (Fackre, 1994:950).

The ministry of participation follows that of Christ who “partook of the same nature, that through death he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God ... For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted” (Heb 2:14a, 17a, 18). The ministry of presence can be voluntary or involuntary, as when verbal proclamation in the public sector is forbidden. The ministry of presence in the pastoral office means vulnerability to and participation in the life-

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<sup>137</sup> Cf. Koopman (2006:50): “The presence of Christians to those in suffering is a re-presentation of the congregation, of the body of Christ that lives from the love that God has shown in the crucified and resurrected Christ. By being present with those in suffering we do not only re-present, make present, the church as body of Christ, but also the Body of Christ, that was broken and that rose from the dead. Our ethics of care, our ministry of presence, affirms that there is a God, the God of Jesus Christ, the God of the cross, the God of the resurrection, Who is present in our midst, and Who lives in solidarity with us”.

<sup>138</sup> *Incarnational Pastoral Care*: “A theologically descriptive term utilized by some pastoral care theorists to designate one or more of the following meanings: (a) the intentional effort of the pastor symbolically to embody the pastoral relationship analogous to the incarnation of God in the human Jesus; (b) the recognition that pastoral care relationships may on occasion mediate the love of God to the recipient of pastoral care in that the pastor’s love speaks of the greater love of God; (c) the care of the entire faithful Christian community for one another and for the world as the response of the people of God to the admonition of Jesus to the disciples to carry on his work in his spirit; (d) pastoral care which seeks to engender in persons the capacity to be open to signs and symbols of God’s disclosure in the events of everyday life” (Gerkin, 1990:573).

world of those served. The sharing of existence, satisfaction, and burdens may take the specific form of silent witness, as in the vicarious involvement of the counsellor in the joys and pains of the counselee, or change agent in the circumstances of the victim of poverty and injustice. (Fackre 1990:950)

This ministry of presence does not only pertain to clergy or professional counsellors, but to laity as well, referring to the exercise of ministry by the people of God in the secular world. Since 1994 it is not really 'fashionable' to be actively involved in community work or with workers' struggles. People would jokingly remark, "Did you hear, so and so is still in the struggle". Community activists, like Melvin de Bruyn, chairperson of the Greater Blue Downs Community Police Forum, together with other community leaders, as well as pastors like Tom Klein of Ravensmead, are concretely demonstrating a ministry of presence. So is Pastor Henry Wood of Manenberg, who has transformed the former 'headquarters' of the Hard Living Kids, a notorious gang led by the Staggie twins Rashied and Rashaad, into a place of worship and community support in the form of training and a child feeding scheme.

A ministry of presence and compassion means that we have to move out of our comfort zones at times, to care for people 'outside the gate' (cf. Hebrews 13:12-13), putting our bodies on the line getting involved in the messiness of life. The opposite is more than often true – we have, as a result of our fears and the high levels of violence and crime, insulated ourselves from the outside world through the best possible and affordable means of security. August (2004:1-3) argues strongly that "Biblically speaking, the pre-eminent activity of the church is in the public arena, not the sanctuary", and points out that "the attraction of the sanctuary can become a seduction", "a comfortable substitute for the harsh realities outside the walls".

A ministry of presence and compassion would sometimes mean working through and with existing community structures, like Community Police Forums. One gets the impression that many churches think that they have to do things on their own to ensure a 'Christian' presence. However, a ministry of presence and compassion that wants to contribute to the transformation of society cannot be based on or motivated by a selfish or self-centred urge for recognition or credit-taking, in the form of denominationalism, organisationalism or institutionalism.

A ministry of presence and compassion utilises metaphors like shepherd, servant or wounded healer, paraclete and wise fool to describe the pastors' understanding of their different roles as sensitive carers who communicate Christ's vicarious suffering within the daily human relational

experiences with great compassion, encouragement, strengthening and guidance as well as admonishment and exhortation (Louw, 1998:39-54).

*b. Empathetic listening*

Empathy and good listening skills remain essential components of the make-up of any pastoral carer and counsellor. Massey (1994:354) describes empathy as follows:

Empathy is the ability to identify with and experience another person's experiences. This is accomplished by (as much as possible) suspending one's own frame of reference in order to enter the perceptual and emotional world of the other.

Denise Ackermann, as well as other feminist and womanist pastoral theologians, reminds us that the prophets of Israel often listened to people before they sought to bring wisdom and prophecy to contextual situations. "Instead of church leaders telling, preaching, and teaching, they would do well to hear, absorb and understand" (Ackermann, 2006:187), to "listen with new eyes" (Miller-McLemore & Anderson, 1995:65), sharpening their sensitivity to the cries of those who suffer in various ways. It also entails "listening into speech those who cannot even tell their stories" (Moore, 2002:17). Moore views the simple act of listening as a particular form of the empowering of women in the context of power relationships.

Discussing the challenges facing the church in the in the post-1994 period, with special reference to public policy, Villa-Vicencio suggests that the church is obliged to become a *listening church*.

It must be willing to learn from its place in the world, analyzing political and economic developments. What it discerns in the process it must bring into dialogue with the biblical and theological traditions that constitute the historical identity of the church. Differently stated, its theology will necessarily need to be inductive, contextual and pre-eminently practical. (Villa-Vicencio, 1995:60)

Sharon G. Thornton (2000:69) suggests a different form of listening which first of all means "listening with absolute respect for the other".

This is a listening that does not stop with acceptance. Respect is more than the Rogerian notion of unconditional positive regard. Respect is pro-active and involves the willingness to make a commitment to the deep humanness of others. The practice of

listening originates in silence, a particular kind of silence – contemplative silence – a disciplined kind of listening that attempts to discard preconceived notions, theories and hunches about the other person. It begins in a silence that invites the other to express herself on her own terms. It means privileging and listening for her frame of reference. It involves listening even when you cannot empathize or understand her. That is why listening must be grounded in absolute and unequivocal respect. (Thornton, 2000:69)

Listening to the other person in this way means to listen to her “with an open imagination” (Thornton, 2000:70). Thornton is of the opinion that ‘imagination’ is more helpful here than empathy, because “empathy still supposes at least the possibility of understanding the other, which may not be the case” (Thornton, 2000:70).. Imagination draws upon different sources of discourse that do not necessarily entail understanding. It opens us to totally new possibilities not contained by given conventions or common definitions of reality. Imagination involves a theological commitment that dares to entertain an alternative social reality within the very uncertain and bewildering concrete pastoral situation. Listening with imagination means “bracketing empathy and *become willing to co-imagine a future of restored dignity, freedom and hope* (my italics). In this way it involves a kind of listening that is not just listening, but *just* listening – a listening that participates in justice. This involves the theological vision of a restored realm of God” (Thornton, 2000:70). Listening with imagination means listening to the experience of the other person and refusing to stand above or behind her – “instead, alongside her as an expression of radical mutuality. It finally means something like being willing to look into each others’ eyes and urge each other on to new beginnings”. (Thornton, 2000:70).

On the aspect of imagination in pastoral care and counselling, Wenderoth (1990:571) writes that pastors demonstrate an interest in:

whole persons, not just a concern to solve problems. And the whole persons include the symbols and stories of one’s life, past, present and future. The pastor’s interest in and facilitation of a parishioner or counselee’s life can engage that person’s imagination and help the counselee to move from whatever is conceived to be the problem to a new vision of herself or himself as one having value and dignity. Thus, the pastoral use of the imagination can provide a means for seeing the parishioner as the principal character in the story of her or his life, not just the victim of its circumstances.

Empathetic listening will also enable us to hear the cries and the pain of so many ‘relational refugees’. Wimberly (2000:20) describes relational refugees as follows:



Relational refugees are persons not grounded in nurturing and liberating relationships. They are detached and without significant connections with others who promote self-development. They lack a warm relational environment in which to define and nurture self-identity. As a consequence, they withdraw into destructive relationships that exacerbate rather than alleviate their predicament.

We hear and see so many 'relational refugees' among us today. It is the former political activist, detainee, politician from the Cape Flats, now over sixty years old and suffering from health problems, yearning to come face to face with a former security policeman who threatened to kill him, who says "The trauma sits within my body and I want to get rid of it so that I can heal". You hear it in the words of an Anglican priest in Manenberg on the Cape Flats who says "It is as if many of the people of Manenberg have not arrived yet. They have been removed from District Six so many years ago, but it is as if they cannot accept this as their home". You hear and see these relational refugees when a community worker in Hannover Park on the Cape Flats speaks with pain in her heart about former activists who are now alcoholics and drug addicts.

Wimberly proposes a re-creation of a community context in which relational refugees can live more wholly (2000:23). Mentors are needed to help relational refugees reintegrate themselves into the community (Wimberly, 2000:27), helping those who feel homeless to find an emotional, relational, spiritual, and cognitive home (Wimberly, 2000:33). One of the skills that mentors employ to assist persons to feel at home in the world, according to Wimberly, is *phenomenological attending*, which he describes as follows:

Phenomenological attending is a way of being available to the learner. It is the use of caring empathy to attend to the experiences, images, metaphors, narratives, ideas, and concepts of relational refugees. Here the mentor seeks to connect with the learner's deepest feelings and experiences. Through empathetic listening the mentor provides a safe space for the refugee to risk attempting a human connection which is basic is she or he is to come to feel at home in the world. The mentor invites the learner to imitate the mentor's positive attitude and way of being present. This communicates welcoming hospitality. When she or he accepts the mentor's hospitality, the learner is no longer homeless. (Wimberly, 2000:35)

The mentor guides the learner to reinterpret her or his experiences in health-producing ways, pointing her or him to what is valuable and worthwhile. Mentoring is a holistic formation process encompassing all the dimensions of personhood through which the learner develops character,

identity, values, self-worth, and a way of being in the world (Wimberly, 2000:36). The mentor works intensively with the particular experiences of the individual, but also gives “direct attention to social conditions and values that contribute to the individual’s situation” (Wimberly, 2000:37).

Such multi-tiered analysis should happen not only in the therapeutic realm but in the larger sphere of social discourse as well. When the mentor attends to issues and values that produce and foster relational refugee status, the mentor becomes a public theologian. A public theologian uses public forums to identify and criticize the conditions that help create relational refugees in the first place ... Modifying the negative influence of wider societal values is an important aspect of the work of mentors interested in transforming not only individual lives but the culture in which they live. (Wimberly, 2000:37)

Wimberly’s chapter on “Violence and the relational refugee” is of particular relevance for our research on gangs and gang-related violence. He reminds us of the social context of violence, stating that “relational refugees who really have no positive roots in supportive, caring communities often turn to the use of violence as a desperate statement about their unacknowledged emotional and relational homelessness” (Wimberly, 2000:44). Another important aspect discussed by Wimberly is the fact that cultural systems often approve the use of violence to redress humiliation and shame, “to restore the honor and dignity of someone who has lost theirs” (2000:45).

The ‘strategic intervention’ of mentors as ‘public, practical theologians’ starts as a first step with vigilantly addressing “the many ways in which violence is portrayed as acceptable in the stories, plots, and themes of our culture” (Wimberly, 2000:49). Secondly, Wimberly suggests that we must help people “discern that there is a hidden principle of justice at work in life, despite the evil and injustice done in the world” (2000:50) and point them to the futility of acts of revenge or vigilantism. At the level of ‘role enactment’ we must continually reject claims that perpetrators of violence had no other possible courses of action. This will not have any positive influence if we do not at the same time “expand the repertoire of options that people can recognize and draw upon” (Wimberly, 2000:50). Another aspect of the responsibility of public theologians is raising the consciousness of our constituencies about issues such as domestic violence. Because we are “long on examples of violence but short on examples of peace” (Wimberly, 2000:49) we need to publicly help people to ‘see’ what peace looks like as well.

At the level of 'scene and attitude enactment' we need to draw those who have been victimised by evil into the fellowship of 'God's eschatological community' through our love, making sure that people have "counter-experiences so that the scenes of abuse and oppression are replaced by new, healing ones" in order for the victims of violence to "re-imagine themselves in new ways, neutralizing the internalized saboteurs who destroy self-esteem" (Wimberly, 2000:51).

c. *Discernment*

For us, discernment implies, inter alia, the following:

- To know when to do the right or appropriate thing at a particular moment or within a given situation. Theological component: reading and understanding the will of God
- "Reading the signs of the time" correctly and "discerning truth" (Cohrane et al., 1991:33-35; see also Botman, 2000: 98-99). This entails analysing as well as interpreting our social historical reality. "At the heart of Christian spirituality, is a listening to the Word of God in scripture with eyes opened to the oppressive suffering and reality" (Cohrane et al., 1991:78). Boff speaks about a "theology of the Signs of the Times" (1985:18-19) when referring to the challenge of theology "today" to approach "those realities that in and of themselves are not definitively theological, such as the political arena, ruling social systems, economic realities, liberation movements, and scientific-technological enterprise". He cautions, however, that before one can speak theologically about these topics, it is necessary to have a proficient knowledge of them. "Theological and ethical interpretation is therefore built upon scientific and critical knowledge" (Boff, 1985:18). The importance of 'theologies of the signs of times' for pastoral activity is clear: "new forms of presence and witness become available to the Christian community amid social structures in need of change based on faith" (Boff, 1985:19)
- Learning when to say 'Yes' and when to say 'No' in matter of public policy.

Pastoral responsibility requires the church to distinguish between what it can support in the reconstruction process and what it needs to resist ... to do so within a situation where the visible enemy of apartheid has been replaced by the invisible enemies of racism, sexism, continued economic exploitation and related evils – that fewer people are prepared to acknowledge or identify. (Villa-Vicencio, 1995:58)

We will come back to this aspect under the heading Critical Solidarity?

- **The ability to use different lenses** – to see the wider/broader picture, the whole; but at the same time, not lose sight of the finer detail, the constituent parts. Looking critically at our struggle for liberation in South Africa, we are of the opinion that we did not learn well enough to use different lenses. We were, quite understandable and rightfully, so focussed on the breakdown and eradication of apartheid – it almost became our singular focus – that we did not always keep our eyes on some other aspects that constitute the whole or fuller picture. In many instances, the course (or liberation struggle) took almost total precedence over everything else (e.g. education, moral issues, interpersonal relationships).<sup>139</sup>
- Having **bifocal vision** – people with new creation minds – *seeing* the new creation struggling in *the present* and, simultaneously, seeing the ultimate outcome of this struggle in *the future*. Bi-focal means “to discern the small signs of the new creation already breaking in to their lives and communities and to nurture them in hope born of their confidence in God’s promised future” (Osmer, 2001:108) – learning to see the new creation struggle in things near but to do so in the light of God’s promised future; “to discern hidden possibilities of change and hope that the world can’t see” (Osmer, 2001:109). It means “seeing clearly”, reading the Bible with “the newspaper in the other hand” (Karl Barth, cited in Cochrane et al., 1991:32).
- Being **bi-lingual**: “People of faith must be bilingual – a *public language* for negotiating at the wall, and a more *communal language* for processing behind the gate, in the

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<sup>139</sup> The researcher’s own experience as chairperson of the Students Representative Council (SRC) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) during the period of national student protests in 1984 to 1985 may serve as example here. I was detained without trial under the notorious Section 29 of the Internal Security Act for 21 days in September 1985. While in Pollsmoor Prison, he contemplated the situation on campus and became convinced that students should return to classes and end the prolonged boycott of lectures. He argued that boycott was not an end in itself, but a means to an end – it was only a weapon that the oppressed could use against the power of the State. He also argued that many students could not afford to fail the academic year and return the next year. Students, therefore, needed the campus as a ‘base’ to continue the struggle. While these views were supported by the majority of the SRC and the students, many others criticised it and some even suggested that the security police softened him up during his detention. The students eventually wrote the end-of-year examination in January 1986. Although it was never official UDF (United democratic Front) or ANC (African National Congress) policy, one of the student slogans was ‘Freedom – Now! Degree – Later!’ based on an assumption of: ‘Liberation before Education’. It is also no secret that the marital and family relationships of many activists and struggle leaders were under tremendous strain, and some marriages ended in divorce because of their involvement in the struggle.

community, out of sight and range of the imperial negotiators” (with reference to 2 Kings 18-19; Brueggemann, 1989:6).<sup>140</sup>

Gerkin (1997:91) adds “the capacity to observe” to “the art of listening” as observational capacities crucial for the pastor involved in day-to-day relationships with people at all levels of social life.

