

**LEADERSHIP AS SERVICE OF A PARISH IN MISSION**

by

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## Summary

This study is concerned with the style of leadership needed to enable the church to fully express itself in mission. The renewed ecclesiology of the Second Vatican council, in which the church is said to be missionary by nature, is reviewed. The fundamental structure of the church is described theologically under the themes of the people of God, creation of the Holy Spirit and the body of Christ. A study of the Council's teaching on a pyramidal style of leadership leads to the conclusion that it is inadequate for implementing the teaching on the missionary nature of the church. A review of post-Vatican II ecclesial movements worldwide points to a strong desire among many for a church of greater participation with a more personal leadership style. A study of leadership in the corporate world shows how a servant-style is replacing the traditional pyramidal structure. It is shown how this servant-leadership style could also be used in the church. The results of a qualitative research study of St. Joseph's Parish in Metro Manila, Philippines, are presented. This shows how the pastor gathered around him a group of lay leaders who share and express his style of servant-leadership. This part of the study begins by setting the historical context within which this parish exists by giving an overview of the history of the church in the Philippines and then shows how the leaders of St. Joseph's Parish motivated a passive congregation to become a church-in-mission. This occurred over a number of years through the parishioners being invited to full participation in parish life and becoming involved in service of those in need. An intense formation programme by parish leaders, who used a servant-leadership style, helped lead this parish from its former passivity to a manifestation of the missionary nature of the church. The study concludes by identifying some themes for further research.

There is some special happiness here in the parish,  
the experience of community and closeness among us

The commitment of each one of us  
is not just personal effort on our part,  
but really God gives the grace for us to keep on.

**Mel Antonio Gubatan**  
**1965-1997**

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## Abbreviations of Roman Catholic Documents

### Vatican II

AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem
AG	Ad Gentes
CD	Christus Dominus
DH	Dignitatis Humanae
GE	Gravissimum Educationis
GS	Gaudium et Spes
LG	Lumen Gentium
PO	Presbyterorum Ordinis
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium

### Pope Paul VI

ES	Ecclesiae Sanctae (1965)
PP	Populorum Progressio (1967)
CU	Convenientes ex Universo (1971)
EV	Evangelii Nuntiandi (1975)

### Pope John Paul II

SRS	Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1987)
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## Glossary of Tagalog Words used in the Text

Babad	Immersion. Refers to the process of preparing a neighbourhood for the initiating of a Basic Christian Community.
Bakubukong	Undesirable people.
Baranguay	Traditional Filipino principality, still used today interchangeably with the Spanish word <i>barrio</i> .
Barrio	The Spanish word used to designate a civil district.
Baryo	Translation of the Spanish word <i>barrio</i> . Used interchangeably with <i>baranguay</i> .
Bayanihen ni Kristo.	Heroes of Christ.
Botika sa Baryo	Barrio drugstore.
Butil ng Buhay	Grain of Life.
Capiz	Sea shell used for decorative windows & lampshades. Light shines through, but not heat.
El Niño	The Child. Refers to a statue of the Child Jesus dressed in royal robes. Known in Europe as the Child of Prague.
Iglesia Filipina Independiente	Filipino Independent Church
Isang kahig, isang tuka	Living a hand-to-mouth existence.
Laya sa hiras	Freedom from poverty.
Legaya ng Panginoon	Joy of the Lord.
Lingap	Abbreviation of Lingkod ng Ating Parokya.
Lingkod ng Ating Parokya	Servants of the Parish, the title of the Parish Pastoral Council.
MKK	Mumunting Katolikong Kapitbahayan
Mumunting Katolikong Kapitbahayan	Basic Ecclesial Communities.
Operasyon Saniliry Lupa	Re-Settlement Housing Programme
Pagkalinga	Caring. Refers to the social development ministries.
Pagsamba	Worship. Refers to the worship ministries.
Pakikibahagi	Sharing. Refers to the teaching & formation ministry.
Pakikisama	Smooth interpersonal relations.
Patak ng Buhay	Water of Life.
Pook	Neighbourhood, zone. Pronounced in two syllables as: po'ok.
Santacruzán	Holy Cross. Refers to an annual festival.
Sari-Sari	Small shop.
Tagalog	Language of mid- and southern Luzon. The basis of Filipino, instituted as the national language by President Marcos.
Visayas	Islands in the central Philippines.

# **Chapter One:**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Imelda Marcos commissioned an oil painting for the palace in Manila. It depicts her husband and herself emerging from a sprouting bamboo plant. It reminds the viewer of an ancient Filipino myth which describes how Adam and Eve came forth from a sprouting bamboo. In their sumptuous home near San Fernando is another oil painting, also commissioned by Imelda. It depicts herself standing over the Filipino nation with arms outstretched.

These two vignettes were regaled to me by Fr Marc Lesage in his presbytery in St. Joseph's Parish, Las Piñas, Metro Manila, on June 1, 1996. "You see," he concluded, "Imelda saw the two of them as the new Adam and Eve, and she saw herself as the mother of the nation." "Just like Mary, the Mother of the Lord", added Lauret, a seminarian who was staying in the presbytery at the time.

Imelda Marcos had a clear picture of the kind of leader she was. Often Filipinos would point to a shopping centre or other large enterprise and say: "Imelda built that". She, through her

husband, contributed much to Filipino society. Yet many of her actions manifested disdain for others. For example, thousands of people were cleared out of an area in Parañaque, Metro Manila, so that she could build an international exhibition hall. When three workers were killed in an accident on the building site, she ordered that the work must not be delayed for even an hour as the building had to be opened on time. Full-grown palm trees were planted in front of the building and coconuts were tied on to them to impress the foreign visitors. Meanwhile, the erstwhile residents of the area moved south and squatted on the beach in Las Piñas, an area within the confines of the parish of St. Joseph's. We will come back to their story later (see 6.4).

Over twelve years later Imelda still protests her innocence against accusations of tyranny and, indeed, claims that she gave her life selflessly for the nation. She did do much to improve the country, but her style of leadership is generally regarded as oppressive. "What Imelda wants, Imelda gets", one often hears.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Over 35 years have passed since the closing of the Second Vatican Council in whose documents can be found the seeds of a new ecclesiology: the Church is missionary by nature and lives this through outreach beyond all frontiers, both within and outside the Christian community. Pope Paul VI summed this up in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*: the church must continuously be evangelized and then is sent forth to evangelize others (EN#15). Despite this teaching, many parishes of the Roman Catholic Church still seem to reflect the pattern of the past: a congregation concerned about attending Mass on Sundays, busy with its other internal

interests, though often with some outreach to those in need. At the head of this parish is an ordained priest with total power to make whatever decisions he wishes, provided they are within the general parameters of canon law. Although most of the clergy do consult the laity in some matters, they do not have to. A parish priest is still able to act autocratically, for example, by abolishing a parish council because he does not get on with its members. Meanwhile, the laity, in general, are supposed to remain passive receivers of spiritual goods from their pastors.

Vatican II envisages the church as a community expressing its missionary nature in the service of others. The question arises as to how this can become a reality in the parish. I believe that, while many attempts have been made to concretize the new ecclesiology, they are doomed to failure unless a different kind of ecclesial leadership is exercised. Through my involvement in the Lumko Institute (see a brief description of this Institute in the next paragraph) I have contributed to research and teaching on this subject. As part of my work I encountered St. Joseph's Parish in Las Piñas, Metro Manila, Philippines. I was intrigued to see how a particular style of leadership and parish organisation fostered a participatory church which was heavily involved in the issues of society. Through my study of this parish I came to realise that the key to a church-in-mission is the way leadership is exercised. The leadership style is so transparent and service-oriented that it forms the nucleus of a sub-culture (Hopewell 1987:5). I wanted to know how this parish came to reflect the *communio* theology of Vatican II (Kasper 1989:148-165) and how the pastoral leaders could move such a large number of mainly passive parishioners towards this.