It asks that pastors look carefully at and make evaluative judgments about the social environment that surrounds those who are the subjects of pastoral care. We might say that this capacity asks that we look around in addition with looking within. What in the social situation of the people receiving our care may be causing or exacerbating people’s distress? Are the social structures that surround the lives of those under our care providing the social supports that people need in order for their lives to flourish? (Gerkin, 1997:91)

*d. Practicing advocacy*

Advocacy basically means that religious functionaries “advocate the cause of those who appeal to them for counsel” (Rogge, 1990:11). This is done by representing individuals or groups and intervening on their behalf. Over the past two centuries, according to Rogge, pastoral caregivers have begun to reclaim their earlier role as advocates for those who seek their care and counsel, “oppressed and injured individuals” (Gerkin, 1997:92), “with liberating intentions” and “for shaping institutional and governmental policies as they may diminish or support the social ecology of human life” (Ramsay, 2004:4). This resulted from the fact that increasing attention was being paid to the context in which care is offered.

More and more (pastors) are coming to realize that only in an ideal world can each individual become enabled, with proper guidance alone, to act effectively on their own behalf to secure justice. In the world in which we actually live, familial and social inculcation all too often give rise to disabling attitudes and personality patterns which can

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<sup>140</sup> In her discussion of an interdisciplinary approach to theology and pastoral counseling, Van Deusen Hunsinger also employs the concept ‘bilingual’. She states, “If pastoral counseling is essentially interdisciplinary, then pastoral counselors must learn to become ‘bilingual’. They must learn to be as skilled in the language or symbol system of theology as they are in that of psychology. They must be equipped to interpret and experience themselves and their world in theological as well as psychological terms. They must become as linguistically competent in the one discipline as in the other, interiorizing by practice and training two different sets of skills. They must learn to feel, act, and think in conformity with two different modes of thought” (Van Deusen Hunsinger, 1995:5).

be highly resistant to modification. Systemic obstacles within the family, community, and society often render individual action in one's own behalf futile. The pastor who counsels, like many other helping professionals, will sometimes need to intervene as advocates for the counselee if the requisite systemic change is to be brought about which will enable the counselee to secure a living situation in which counselling can be effective. (Rogge 1994:11)

Advocacy ministries are “ministries that seek systemic solutions to problems, not only individual solutions ... using power plus love to seek justice in society” (August, 2004:13). As a result of its nature and purpose, advocacy more often than not brings about a dynamic tension for pastoral caregivers, because of conflict which may appear between societal norms for justice and the counselee's own religious or spiritual development. August suggests the following guidelines for developing effective public witness – “the advocacy way” (2004:13-16):

1. Seek to involve people directly affected by problems in the design and implementation of justice ministries
2. Design an extensive learning and discernment process to ensure that community problems are truly heard and understood
3. Build in opportunities to help congregations reflect on their ministries
4. Challenge Christians to understand and use their power
5. Develop a long-term vision on a spiritual foundation

e. *Hope-generating*

Augustine writes, “Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are.” That is the place where we are called upon to join forces with God. Anger and courage make it possible to hope. (Brown, 1997:74)

The present government promised the people of South Africa “A better life for all” in their election campaign. This has created expectations among the masses, especially the poorest and most vulnerable in society. The growing number of public protests against the slow rate or lack of service delivery in towns across the country stems from people's hope in this better life, and the feeling that this hope is not fulfilled despite promises during electioneering.

Pastoral carers should be aware of the danger of false hope. The hope that pastoral care offers to people is grounded in the victory of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Louw reminds us of the pastoral ministry's specific theological perspective, namely "the life and victory which result from the resurrection" (1998:61) that empowers believers with faith and hope. He continues:

The primary empowering and inspiring force in pastoral ministering is the event of the resurrection, which provides resurrection hope ... A theology of pastoral care should therefore be designed in terms of eschatology. Care and compassion express the 'already' of God's salvific grace and the 'not yet' of the coming kingdom of God. Faith, love and hope in deed shape pastoral care and become the sign of God's real presence in our daily existence. (Louw, 1998:61)

In his discussion of the trinitarian roots of Christian hope, Nico Koopman (2006) states that Christian hope is not an illusion.

It is based on the faith in the redemptive actions of the triune God which culminates in the cross and resurrection of Christ. This hope builds upon the promises of this God who proved in history that he keeps his word and that He is worthy of our confidence (2006:39).

We need to remind ourselves time and again that Christian faith offers a blend of hope and realism that is resistant to disillusionment (Ross, 2007:79). The eschatological framework of our faith helps us to live our lives in the light of the promise that the purpose of God revealed in Jesus Christ will ultimately find expression in the new world which God will bring to birth.

Christian hope is real hope – hope against hope! Allan Boesak points out that during our struggle against apartheid, this resurrection hope was "a constant fire in the hearts of our people, and burned brighter than the crucible of fire we had to enter every day" (2005:129). The Kairos Document (1985) describes a "message of hope" as one of the elements of a "prophetic theology".

At the very heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ and at the very centre of all true prophecy is a message of hope. Nothing could be more relevant and more necessary at this moment of crisis in South Africa than the Christian message of hope...Most of the oppressed people in South Africa today and especially the youth do have hope. They are acting courageously and fearlessly because they have a sure hope that liberation

will come. Often enough their bodies are broken but nothing can break their spirit. But hope needs to be confirmed. Hope needs to be maintained and strengthened. Hope needs to be spread. The people need to hear it said again and again that God is with them. (World Council of Churches, 1985:27)<sup>141</sup>

Boesak's description of the resurrection reminds public pastoral care of its continuing task in our new democratic South Africa and the challenges that we are facing:

The resurrection of Christ is God's insurrection, God's *apanastasia*, God's rebellion against sin, inhumanity, death and destruction. It is God's rebellion against our resignation, our need for compromise with evil, and our tendency towards despair and hopelessness, against our willingness to sell God's dreams for God's people to the highest bidder in the name of "realism". (Boesak, 2005:129)

The kind of hope that we are referring to is not cut loose from our faith and our faith does not alienate us from the world. This faith is "a leaven of invincible hope and love" (Boff, 1981:143). We are talking about hoping against hope. We are talking about "hope in eternity, while still keeping (our) feet on the ground and involving (our)selves in the struggle for a better tomorrow here within our present history" (Boff, 1982:143). Even though we realise that our best human efforts only enjoy penultimate status (Koopman, 2006:50), we act concretely and courageously, at the risk of dirtying our hands.

*f. Critical solidarity? On the question of Church-State relationship and its implications for public pastoral care*

The dawn of a new political dispensation in South Africa has brought a great deal of excitement to the previously oppressed, disenfranchised and disadvantaged people of the country. We have already sketched the dilemma that the church faced, in particular the part of the church that was deeply involved with the struggle for democracy at the onset of the transition.

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<sup>141</sup> Cochrane et al. (1991, 81-83) refer to "a spirituality of empowerment and hope". They describe Christian hope as follows: "Hope is attempting to live here and now in anticipation of the fulfillment of God's promise of a 'new earth and new heaven'. Hope is another way of saying that we believe in the God of righteousness and justice. To lose hope is to lose faith in God, and therefore to lose faith in the coming of his kingdom ... Christian spirituality is about keeping that 'hope against hope' alive. A hope which recognizes that, while the coming of the kingdom is ultimately in God's hands, the Christian community is called to live and act as the agents and instruments of its coming here and now".



More than a decade into the new South Africa the religious communities are faced with a very important question: What should the relationship be with the government of the day? This is an important question for our argument that pastoral care ought to be public in nature and practice. Taking pastoral care into the public places and being an advocate for those suffering as a result of systemic factors will naturally and consequently bring us into the political arena.

After 1994, terms like 'critical solidarity' and 'critical engagement' were often used. Brigalia Bam, a former general secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), voiced the new challenge facing the SACC after 1994:

Now we have a new government. It is one which we voted in a democratic election. We have to identify a new and suitable manner in which to relate to government both in a prophetic and supportive manner. (Bam, 1995:50)

Summarising the position of the SACC months after the first democratic elections, Bam (1995:50) wrote:

The theological challenge facing the church is to know when to say 'yes' to meaningful change – even when such change does not satisfy all demands of the poor, let alone the ideals of God's impending reign on earth. The church must learn afresh when to say 'no' to such acts of commission or omission by the state ... that undermine the good of the people.

This position of 'critical solidarity' with a democratic government is ultimately the greatest service that the church can render either government, extra-governmental services that claim to service the common good and above all the poor – who remain the primary constituency which the church is obliged to serve ...

The call to prophetic ministry requires the church to be both a social critic and a partner in the building of the nation. At times the church will be required to pay a heavy price for rendering this ministry. At times it will receive national acclaim. It is required theologically never to allow itself to be seduced by either response.

There was a great deal of sympathy and understanding for the new ANC-led government during the first decade or so into the new democracy. It was easy to rationalise mistakes made, given the long history of oppression and white supremacy – the new government needed time to find their feet, to learn the tricks of the trade. Indeed, it was not an easy task to juggle political

policies that would rectify the gross injustices of the past with the realities of global economic demands and requirements, to balance political loyalty with necessary skills that would ensure service delivery to the expectant masses of people who had been promised a better life. What is clear from Bam's contribution is that the church should remain true to its calling to the gospel of Jesus Christ, which means, in Christ's own words, proclaiming Good News to the poor in the first place, but also in a very concrete way standing where God stands, at the side of the poor (cf. the Belhar Confession<sup>142</sup>).<sup>143</sup> Albert Nolan (1995:151-156) discusses the practical applications of a relationship of 'critical solidarity' and lists some of the important areas where he reckons the church needs to be prophetic, namely racism, economic justice, culture, peace, *masakhane*, family, truth and reconciliation, environment, media and research.

The initial policy of 'quiet diplomacy' with regard to the government in the 'interregnum' between the 'old' and the 'new' (Villa-Vicencio, 1995:58), of refraining from openly criticising for fear of providing ammunition to the opposition or reactionary forces, gradually made way for more bold and open criticism from the side of prominent church leaders, like Anglican Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane. The former general secretary of the SACC, Dr Molefe Tsele, came under attack from certain ANC leaders for suggesting that the church must once again become "a nuisance" to the nation.<sup>144</sup> Some of the remarks in Tsele address include the following:

... But the point is that *this* is what should define us as the Church: being in solidarity with those who are vulnerable, who are excluded as a result of their social situation – the poor, refugees, the homeless, the unemployed, etc....

Faced with continuing poverty, disintegrating social systems, and the ascendancy of value systems that prize material gains over social relationships, the Church is compelled to define anew its role and unique contribution to public life (2001).

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<sup>142</sup> The Belhar Confession was adopted by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) in 1986 at the synod hall in belhar, Cape Town as part of its confessional basis. The DRMC re-united with the Dutch reformed Church in Africa in April 1994 to form the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

<sup>143</sup> "A theology committed to the poor is required to be vigilant, prophetic and ready to say 'No' to any policy that ultimately favours the cause of the 'haves' at the expense of the 'have nots'. The question is whether the church *can* share creatively in the process of development, national reconstruction and nation-building that favours the poor, rather than the creation of a new ruling class that survives on the backs of an ever increasing underclass of poverty?" (Villa-Vicencio, 1995:59).

<sup>144</sup> Address by Dr Tsele, SACC General Secretary, to the Diakonia Council of Churches Breakfast Briefing, Durban, 30 October 2001.

The church, therefore, should first and foremost be in solidarity with the poor and socially excluded, marginalised and powerless people in society. On the issue of “Church-State relationships: Finding a new role in public life”, Tsele (2001) says:

One of the sad things we see today is how those in power, the ruling party in particular, tend to instrumentalize the Church. The Church is generally seen as a nuisance that must be appeased by hand outs. I often get hot under the collar when I see Church leaders treating political leaders like African royalty, sometimes even interrupting a worship service because the Premier or a Cabinet minister has arrived. All politicians have totalitarian tendencies. They want to subsume all power under themselves. They cannot deal with the notion that some people are not accountable to them. So the Church is seen as a power that comes in handy when they want to address the masses to propagate their party manifesto. Otherwise, they have no use for us ...

Tsele poses the following self-critical questions to the church:

Are we useful tools for the perpetuation of the ANC’s political agenda, remembered only when needed, or do we have our own agenda? Should we be part of the opposition coalition “fighting back”, or should we simply play a so-called watchdog role? Are we partners together with the government in the struggle for transformation, poverty eradication and a democratic, non-racial, united South Africa?

Tsele courageously indicates the changed status of the ANC, from a liberation movement to a ruling political party – “one which sometimes pursues policies and actions with which we cannot associate ourselves with an easy conscience”. He draws the picture of the dilemma the church finds itself in regarding its relationship with the government:

The current ambiguous relationship between Church and government indicates that the times are clearly difficult for us. The simple answer is that we are not sure whether we should co-operate or keep a distance. What is clear, is that we must run away from an incestuous cohabitation with government. To do otherwise would be to neglect our mission as a Church. We would cease to exist as an autonomous entity.

The problem we face is how to assume a critical posture without becoming anti-government or alternatively, how to identify with specific policies of government (such

as its integrated rural development programme) without reducing ourselves to being pro-government ...

It is a matter of concern to us that government appears to believe that churches must either show unwavering support or be treated like political opposition ...

Tsele concluded his address by pointing out the threats to the Church in South Africa, emphasising a ministry of presence that asks for improved tools of perception, adjusting senses of hearing and seeing the cries and pain of the poor, as well as having the courage to speak out “boldly and clearly and passionately ... in full awareness of the risks that such speaking entails”:

We have entered a new era of Church-State relationships. There are two permanent threats to the Church in South Africa. One is the seduction of power, where the Church enjoys the comforts of association with those in power and ultimately adopts the government’s ideological worldview. This is a serious threat for any church in any era.

The other danger is that the Church will fail to distinguish between political opposition and prophetic dissent. In this instance, the Church misinterprets any disagreement with government as a fulfilment of its prophetic ministry. It is as if to be a real church, a true church, all one needs to do is to oppose the government. This stance ignores the fact that there are many who oppose the government out of vested class interests rather than a concern for justice or morality.

What then is the alternative to these errors? My counsel is that churches in South Africa should improve their tools of perception. We must develop our models of being present where humanity is in need. We must adjust our senses to hearing the genuine agonies of the poor, not what they have been conditioned by the media to repeat. We must see the inner depth of pain and despair amongst ordinary people.

Having determined these, we must then muster the courage to speak out boldly and clearly and passionately. We must speak in full awareness of the risks that such speaking entails ... The pivotal question for us is whether we are in touch with the poor on whose behalf we profess to speak and act. Obviously we cannot claim any exclusive status in this regard ... Where we are unsure, let us err on the side of the poor rather than on the side of the powerful. If we later learn that we have been misinformed or have made a misjudgement, we must be willing to acknowledge our error with humility.

Boesak (2005:169) call these “courageous, prophetic words” and Tsele a “brave voice”, and asserts that leaving the state to its own devices “is not forgivable” as it will “deprive the nation of the redemption of its soul”.

De Gruchy (2004:441) reminds us of the importance of civil society (which includes organised labour, educational bodies, the media and faith communities<sup>145</sup>) for the sake of critically monitoring the exercise of power, as well as providing the framework within which people can participate in shaping the structures and values of society.<sup>146</sup>

A government that begins to oppose the organs of civil society has begun to attack one of the pillars of democracy. It is therefore in danger of undermining both its own legitimacy and the future of democratic rule De Gruchy (2004:441).

Ramphela (2008:131) rightly points out that both black and white South Africans need to

learn how to be citizens of a democracy in the post-apartheid era. She argues for citizenship as stewardship (2008:127) in which we critically evaluate the performance of our democracy thus far against the stewardship role that was accepted freely in the new democratic order (2008:131). This is not an easy task, but one that is critically important. It is not easy, because of fear that any critical comment might be interpreted as disloyalty. But acquiescence in such silencing tactics would be a betrayal of our constitutional ideals (Ramphela, 2008:144) – and, we may add, also a betrayal of our pastoral responsibilities.

What should the role of critical theology and prophetic witness be in pursuing the democratic vision of justice and equity, which has its origins in the messianic hope for a society in which the reign of God’s shalom will be a reality?

This prophetic impulse, utopian as it may appear, has been the driving force behind the struggle for democratic transformation in many parts of the world. De Gruchy also cautions that the establishment of a new democratic social order in formerly oppressive contexts will not bring in

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<sup>145</sup> “Civil society is a middle term of sorts, a semi-public space, classically understood as referring to a mediating realm between the state and the individual, which is inhabited by a host of voluntary associations. It is frequently associated with organizations like the family, neighborhood groupings, the business corporation, and the various social associations with which people voluntarily affiliate. What distinguishes civil society from the state is precisely the voluntary, noncoercive nature of its government” (Bell, 2004:427).

<sup>146</sup> Civil society’s role is not only to monitor the State, but indeed also with regard to “the shaping of political and economic life of society” (Villa-Vicencio, 1995:59).

Utopia or the kingdom of God, but, at the same time, without such expectation and hope, the struggle for democratic transformation will not be engaged (De Gruchy, 2004:448).

Critical theological reflection on democracy must continually return to this prophetic source of Christian faith ... Within the Old Testament canon itself there is tension between the royal trajectory, with its tendency toward absolutism, and the egalitarian trajectory of the eighth-century prophets. This tension has continued through Christian history. But the prophetic tradition provides the basis upon which Christianity must reject all absolutist political claims as idolatrous because they invariably oppress and dehumanize. It also keeps the church aware of the danger of giving uncritical theological legitimation to any particular expression of democracy, for that too can easily lead to its corruption.

In the light of the post-1994 democratisation of the South African society, pastoral caregivers in particular, and faith communities in general, are faced, according to Boesak (2005:154), with the choice between critical solidarity and prophetic faithfulness. Boesak summarises his own conviction in these words:

The church in South Africa is called still by God to be a prophetic, healing, critical, eschatological presence. No political sea change can change that. Now, as then, we are still called to be the voice of the voiceless. Now, as then, it is no easy task (2005:154).

Pastoral carers should therefore be very clear about the full scope of their task and responsibilities according to their calling and their commitment to this calling. Compromising this will not benefit the most vulnerable in society – those who need us to be their voice and advocates, who experience old and new forms of exploitation and marginalisation. By practising a ministry of presence and compassion and through our emphatic and just listening, we have to ensure that the cries of the destitute are not drowned out by the celebration of successes in different fields.

The last element of our understanding of public pastoral care is that of the inter-disciplinary nature of this pastoral care. We are convinced that it is foolish and naïve to think that we can practice pastoral care without any decent knowledge of and collaboration with other disciplines. A communal contextual pastoral care based on an eco-systemic paradigm and holistic thinking needs other disciplines to be effective.

#### 4.6.7 Interdisciplinarity

Interdisciplinarity is an important component in our quest for true knowledge (Louw, 1998:107)

Pastoral Counseling, as a ministry of the church, is essentially interdisciplinary. Becoming equipped for this ministry requires both psychological and theological training (Van Deusen Hunsinger, 1995:1)

Crucial for any pastor is the enquiry, 'What is it to be human?' The question may be treated as existential and given a philosophical or theological answer. But as a result of studies which have largely developed during the twentieth century even such answers now involve empirical study. The human sciences hold a key position in pastoral theology. Pastors cannot ignore them (Carr, 1997:37)

Stephen Pattison points out that one effect of the "de-throning of theology as 'Queen of the Sciences'", and with that the realisation that it is only one, very human, way of understanding and analysing reality, has been to make it clear that theology needs to draw on other academic and applied disciplines to fully comprehend reality (Pattison, 1994:24). In her reflection on "methods in pastoral theology, care and counselling", Joretta L. Marshall identifies interdisciplinary co-operation with conversation partners as "one of four significant emerging trends, or trajectories for the future" (2004:147).

Postmodernity requires that pastoral theologians attend to epistemological formations that have not traditionally been part of the field of pastoral care. Anthropology, ethnography, sociology, feminist epistemological theories, and contributions from a wealth of resources will make a difference in our discipline. In addition, more research in our field will have to undertake sophisticated qualitative work, while at the same time maintaining quantitative research and attending to concomitant developments in the sciences. (Marshall, 2004:147)

Feminist theologians' use of the metaphor 'living human web' instead of 'the living human document' clearly indicates that individuals cannot be seen independently of their social context; "it also highlights the necessity for pastoral theology to be part of a web of scholarship and analysis involving a wide range of disciplines – the social sciences, fine arts, literature" (Moore,

2002:17). Watson (2002:10) sees interdisciplinarity as part of a “feminist reconsideration of ecclesiology, critically evaluating the boundaries of theological and academic disciplines”.

[F]eminist theological discourse is by its nature interdisciplinary. A feminist reconsideration of ecclesiology needs not only to be in dialogue with other theological *topoi* such as Christology, theological anthropology and the doctrine of the Trinity, but needs to draw on subjects such as practical theology, church history, sociology of religion, religious studies and women’s studies. Feminist ecclesiology recognizes the ambiguity of male-defined boundaries for women and their discourses of faith, theology and spirituality, transcends them and also seeks to find ways of working constructively within them (Watson, 2002:10).

Don Browning (1991:80-81) refers to the “great prestige of social sciences” and names four phenomena that reflected an increased use and envy of theologians and churches of the human sciences:

(1) The psychological disciplines have influenced the counselling and pastoral care disciplines of the church enormously. (2) Sociology influences liberation and political theologies, church planners, and the thinking of all educated church people. (3) Anthropology, and especially the anthropological study of ritual and initiation processes, influences liturgics and religious education. (4) The psychology of moral development (Kohlberg, Gilligan) and developmental psychology (Freud, Erikson) have had tremendous impact on our understandings of both human and Christian maturity.

Carr warns that if pastors do ignore the human sciences, four unfortunate outcomes may result: Pastors may lose contact with those to whom they are trying to minister; religion may become separated from everyday life; the people among whom the churches minister may begin to think that Christians do not speak their language; and pastors may lose contact with reality about themselves (Carr, 1997:37-38). The “tools for pastoral studies” according to Carr, are psychology, sociology, dynamic theories and theology<sup>147</sup> (1997:35-110).

A ministry rooted in a “wholistic understanding of salvation”, argues Rodney J. Hunter (1995:20),

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<sup>147</sup> “Psychology, sociology and literary theory are but three of the disciplines which may be used by pastoral theologians in different circumstances” (Pattison, 1994:23).



attempts to address human needs in their totality from a perspective of faith, and is not confined to problems explicitly defined as religious or moral. It is also able to draw freely on natural healing forces of the soul and of society, and on the wisdom of secular healing arts and sciences. Thus high level of cooperation becomes possible between ministry and medicine, psychiatry, social work, and other helping professions.

Hunter (1995:20) also points out “internal tensions and limitations” of a holistic definition of salvation:

Although the concept of holistic salvation easily included family and personal relationships, it did not incorporate political and economic dimensions into its theory and practice of care. Its tendency was to focus on psychological and social psychological dimensions of wholeness with only lip service paid to cultural, economic, and political aspects of human problems and the practical actions appropriate to addressing them.

Nancy Ramsay (2004:5) calls the human and behavioural sciences “conversation partners”, recognising “the widened range of conversation partners understood as useful for informing the work of healing and transformation”.<sup>148</sup>

In his discussion of the relationship between pastoral care and the human sciences, Louw (1998:100) applies the asymmetry of the so-called Chalcedonian pattern employed by Van Deusen Hunsinger (1995)<sup>149</sup> with reference to the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) and its declaration concerning the two natures of Christ. The person of Christ was to be understood as “complete in deity and complete in humanity” (Louw, 1998:101). Van Deusen Hunsinger utilises “a Barthian perspective” which understands the two natures to be related “without separation or

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<sup>148</sup> Another feminist pastoral theologian, Nancy J. Gorsuch, views interdisciplinarity as one of the challenges of pastoral theologians. “Systematic reflection in pastoral theology is normally interdisciplinary, using theory from disciplines other than theology in a manner that respects their integrity, avoiding reductionism or syncretism, neither oversimplifying a discipline nor combining assumptions without regard for their differences” (Gorsuch, 2001:5). These “adjunct or supporting disciplines” include psychology, social theory, or political theory (Gorsuch, 2001:3).

<sup>149</sup> Van Deusen Hunsinger’s own interdisciplinary approach was born from her quest to try, as a practicing pastoral counsellor, to bring the psychology of Carl Jung and the theology of Karl Barth together. “A ‘symmetrical’ relationship between psychology and theology,” Van Heusen Hunsinger states, “would be one in which concepts from each discipline were somehow logically reversible. In other words, it would be possible to restate a psychological concept in theological terms, and a theological concept in psychological terms, without any significant loss in content or meaning. An ‘asymmetrical’ relationship, however, would be one in which this sort of mutual restatement across disciplines is not possible. Theological and psychological concepts would thus be ‘logically diverse’. Respecting God’s ontological otherness, as understood by Barth, would seem to require this kind of logical irreversibility” (Van Heusen Hunsinger, 1995:xi).

division" (Louw, 1998:101) and yet "without confusion or change", but also with "conceptual priority assigned to the divine over the human nature". "Although there is a divine priority assigned and human subsequence, their asymmetry allows for a conception which avoids hierarchical domination in favour of mutual structuring in freedom" (Louw, 1998:101). Applied to the interdisciplinary relationship between theology and the human sciences, the "stipulation of asymmetry" implies that "no material equivalence exists between theology and psychology, for their essential subject matters and perspectives are fundamentally different" (Louw, 1998:107). To appreciate the analogies between theological and psychological discourses, while at the same time maintaining their asymmetry, Van Deusen Hunsinger proposes three features to describe this relationship, namely "indissoluble differentiation", "inseparable unity", and "indestructible order" (Van Deusen Hunsinger, 1995:65; cited in Louw 1998:108).

'Indissoluble differentiation' means that theology and human sciences are related without confusion or change. Each has a unique scientific identity.

'Inseparable unity' means that they coincide in an occurrence without separation or division. The notion of the encounter between God and human beings presupposes such a correlative unity of co-existence.

'Indestructible order' means that in and with their differentiated unity, the two are asymmetrically related, with the one term having logical precedence over the other (the methodological precedence of transcendence over human history, of revelation over observation). (Louw, 1998:107)

Pastoral care in the context of gangsterism and similar socio-economic challenges can clearly not be understood and practised without acknowledging the contributions of other human sciences. Our discussion of the phenomenon of gangsterism in Chapter Two and most of the existing literature on the subject draw from other social sciences, like criminology, sociology, anthropology and psychology. The antithetic model of Jay Adams's nouthetic counselling, stating that pastoral care cannot learn anything from psychology (Louw, 1998:28-31), is not recommendable or suitable on the Cape Flats. We have already pointed out that there are indeed many preachers and churches that follow Adams's approach, focussing on individual sins and preaching personal salvation and conversion. While every effort to address or eradicate gangsterism should be welcomed, we have also pointed out that gangsterism is a systemic phenomenon with many systemic and structural causes. In the light of this, pastoral care cannot

ignore the contributions of the human sciences. Within the complexity of bipolarity, we understand with Louw (1998:109) that:

[a]lthough theology and human sciences could be ontologically speaking, totally different, within events they could not be separated or divided from each other. The same event could be assessed from both a psychological/sociological point of view. Both perspectives add to the hermeneutical process of interpretation and point to the dimension of meaning. Within a hermeneutics of pastoral care and practical theology, this coincidence and unity between theology and human sciences is not intrinsically necessary (determination) but includes elements of contingency, i.e. they do not coincide necessarily in every event, occurrence or experience.

Interdisciplinary co-operation is not without problems and difficulties. Feminist pastoral theologian Zoë Bennett Moore (2002:17-18) cautions:

It is important for pastoral theology, including feminist pastoral theology, that as it moves from a 'professional captivity' within a predominantly therapeutic model, it does not succumb instead to a captivity to the social sciences. Liturgy, creative writing, art and music are forms for the forging and the expression of pastoral theology – forms whose creative and symbolic power should not be lost in an enthusiasm for the language of the social sciences or the information gathered through empirical research.

Van Wyk's paper on "'Theology' and interdisciplinary co-operation with other sciences" (1997:75-86) helps us to understand the "nagging problems, challenges and possibilities" of this co-operation. On the question of the necessity of interdisciplinary co-operation, Van Wyk points out that the idea is not widely practised "because of a number of complex issues and a myriad of questions on the sense and meaning which confronts us" (1997:76). It is not necessarily self-evident to all that theology should cooperate with other sciences. Indeed, we are reminded of the fact that, at the turn of the twentieth century, "science was almost at war with theology" (Van Wyk, 1997:76). The possibility of interdisciplinary co-operation may even be questioned from a postmodern perspective. The development of separate disciplines is regarded as a modernistic reductionism that leads to the pigeonholing of phenomena as belonging to a certain discipline rather than others. "Every independent scientific discipline is marked by its own specialised modes of abstraction; and the issues to be considered in each discipline are so defined that they can be investigated and discussed independently – in abstraction from the issues belonging to other disciplines" (Van Wyk, 1997:76). This resulted in the loss of the cosmic interrelatedness,

being superseded by more specialised, disciplinary questions. However, no discipline can exclude itself from co-operation with other sciences, and no singular science has a monopoly on life and reality. Van Wyk is convinced that “interdisciplinary co-operation may serve as the first steps to overcome the atomism and overspecialisation of modern sciences” (1997:77). Van der Ven (cited in Van Wyk, 1997:77) distinguishes four methods of relating theology to the so-called social sciences:

- A monodisciplinary co-operation, a deductive method that may or may not involve the other sciences, that derives practical consequences from dogmatic and/or moral principles
- A multidisciplinary approach, which endeavours to study a topic from various frames of reference
- An intradisciplinary approach, which conducts its own empirical research but uses the concepts, methods, and techniques from other disciplines
- Interdisciplinary co-operation – implying the interaction of two or more disciplines

A fundamental question confronting interdisciplinary co-operation is: What is theology? This in itself is not an easy and simple matter to deal with because of the many conflicting views being posited. “The contemporary theological scene may even be described as chaotic without consensus on the task of theology or how it is to be pursued” (Van Wyk, 1997:79).<sup>150</sup> In this regard, Van Wyk (1997:81) suggests the following:

A possible interdisciplinary co-operation requires that the concept theology may not be regarded as an absolute entity departing from solid and fixed pillars, but rather as a discourse on religious pointers. These pointers may differ depending on the context and limitations of time.