On my first visit to St. Joseph's Parish in Las Piñas, Metro Manila, Philippines, I discovered a church-in-mission. This vast parish of 50,000 Catholics has only one pastor, yet seems to possess all that one could ask for in a church which is implementing the ecclesial missionary dimension found in the Vatican II documents. How did this come about? My research began with the two questions: "What makes a person a good leader? What qualities does he/she need to have?" The pastor at St. Joseph's possesses a long list of qualities; must all pastors have the same? Clearly not. There are many other mission-oriented parishes like St. Joseph's where the style of leadership is different.

My research then turned from looking at *leaders* to studying *leadership* which contains many elements, the main one being that it is *a relationship of influence between leaders and followers* (paragraph 3.6). It is within the context of this relationship that a leader expresses leadership qualities. This does not exclude the probability - if not the certainty - that two consecutive leaders of the same group of people (for example, one parish pastor following another) could both be accepted by their constituency without having to express leadership qualities in the same way or even, for that matter, the same qualities. I argue that, in order to lead a parish into becoming a church-in-mission, there are certain requisites for an appropriate leadership. Each leader will need to find his/her own way in which to put these requirements into practice. Hopewell (1987:103-118) argues that each Church community has its own ethos or character by which it can be recognised. Good leadership would be conducted by the person who recognises this and works within the community's expectations. Yet, is leadership to be exercised merely to please as many of the community as possible? If the answer were in the positive then the prophetic nature of leadership would be excluded. "Good leadership", then,

will include a quality of goading (Acts 26:14), or prodding consciences. These opening remarks point to something of the complexity of the subject.

### **1.3 Personal Involvement in the Issue**

The researcher has a personal interest in conducting this study. This purpose answers the question: “What is my research for?”, and there is a range of answers to it (Mason 1996:18). One may have to push oneself to be honest. For example, apart from advancing understanding in a particular field of knowledge, one could also be seeking some personal gain. There are often social and even political ramifications arising from such a study (1996:29-30). Ethical concerns also arise, particularly when human beings are the object of study, as in a qualitative research method (de Vos 1998:23). Mason, too, emphasises the morality inherent in a research project. She asks, for instance: “Whose interests are served by these criteria? How and why were they developed? Do the different sources offer criteria of equal stringency? Are they good enough in relation to the complex interests I have identified?” (1996:31).

My concern with the subject of ecclesiastical leadership goes back many years. Originally it was my reading of J A T Robinson’s introduction to McBrien’s *The Church in the Thought of Bishop John Robinson* (1966) which helped me see the servant role of ecclesial leadership.

Commenting on Vatican II’s documents he wrote:

They still reflect the traditional theological order of God – Church – World (and indeed of God – Ministry – Church – World), as if God were primarily at work in the Church and through that on the world. Whereas the biblical order is, rather, God – World – Church. The primary obedience of the Church is to be sensitive to the points at which God is working in history on the frontiers of social change and there to serve God in it (McBrien 1966:ix).

The Church's task is not to be the sole instrument through which God works in the world. God is there already. The Church's task is to "be wherever God is at work, in the van of God's process, baptizing and transforming it in Christ" (Robinson 1960:21). This change of direction (God – World – Church) affects not only our attitude to ourselves as Church, but also our attitude and practice of leadership. An extension of Robinson's scheme (in Roman Catholic language) could read: God - Laity – Priesthood (Leadership), instead of God - Priesthood - Laity. This would mean that priests are no longer to be seen as mediators of grace to the laity, but servants of the whole Church in mission to the world in which God is already present and active. This demands a change of mindset on the part of both clergy and laity, as well as a different kind of relationship between them. Part of my purpose is to show how this is theologically well founded and pastorally possible.

Reference will often be made in this text to the Lumko Institute<sup>1</sup>. The teaching of this Institute, as presented in its workshops and in its publications, presents a distinctive ecclesial style. The staff of Lumko Institute have taken the documents of Vatican II as the basis of their teaching and over the years have situated this, along with post-Vatican II thinking, in the context of the Church in South Africa. For their workshops they have employed an educational methodology from Paulo Freire<sup>2</sup> and the corporate world. The fact that they have been successful is attested to by the enormous interest that the Institute's publications have aroused throughout the world. To date, these books have been sold in 78 countries. The Federation of Asian Bishops'

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<sup>1</sup> For a full description and analysis of this Institute's theology and methodology, see Prior 1995.

<sup>2</sup> Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire became a world figure through his first book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. He followed this up with *Education for Critical Consciousness* and has written 25 books altogether. His concern was with educating the poor to take control of their lives and thence to rid society of its inequalities. After being

Conferences, which represents all the dioceses in Asia, has taken the Lumko vision as its own, describing it as “a new way of being Church” (ASIPA 1990:8; 1995:1; 2000:11).

Keeping in mind Mason’s questions concerning morality (1996:31), I admit, as mentioned above, that I am prejudiced in favour of a full participatory local church as advocated by the Lumko Institute and which can be found, in the main, in St. Joseph’s Parish. As there is a danger that I will see only what agrees with my ideas, a disciplined, rigorous and honest study cannot be over-emphasised (Carroll et al 1986:18). I need to become aware of any unrecognized assumptions so that the data which is uncovered can be studied within the “light of the theoretical framework that evolves during the research itself” (Strauss & Corbin 1990:49). Once I began to be clear about what I wanted to research, I was able to focus on the research questions which form the backbone of the research design (Mason 1996:15).

A further pressure I had to keep in mind was the possibility of an expectation on the part of the Lumko Institute’s staff that I justify the Institute’s theory with the results of my research. The Institute enjoys a widespread influence in the world, especially in Africa and Asia. Dozens of people travel from as far away as Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea, from Ghana and Ethiopia to attend the annual international course which is conducted in South Africa. During this busy month the programmes, methodology and underlying theology of Lumko are presented and adapted by the participants to suit their own cultures. The result of each course is a group of very satisfied participants who pass on their enthusiasm to others. Many of those who visit the Institute keep in touch with the staff, so there is an on-going correspondence of some

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expelled from Brazil he spent many years working for development in the offices of the World Council of

magnitude. On top of that, a full-time member of staff is required to handle the sale of Lumko Institute's publications throughout the world. All the staff are enthusiastic about their contribution to Church leadership and they receive a lot of affirmation. To suggest, in a study of a parish where a conscious effort has been made to put the Lumko vision into practice, that Lumko does not have all the answers, or that its training needs to take another direction, could be difficult for the staff to accept. As a result, despite my personal interest, I have had to hold a certain distance from Lumko Institute in assessing the practical outcome of its programmes in St. Joseph's Parish.

Although graciously received both in St. Joseph's and wherever else I went to talk with people or conduct research, I remained an outsider to the culture and to the Filipino church. I do not speak Tagalog. Although most of the parish leaders speak fluent English (I never had to resort to an interpreter) there is still the possibility that I may have misunderstood what they told me and what was going on. When speaking English they were using their second, sometimes third, language. Due to cultural differences, I could attach different concepts to some of the words they used. This came to my notice particularly as I transcribed the recorded interviews. In order to offset problems in this regard I asked each interviewee to read his/her transcript and make corrections. The few corrections I received were so minimal that I knew I had understood the interviewed leaders well. I also made continual checks for the meaning of words with Fr. Marc and members of the central formation team.

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

In the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council the term “People of God”, although perhaps over-used, captured the imagination of many lay people who wished to become involved in parish life. Most expected their involvement to include a part in the decision making process. The clergy as a whole were happy to have helpers on their own terms, but were not ready to give up their power base. The result has been enormous frustration and even anger on the part of both laity and clergy. The subject of this study speaks directly to this situation: the balance of power needs to be changed, and that through a different leadership style.

In paragraph 2.4.1 I shall refer to the reaction in Vatican curial circles to many of the attitudes born in the post-Vatican II period. For example, the role of women in the church could be picked out as a burning issue which must be faced. The general tendency on the part of church authorities has been to assert that a monarchic hierarchy has the duty to tell the laity what to believe and how to act in all situations. Apart from those who have left the church because this autocratic response to their requests for inclusion, many thinking laity are asking if the church has to be limited to this uniform pattern of leadership. The move to new forms of church life (paragraph 2.4) answers this question in the negative and clearly states that another leadership style is not only possible but necessary.

As will be explained in Chapter Three, a new style of leadership is being sought in commerce and industry. While some may cynically regard this as a way of seeking more profits, most of the theorists I have read base their views on the quality of people’s lives. Human dignity requires that the individual be taken seriously and be respected for whom he/she is. In business

this requires a new style of leadership, with a vision for human transformation and the ability to empower people. Many members of the Christian churches come from this milieu and expect a similar participatory style of leadership in their clergy. This study shows the relevance of leadership theories in an ecclesial setting.

The disenfranchisement of the majority of South Africans over the past decades was not only limited to the political field, but also included the economic, social and industrial, to mention just a few. With the inauguration of the first democratic government has come a new sense of ownership and a demand to be consulted in all matters. This has spilled over into church circles where demands for inclusion have led to creativity and new pastoral approaches and, at the same time, has led to much tension and controversy between members of congregations, as well as between them and their pastors. A serious study of how a contemporary leadership style can affect pastoral ministry and organisation can contribute to a new way forward in this matter.

In contrast to the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine of the power of ordination, the Reformation Churches affirm a more collegial and congregational model of church. In practice, one must admit there may not be so much difference between the two. This study could contribute on an ecumenical basis to the issues of authority, power and service.

## **1.5 Methodology**

My research question - what kind of leadership is required for a church-in-mission? - has determined to a large extent the method I have used (Strauss & Corbin 1990:36). In a

qualitative research study one primarily emphasises the events and actions themselves. I have attempted to develop causal explanations for what I discovered (Maxwell 1996:17-20). I also had to constantly clarify what it is that I want to know. This included being aware of where I stand in the research (Strauss 1991:467).

Mason (1996:11-13) maintains that the researcher needs to take up an “ontological position” by which one asks how one “sees the very nature and essence of things in the social world”. I began my research from a “Lumko Institute position” which emphasises the necessity of a participatory church with a new style of leadership. I began with a broad view of the organisational structure of a parish of 50,000 baptised people and later discovered the necessity of emphasizing, as a core of the study, the relationships among the leaders of the parish and the effect that this had on the parochial structure. This meant that I could not limit the research to one of the three questions which Strauss and Corbin (1990:39) list. They distinguish between inter-actional, organisational and biographical questions. Beginning with the second, I ended up highlighting the first within the context of the third. In the light of this I learned the importance for the researcher to engage in an on-going clarification of where the study is going and, where necessary, to limit the task (Carroll et al 1986:15). This process affected certain of the design decisions I had to make which ensure that a study is justifiable (Maxwell 1996:14).

The approach to this study has been both deductive and inductive. The two interests I have are *mission* and *ministry* (the necessity of a parish being a church-in-mission and how servant-leadership can bring this about). Through a study of the Vatican II documents and the works

of relevant theologians, I deduce the meaning of a renewed theology in terms of a church-in-mission. I also had to read extensively in the area of leadership studies to work out a description of leadership which I could apply to pastoral leaders. Within this overarching *modus operandi* there was need to employ other perspectives. The summary of the growth of the Catholic Church in the Philippines serves as a backdrop to the present study. In a missiological work such as this, it is the author's task to gather up historical experiences and seek "to express them together with their ever new and living message" (Gutierrez 1983:v). While attempting to relate the main elements of the Church's growth in the Philippines, I have highlighted those elements which I regard as having had a bearing on the Philippine Church in general and on St. Joseph's parish in particular. The fieldwork research constitutes the inductive approach. It was important to begin this research without having already developed an hypothesis. From an open-ended search for data, I developed concepts, insights and understanding from the patterns I discovered there which formed the basis of the three descriptive-analytic chapters on the parish (Chapters 5, 6 & 7) (de Vos 1998:242.281-282). Knowing that it is virtually impossible to capture the lived experience of others, I have tried to let the leaders I was studying to speak as much as possible for themselves (de Vos 1998:245).

Research questions "explain specifically what your study will attempt to learn or understand" (Maxwell 1996:51). Before conducting the interviews I wrote to the pastor, explained my intention of studying leadership in the parish and the purpose of the study, and asked him to discuss this with the leaders to order to obtain their permission. This was gladly given. In the interviews I conducted with parish leaders, I allowed the interviewees to follow their own interests, although I had a general structure in mind. After asking some personal questions

about the interviewees' family background and education, I asked them to describe their work in the parish and how they saw themselves fitting in with the other leaders and other parish activities. We talked about the people they served and I asked about what they understood to be the parishioners' reactions to the ministry the interviewees were engaged in. I also wanted to know what motivated these educated people (they all have at least one degree) to forego a probably lucrative job in the business world to give their lives to the parish where they work six days a week and often up to ten hours a day for a salary of less than R200.00 a month (less than that earned by a secondary school teacher). They spoke to me about what training is and the purpose they had in mind when conducting their seminars and serving the poor. I was interested, too, in how they integrated their spirituality with the task of human development. Towards the end of the interview I asked them about Fr. Marc Lesage as a person and as a leader: how does he relate to the leaders, for example, and what might happen when he leaves the parish? We also spoke about crises in the parish and how both leaders and parishioners reacted to them. I was fortunate in having built up a good relationship with each of the leaders during my first three visits so that the interviews were more like a conversation between friends. This process obviated the dangers listed by de Vos (1998:23-29) for those involved in qualitative research. These include emotional harm, not obtaining informed consent and not offering adequate information about one's project.

I recorded the interviews and transcribed them soon afterwards. As mentioned above (paragraph 1.3), I posted copies of these interviews to the respondents and invited them to correct or add anything they felt was missing. I then returned to the parish and conducted follow-up interviews with eight of those leaders which I recorded in writing. I chose these

eight because of the quality of their responses to the first interview in terms of interpretation of pastoral issues and methods.