A decisive question in terms of the ‘nature’ of interdisciplinary co-operation for Van Wyk is whether we are concerned with an addition (i.e. adding knowledge from other (‘auxiliary’) sciences in an undifferentiated way, or integration (e.g. the empirical approach to practical theology), or the duplication of theology (in which theology employs only the methods, insights and material of other sciences).

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<sup>150</sup> See also Spangenberg NOT IN REFERENCES (1994:174), who is of the opinion that we cannot speak of ‘theological science’ (“die teologiese wetenskap”) because no such unity exists. Theological science has fragmented and now consists of different sciences.

The last aspect that Van Wyk addresses is that of 'language', posing the question: "What is language, how is it to be understood and to what extent does it determine understanding?" (Van Wyk, 1997:83). "Language is not a combination of words which have a neutral political meaning" (Van Wyk, 1997:83). According to Johan Degenaar (cited in Van Wyk, 1997:83), "postmodernism in general, and deconstruction in particular, demonstrate how discourse is not a neutral phenomenon but is very much involved in the construction, subjugation and liberation of humankind". Van Wyk is of the opinion that "interdisciplinary co-operation cannot be content with a pluralism of unrelated languages if they are about the same world" (Van Wyk, 1997:83). Thus, "a coherent interpretation of the experiences of science and theology cannot avoid the search for a unified world view", but the question is: "Can such a world view be constructed?" (Van Wyk 1997:83). Before any progress can be made regarding interdisciplinary co-operation, two important issues, namely metatheoretical matters and the 'nature' of communication, need to be addressed.

Concluding his article, Van Wyk expresses the view that interdisciplinary co-operation can be "a stimulus to enormous practical and intellectual vigour in which different ways of seeing the world are brought alongside one another", but he warns that "it may also tempt us to generalize and to pretend that theology has taken seriously the insights of other sciences" (Van Wyk, 1997:84).. Acknowledging, therefore, the complex challenges confronting interdisciplinary co-operation, those who are seriously involved in life's problems are provided with an opportunity to broaden their perspectives.

#### **4.6.7.1 Conclusion**

Stephen Pattison, while also acknowledging the necessity of interdisciplinary co-operation, helps us to understand the challenges and problems facing such co-operation:

There are substantial difficulties here; there are so many disciplines, sub-disciplines, schools, fields and perspectives for pastoral theologians to choose from in trying to analyse particular phenomena or situations. It is not possible to look at a situation from every possible perspective, so pastoral theologian need to think carefully about which disciplines or combinations of disciplines they are going to use, what significance they are going to give them, and how they will use them. This is a stimulating process, giving pastoral theology much of its attraction and vigour, but it is inevitably frustrating and partial too. And it must not be forgotten that different disciplines in e.g., arts and social

sciences, have their own implicit values and theologies which may influence the nature and outcomes of the pastoral theological quest. (Pattison, 1994:23)

Clearly, the choice is ours regarding the knowledge base available through other disciplines. The methodological approach that is followed is of crucial importance and needs to work with the “tension” and “togetherness/connectedness” existing between theology/revelation and human experiences/phenomenology (Louw, 1998:109). “Although the two frameworks sometimes interpret the same phenomenon (the human being or context), they are kept distinct to safeguard their individual disciplinary integrity” (Louw, 1998:109).

#### **4.7 A PROPOSAL FOR A PNEUMATOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THEORY FORMATION IN PASTORAL CARE**

From the discussion of a communal contextual paradigm and its suitability or appropriateness for communities on the Cape Flats, a few core elements have been proposed which are crucial for pastoral practice. These are contextuality and eco-systemic thinking, hermeneutical and anthropological perspectives, relationality, the public nature of pastoral care, and interdisciplinarity. These elements collectively help us to understand the complexity of pastoral practice, and need to be taken seriously if pastoral care-givers wish to make a meaningful contribution in the lives and life struggles of the people they are called to serve.

**In order to link an eco-systemic and social hermeneutic paradigm to the theology of the presence of God within communal and contextual systems, the researcher now proposes a pneumatological approach to theory formation in pastoral care.**

For this purpose we build upon Daniël Louw’s work<sup>151</sup>. On the very first page of his seminal work, *A Pastoral Hermeneutics of Care and Encounter* (1998), Louw formulates the challenge facing pastoral care, namely “to develop a model which not only takes salvation of the Gospel seriously, but also tries to understand and to interpret our human existence within contexts and relationships” (1998:1). The hermeneutical challenge is: “how the good news of the Kingdom of God and salvation should be interpreted in terms of human experience/reality and social context so that the substance of our Christian faith may contribute to a life of meaning and quality”

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<sup>151</sup> The pneumatological approach to pastoral theology was introduced by JJ Rebel with his work “Pastoraat in pneumatologisch perspectief” (1981). Louw’s own contribution to practical and pastoral theology has already been acknowledged (page 174) and the researcher finds Louw’s option for a pneumatological approach very helpful for this study.

(Louw, 1998:1). “Pastoral care enters into a relationship with people in which it demonstrates and interprets God’s care in the existential, social, political and ecological spheres” (Louw, 1998:68).

Louw’s hermeneutical model has already been discussed earlier in this chapter – his pastoral hermeneutics being “a theological reflection on how to live and to practice faith within the context of the congregation and the contemporary social and cultural situation” (Louw, 1998:5). To do this, it is necessary to link the eco-systemic and social hermeneutic paradigm with the theological notion of Christology and pneumatology. Pastoral care (as *cura animarum*<sup>152</sup>) is therefore used to describe “the consoling effect which God’s empowering and transforming presence has in the world. This leads us to salvation, which is pastoral care’s theological stance and distinctive perspective” (Louw, 1998:6).

Put differently and within the framework of this study – if we have a good understanding of the phenomenon of gangsterism; and if we have built a faith community that understands itself as a missional, serving community that is hospitable and caring; and if we have succeeded in remembering relational refugees into our community of believers, what would be our further aim? What else do we have to offer people who have been drawn into our communities of faith?

It is at this point that the question of salvation (= “the indicative condition of the new person and new creation in Christ”; Louw, 1998:55) and the understanding of grace become important. “If the basic presupposition is that pastoral care is a theological discipline, then any attempt to design a theological model and a basic theory for pastoral care should operate from an eschatological and pneumatological perspective” (Louw, 1998:8). In his more recently published work, *Cura Vitae. Illness and the healing of life*, Louw proposes a *theology of affirmation* within the theological parameters of an eschatological approach to life and our human quest for meaning (Louw, 2008b:16).

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<sup>152</sup> *Cura animarum* is the classical formulation for pastoral work. It describes care for the whole person, from a specifically spiritual perspective. Soul care is about people and the centre of their existence, their focus on God and dependence upon Him. *Cura animarum*, therefore, describes a very special process of caring: caring for human life because it is created by God and belongs to God. The essence of what it means to be human is linked inextricably to a life of faith lived in the presence of a living God (Louw, 1998:21). Louw would later expand *cura animarum* and develop what he calls a theology of life and the healing of life from the viewpoint of spirituality, namely *cura vitae*. “It (*cura vitae*) is about how new life in the risen Christ and the indwelling presence of the Spirit can contribute to the empowerment of human beings. It is about hope, care and the endeavour to give meaning to life within the reality of suffering, our human vulnerability, and the ever-present predicament of trauma, illness and sickness. *Cura vitae* is a theological attempt to create a paradigm shift in care giving from a predominant focus on our ‘knowing and doing’ functions to our ‘being’ functions” (Louw, 2008b:11).

Why then an eschatological approach? Louw gives the following motivation:

In pastoral anthropology such an eschatological approach implies a shift away from traditional attempts to found our humanity (our being human) on a Christological interpretation and incarnational paradigm.<sup>153</sup> Such attempts often merely act as a replacement for the medatorial work of Christ. In a pastoral anthropology caregivers then end up with a moralistic idol of human perfectionism as well as with a legalistic interpretation for human performance. I would rather opt for a *pneumatological approach* with its starting point in *inhabitational* theology.

When the question is then asked: What is the unique contribution that pastoral care offers to the lives of people who become or form part of the community of faith, our response would be that the distinctive and unique contribution that pastoral care and the pastoral encounter make in the lives of people is the “fostering of a mature faith and spirituality by means of the Scriptures, prayer and the sacraments” (Louw, 1998:19). As such, pastoral care implies more than only offering comfort and consolation – “transformation (change and growth)<sup>154</sup> also forms an important dynamic in the pastoral encounter” (Louw, 1998:71).

And again it should be point out that transformation can be an entirely psychological or psychosocial process – and in terms of our understanding of the importance of inter- and multidisciplinary, the researcher does not view psychology and sociology as having no relevance for a pastoral perspective and approach to care. We are convinced, however, that “the pastoral encounter cannot be understood as a theological event without the aid of pneumatology” (Louw, 1998:120).

The Holy Spirit’s work is to concretize the presence of God and to actualize salvation. Humans play a mediatory role in the process by becoming God’s agents of care and compassion. (Louw, 1998:120)

It was earlier stated that the unique contribution of pastoral care as a theological model has to be grounded in an eschatological and pneumatological perspective. “*Eschatology* signifies the

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<sup>153</sup> Louw (1998:170) argues that a pastoral anthropology, based mainly on a Christology, faces a threefold danger: emphasis is placed unilaterally on the incarnation alone; Christ’s mediation is reduced to the level of morality; and Christology operates within the dynamics of grace and our sinful nature.

<sup>154</sup> Shelton (1995:15) refers to the “twin themes of pastoral ministry”, namely “loving care and compassionate challenge”, which he describes as follows: “pastoral ministry entails accepting people where they are and being able at the same time to gently challenge them to future growth so that their behavior might more reflect Gospel values”.



essence of our new being in Christ as well as the revelation and fulfilment of our future in terms of the coming Kingdom” (Louw, 1998:61). Louw (1998:65) lists the following implications of an eschatological perspective for the practice of pastoral care:

- It provides a horizon of meaning. Eschatology refers to God’s fulfilled promises regarding salvation.
- It links the believer to the faithfulness of God. The believer is offered a guarantee of God’s presence in the midst of the uncertainty, discontinuity and paradox of life.
- It creates a normative framework: a meaningful life needs norms by which to live. The eschatological perspective criticises human complacency, selfishness and loveless self-assertion.
- It imparts a unique identity to the pastoral act itself. The pastor acts from a faith dimension. The faith dimension defines pastoral care as a unique discipline. Pastoral care is linked with the principles of the gospel.

Earlier statements concerning the contextual nature of pastoral care should again be reiterated at this point. In other words, an eschatological perspective and dimension do not or should not lead to an abstraction in which pastoral care is alienated from the realities of life.

What then are the implications of a pneumatological perspective in our pastoral design, and how would this effect our care for people within the context of the Cape Flats, where gangsterism, poverty, unemployment and drug abuse remain daily challenges?

If we were to operate mostly or entirely from a kerygmatic perspective, it may result in a reduced anthropology: human beings remain mere sinners. A phenomenological and client-centred model, on the other hand, frequently results in an over-estimation of human abilities for self-actualisation. In a theological anthropology, a person’s abilities should be viewed with regard to the work of the Spirit. “Only through pneumatology can people find their healed and transformed *humanum*. This *humanum* is a gift of the Spirit ... The Spirit does it all; people receive it all (salvation)” (Louw, 1998:171).

What difference does a pneumatology make to a pastoral anthropology? Louw (1998:173-176) answers this question with the following important points:

- (a) The factor of influence. While psychology is dependent on the counsellor’s communication skills, in pastoral care something else happens on a deeper level. By

means of Scripture the Holy Spirit can judge a person's being (theological diagnosis), create new insight (a new vision and future perspective on human life), and bring about a radical change (*metanoia* as human transformation) and a new ultimate meaning (a focus on the eschatological issues in life) for human life.

- (b) The Holy Spirit creates a new dynamic and meaningful objective for human existence. The Spirit transforms the tendency towards internally focused self-assertion to externally focused self-denial. Anthropology now attains a new dimension: self-transcendence through love and hope. Through eschatology, pneumatology creates a telic dimension in life: faith is transformed by hope.
- (c) Within a pneumatology, the development of the human person becomes more than mere growth towards psychological maturity. The Holy Spirit applies Christ's salvific work to human life, thereby initiating the development of faith towards mature spirituality; that is, the development of Christian love, hope, gratitude, joy, and sacrificial service.
- (d) The new focus in life (life's telic orientation) implies a radical new pattern of life and a change in behaviour. Behaviour is now characterised not by self-centredness, but by God-centredness and other-centredness.
- (e) By means of the gifts (fruit) of the Holy Spirit, the believer discovers a new morality: service (*diakonia*) within the congregation as body of Christ. This is a radical paradigm shift away from individualistic achievement towards systemic caring. Within *koinonia*, and on the grounds of the principle of loving care for one another, believers become more sensitive to the needs of others and the congregation starts functioning as a caring body of Christ.
- (f) The Holy Spirit creates an encounter between believers, which becomes an exponent of the *communio sanctorum* and an expression of the promise of God's presence.
- (g) Pastors' identities change. The sympathy of Christ and God, as interpreted in the crucified Christ, determines the basic pastoral attitude. In the unconditional love of Christ (*agape*), pastoral ministry attains a priestly character. The person now acts in the name of Christ, and becomes an exponent of God's loving care.
- (h) Therapy is different. Pastoral care is not primarily about psychotherapy, but about hope therapy based on God's promises (= promissiotherapy). A person's healing towards becoming a new person and a mature person (*aner teleios*) does not reside within him-/herself, but in Christ's salvific work: this renews, transforms, changes and heals at all levels of life.

- (i) Pastors do not direct their work only at individuals, but also at groups and the congregation. The process of reaching maturity in faith is a corporative event, and thus also affects the edification of the congregation as the body of Christ. The edification of the congregation becomes the context within which the gifts of grace (*charismata*) function.
- (j) A pneumatology redefines the new person as follows: he/she is a person endowed with gifts of grace (*charisma*), which serve as a core potential for the development of faith skills. The purpose of these gifts of grace is not to create super Christians, but to empower them to edify the church and to live differently in the world.

The implication for a ministry with gangsters and ex-gangsters would be that pastors and pastoral workers may indeed offer more than those working in a government or NGO (nongovernmental organisation). "Pneumatic pastoral care" (Rebel, cited in Louw, 1998:174) means that we discover how "the Holy Spirit not merely renews, but under His guidance the human person discovers him-/herself as a person directed, guided and equipped for his/her ultimate goal: child of God".

It is also very important for the community of faith to be mature in their understanding of the tensions inherent in the Christian life, so as not to judge too quickly, or set unrealistically high(er) expectations to people who are drawn into the communion sanctorum.

- Firstly, the tension caused by the eschatological reserve: the already and the not yet (Louw, 1998:178). While, on the one hand, the person already shares completely in the fullness of salvation, on the other hand the person lives in hope. This eschatological tension means that the new person, as a concrete believer, is that same person who previously *was* the old person (in terms of a sinful condition under God's wrath), but now is a new person (in terms of the new condition under God's grace). A new person *is* new, insofar as he/she already is that new person in Christ, but should *become* that more and more.
- Secondly, there is the tension between indicative (the new life as fruit of God's salvific work in Christ and through the Holy Spirit) and imperative (the responsibility regarding the application of salvation).

It is crucial to emphasise and remind ourselves continuously of the fact that the Gospel assesses human beings in terms of their new condition in Christ. “People’s *being* qualities are more fundamental than their *knowing* and *doing* functions” (Louw, 1998:179).