When it came to the study of leadership theory, I found that the plethora of studies in this discipline have to be waded through until one finds a clear definition or description for which one is looking. Although referring to many authors, the main three I rely on are Robert K Greenleaf, James MacGregor Burns and Joseph C Rost because, in the words of Rost, they have left aside the mainstream narratives of leadership theory (in which most authors repeat the ideas of their predecessors) and have branched out into an inter-disciplinary study of the subject (Rost 1991:26). Deducing my own description of pastoral leadership, I use it as an analytical tool with which to study the infrastructure of St. Joseph's Parish and the style of leadership employed by its staff. Many leadership theorists are concerned with the managerial style required to lead large institutions in the latter half of the twentieth century. This led me to employ an analytical-sociological perspective in order to understand this parish as an institution. In the analysis of the parish itself I employed sociological and historical perspectives in order to come to a comprehensive understanding of how it is structured, the inter-relationships between the various forces at work there, and how the whole can be viewed through the leadership analytical framework I employed. I made use of a qualitative research model which is explained in more detail in the next paragraph. I also had to delve into the arena of spirituality once I discovered that this was the primary motivating force of the core team of parish leaders. I found it necessary to touch on the subject of educational methodology which the parish team uses when dealing with parishioners. Thus this study is multi-disciplinary.

Underlying the whole project is a missiological perspective. The Filipino Church is the product of intense missionary activity which occurred over hundreds of years. While the national church is making efforts to be the “missionary church of Asia” (my own phrase, but see PCPII 1992:42, 38-40; FABC 2000:3), the leaders of St. Joseph’s Parish see their task as one of moving the parishioners from a passive stance to an active participation in all areas of church life. This requires that they reach out to grassroots communities, develop social consciousness and move into socio-political action (Padilla 1997:175-176). Greenleaf (1977:49) could be regarded as having a missionary stance in that he desired a transformation of the world through the renewal of institutions, including their leadership. Burns, too, (1978:142) expresses the same belief when he speaks of the need for leaders to transform institutions in order to respond to the needs of society. Rost (1991:182-187) wants a paradigm shift to take place so that leaders respond to the new post-industrial society. My overriding aim in this study has been to discover how the missionary mandate of the church can be enhanced by a judicious use of leadership theories which are missionary in outlook, although they have been developed in another arena, the corporate world. In a sense, I am taking my previous study (Prior 1995) a step further. Drawing on the results of that analysis, I am hoping that I have successfully shown in this study that there is a concrete pattern available which points to how the re-discovered missiological perspectives of the Second Vatican Council can find expression at parish level.

## **1.6 A Qualitative Research Method**

A qualitative research method has been most useful in the study of leadership in St. Joseph’s Parish. There are both advantages and disadvantages in using this method. It shows definite

advantages over, say, a quantitative research method which Babbie (1989) calls “the traditional model of science”. The latter begins with a theory which comes from one’s “interest in some aspect of the real world” (Babbie 1989:36). One then outlines the method to be used to acquire the necessary information to prove one’s theory. This requires specific “steps, procedures or operations that you will go through in actually measuring and identifying the variables you want to observe” (1989:37). Although these may be modified as one’s research proceeds, they do give one a clear plan for going about collecting the data needed to prove the theory. The final step is to observe the world of one’s research and make measurements of what is seen (1989:38). Such a model utilizes a deductive approach: one frames a general hypothesis and then goes about testing it by analysing empirical data “to determine whether the deductive expectations were supported by empirical reality” (1989:41).

My interest is different. By employing a qualitative research method I had hoped to produce “findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (Strauss & Corbin 1990:17). It is not a matter of attempting to prove a theory, but of beginning with an area of study (in this case the leadership of the parish of St. Joseph’s) and allowing what is relevant in that area to emerge (Strauss & Corbin 1990:23). Rather than setting up an hypothesis to be proved, the qualitative approach entails the formulation of questions which I have tested by or against the research process itself. These questions express the essence of the enquiry (Mason 1996:15).

The grounded theory of Strauss is one specific form of qualitative research. He emphasises “the generation of theory and the data in which that theory is grounded” (1987:22). All data

collected, even the tiniest detail, needs to be analysed, coded and constantly compared in order for a theory to be authentically constructed. The emphasis is not on collecting the data but on organising the “many ideas which have emerged from the analysis of the data” (1987:23). This will constitute the content of Chapters Five, Six and Seven in which I spell out, in thematic form, an analysis of St. Joseph’s Parish in the light of a theology of mission and leadership theory.

The necessity for an on-going clarification of the study’s direction challenges the researcher to continually formulate for oneself what one thinks is going on. It is “a tentative theory of what is happening and why” (Maxwell 1996:25-27). This component of the research method is referred to as “theoretical sensitivity” by Strauss and Corbin, which “indicates an awareness of the subtleties of meaning of data” (1990:41). A number of resources give rise to this sensitivity: the literature which has been written on the subject (which I refer to in the main text) and one’s professional experience which, while it can block the researcher from seeing what has become routine, helps one to understand events and actions. Personal experience is another source of theoretical sensitivity, as well as the analytic process itself. My insight and understanding of a phenomenon increases as I interact with the available data, continually keeping it under analysis. I found it important to periodically step back to assess what is going on, to maintain an attitude of scepticism and to follow consistent research procedures (Strauss & Corbin 1990:42-46).

## **1.7 Fieldwork Sources**

Apart from the interviews mentioned above, my knowledge of St. Joseph's Parish has come from personal observation during my five visits over four years. During that time I took copious notes on what I saw and heard. I watched and listened to the parish leaders, both at their daily work in the parish, at a number of meetings and during the conducting of workshops. Many hours of informal conversation occurred. The fact that much of their parish business was conducted in Tagalog (at the workshops in which I was involved English was always used) forced me to carefully watch their relationships with each other and with the parishioners and workshop participants. During my visits there was a constant stream of ideas being discussed and put into written form by leaders using the parish's six computers. Many of these ideas were shared with me and became the source of rich conversations. On later occasions I was able to make further contact with the parish by phone, fax and e-mail in order to check my information and seek for further clarification. Another rich source was a number of books and periodical articles written by Filipinos, especially in the area of Filipino culture, pastoral ministry and Basic Ecclesial Communities. I was also fortunate to gain a knowledge of the wider church in the Philippines which helped me put St. Joseph's Parish in context. At the eight workshops which I co-facilitated with parish team members (in English) all the participants were asked to share information about their island, their church and their own pastoral experiences. The notes I took at these sessions and later collated amount to nearly one hundred closely typed pages.

## 1.8 Validity

Maxwell (1996:86) quotes Brinberg and McGrath, who describe validity as “not a commodity that can be purchased with techniques. Instead, it depends on the relationship of your conclusions to the real world”. The main point is that the researcher needs to give the reader the possibility of proving one’s account wrong. Meanwhile, the researcher has attempted to rule out validity threats by using evidence collected during one’s research to make alternative hypotheses implausible (1996:88). It has been incumbent on myself to see that the evidence I present is not only plausible but true. Otherwise, the conclusions I draw at the end will be invalid. I received assurance in this matter while conducting the interviews. There was an amazing agreement over facts and opinions. On one occasion a story was told by two people, each from his own point of view, in exactly the same words. The event had happened many years before (paragraph 5.5.1).

I have admitted my personal prejudice in regard to church leadership (paragraphs 1.3 & 1.5). I cannot eliminate this, but rather should use it productively (Maxwell 1996:91) by, for example, not being satisfied with a response I approve of, but pushing the interviewee to give deeper reasons for his/her opinion. While triangulation is not a fool-proof method of obviating validity threats, it is still one of the safest ways of testing one’s assessment of a situation from more than two angles. The interviews and conversations with parish leaders, participant observation of events, both in the parish and in workshops, and studying Filipino authors who have written on the subject of a participatory Church, particularly in the sense of Basic Ecclesial Communities and the necessary leadership which these concepts demand, have

helped me, I believe, to escape the dangers to verifying validity listed by de Vos (1998:351-352).

Maxwell (1996:95) refers to “rich” data that is “detailed and complete enough that they provide a full and revealing picture of what is going on”. One such source for me has been the Masters dissertation of Padilla (1997). While I had a minor influence on the theological aspect of her work, the detailed description (Padilla 1997:39-317) of St. Joseph’s Parish itself, much of it based on parish pastoral council minutes in Tagalog, offers a firm written back-up of what I heard in interviews and conversations, and experienced through personal observation.

Babbie (1989) lists nine problems concerning validity. Apart from those I have already mentioned, he adds illogical reasoning and premature closing of the inquiry. While I collected as much information as I could during my visits to the parish, it has become important to close the investigation as Fr Lesage has now left the parish and it is in the hands of local clergy. I wish to reflect on the leadership style which brought the parish to the stage at which I experienced it, that is, from Fr Marc’s inauguration in the parish as its pastor in 1969 until my last visit in 1996. In that sense the closure of information gathering was timely, but not premature. A period of almost 30 years is an adequate length of time in the life of a parish to make valid interpretations.

I hope to emulate Maxwell (1996:58), who says: “In many qualitative studies, the real interest is in how participants make sense of what has happened, and how this perspective informs their actions, rather than determining precisely what they did. This is the essential difference

between interpretation and description". My aim has been to describe the situation of St. Joseph's Parish, analyse it in the light of the mission theology of Vatican II and leadership theory, and interpret what this may mean for the study of missiology today.

## **1.9 Structure of the Study**

Following on from this introduction, Chapter Two - *A Renewed Roman Catholic Ecclesiology* - deals with a brief description of the renewed mission ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council which was presented in organic images as opposed to previously used juridical ones. I follow this with an analysis of the Council's teaching on power and leadership in the church. I then move on to show how the more organic view of church has been taken further in various parts of the world through the development of contextualized ecclesiologies. A common theme among these is an emphasis on small communities.

In Chapter Three - *Servant-Leadership* - I take a look at the development of leadership studies during the twentieth century which has led to a new understanding of leadership in commerce and industry. I then describe a number of non-mainstream leadership theories, along with a number of questions which arise from their contributions. I conclude the chapter with my own description of pastoral leadership which I shall later use to analyse the parish of St. Joseph's.

As a preparation for this analysis I use Chapter Four - *The Church in the Philippines* - as an introduction to the Philippines as a country. I offer a critical description of how the Church came to the islands and was governed by Spanish rule for 300 years. Then fifty years of American colonization prefaced the next fifty years of independence. In a later section of the

chapter I introduce the geographical and social situation of Las Piñas in Metro Manila and St. Joseph's Parish which resides within its boundary. The concluding section offers a review of how first attempts were made to introduce a new style of leadership into the parish by its newly appointed pastor.

The following three chapters are the result of my field research and deal with parish leadership. I portray the basic purpose of these three chapters in diagram 1.

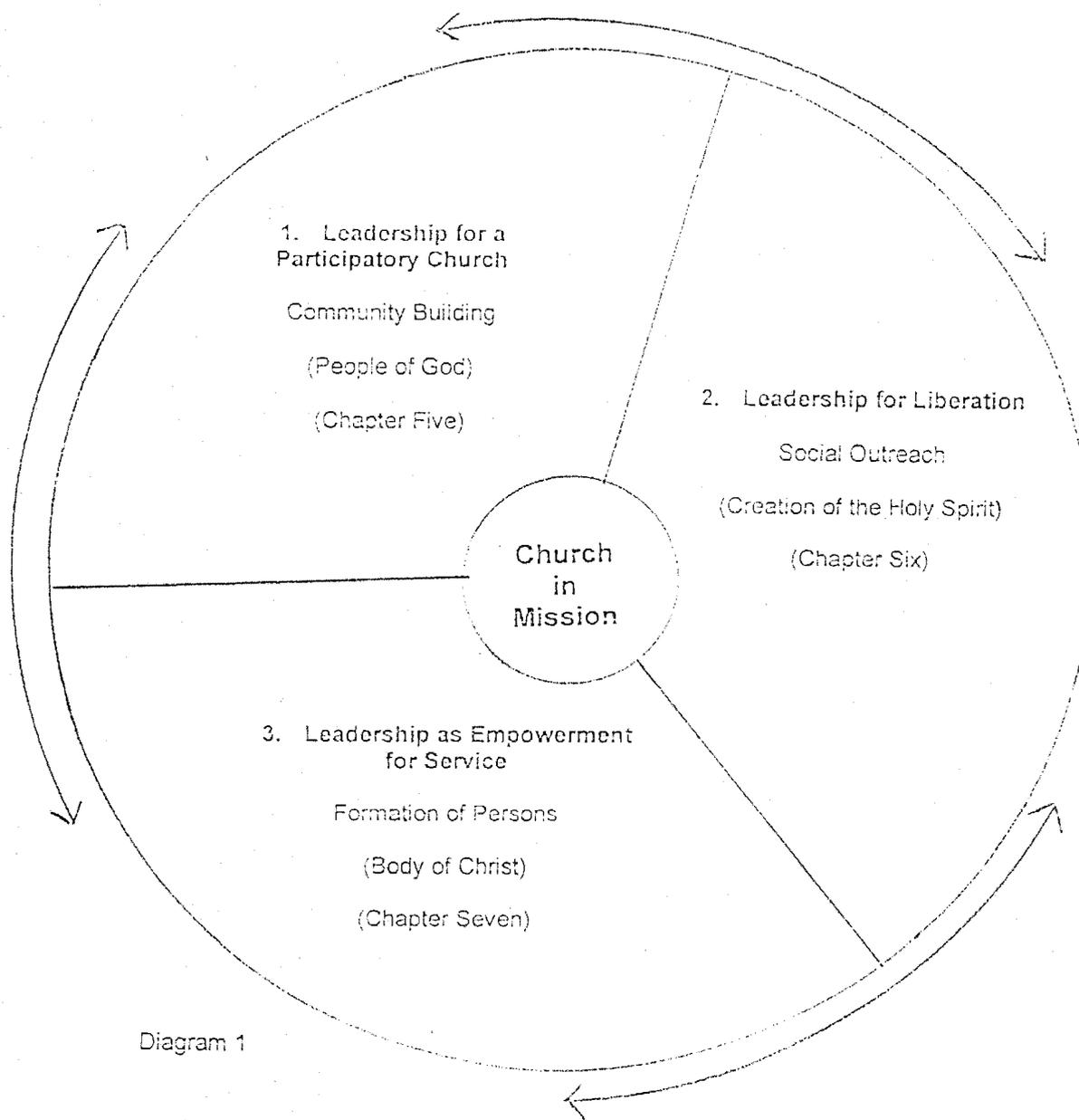


Diagram 1

### Three Areas of Parish Life

St. Joseph's Parish began with No. 1: participation. The parishioners were not very interested in formation or social outreach. The sense of community led to care for others (No. 2: liberation). (They moved from the charity model, through the organisation model to the liberation model.)

This led to a recognition that on-going formation was necessary, not just to learn skills, but to engage in the liberation of the whole person (No. 3: empowerment for service).

Each of these areas of parish life is a concretization of one of the three fundamental structures of the church as outlined by the Second Vatican Council – the People of God, Creation of the Holy Spirit and the Body of Christ.

The arrows point in two directions: each area of parish life leads to the others. Whichever area you begin with, you need to move to the others to make the parish a church-in-mission.