Guiding people to become mature Christians is a process of development and growth that does not exclude agony, tension, intense struggling and even suffering.<sup>155</sup> Nobody becomes a mature Christian overnight. It therefore is the responsibility of pastors to understand the process of **sanctification** as “the process through which the Holy Spirit applies the implications of this new reality of salvation to our daily behaviour” (Louw, 1998:179). This implies that the person become holy in all conduct, i.e. sanctification reaches the moral life of the person, as well as the faith community.

The objective and goal of the pastoral encounter is ultimately maturity in faith, or a mature faith – the telic dimension<sup>156</sup> (Louw, 1998:182). Herein lies the unique contribution that pastoral care can make to counselling and therapy, which distinguish it from psychology.

The psychological concept of maturity is not necessarily similar to what is understood by maturity in the pastoral context. This is because maturity in faith, and therefore our Christian identity and integrity, is always closely associated with the communion sanctorum, the fellowship of believers. Moreover, the term ‘a mature faith’ also indicates the telic dimension of a pastoral anthropology. (Louw, 1998:184)

Louw (1998:185-188; 2008b:90-91) spells out the qualitative dimension of maturity in faith, which makes it clear that it encompasses the whole life of the new person, including the moral, spiritual, relational and corporative elements. Clearly then, a pneumatological approach to pastoral care and counselling presents us with important tools from the Christian tradition and resources to make a valuable and unique contribution to the lives of people. Not only could we lead people away from a life of destruction and death, we could also lead them towards and into

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<sup>155</sup> Wright (1996:23) cautions against the temptation to “concentrate on segments of people’s lives and experience without exploring any further the ultimate goal of all our pastoral care and counseling, and see it as the growth to wholeness and the maturity of the other person”.

<sup>156</sup> Scripture uses the Greek word *teleion* (and its related forms) to describe the process of growth in the fullness of salvation and the development of faith towards perfection and maturity. The noun *telos* originally derived from a root word, meaning ‘to turn’. The turning point functions as a hinge at which one phase is closed and the next begins. As a verb, *teleios* means to begin, fulfil or complete something. *Teleios* is often used to describe the process whereby the human heart turns towards God, binding itself in total surrender to God. There is also a close link between *telos* and the concept *eschatos*. Both concepts function within the context of the Kingdom of God and the dawn of the new order of reconciliation. Christ Himself is the end and fulfillment of an old order, which is determined by law (Rm 10:4; 1 Tim 1:5). Within this context, *teleios* may be applied to the new person’s being.

a new life of meaning and fulfilment as pneumatic persons, the new person in Christ, with a new future.

## 4.8 SUMMARY

The researcher has proposed the **communal contextual paradigm** for doing pastoral care in communities on the Cape Flats. He has said that this 'bias' does not imply a rejection of the other major paradigms, namely the so-called classical paradigm and the clinical pastoral paradigm. He then proceeded to 'unpack' the communal pastoral paradigm in order to understand how it could assist pastors, pastoral carers and faith communities to play a meaningful role in helping people deal with the realities of life on the Cape Flats. He has discussed various elements of this relevant pastoral care model.

There is no doubt that all theology is per definition **contextual** because it is about a specific time and place (Hendriks, 2004:27). The social context of our ministry is important in order for us to understand how our ministry and the mission of the church is effected by, and affects, the specific situation in which they are practised (Cochrane et al., 1991:26). Contextual analysis that includes an examination of social, cultural, economic, political and religious factors at work in given geographical locations (Lartey, 2006:42) helps pastoral theologians and practitioners to understand the reality of the human experience that we seek to care for. This requires, among other qualities, two crucially important observational capacities (Gerkin, 1997:91), namely the art of listening (empathetically and sensitively), and the capacity to observe fully by looking around in addition to looking within.

It is the contention of the researcher that pastoral caregivers on the Cape Flats should therefore be aware continuously of the context in which we are required to care for people. Although life on the Cape Flats could be described as largely Western, in terms of customs and norms there is an undeniably 'Cape Flats' subculture that has developed over many decades and that defines the people of the Cape Flats in more ways than one.

Closely linked to the element of contextuality is the importance of an **eco-systemic approach** or psycho-systemic approach to pastoral care. The shift from an individualistic (or hyper-individualistic) approach to a psycho-systemic approach has been described by many pastoral theologians as one of the new directions in pastoral care at the turn of the twentieth to the twenty-first century. 'Ecology' points to the dynamics of the environment, the relationship between organisms and their environment (Chinula, 1997:67). 'Systems thinking' pays attention

to the way that the parts are linked to one another within the dynamics of interaction and mutuality. 'Systems thinking' focuses more on interrelatedness and interconnectedness than on separateness, and implies a shift away from substantial metaphysical thinking to hermeneutical thinking (Louw, 2005:24). An eco-systemic meta-paradigm opens up new worlds for pastoral work, because it helps us to ask new questions and to ask questions in a different way, "pushing pastoral care beyond its small world into a bigger world" (Nel, 1996:120).

A conclusion has been reached that states that it would be impossible to render effective pastoral care and counselling on the Cape Flats without taking into account the specific history of this part of South Africa. The gangsterism on the Cape Flats, as well as other forms of social ills, can only be addressed adequately if we are honest about all the factors involved. the researcher concurs with Graham (1992:18) that:

social and cultural realities are not merely out there, but are in every setting where pastoral careseeking and caring take place. It is the caretaker's role to understand this, and to respond accordingly in keeping with the dynamics of the situation...It will result in alternate modes of intervention and a modified language of care.

Understanding the eco-systemic nature of pastoral care clearly moves it out of the confines and borders of the church building into the public domain. It is for this reason that the researcher has argued for a **public pastoral care**. It is about the congregation as the local manifestation of the church in society endeavouring to be faithful witnesses and servants of God in the world. In order to be that, faith communities should grapple with and try to answer questions like: What is happening here? How should we react to what confronts us? (Hendriks, 2004:28). Without this **hermeneutical** element, faith communities may become so self-centred and inwardly focussed that they completely miss their original purpose, which is missional – for the sake of others and the world that God loved so much that He offered his Son as a sacrifice. The hermeneutical challenge facing pastoral theology, according to Louw (1998:1), is "to develop a model which not only takes the salvation of the Gospel seriously, but also tries to understand and to interpret our human existence within the contexts and relationships" – the communication of the Gospel in terms of the life experiences of human souls, and vice versa. Interpretation cannot take place without a proper analysis of the situation or context. Pastoral caregivers should therefore make sure that they understand all the factors that contribute to the formation and continued existence of gangsterism in communities on the Cape Flats.

The importance of a **theological anthropology** is highlighted by, amongst others, the important work of Daniël Louw, who reminds us that pastoral ministry is ministering to *people* (Louw, 1998:123). A theological anthropology goes further than knowledge of human behaviour, physiology and psychology, and includes “an understanding of humans as moral and spiritual beings in terms of their awareness of the ultimate, and their relationship with God (Louw, 1998:141). Pastoral care cannot ignore the important question: What does it mean to be human, to be human in a particular context? Theologically we attempt to understand and interpret human beings from a specific perspective, namely the *human person in relationship with God*.

A theological anthropology helps us to move beyond the phenomenological perspective on gangsterism and people involved with gangs. It helps us to present to people a different perspective of themselves. They are not merely the product of their circumstances or the consequence of socio-political and economic forces and conditions, but persons created in the image and likeness of God, re-created by the salvific work of Christ, transformed and empowered by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and destined for a new future. The researcher believes that, without a sound pastoral or theological anthropology, we would not be able to make a significant difference in the lives of people caught up in the reality of gangsterism on the Cape Flats, thereby helping them to discover whole-ness and soul-fulness.

It was also pointed out that human beings are profoundly **relational**. The discussion of the recent focus on relationality and the doctrine of the Trinity – a theological perspective that brings an interesting angle to the praxis of pastoral care.

The discussion of **public pastoral care** has shown that we cannot escape from the inherently political processes involved in caring for people, because we subscribe to a holistic view of human beings. It was therefore argued that an integrated, holistic spirituality has been part of the oppressed people in South Africa and their struggle for liberation and for recognition as people with dignity and worth. In the light of this conviction, it was important for us to ask the question: Where have all the pastors gone since the dawn of the new democratic dispensation in South Africa? A brief discussion of the different views on the public role of the church in this post-1994 South African society has brought the researcher to the conclusion that the scriptural bias for the poor compels us to continuously examine the notion of “critical solidarity” with regard to the state. It therefore is vital to also guard against an inwardly-focussed ministry, given the fact that the people we serve are influenced by systemic and structural challenges pertaining to political and socio-economic policies and decisions that directly or indirectly affect their lives.

Within a communal contextual paradigm for pastoral care, and an understanding of pastoral care as being public, we are no less under an obligation to ensure that we are equipped with the right pastoral tools to care for individuals and congregations. A ministry of presence, empathetic listening skills and discernment remain necessary for us to be advocates that generate hope in the people we serve.

The researcher is convinced that pastoral care without a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approach will fail in its attempt to help give meaning to people. Interdisciplinarity, says Louw (1998:107), is an important component in our quest for true knowledge. Pastors cannot ignore the major contributions of the human sciences (Carr, 1997:37), which are important conversation partners for pastoral theologians. We are reminded, however, of the tension inherent in such a working relationship, and that interdisciplinary cooperation is not without problems and difficulties, and that we should be wary of “captivity to the social sciences” (Moore, 2002:17).

The chapter was concluded with a proposal for **a pneumatological approach to theory formation in pastoral care**, in order to link an eco-systemic and social hermeneutic to the theology of the presence of God within communal and contextual systems. the researcher is convinced that pastoral care needs to offer more, and indeed has more to offer, than the behavioural and social sciences; that faith communities are more than just nongovernmental organisations, because of the salvation and grace they may offer people as the good news of the Gospel. Pastoral care offers not only comfort and consolation, but also transformation (change and growth) and the fostering of a mature faith and spirituality by means of Scriptures, prayer and the sacraments. An eschatological and pneumatological approach helps us to ground our pastoral work in the salvific work of Christ and to concretise the presence of God through the Holy Spirit, actualising salvation in the lives of people and faith communities.

“Pneumatic pastoral care” (Rebel, cited in Louw, 1998:174) means that we discover how “the Holy Spirit not merely renews, but under His guidance the human person discovers him-/herself as a person directed, guided and equipped for his/her ultimate goal: child of God”.

In the last chapter the researcher will bring together the most important findings of the study. He will also indicate the areas of research that need further exploration to assist faith communities to become what God intended them to be – servants of God’s people, guiding and helping them to experience whole-ness and soul-fullness, even in the midst of and despite socio-economic and political challenges and realities.



## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **IN SEARCH OF A FAMILY: THE CHALLENGE OF GANGSTERISM TO FAITH COMMUNITIES**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Gangsterism is a reality to many people living on the Cape Flats of Cape Town. These people do not have the privilege of deciding whether they want to address the issue or just ignore it as a non-issue. As such, faith communities within the communities on the Cape Flats should pay serious attention to the challenges posed by gangsterism to the nature and purpose of pastoral care to people in this particular context. The intention and purpose of this study was to contribute to a library of knowledge for faith communities to help them to respond to the challenge of gangsterism. Little or nothing has been done previously to reflect theologically on this challenge. The researcher has chosen a specific theological lens – making practical theology, and more specifically pastoral theology, our focus. However, the critical importance of an interdisciplinary approach (utilising other social science disciplines), as well as an intradisciplinary approach (acknowledging the fact that systematic theology and ethics, ecclesiology and missiology, and even Biblical theology, play an important role in pastoral care) have been emphasised.

In this concluding chapter the researcher wishes to summarise the key findings of his study and indicate a number of areas that need further exploration. This study in itself has become a personal journey for the researcher, a wrestling with what it means to be church or a community of faith in a very particular context and in the light of very specific societal challenges. It started back in 1987 when the researcher was called to a congregation in Bishop Lavis on the Cape Flats to serve a community of mostly working class people. Since then the researcher has been involved in more ways than one with various people and organisations that are actively participating in societal change.

This journey has not ended and will be continued as long as people and communities on the Cape Flats are faced with phenomena like gangsterism and drugs, unemployment and poverty.

## 5.2 IN SEARCH OF A FAMILY

The study has described the phenomenon of gangsterism in general and how it manifests itself within the specific context of the Cape Flats. One undeniable fact is that gangs act as some sort of surrogate family for many of the young people who are attracted to the gangs.

The research study was not attempted as a thorough and in-depth research on gangs as such. The main research question was: How do faith communities, in particular Christian churches, respond to the challenges of gangsterism on the Cape Flats. Chapter Two gives an overview of gangsterism as a global phenomenon and how it specifically manifests and presents itself within the context of the Cape Flats of Cape Town.

The discussion of gangsterism deliberately wanted to dispel the notion that there are quick-fix solutions to gangsterism. The researcher has cautioned more than once that people of faith should guard against superficial analyses and over-simplification of social issues, including gangsterism, poverty and unemployment. The phenomenon of gangsterism could not have been discussed without the body of knowledge from other fields like criminology, sociology and anthropology. In this regard, the researcher has also argued for pastoral care to be interdisciplinary in its approach.

With this in mind, the research has traced the historical origins of gangsterism in Cape Town, highlighting various socio-political, economic as well as cultural and personal factors that contributed to the formation and establishment of street gangs. It was also noted how some of these factors still exist in post-apartheid South Africa and continue to provide fertile ground for gangsterism to continually raise its ugly head in communities on the Cape Flats. It was important to note that gangs have evolved from ordinary street gangs to sophisticated, high-profile crime syndicates that have built strongholds in poor communities. This furthermore underlines the fact that there are not quick-fix solutions to gangsterism as if it is only a few youngsters causing trouble that should be sorted out.

The reality of gangsterism is generally hidden from people living in the more affluent suburbs who depend on the major newspapers for their information. However, daily newspapers or tabloids like the *Kaapse Son* and the *Daily Voice* reveal much more of this reality, as they report on gang wars and the fear that grips people living in townships like Bishop Lavis, Bonteheuwel, Elsies River, Hanover Park, Factreton, Manenberg and Tafelsig in Mitchells Plain.

At the end of Chapter One the following conclusions were drawn:

- **Gangsterism is a systemic phenomenon that affects not only the individual persons but families and communities as well**

Gangsterism is a societal problem with many facets regarding its root causes. It affects an entire community and not just individuals. Every person, every gang member, has family connections. What happens to that gang member affects his or her family in a direct or indirect manner. But more than that, gangsterism has a severe impact on whole communities. Communities are stigmatised, disrupted and adversely affected in more ways than one by the existence of gangs in their townships.

In order to address gangsterism from a pastoral theological perspective, this structural and systemic nature of the phenomenon will have to be taken into account. It certainly does not negate a focus also on individuals involved in gangsterism. The researcher does not believe that it is a choice for one approach against the other, rather, that addressing the challenge requires a multifaceted approach. Too often, however, emphasis is placed on the individual without a proper consideration of structural-systemic factors.

- **Gangsterism is rooted in historic and prevailing socio-political and economic factors**

It is critical for pastoral care to bear this in mind when addressing gangsterism. Without this perspective there may be a tendency to (over-)simplify the issue or to try to propose superficial solutions to a very complex situation, e.g. to view gangsterism as something that is typical of the 'youth today'. Although apartheid cannot and should not be blamed for every single thing that went wrong in South Africa, the devastating effects of this form of social engineering can never be ignored or rationalised. Gangsterism found a favourable breeding ground in the socio-economic conditions created by apartheid on the Cape Flats. Once established, it became difficult to be rooted out, despite various efforts, notably in the forms of police operations and specialised units. The researcher has also argued that the socio-economic conditions on the Cape Flats since the dawn of the new democratic dispensation have not necessarily translated into a better life for all. In some communities unemployment is still high, causing ripple effects in the form of poverty and a sense of hopelessness, purposelessness, meaninglessness and lovelessness. This, in

turn, may lead to a sense of worthlessness and a resultant non-appreciation of life, your own as well as the life of others.