In Chapter Five – *Leadership for a Participatory Church* - I show how the pastor, with the assistance of some leaders, made efforts to motivate the parishioners to move from being passively “fed” to taking an active and participatory role in church life. Emphasis is given to the covenant community of young people from which most parish leaders were eventually to come, as well as the role of the parish formation team.

Having formed a central leadership team, the pastor worked with them to make efforts to increase the concern of the parishioners for those in need. In Chapter Six - *Leadership for Liberation* - I show how the concern for the poor grew through three stages of concern: the charity, the organisational and the liberation models of service. Note is made of how the interaction which takes place in the outreach programmes is personally formative for the participants. I also note the need for further growth in this ministry, as well as the spirituality which motivates this outreach.

In Chapter Seven - *Leadership as Empowerment for Service* - I describe and analyse the extensive annual formation programme of the parish. This is the basis for all ministry which includes so many people that ministry has now been decentralized. Through formation parishioners are encouraged to make use of their charisms and this is beginning to blossom in the inauguration of Basic Ecclesial Communities.

As a conclusion to the study, in Chapter Eight I summarise the development of the whole thesis. I make some comments on some of the major issues which have arisen and which would benefit from on-going research.

# **Chapter Two:**

## **A Renewed Roman Catholic**

### **Ecclesiology**

#### **2.1 The Roots of a New Ecclesiology**

“The Christian tradition has been pluriform from its inception” (Whitehead & Whitehead 1995:7). The Whiteheads have pointed out that there have been different Christologies and soteriologies from New Testament times. This, they say, is a sign of richness and “points to the ineffably diverse ways God is with us” (1995:7-8). Küng, too, sees a variety of ecclesiologies in the Roman Catholic Church which reflect the way the church has been understood at different times in its history. He has pointed out (1967:7), for example, that among the Apostolic Fathers one can detect two ecclesiological tendencies: the one is developed as a means for the leaders of the community to edify their people, the other is used to attack heresy. He has described the same phenomenon in other centuries of church history (1967:9-14). Bianchi has described (1992:34-51) how from the Constantinian era till the contemporary era there has been a conciliar movement trying to challenge the juridical and

monarchical structure of the church which dominated throughout that time. In the Roman Catholic Church a more uniform ecclesiology has been developed since the Council of Trent as a defence against the Protestants. The Fathers of the First Vatican Council (1869-1870), with war between France and Prussia imminent, truncated the *De Ecclesia* document and voted in favour of two definitions taken out of it, those of papal primacy and papal infallibility. For the following one hundred years the classic theological textbooks (for example: Murray 1860; Hunter 1900; Huyon 1933; Hervé 1949; Ott 1955) presented the church as an institution, some would say a perfect society, in which all jurisdiction came from above. The pope was seen as a monarch who represented Christ and had full power over the whole church, including the right to exercise in any diocese the same functions as the bishop (McNamara 1968:46).

Despite this monarchic thinking, other developments were taking place. There was, for instance, a strong move to see the church in a more organic way (paragraph 2.2.3). Also the renewal of Scripture study, which had begun in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, received a strong boost with the publication of Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* in 1947. He asked for a study of the biblical books in their original languages. The value of studying God's word received a new thrust. A liturgical revival was emphasising the mystical nature of the church and the presence of Christ in public worship. A shift from ritual to celebration was in the offing. These changes were gradually putting into place the basis for a new understanding of the church which would crystallize during the Second Vatican Council.

The writers of the original Vatican II draft of *De Ecclesia* returned to the Vatican I text, realising at the same time that they would need to supplement it with a description of the bishops' relationship with the pope, as well as the place of the laity in the church. This text was abandoned after objections by, among others, Cardinals Montini and Suenens (Vorgrimler 1967:105-107). The stage was set for an official *aggiornamento* in Roman Catholic ecclesiology, the very call which had been made to the bishops by Pope John XXIII at the opening of the Council. The new text – to be entitled *Lumen Gentium* - would officially lay to rest “the legalistic ecclesiology of the Counter-Reformation” (O’Neill 1966:30). It would be more pastoral in tone and thus offer a model of what the church could look like in the dioceses and parishes of the world.

The development towards a more dynamic view of the church was not the final contribution of the Council towards a renewed ecclesiology. A more radical change appears in *Ad Gentes* where the church is described as missionary by nature. The “fountain-like” love of the Father is expressed in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In Christ people discover the call to be reconciled to God and to one another. The members of the church are constituted by this mission and, in turn, must proclaim what was once preached by Jesus to the ends of the earth. The Holy Spirit was sent in order to “inspire in the hearts of the faithful the same spirit of mission which impelled Christ himself”. The Spirit, says Boff, is “the first missionary” (1990:23). The Trinity is the source of the *missio Dei* and the *missio ecclesiae* which are, in fact, the one mission of God to all humanity (AG #2,3,4,5).

The Trinity has always been at work in the world, inviting men and women to share in its communion (Boff 1990:47.69). The church does not exist for itself but on behalf of the world (Kraemer 1958:127) and it is specifically the Spirit who “opens the church to new mission frontiers” (Boff 1990:83). This “missionary activity flows immediately from the very nature of the church” (AG #6). Wherever we come across church we should encounter a community in mission, that centrifugal evangelizing effort to translate the Good News in language that can be comprehended by everyone (GS #44, quoted by Boff 1990:84). The purpose of the church is to “summon individuals and groups to personal adherence, and to express their faith in community”. This community has as its mission the service of others (Boff 1990:88.90). If this missionary thrust is absent, then that community is lacking something of its fundamental nature. As McCoy puts it, “the loss of missionary vision disqualifies the church from calling itself “church” (McCoy 1993:72). Mission is primary; the method by which it is exercised is secondary. Likewise, missiology is primary; ecclesiology is developed within the former’s ambit and influence.

Kraemer (1958:127-130) counters what he often sees as self-absorption on the part of the church with God’s concern primarily for the world. God became incarnate because God loved the world so much (John 3:16). Simeon’s prayer describes God’s saving power “before the face of all the peoples, to be a light of revelation for the Gentiles” (Luke 2:29-32). In Jesus’ prayer “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” Kraemer sees “the world as the theatre of God’s activity” (1958:129). He punches home his argument with a reference to II Corinthians 5:19: “For in Christ God reconciled the world to Himself”.

The church is to imitate God and Christ, not by including mission as one of its activities, but by *being* mission. Mission is not one of the marks of the church; it constitutes the church, and everything else we say about the church is coloured by this reality. This mission, being of the nature of the church itself, is the way of life for each of its members. Mission, then, cannot be seen as the work of clerics who are assisted by the laity, but is the calling of all the baptised (see Kraemer 1958:135).

Christians who faithfully live out their mission do so by means of service or servanthood. All believers are ministers and manifest before others that the church's nature, like Christ's, is service.

A recovery of the true meaning of the ministerial nature of the church, not only in the sense of activity but of being, would entail a careful scrutiny of the inherent tendency of our church structures towards a division of authorities and powers instead of a Christ-centred *diakonia*. The basic fact that the church *is* ministry (*diakonia*), because it is correlative to and rooted in Christ's ministry (*diakonia*), has to enter into full vigour again (Kraemer 1958:143)

The church *is* mission and the church *is* ministry. The former points to the basic Christian stance in the world while the latter points to how this mission can be implemented. The former demands a community-oriented church, while the latter requires a servant style of leadership. These two concepts will remain at the core of this study.

While others have offered a commentary on the ecclesiology of Vatican II (for example: Flannery 1966; Vorgrimler 1967; McNamara 1968; Kloppenburg 1974), my purpose in this chapter is to indicate the new elements of an organic ecclesiology. I will note how these are juxtaposed within a framework of post-Tridentine ecclesiology. I shall also make note of how faithfully this theology reflects the original missionary mandate given to the church,

particularly in reference to a theology of mission and ministry. As explained in the Introduction, my thesis is that the more organic ecclesiology, based on the missionary nature of the church, requires a changed leadership style, namely, that of servanthood and participation, and so I will then look at Vatican II's teaching on leadership. I conclude the chapter by giving some examples of how local churches have concretized a more organic church-in-mission in their respective cultures.

## **2.2 The Fundamental Structure of the Church**

Küng summarises the central teaching of *Lumen Gentium* under three images: the church as the people of God, as creation of the Holy Spirit, and as the body of Christ. These three images, he says, cover all that is “fundamentally essential to an understanding of the historical nature of the church” (1967:260). Anything else can only be presented by way of explanation. Küng played a vital role in the writing of *Lumen Gentium*. He was also involved in much of the debate behind the scenes, and throughout the Council held theological seminars in the evenings to help update the bishops. It seems appropriate to this researcher to take this trinitarian model as a basis for understanding a contemporary ecclesiology for the parish, particularly as *Lumen Gentium* explicitly refers to the Trinity as the foundation of the church: “The universal church is seen to be a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit” (# 4).

### **2.2.1 The Church as the People of God**

The disciples of Jesus saw themselves as the true Israel. In Jesus the old covenant had been renewed and, as Jews, they regarded themselves as the continuation of God's people. They

kept their Jewish practices while introducing new ones of their own. With Paul the church's mission grew extensively. Eventually, with the destruction of Jerusalem the church became a church of Gentiles.

Separated from the Jewish nation, the church still regarded itself as the people of the old covenant. Their use of such terms as the *qahal* of Yahweh and *ekklesia* bring this out. Their use of *laos*, too, points to how they understood themselves to be chosen by God (Küng 1967:116-121). Paul teaches us that Jesus "offered himself for us in order to ransom us from all our faults and to purify a people to be *his very own*" (Tit 2:14). Peter is even more explicit: "You are a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a people to be a personal possession to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were a non-people and now you are the people of God" (I Pet 2:9-10). This nationhood is not something earned or deserved, but is a gift offered to those who accept faith in Christ. The emphasis in the phrase "people of God", says Kress (1985:66) is not on "people" but on "of God". They are God's people – God is their origin, their sustainer, their goal. In the New Testament the word *laos* is used "for the fellowship of the disciples, for the community of Jesus Christ. It is now to the church that the words are spoken: 'I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people' (II Cor 6:16; Heb 8:10-12; Rev 21:3; Rom 9:24)" (Küng 1967:120).

The first chapter of *Lumen Gentium*, entitled "The Mystery of the Church", emphasises that the church is not a merely human fabrication but a creation of God: "The church stems from a free act of God's grace" (Grillmeier 1967:141). Even membership of the church is not fully

one's own choice but a response to a divine call to faith. The overall title of the document does not refer to the church but to Christ. Christ is the light of humanity and the baptised are called to reflect this in their life as a community on earth. The church is centred on Christ who is the primordial sacrament. The vocation of Christians is of its essence missionary. It is to participate in the mission of Christ – the *missio Dei* – who calls all of humanity to unity with God in himself. “All men and women are called to belong to the new people of God” (LG #13; see #1). “The church exists not for itself but for the whole world” (McNamara 1968:78).

To invite others to live in unity requires that the members of the church do the same. This means that the original meaning of *laos* has to be re-discovered. *All* the baptised are the church. Although this is not a new teaching, the dominant role of the clergy in the centuries before the Second Vatican Council leads one to realise that the use of the term people of God “provides a new view of the whole reality of the church” (Grillmeier 1967:153). There is a fundamental equality between all the baptised which is based on their rebirth in Christ and their reception of the Holy Spirit (1967:157). This is spelled out by the Council document.

God willed to make people holy and save them, not as individuals without any bond or link between them, but rather to make them into a people.

Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are none the less ordered one to another; each in its own proper way shares in the one priesthood of Christ.

There is one chosen people of God; there is a common dignity of members deriving from their rebirth in Christ, a common grace as sons and daughters, a common vocation to perfection, one salvation, one hope and undivided charity. In Christ and in the church there is, then, no inequality . . . for you are all one in Christ. (LG #9,10,32).

Comments Klostermann: “Here the idea of a basic equality emerges with ever-increasing force and clarity” (1967:239). He goes on to suggest that this unity between the baptised obliterates

inequalities of race, nationality, social position and sex. Writing before Vatican II Congar says that in the New Testament “there is a spiritual and real – real because spiritual – sacerdotal quality which, belonging properly to Christ, is communicated to all the members of his body” (Congar 1957:133). As a consequence, there cannot be a clericalization of the church for “this fundamental parity is much more important than the distinctions which exist in the people of God” (Küng 1967:125). A single community comes first; ministries which distinguish people within it are for the purpose of service. Priests, for example, are called to service of the community and are to work in such a way that it can truly become the people of God (LG #28). Although there is a distinction between the clergy and the laity, “there remains a true equality between all with regard to the dignity and to the activity which is common to all the faithful” (LG #32). The functions of the baptised are different but complimentary (Faivre 1990:18).

The image of the church as the people of God reminds one of the basic equality of those who gather in Jesus’ name. This sense of ecclesial unity is not based on a human desire for solidarity, but on the fact that the church is founded by God and is called to reflect in the world the inner communion of the Trinity (Kress 1985:32).

This image of the church enabled the writers of the Vatican II documents to speak of the church at local, that is, diocesan level. This concept was not developed, but its very use points to the genuine ecclesiality of those groups of Christians who, sharing in a unity of faith, gather as God’s people and express their faith in their own culture (LG #26; Richards 1982:13).

*Lumen Gentium* uses such phrases as “union”, “joined together by a close relationship”, “minister to each other”, “collaborate”, and so on. One detects a certain homeliness in the language, an expectation that Christians, united in a single community, will joyfully and with vigour work for the unity of the world which is the *missio Dei* revealed to us in Christ. The Council’s teaching that the church is missionary by nature is reflected in these texts. They speak of a community dedicated to the evangelization of the world. as we shall see later in this chapter. In such a church a new kind of leadership needs to replace the monarchic one, one that displays the church as ministry. If members of each parish could work towards this vision they would rediscover the original meaning of *laos* which should not be translated as “laity” but which describes a people who live in companionship and who actively and harmoniously work for the spread of the Kingdom (McNamara 1968:105). In Chapter Five we shall discover how a sense of communion and mission has been reached in the parish of St. Joseph’s through the exercise of a servant style of leadership.

### **2.2.2 The Church as Creation of the Holy Spirit**

For Luke the church is essentially missionary. Not only does he end his Gospel with Jesus instructing the disciples to preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins throughout the world (Luke 24:47), but he begins his next book with the same message (Acts 1:8). The disciples’ ability to do this will come from the Holy Spirit who will enable them to be witnesses to the Good News. In the story of Pentecost it is the Spirit again who enables them to take Christ’s message to the world and who reveals God’s plan for calling all nations into unity despite their language and cultural differences (Acts 2:1-13; LG #4; AG #4)). The Holy Spirit is Christ’s presence and power in the church. Having been sent by Christ to his earthly community, the

Spirit now makes a home in each believer assuring that one belongs to Christ (Rom 8:9). As a consequence the believer must live by the Spirit (Gal 5:25).