The effects of systems such as apartheid take generations to be overcome, precisely because of their systemic nature. The school education system is one specific example. Schools on the Cape Flats have generally deteriorated in the new South Africa. This is evident in the external, physical structures like buildings, school grounds and sports fields. Vandalism has increased tremendously, and in extreme cases schools are literally carried away piece by piece by alleged drug addicts. This is not conducive for young people to learn and to build dreams. When the children no longer dream, there is no future. This leads to nihilism.

- **Gangsterism in South Africa occurs mostly within Coloured communities**

This aspect of gangsterism in South Africa is the topic of much debate. For the moment, however, we have to accept the fact that Coloured townships, especially in the Western Cape and more specifically on the Cape Flats, are affected more by gangsterism than other parts of South Africa. (There is evidence that gangsterism has also historically been experienced in some predominantly Coloured areas in Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg.) When we ask why this is the case, no one has really come up with a compelling explanation or answer. Andre Standing puts forward at least thirteen causal factors that are generally listed as the reasons for the long history of gangs in Coloured communities.

There is no doubt that many of these factors are important issues for the coloured community as well as explaining the behaviours of various individuals involved with gangs. However, we may wonder which of these arguments are more persuasive than others when it comes to explaining why the coloured areas of the Cape Flats are believed to have such a longstanding problem with gangs and gangsterism. (Standing, 2005:15)

Whatever the reasons may be, this study aims, among other things, to contribute to a discussion about pastoral care in faith communities where membership is predominantly from the Coloured population, and where the phenomenon of gangsterism has become a real part of their lives.

### 5.2.1 Reflection

Reference was made to Edward Wimberly's use of the term "relational refugees". He gives the following definition:

Relational refuges are persons not grounded in nurturing and liberating relationships. They are detached and without significant connections with others who promote self-development. They lack a warm relational environment in which to define and nurture self-identity. As a consequence, they withdraw into destructive relationships that exacerbate rather than alleviate their predicament. (Wimberly, 2000:20)

In the researcher's view, gangsters and reformed gangsters are 'relational refugees' – in search of a home, a family. Although the gang functions as some sort of surrogate family, it does not ground gang members in 'nurturing and liberating relationships'. On the contrary, these are 'destructive relationships that exacerbate rather than alleviate their predicament'.

The positive re-integration of gangsters into communities is not an easy task. Hospitality, we have said, is not naturally easy, even for people of faith. There are many traps, too many bad experiences that justify people's scepticism and prejudice, and their reluctance to welcome strangers into their close communities. Ex-gangsters carry and bring with them their past – signified in most cases in no unclear manner by the tattoos they wear. More often than not, they lack educational qualifications and are not skilled workers – given the fact that many have dropped out of school to join gangs. Most of them have relied on the gang boss to take care of them as a reward for loyalty and work done for him – creating a relationship of dependency and even a learned helplessness. These are people with low self-esteem or, in the words of Edward Wimberly, with a "crippled self-esteem" (2000:13).

There is a definite combination of personal-individual, as well as structural and systemic hindrances or obstacles, in the way of re-integration. Every person will have to be treated as a person in his or her own right, despite the common factors involved in gangsterism. This presents faith communities that are intentional in their ministries to and for gangsters and ex-gangsters, and who choose for a ministry of hospitality, with real challenges. In the light of these challenges, many may therefore choose not to get involved, and cross to the other side of the road, like the priest and the Levite in Jesus' parable.

The researcher sincerely believes that the church and other faith communities could and should provide a better alternative to gangs for young people on the Cape Flats. What is of critical importance is that we should remember that these will all be people with stories, with selfhood, and history – not *tabulae rasa*, blank slates (Ackermann, 1998:15; Streety Wimberly, 2004:xv). This, in turn, may contribute to the “re-membering” (cf. Patton, 1993:52)<sup>157</sup> of families and faith communities.

In the next section we will discuss how faith communities could welcome gangsters and ex-gangsters into the family of God.

### 5.3 WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

This study was undertaken because of the researcher’s belief that faith communities in general and the church in particular could and should play a more meaningful role in addressing the challenge of gangsterism on the Cape Flats. In order for this to happen, he believes that honest critical thinking about the church’s self-understanding (ecclesiology), as well her understanding of pastoral care, is crucially important and imperative. Of course, not everything should be entirely new, discarding or foolishly ignoring the foundations of ecclesiology and pastoral care that have been built over many decades and even centuries, often under very challenging circumstances. For this reason the researcher has, for example, looked at historical markers of pastoral care that could help us to develop a contextually relevant base theory for doing pastoral care on the Cape Flats.

The researcher will now draw together the conclusions regarding a practical-theological ecclesiology, as well as the framework for pastoral care within a context where communities are challenged by phenomena such as gangsterism, violence, poverty, unemployment, and drug-abuse.

#### 5.3.1 Being Church on the Cape Flats

In Chapter Three the researcher briefly discussed the historical conditions of faith communities on the Cape Flats. It was said that the trauma and pain that resulted from the effects of the oppressive apartheid policies on the lives of thousands of people on the Cape Flats could never

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<sup>157</sup> John Patton (1993:51) uses this term “re-membering”, borrowed from a feminist family therapist Deborah Luepnitz, who see re-membering as restructuring. “To remember contributes to the important task of ‘re-membering’ family, church, or larger social structure. Members of the family, the community, one’s self can be ‘re-membered’ or given new roles, functions, or opportunities” (Patton, 1993:52).

really be measured or adequately expressed in words. In so many cases, the scars and open wounds remain evident and manifest in some of the social ills that communities on the Cape Flats are still facing and struggling to overcome.

Despite very difficult conditions, faith communities had shown remarkable resilience, providing places of refuge and safe spaces in the midst of people's struggle to make sense of and give meaning to their lives. The incredible resources of social and human capital within churches have provided destitute and deprived communities a life line during times of uncertainty, and provided shining examples of communal caring for others. The work and ministry of many non-prominent leaders and caregivers cannot be appreciated too much, and should be honoured. They were the ones in the trenches of many struggles, who were prepared to go where most would not and were not willing to go, outside the gates. They did not always have the proper theological or pastoral training, did not always follow the prescribed pastoral processes and did not have the correct theoretical and methodological framework, but their sense of calling, their love for people, and their refusal to give up on God's promise of a better life kept them going. To these men and women we have to show gratitude for sowing the seeds that allowed the church to continue to grow, and for faith communities to keep on playing a significant role in communities on the Cape Flats.

One way of honouring these faith workers is to recognise their work as part of the dynamic nature of being church, to incorporate their organic wisdom and knowledge into the body of academic knowledge, and to recognise them as important partners in our conversations and work. With this in mind, and drawing from the important work of many practical theologians, the researcher would like to highlight the following aspects of a practical-theological ecclesiology relevant for the situation on the Cape Flats.

#### ***5.3.1.1 A ministry of social-systemic and inter-contextual presence***

Hendriks (2001:6-16) posits that theology is not only about God, about the church, and about Scripture and tradition, but also about a contextual situation, about interpreting your situation, about a vision and about a strategy. Ecclesiology is therefore dynamic, not static. The researcher finds Leonardo Boff's reference to the base communities in Latin America applicable to the situation on the Cape Flats, or rather, the way the researcher would like to view the formation and existence of faith communities on the Cape Flats.

The basic communities are generating a new ecclesiology, formulating new concepts in theology ... Pastors and theologians, take warning! Do not seek to box this phenomenon within theological-pastoral categories distilled from other contexts and other ecclesial experiences. Instead, assume an attitude of those who would see, understand, and learn ... The history of the church is genuine history: the creation of never-before-experienced novelty. Even in the New Testament, like the history of the church, it presents a pluriform institutional incarnation of the faith. (Boff, 1986:2)

The researcher feels strongly that the type or types of ecclesiology found on the Cape Flats have not been sufficiently researched and documented. This study has opened his mind enough to put the question on the table: What does it mean to be church on the Cape Flats? In order to answer this question we will have to be open-minded, prepared to acknowledge the fact that the church has existed in the midst of and despite extremely difficult socio-political and economic conditions. We also have to acknowledge that it may indeed not be possible to box these ecclesiologies within theological categories from other contexts and other ecclesial experiences.

From the discussion of the vital elements of congregational ministry and care, the researcher has concluded that, within the context of the Cape Flats, an ecclesiology has developed that may be called **a social-systemic ministry of inter-contextual presence**. This ecclesiology is dynamic and not static; it is responsive to the social context and social systems; and it is kept alive by the context, with a huge emphasis on orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy. In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, in the daily quest for survival and a decent living, people do not always have the luxury to theorise, rationalise or intellectualise their life issues. They respond, or have to respond, to the issue in the best possible practical manner. They expect their church and its structures to understand the realities of their context, not in a superficial way, but in a way that will help them to give meaning to and make sense of their lives. People of faith need tools to deal with and handle the challenges facing them. In order to practise a meaningful and relevant ministry, pastors and theologians need to ground their ministry theoretically and practically in such a way that the Gospel becomes alive, that the historical traditions of the church are utilised effectively, and that the present context and challenges facing the people are addressed and responded to in a manner that helps give meaning to the lives of the people.



### ***5.3.1.2 A welcoming church – a sign of spiritual maturity?***

One of the key characteristics of feminist ecclesiology is that it is essentially an open ecclesiology. The church is not a closed community in which some are in and others are out, but it is a round-table community where everyone is welcome. Hospitality and justice are to be added as marks to unity, catholicity, holiness and apostolicity. The members of the community are open to each other and celebrate their diversity. (Watson, 2002:120)

The researcher is convinced that practising hospitality in a hostile society, where the natural thing to do is to close and lock up your door rather than opening it to strangers, is one of the major challenges facing faith communities – not only on the Cape Flats but everywhere. Given the reality of the context in which we live, Pohl (1999:7) is asking a very relevant question:

Is hospitality not potentially subversive and countercultural...an antiquated practice, a relic from an earlier time?

The researcher has shown in chapters Three and Five that hospitality is part of the Christian tradition, a “feature of Christian life ... and a spiritual discipline of opening one’s life to God’s life and revelation” (Oden, 2001:14), “fundamental to Christian identity” (Pohl, 1999:x). Hospitality is the welcoming of others in their strangeness and otherness (Vosloo, 2006:47). We are reminded of how easy it is to forget and disobey Christ’s command of love by Denise Ackermann (1998:22-23):

We have not welcomed one another as Christ has welcomed us, for the glory of God (Rom. 15:7). Each day we disobey the command to love our neighbour, the ‘different other’, as ourselves. Too often we stigmatise the other and thus refuse to be in relationship with him or her ... we forget that Jesus taught us that our neighbour is the radically other who is radically related. We forget that our neighbour has inviolable claims on us to be welcomed as Christ has welcomed us.

One is almost prompted to ask, with the listeners to the conversation between Jesus and the rich ruler: “Who then can be saved?” (Luke 18:26, NIV). Graciously, we also hear Jesus’ response: “What is impossible with men is possible with God” (Luke 18:27, NIV).

The researcher’s contention is that asking critical questions about the practice of hospitality might be the best starting point – it shows that we are at least willing to put the issue on the

table; that our minds are not made up already, regarding hospitality as an irrational, unrealistic point of discussion. Let us also remind ourselves of Vosloo's words of caution: hospitality should not be seen as an abstract, timeless value or quality – just another concept in our list of praiseworthy virtues and values (Vosloo, 2006:129). Hospitality always has to do with good discretion about how to practise, or live, hospitality in a specific time and in a specific place – it is about an embodiment of hospitality. This is very relevant with regard to the context of gangsterism on the Cape Flats.

There are definite risks involved in Christian hospitality that should be recognised. In this regard, Pohl's suggestion to make hospitality more public, that is, that the welcome be initiated in a more public setting where the community gather regularly (1999:94) is very realistically practical. It therefore asks for openness in our approach and discussion, as well as creative ways of being the church that we are called to be within our specific context. Faith communities on the Cape Flats that would like to practise hospitality to gangsters will have to be creative, taking into account the risks, but also the opportunities, of making a difference in the lives of disconnected and displaced people.

This research recommends that the role that ex-gangsters could play as 'bridge or threshold people' should be explored. Pohl (1999:95) describes 'bridge or threshold people' as people who understand both the world of the stranger (gang) and the world of the welcoming faith community. "Such person can interpret and discern situations, needs, and resources effectively" (Pohl, 1999:95). 'Bridge or threshold people' should be 'bi-lingual' – possess the ability to understand the language of the stranger or outsider on the one hand, and the language of the faith community on the other hand. They should also be 'streetwise',<sup>158</sup> that is, be able to interpret and discern situations and needs.

It is important that we "find and create contemporary equivalents of the gate, community rituals, and small group meetings in which we can build preliminary relations with strangers" (Pohl, 1999:97).

Christians, who form the church, the *communio sanctorum* and *familia dei*, should recognise that the stranger was created in the image of God (*imago dei*) and was made of the same flesh. Matthew 25:35 ("I was a stranger and you welcomed me") reminds us in a forceful manner that Jesus Christ, the most desired guest, comes to us in the form of the vulnerable stranger. We are

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<sup>158</sup> If you are not 'streetwise' you may very easily be 'taken for a ride' – meaning that your innocence, naivety, or good intentions may be exploited by shrewd people.

sometimes (too often!) blinded by our own social prejudice to be able to recognise the Christ among us and on our doorsteps.

Open, honest and courageous conversations need to take place within the faith communities themselves on the issue of hospitality. It cannot be something that only the pastor or congregational leadership feel strongly about. Part of these conversations is recognising the power of stereotypes, which are closely linked with prejudices and generalisations (Vosloo, 2006:135). When members of a faith community engage in these types of difficult conversations and cultivate a culture of hospitality, they reveal signs of spiritual maturity (cf. Vosloo, 2006:144).

Denise Ackermann's reference (1998:27) to the powerful symbol and meaning of the Eucharist or Holy Communion table sums it up poignantly:

For the Eucharist to have meaning in our lives, we need to feel its powerful pull to the radical activity of loving relationships with those who are different. The one who calls us to the table knows our differences. The One who issues the invitation and asks us to make peace with one another when we come, knows full well just how difficult that can be. The call to full humanity is nothing less than the call to grapple daily with the challenges, implications, and surprises of seeking to be in relationship with each other in all our differences, in the fullness of our humanity.<sup>159</sup>

### **5.3.1.3 A missional church**

The Spirit of God not only creates the church by calling it into existence, but also leads the church by sending it into the world to participate fully in God's mission in all of creation. (Van Gelder, 2007:38)

People coming to the church, as strangers – and with it the Biblical instruction of hospitality, form one part (so to speak) of the nature of our life and existence as church. The other part has to do with our being in the world, of participating obediently in God's missional praxis (Hendriks, 2004:24). This pertains to our understanding of the church as a "sent people" because she belongs to a "missionary God" (Guder, 1998:4). The core characteristic of a missional church is

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<sup>159</sup> Andrew Phillips (2003) also points to the powerful symbolic character of the Holy Communion in ethos formation. He argues that Christian symbols have both an informing and a transforming function. These symbols do not only act as remembrance, but also provide the framework for the way of life Christians should live according to the Gospel. "Die Nagmaal, as uiters belangrike sakrament en sentrale simbool van die Christendom en vername teken van die eienskappe van ware kerkwees, kan op 'n bepalende wyse die etos van Christene informer en transformer" (Phillips, 2003:113).

“being, not just doing, mission” (Keifert, 2006:28). “A missional congregation lets God’s mission permeate everything that the congregation does – from worship to witness, to training members for discipleship. It bridges the gap between outreach and congregational life, since, in its life together, the church is to embody God’s mission” (Barret, cited in Dames, 2007:2).

Missional congregations minister for the sake of the world. They are responsible for translating the good news of the Gospel along with their own organisational reality into every cultural context they encounter (Van Gelder, 2007:34). A congregation is the local manifestation of the church in society (Hendriks, 2004:19), and as such every congregation or faith community should endeavour to be a faithful, effective witness and a servant of God in this world, in its particular context, proclaiming the Good News in word and deed. To understand and act accordingly requires strategic planning as faith communities seek to discern the leading of the Spirit (Van Gelder, 2007:34). The church that is led by the Spirit recognises that any tradition must be a living and dynamic reality, and that it must take account of new realities.

As such, missional congregations are always forming and reforming. The ‘forming’ part pertains to the missional challenge of the congregation, that of re-contextualising its ministry in the midst of a changing context; while the ‘reforming’ part points to the confessional aspect of the congregation – the challenge of continuing to maintain the truths of the historic Christian faith as understood by the congregation. The issue, according to Van Gelder, is really of “finding the right balance between the two logics of *outside in* (forming) and *inside out* (reforming)” (2007:38).

It is clear that the congregation should be influenced by its context, and that it is crucial that it finds the right balance between the two logics of forming and re-forming (Van Gelder, 2007:38). We need to heed the caution of Frederickson (2007:63) that the missional congregation should not become like the context, but work between the polarities of being under-contextualised (leaning toward privileging the congregation) on the one hand, and being over-contextualised (the congregation tending to become subsumed under its context) on the other. Put differently, there is always the risk that the congregation may lose faith within the context (over-contextualisation), or that they may destroy the context and ignore the faith (under-contextualisation). Ultimately, it is all about the living and being of God’s mercy for every person in every context and, as such, “contextual congregations will not always be missional, but missional congregations will always be contextual” (Frederickson, 2007:64).

The researcher believes that a missional ecclesiology captures the essence of the tradition of faith communities on the Cape Flats. He has shown how these communities were forced to make sense of life under very difficult and challenging conditions in the wake of forced removals and related social engineering methods under apartheid.

### ***Ecclesia reformata secundum verbi Dei semper reformanda!***

(The church once reformed is always in the process of being reformed according to the Word of God).

It is necessary to caution, however, against a sense of contentment. There needs to be, to quote Darrel Guder (2000), a “continuing conversion” of the Church, also of the Church on the Cape Flats.

The continual conversion of the church happens as the congregation hears, responds to, and obeys the gospel of Jesus Christ in ever new and more comprehensive ways. (Guder, 2000:150)

The challenge facing the Church in general, and faith communities on the Cape Flats in particular, is to be aware of the dangers inherent in institutionalisation, especially (gospel) reductionism – “captive to a reduced and diluted version of the gospel” (Guder, 2000:188). We need to continuously ask questions such as: How can an institution be incarnationally missional? Can we as Christian communities be shaped by the God’s Spirit so that our institutional structures themselves en-flesh the compassionate and healing purposes of God? (Guder, 200:187).

With this practical ecclesiology in mind, the next section will now look at how the the compassionate and healing purposes of God could be incarnated or enfleshed through the caring ministry of the church. What does it mean to be a caring church within the context of gangsterism? What are the most important aspects of pastoral care that we have identified for the socio-economic context of the Cape Flats?

### **5.3.2 Pastoral care on the Cape Flats (A Caring Church)**

This section will begin with a re-capturing of the foundations and values of pastoral care over the ages. This is based on the researcher’s conviction that we stand on the shoulders of others, of great men and women who have faithfully laboured to show the compassion of Christ in

concrete ways to people of different communities, as well as prominent and leading thinkers and writers in pastoral theology in the history of the church.

### ***5.3.2.1 Drinking from our historic and common wells***

In the first part of Chapter Four the researcher traced back the steps of pastoral care over many centuries, re-appreciating the major contributions of various pastoral theologians and practitioners. We have highlighted the following important aspects that are still very relevant in our search for a pastoral framework for the context under discussion in this study were highlighted.

- **The image of shepherding.** Although it has come under some criticism from feminist theologians amongst others, this image remains an important one in ecclesial circles in terms of its metaphorical value. This metaphor implies sensitive and compassionate intentional caring (Louw, 1998:39); it also implies courage, as well as a mixture of tenderness and toughness (Campbell, 1981:27). The researcher agrees with Thomas Oden that it may be premature to rule out pastoral images as meaningless to modern consciousness (1983:51). No image or metaphor is perfect and its user should always be aware of its limitations. While shepherds were normally male, it is significant that the caring aspect that is inherent to shepherding is usually associated with women. Given the powerful symbolism of this image with regard to sensitive and compassionate care, courage and toughness, the researcher believes it is still very useful for our context.
- **The eschatological dimension of the faith** of the early church. In anticipation of the immanent and cataclysmic *parousia*, the primitive church focussed on sustaining the faith of believers. People were reminded of the fact that things would change for the better when their Lord returned. It helped them to transcend their circumstances and situations, by living in the promise. The hope and steadfastness of the early believers have been an inspiration to the faithful over the ages, encouraging them not to give up hope easily and to continue to care for one another. Louw's (1998:119) positive appreciation of eschatology is very appropriate:

Without eschatology, pastoral care becomes a victim of the empirical method, and pastoral care pales into insignificance within the multiplicity of phenomenological analyses.

In the words of Gerkin, once again: “We who exercise pastoral care in our time, are still under the influence of a Christianity that lives in hopeful anticipation of the rule of God” (1997:28). The eschatological perspective helps us to understand and see that there is a “more dimension” (Louw, 2008:86) to life. The resurrection of Christ provides hope – “Hope is actually resurrection hope” (Louw, 2008:434). In a context of suffering, death, violence, crime and poverty, we can declare:

(The) empty grave is God’s final critique on the reality of death and every form of death related to our being human, including the death of relationships and the robbing of our human dignity, i.e. the fear of being rejected and living without any unconditional love. (Louw, 2008:435)

- **The perseverance of believers** during the age of persecutions. Stories of unwavering faith in the midst of severe trials and tribulations that saw many of the faithful paying the ultimate price for their faith, somehow relativise our own hardships. Tertullian’s utilisation of the concepts of repentance and confession as pastoral requirements for the Christian community are important elements for the church till this day. In the same manner, the aspects of discipline and healing that featured strongly remain crucial for faith communities today. It is these incredible stories of faith that have also encouraged believers on the Cape Flats to hold on to their faith in the midst of forceful removals, of resettlement, and establishing and re-establishing a sense of community – an incredible resilience that has ensured the survival of the church. These lessons from history and the recent past are a source of inspiration for faith communities as they face current contextual challenges.
- **The importance of liturgy and ritual practices** for care and healing that developed during the Constantine period should be recognised and re-appreciated more fully. The Pentecostal and Charismatic churches place a greater emphasis on these aspects, but many ministers and pastors within the so-called mainline churches have recently moved away from the over-emphasis on form to a more dynamic and relational approach to the liturgy. Our belief is that form and freedom (so to speak) are not mutually exclusive, but should rather be utilised in a dynamic way that reflects the movement of the Spirit. We believe that fear of emotionalism and escapism should not become another form of bondage, in which we put all our trust in our intellect and rational capacity only. Our liturgical places and spaces should open up the fellowship of believers to become more hospitable to strangers and outsiders, while members also experience more fellowship,

koinonia in worship services. The net result is a strong sense of affirmation and well-being. While God remains at the heart of our worship and our worship should allow encounter with God, it should also pay attention to the worshippers as people of differing phases of faith and psychosocial circumstances (Lartey, 2003:57).

- **Gregory the Great's** (540-604 AD) strong emphasis on a ministry inspired by the Holy Spirit, and not only on the pastor's theological and professional training, helps us to guard against the secularisation and self-secularisation of pastoral care. No matter what the challenges and circumstances, pastors should heed Gregory's call for moral, spiritual and theological maturity, and always be aware of the complexity of the pastoral task (Purves, 2001:75). To play a meaningful role in the lives of people we need to guard against easy or quick-fix answers. This has been one of the main arguments throughout the study. The research has taken cognisance of the complex nature of a phenomenon like gangsterism and the way it impacts on the lives of individuals, families and entire communities.
- Another important marker from the period of the Middle Ages is Gerkin's observation that Gregory and other pastoral leaders of his time generally did not dispute the social system that victimised the poor, and that the **tendency to unquestioningly accept unjust social systems** remains alive and well in the pastoral care movement of the twentieth century (Gerkin, 1997:40). The researcher has indicated that the question of how the Christian community should care for the poor and downtrodden (Gerkin, 1997:41) is part of the focus of this study, given the socio-economic circumstances on the Cape Flats. The issue of gangsterism can never be addressed adequately and effectively if pastoral carers do not also become public theologians and social critics (Wimberly, 2006:130). This requires lifelong learning on the part of pastoral care-givers – they should remain grounded in Scripture and theology, while they are also diligent students, or at least readers, of sociology, psychology, economics and politics. A continuous and regular sharpening of their pastoral tools would help to keep them alive and sensitive to the dynamic context in which they are called and placed to serve God's people.
- The tension between the priorities of **individualism** and the need for **corporate or communal** ordering of life prevalent during the Reformation period has been a point of vigorous debate up until today. The researcher believes that it is not a question of 'either-or' but rather of 'and' – once again, they are not mutually exclusive elements of pastoral care, rather two sides of the same coin. We come from a past in which we all too often ordered our lives and relationships according to opposites, resulting in a highly tension-



filled and polarised life. We need to learn and understand that individuals as well as groups or communities are and should be the 'objects' of our care – sometimes our immediate focus will be on the individual, but always bearing in mind that the individuals are part of, and are influenced by, the corporate.

It is clear that many lessons about pastoral care have been learned and established over many centuries. These remain valuable for providers of care even today.

### ***5.3.2.2 Communal contextual paradigm for pastoral care***

We have opted for a communal contextual paradigm for pastoral care (cf. Patton, 1993). In the communal contextual paradigm, pastoral care is understood to be a ministry of a faith community, emphasising the caring community and the various contexts of care, rather than focussing on pastoral care as the work of the ordained pastor (Patton, 1993:5). The communal contextual model re-emphasises the biblical fact that the church is a relational and corporate community. It is contextual because it pays much more attention to the historical, social and cultural contexts of the community that mediate pastoral care (Lartey, 2006:124). In the second part of Chapter Five the researcher dealt quite expansively with his understanding of the communal contextual model, unpacking and translating it for the context of the Cape Flats as he sees it.

He has emphasised the importance of recognising the importance of the particular stories of communities and the life stories of each person, even a gangster or ex-gangster (cf. Wimberly's "story-listening", 1991:18).

Some of the critical elements of a communal contextual paradigm that were highlighted in this study are:

- contextuality
- eco-systemic nature of pastoral care
- hermeneutical
- anthropological
- relational
- public pastoral care and
- inter-disciplinarity

When applied to pastoral care within communities on the Cape Flats, these elements will add to the effectiveness of the public witness of the church, and at the same time help with the edification of the Body of Christ. A ministry of presence implies that faith communities cannot hide away from the challenges or withdraw into their own, self-created spaces of so-called comfort. Churches have to understand that the full extent of caring for people within a communal contextual model will take them outside the gate and into the public sphere.

### ***5.3.2.3 A pneumatological perspective***

The critical importance of a pneumatological perspective to ground the communal contextual model even more theologically were added. Faith communities cannot just offer the same care and comfort provided by so-called secular organisations. While cooperation with other community organisations is of the essence, faith communities should and must bring their own particular and distinctive attributes to the table. The researcher is convinced that the eschatological and pneumatological perspectives provide us with a message of hope for people. It is at this point that the question of salvation (= “the indicative condition of the new person and new creation in Christ”; Louw, 1998:55) and the understanding of grace become important.

Pastoral care offers not only comfort and consolation, but also transformation (change and growth) and the fostering of a mature faith and spirituality by means of Scriptures, prayer and the sacraments. An eschatological and pneumatological approach helps us to ground our pastoral work in the salvific work of Christ and the concretisation of the presence of God through the Holy Spirit, actualising salvation in the lives of people and faith communities.

A pneumatological approach will help us to offer people salvation, forgiveness and liberation, affirmation and not condemnation, as well as a new self-understanding as a child of God, a new being in Christ, a Spirit-filled person with a hope-filled future.

This will lead to a healing of lives and will help people to re-claim their dignity.

### ***5.3.2.4 Care: the calling and responsibility of the whole congregation***

[P]astoral care is a communal art, bringing together laity and clergy to offer ministry of care to one another and to those outside the boundaries of their congregations.  
(Billman, 1996:10)

Clergy (pastors, priests, imams and rabbis) have long been – and are still – in the front lines when it comes to guiding people through the many difficulties and crises of life. This can be said despite evidence that more and more people are not necessarily active members of any faith community. The researcher's own experience as a minister on the Cape Flats has shown that when people go through one or other crisis or difficulty in their lives, they seek the advice of a religious leader. There is still a stigma attached to seeing a mental health professional, and people feel more comfortable bringing their problems to a spiritual adviser than to some or other psychotherapist.<sup>160</sup> Most people also do not have the financial means to consult such professionals. The result is that most of this pastoral counselling occurs not in the offices of specialists, but in churches and mosques where people also worship, socialise and work together. It takes place during pastoral visitations in people's homes, at the bedside of hospital patients, in chance encounters on the "winkelstoep" (i.e. at the supermarket or shopping complex), during preparations for a wedding or funeral – in every arena of congregational life (Stone, 2001:181).

What we need to bear in mind is that the informal, unplanned pastoral encounter is every bit as vital and efficacious as the scheduled meeting in a pastor's office. William Hulme contends that "[t]he congregation as a local community of faith is the most unused, undeveloped, and unorganized of all the unique resources of the pastoral counselor" (cited in Stone, 2001:181).

Stone criticises pastoral care and counselling for straying from its theological heritage or roots, as well as from its congregational context, where most pastoral counselling actually occurs. John Stott also strongly criticises the "scandal of clericalism" through which power and privilege are being concentrated in the hands of the clergy (Stott, 1982:25). "I do not hesitate to say that to interpret the Church in terms of a privileged clerical caste or hierarchical structure is to destroy the New Testament doctrine of the Church" (Stott, 1982:26).<sup>161</sup> Ministry (*diakonia*) and pastoral care are without a doubt the responsibility and calling of the congregation as a whole. The presence of Christ, which constitutes the church, is mediated not simply through ordained

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<sup>160</sup> Swinton, for example, states that things such as "economics, geography, stigma and social class, work towards the exclusion of many 'ordinary' people from the possibility of receiving this form of intervention" (Swinton, 1999:27).

<sup>161</sup> We must, however, also point out that Stott is not taking an "anticlericalism" position, i.e. "to despise the clergy and to behave as if they did not exist, or rather, since they do exist, to wish they didn't" (1982:40-41). "Clergy are not to domineer over laity (clericalism), nor to denigrate themselves and pretend they are altogether dispensable (anticlericalism), or jealously to defend their preserves against trespass, while allocating other preserves to the laity (dualism), but to recognize that the laity are the Church and that they, the clergy, are appointed to serve them, to seek to equip them to be what god intends them to be" (Stott, 1982:47-48).

ministers but through the whole congregation. In the words of Miroslav Volf, “the whole congregation functions as *mater ecclesia* to the children engendered by the Holy Spirit: and the whole congregation is called to engage in ministry and make decisions about leadership roles (Volf, 2002:213). Volf argues against the *episcopocentric* ecclesiologies of the Catholic and Orthodox traditions (in which the bishop acts *in persona Christi* and simultaneously *in persona ecclesiae*), for the church is fundamentally a polycentric-participative community (Volf, 2002:231). For Volf the church is not a single subject, but a communion of interdependent subjects; the mediation of salvation occurs not only through office holders, but also through all other members of the church; and the church is constituted by the Holy Spirit not so much by way of the institution of office, as through the communal confession in which Christians speak the Word of God to one another (Volf, 2002:231). These arguments tie in with our own understanding of the ‘priesthood of believers’ described by Luther.

It is also the contention of the researcher that most of the pastoral care within communities on the Cape Flats is already practised by so-called lay people, or so-called ‘ordinary members’ of the faith community. The strength of this ‘human capital’ should be utilised better. Investment by means of more education and training is crucial, as well as the constant affirmation of the priesthood of all believers. It was also pointed out how ex-gangsters may serve as ‘bridge-people’ and play a vital role in the congregation’s ministry to gangsters.

We cannot escape the fact that most of the members of gangs are between the ages of 15 and 25 years. It therefore is of critical importance for faith communities not to neglect their ministry to children and the youth until it is too late. It is just as important to make sure that there is a holistic and integrated ministry plan for the congregation.

### **5.3.3 A Final Plea: For Christ’s sake! Take Good Care of Our Children and Youth<sup>162</sup>**

#### ***5.3.3.1 A much stronger focus needed***

Faith communities in general and pastoral carers in particular, should definitely engage our children and young people proactively and positively in order to guide and nurture them, the so-

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<sup>162</sup> The aim of this section is not to discuss aspects of a children’s and youth ministry, but to emphasise the vital importance of paying more attention to children and the youth. This is indeed one of the main challenges that the phenomenon of gangsterism presents to faith communities. Children and the youth in particular are at risk of being drawn to and into gangsterism, given the universal challenges and experiences faced during these developmental stages of their lives.

called 'Next-generation', through the maze of adolescence (Wimberly, 2000:101). Young people in particular are exposed to the same socio-economic climate as adults, but are not always well prepared to deal with it. The Youth 2000 Report by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) found that the four main concerns of the youth (15 to 34 years old) were unemployment (41%), crime (14%), HIV/Aids (11%) and money (10%). This report also found that 52% of economically active youth are unemployed. In discussing youth and crime prevention Cheryl Frank, executive director of Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN) and former senior research consultant at the Institute for Security Studies, makes the following important point:

In any discussion about crime prevention relating to youth, it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that the most important gains are those made by reaching these young people much earlier on in their lives. The experiences of early childhood and adolescence actively shape the overall well-being of people in their youth, and often create the conditions and constraints by which people have to live their lives. (Frank, 2006:116)

Rather than blaming young people for all that is wrong in the world and developing what Anne Streaty Wimberly calls 'ephebiphobia' – a fear and loathing toward adolescents resulting in devaluation of them and views of adolescence as a problem (Streaty Wimberly, 2005:xix), we should make sure there are enough models and mentors for them. We need '*faithing adults*' – who incarnate God's love in genuine, appropriate ways, in what we can call '*collective incarnation*' (Myers, cited in Nel, 2000:23). Older members of the congregation are "guarantors who are appropriately anchored in adulthood but who will walk with youth on their journey". These guarantors "share the burden of the journey, help read the road maps and offer encouragement" (Nel, 2000:23).

Wimberly is convinced that "our truest family is the family of God" (2000:112). The family of God should provide three important things for the young on the journey through life, according to Richard Osmer, professor of Christian Education at Princeton Theological Seminary (2001):

- **A Creed to Believe**
- **A Code for the Road**
- **A Dream to Esteem**

He calls these three things ‘Biblical Foundations of Ministry with Youth’. With ‘A Creed to Believe’ he refers to teaching the children a **basic vocabulary of the faith**. We should teach them how to use this vocabulary reflectively and critically, providing them with opportunities to practise the vocabulary and to deepen their understanding. A catechesis of personal relationships learn to experience anew the lure of the loving, forgiving and accepting God of the gospel – the opportunity to join a rich and deep conversation about this God.

‘A Code for the Road’ – By the time young people leave the ministry of your congregation, you want to have tried your best to help them develop **an inner ideal of the sort of person a Christian ought to be morally**, an ideal to live up to and strive toward. Exhortation is a very important part of providing this code for the road. Young people also learn to be moral by imitating **exemplars of the Christian life**. They, in turn, become examples for others. If we want our young people to form a code for the road, we have to expose them to people who embody that code (cf. the reference to ‘faithing adults’ and ‘guarantors’ earlier). Shelton (1995:25) lists the following Christian reference points that may help adolescents give reasons and take responsibility for their behaviour: the Decalogue, the Beatitudes, Gospel teachings, the writings of Paul, and the informed tradition of the faith community to which they belong.

‘A Dream to Esteem’ – Osmer speaks about the importance of **discernment**. Discernment for him means that people will have **bifocal vision**. They would be people with new creation minds – **seeing** the new creation struggling in **the present** and, simultaneously, seeing the ultimate outcome of this struggle in **the future**. They would be able to discern the small signs of the new creation already breaking into their lives and communities and **nurture them in hope** born of their confidence in God’s promised future.

### ***5.3.3.2 Keep it real!***

‘Keeping it real’ is a phrase used to indicate an engaged form of Christian youth ministry that intentionally brings to the forefront the concrete life experiences and concerns of the youth. It is a process undertaken by youth leaders, parents and other adults to connect the realities of black youth life in and beyond our churches to the gospel message. The goal of ‘keeping it real’ is to help the youth see and embrace God’s plan for their welfare and a future with hope (Jeremiah 29:11), and to make possible their development and spiritual growth in their becoming “Christian hope-builders in the church and world” (Streaty Wimberly, 2005:xiv).

## **5.4 THE NEED FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION**

A number of aspects that were touched on in this study need further research and investigation:

- There is a need for a deeper understanding of why Coloured people seemingly are more vulnerable or susceptible to social ills like gangsterism.
- More empirical, ethnographic research with regard to gangsters' views of the church and ex-gangsters' experiences of the church is needed.
- Research on the non-affiliated young people is needed – what factors play a role in helping young people to decide against joining a gang despite being exposed to the same challenges and dangers as those who do join gangs?
- There is a need for research on how to counsel gangsters as individuals and as groups.

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## ADDENDUM A

### I. INTERVIEW NOTES

- 1.1 I contacted **Pastor Henry Wood** telephonically on 1 June 2006 to make an appointment. Appointment granted for Tuesday 6 June 2006 at 10:30.

Arrived at City of Refuge, Manenberg at about 10:20. Pastor Wood busy with another interview/meeting. I was offered tea while I waited.  
When he was ready to see me, I was offered another cup of tea.

Our interview started about 10:55.

We met in his office.

I started off by giving more background information about myself and explained my research to him.

I asked his permission to record our interview. He had no problem with that. He mentioned beforehand that he might not be able to answer all my questions.

Interview starts.

Disruptions from time to time – people coming in; telephone ringing – which he answered once.

After interview, Pastor Wood showed me part of their work – a wall.

Introduced me to Quinton.

We watched parts of a programme about his project to be made public later; also parts of a DVD about his choir and spiritual dancing by young people.

I made appointment with Quinton Julius.

### 1.2 INTERVIEW WITH QUINTON ON MONDAY, 12 JUNE 2006

Manenberg

Raised Athlone, Belgravia Rd. “quiet area”

Never new about gangsterism.

Primary school Silvertown. Moved to Manenberg @ age 10.

Younger brother being bullied – defended younger brother – was beaten up by bully.

Went with parents to see boy’s mother who did not want to listen or rebuke her son.

That’s when Q’s parents said that if the boy bullies him again he should fight back.

This was the turning point in his life. From then on he fought back.

Was later also harassed by members of young gang in area where his girlfriend lived.

Got the guys one by one and beat them up.

Became notorious for fighting skills.

Started ‘gang’ BOS (Boys with Style) with some friends and family members.

Was later introduced to the Staggie’s.

Joined Hard Living Kids in 1981. Time of gang fights.

Never got a 'tjappie' – refused to be marked, because he moved a lot around Cape Town and other areas and did not want to be known through mark, but was HL at heart. Learned a lot of survival skills – e.g. how to deal with "kettings" and bracelets, and stuff. Even better than selling drugs.

### 1.3 INTERVIEW WITH LLEWELLYN JORDAAN

(Social worker, New World Foundation, Lavender Hill, Tuesday 4 July 2006)

- Territory; turf = important to gangs
- It takes many years to establish some sort of relationship with gangs – it took him about 10 years to make a 'breakthrough'
- Challenge: when organisation or community is situated within a certain 'territory', how can you reach the other (rival) gang?
- Inviting gangsters to come to you won't work (because of territoriality)
- They did come, e.g. on Mondays, after weekend gang fight, to try to get transport to hospital outside area. Local day hospital and police station were also situated within a particular territory, and therefore inaccessible to other (rival) gang
- Many church people see gangs as "beyond redemption" – will not allow gangs into their churches, e.g. for funerals – gangs must eliminate each other
- 'Church rules' come first, e.g. "he is not a paid-up member of our church"
- Question: What about churches' understanding of their mission?
- Gang is also an organisation with rules, etc.
- Gangsters are also human – we should try to 'connect' with them on that level – burying one of them out of a church is humane

### 1.4 INTERVIEW WITH PASTOR WOOD AND QUINTON (31 October 2006)

Aspects touched on:

- They are busy with open-air church services
- Rumours of new gang violence circulating in the area
- It is important to go out to the community
- New gang violence often starts with some or other misunderstanding between two or more people
- Drugs play a crucial role
- The younger gangsters do not have respect for people, and are therefore not respected by the people
- Most churches are not open for the community
- Many people have seen horrible forms of violence and killings and still struggle with those images
- "We have to cancel the blood spilled by the gangs with the blood of Jesus."

### 1.5 Godfrey Baartman & Joshua Louw

Tuesday 14 November 2006

- Godfrey – 10 years Uniting Reformed Church minister in Manenberg; Joshua – eight years Anglican priest



- Joshua: Many gang members are also members of churches – we're not talking just about people out there
- Story of Quinton (30) who was killed recently – came to him at one stage: "Ek het nou genoeg gehad."
- He turned against the gang, "Nou is my nommer getrek."
- Had charisma – could inspire other people – was shot 14 times already.
- Q asked Father Joshua to help him – had to set up a meeting with another Americans 'general', Charlie Henke
- Charlie, statesman-like character – was adamant that Q had broken the gang's code. Nothing he could do to save him, otherwise his leadership would be doubted
- Joshua challenged Charlie on the recruitment of learners from schools into gangs – these were not drug addicts or 'weak' ones, but 'the cream' of society
- He was at a stage threatened by somebody from the HL\$ because he buried Q's brother
- A Xtian response: not to compete with gangs
- Concentrate on the positives – e.g. Proudly Manenberg Campaign
- Minister to gangsters; not confrontational
- At the moment there is 'peace' in Manenberg – because nobody is interfering with one another's business. It is about turf
- Some reasons for gangsterism: Poverty; 1980s; political unrest; lack of good role models; forced removals under Group Areas Act – many have not arrived yet – not healed
- What can churches do to counter gangsterism?
  - focus on youth; listen to them; show interest in them
  - In parish: had a soccer club – had to terminate because of problems
  - Young People's Council – organise and coordinate youth activities in parish
  - Men's group – organise men
  - Home cells – discuss certain specific themes, e.g. Focus on the family
  - Teach parenting skills
  - Focus on spirituality
  - Give more space for people – to tell their stories and to testify
- Why are 'mainline' churches not successful in drawing in ex-gangsters?
  - Lack of hospitality
  - Not involved enough
  - Pentecostal and smaller churches have prison ministries – work in prisons and build contact and relationships with gangsters in the prisons

## SCARS, WOUNDS

- From seeing, observing, experiencing; or having been involved in gang-related violence in the community
- From apartheid past
  - Because of forced removals – they "have not arrived yet"
  - now being played out in personal lives – emotional, relational, or marital problems
  - now being played out in faith communities – conflicts, strife, power struggles

## **II. Interview with Pastor Tom Klein, Ravensmead 28 November 2006**

### **1. How long have you been involved in the community?**

Since 1994 when the CPFs (Community Police Forums) were started.

### **2. How did it start and what motivates you to be involved in the community?**

I was a member of the Anglican Church for many years – church warden, very involved in the church – a staunch member. God spoke to me to become an evangelist. I did not know what that meant, but somehow he put me in a squatter camp and showed me that that would be my area of work. I had no clue what to do at first. 2 Peter 3:9 came to me – that God did not want any person to perish, but that everyone come to repentance. That text motivated and inspired me ever since.

Two things that further motivate me are: the need for safe communities and, secondly, the fact that I believe that each and everyone, especially our young people, has received a talent, a wonderful gift from God.

When I led Bible studies at Pollsmoor's Juvenile Section, the Lord spoke to me and said: 'These children will eat the heritage ("erfporsie") of your children and your grandchildren'. It meant that if they came out, unrehabilitated, they would steal and rob, taking away other children's heritage. I realised that those youngsters in prison were our children – they were not aliens.

What are they looking for? They are looking for a chance; they are looking for role models.

### **3. What, according to you, are the main reasons for gangsterism in our communities?**

It is an achievement for many youngsters. To have a weapon in your hand – it implies power.

It is also about survival in a situation of poverty. It helps to put food on the table. That is why you'll find that mothers protect their children. These mothers know that their children are involved. Sometimes they see the blood on their clothes – but they would not talk. Why? Because that child brings money and food home. It is about survival. It is the same with prostitution. I have worked amongst prostitutes. I heard the same stories many a time.

It is also about territory, turf. Gangs claim a certain area as their own, and they would defend it from other gangs.

Another thing is the discipline in gangs. The gang leader has a lot of power over the gang. There is also a hierarchy – a top-down structure, colonels and sergeants, and all – but it is the foot soldiers that do the work. They receive orders that they must execute; they are well looked after. And they have respect for the leaders – they know that they would be severely punished if they disobeyed orders or act without instructions.

Drugs and money, together with guns, play a major role – and the foot soldiers are supplied with these. They do the job and they are rewarded. They would take out somebody on order from their leaders for a mere R500 or R1 000. For a young man that is a lot of money.

**4. How would you describe the involvement of churches or faith communities in efforts to eradicate gangsterism?**

Zero.

There is very little deep involvement of churches. They sometimes have things like coffee bars. Many of the churches have halls that are not really utilised for community work. There are not many recreational facilities for young people in our community. If I take them out of the shebeens, where do I take them to? At the shebeens there are music and pool boards.

**5. What can churches do?**

As I've said, churches should open their church halls to the youth. The Council has built a multi-purpose community centre, but the youngsters cannot utilise it, because it is too expensive. So, it has become a white elephant.

One of my favourite sayings is: "The church is too much in the church."

I strongly believe that social issues, like gangsterism, should be part of the training of ministers. They need to be exposed to it in the training already, so that they become involved in their communities when they start their ministry.

Church council members also need training. If they do not understand the need for community involvement, they could make it difficult for a minister or priest or pastor who wants to be involved.

**6. What do you think is necessary for anybody to get involved in working with gangs? What qualities are needed?**

First of all, you need some knowledge of gangs. Without knowledge you could have a wrong approach. Get an expert or knowledgeable person to inform you about gangsterism.

It is very important to win the confidence of gangsters. You need to befriend them with a non-judgemental attitude.

**7. What are the problems experienced by ex-gangsters, guys who have decided to turn their backs on gangsterism, or who have decided to become confessing Christians?**

An important part of the work amongst gangsterism is the work done while they are in prison. Many of these guys join a gang while in prison – for survival.