Seeing the church as a creation of the Spirit, the Second Vatican Council clearly replaced a primarily juridical ecclesiology with a fresh and dynamic one. The baptised, anointed by the Holy Spirit, are encouraged to accept ever richer fruits of the Spirit so that everything they do may be accomplished in the Spirit (LG #34). Born of water and the Holy Spirit they have become a holy and priestly community in which “the one life of Christ flows in all” (Kloppenburg 1974:38). They are enabled to turn every action into a spiritual sacrifice to God (LG #34; Klostermann 1967:244-245; Masterson 1966:112-113; McNamara 1968:106).

The church is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor 3:16-17), a building where the Spirit resides (Eph 2:17-22). The Spirit, then, “makes the church a completely pneumatic reality” (Küng 1967:171). Commenting on Chapter 5 of *Lumen Gentium*, Wulf states: “Hardly any ecclesiastical document of recent times could be found which so often and so forcefully proclaims the grace-given, charismatic nature of Christian life” (1967:272). This reality of the Spirit is made explicit in the gifts, or charisms, bestowed on individuals. *Lumen Gentium* makes it clear that all the faithful receive these gifts and they are not usually dramatic or extraordinary, but common. They are universal in the church and are “central and essential to it. In this sense one can speak of a charismatic structure of the church which embraces and goes beyond the structure of its government” (Küng 1965:30-31; LG #11-12; McNamara 1968:135-138).

The purpose of these charisms is for service and the greatest of them all is love (I Cor 12:1-11; 13; 14:1). For Dulles it is in the use of these charisms by believers that Christ may be said to reign as Lord of the church (Dulles 1983:20). Also, as a living organism the use of these gifts “constantly impels the church to find new forms of life” (Grillmeier 1967:166). This is possible because God is immersed in historical situations and enables us to reflect on and, where we feel called, change the church’s structures. “A Spirit theology accepts historical and personal factors as part of an on-going process” (Bianchi 1992:35). We do not only look to the present and future for signs of the Spirit, but also at our tradition where we may discern “neglected or repressed clues” (1992:36). This will happen if the church as a whole takes seriously the teaching of *Lumen Gentium* (#36) that all the faithful have a share in the kingship of Christ which enjoins upon them a duty to reform the sinful structures of society and, one may add, of the church too. The laity in particular, because of their knowledge and competence, are obliged to make known their opinions on what they regard as good for the church. On their part, pastors, recognising and promoting lay responsibility, should encourage this (#37). The obligation of engaging in constant renewal is repeated once more in the Chapter “The Call to Holiness” where all the faithful are reminded that growing in holiness is manifested in the lives of individuals by their living out the gifts of the Holy Spirit (LG #39). The text makes clear that there is an “inner bond and cohesion between individual members of the people of God and their office-bearers”. Both laity and hierarchy enjoy a fundamental equality “as regards vocation, dignity and commitment” (Klostermann 1967:234).

The primary place for the laity to exercise their charisms is in temporal affairs. It is in their daily life, in all their activities – particularly in family and married life, daily work and even

when they are relaxing (LG #34) – that they bring Christ into human living and so work for the transformation of society. They are, as it were, at the cutting edge where they as church are immersed in the world. Far from mission being a clerical preserve, the majority membership of the church is already there where mission is to take place – if only they were empowered. Because of past conceptions of the church as the preserve of the clergy, this “temporal vocation” can still be regarded by some as second best. *Lumen Gentium* offers a different vision, one in which the whole of creation is ordered to the praise of God. The document points to (though does not make it explicit) a “secular spirituality” through which believers see their daily activity as a means of bringing the spirit of Christ into the whole of society. Human effort of all kinds, technological skills and the ordering of civil life is to serve the good of people which includes the just distribution of the world’s goods (LG #36). The seeds of this secular spirituality were later developed in *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (1965) and at greater length in *Gaudium et Spes* (1965).

This Roman Catholic teaching on the charisms of the baptised may not sound revolutionary today, but it caused a storm of protest when it was placed before the bishops gathered at the Second Vatican Council. Suenens opened his speech in the second session by commenting that one would have the impression that “charismata are nothing more than a peripheral and inessential phenomenon in the life of the church” (Suenens 1964:18). Even the administrative apparatus must have an intimate connection with the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, he said. To speak only of the apostles and their successors when writing about the church “would be defective in a matter of the highest importance” (1964:19). Novak observes (1964:151) that “in the mind of almost everyone this was the great moment of the session”. While the majority

were in favour of such a view, it did meet fierce opposition. Many argued that the laity are a purely passive element in the church, at best an instrument of the hierarchy. They argued that the relationship between the hierarchy and the laity is that of authority and obedience (Klostermann 1967:233).

The image of the church as creation of the Holy Spirit takes the image of the church as the people of God further. Not only are all the members of God's *laos* equal, but each is gifted and has an active role to play both within the church and in working to transform society.

This teaching has led to an explosion of ministries in the church since Vatican II, although these are too often restricted to the sanctuary - what Dunning calls the ministry of "mice", the French call "frogs in the holy water font" (1980:14) and Bosch calls "mini-pastors" (1991:473). Lay people are working in many areas which before the Vatican Council were reserved for the ordained. It would seem that a parish is not fully manifesting *Lumen Gentium's* teaching until there is a general awareness about the existence of charisms and a planned campaign to empower the laity. Once their charisms are let loose there would be not only a belief in the church as mission at parish level, but also an overall commitment to carrying out that mission by working for the transformation of society. A servant style leadership will be needed to bring this about. In Chapter Seven we shall see how St. Joseph's Parish became a parish in mission through the exercise of that kind of leadership.

### 2.2.3 The Church as the Body of Christ

As mentioned in paragraph 2.1 an organic view of the church had been developing for some time. John Adam Möhler (1796-1838) of the Tübingen school, tired of arid scholasticism, made a detailed study of the early Fathers in whose writings he found views of the church close to his own. Möhler “saw the church as a living and organic community animated by the Spirit of Christ” (McNamara 1968:17). As a result he formulated a theology of the church as a mystical body. Möhler was followed by others, including Scheeben who carried his ideas to Rome where he taught in the Jesuit school of theology. Although no space was given to Möhler’s emphasis on the church in Vatican I’s *De Ecclesia* his views eventually found their way into a number of Vatican documents, particularly *Mystici Corporis* (1943) of Pope Pius XII. In using the image of the church as the mystical body of Christ, by which all are related to each other and to Christ as the head, the pontiff provided a theological foundation for the Lay Apostolate (or Catholic Action) by which the laity were encouraged, on the basis of their baptism, to take an active part in church life.

Vatican II’s *Lumen Gentium* makes use of many images to describe the church, all of which focus on Christ. The church is a sheepfold whose gateway is Christ. It is a flock which is brought to pasture by Christ himself. It is a cultivated field in which Christ the true vine gives life and fruitfulness to the branches. It is a building – the household of God - of which Christ is the cornerstone. It is that Jerusalem which is above, the spotless spouse of the spotless lamb (LG #6). Above all the church is mystically constituted as Christ’s body through whom life is communicated to all. In the densely written paragraph 7 the word “body” is used no less than 25 times, and there are 27 quotations from 7 New Testament letters. Möhler, and now Vatican

II, were returning to the ecclesiology of Paul. The Council document, however, does not employ the term “mystical” which Pius XII used to describe the mysterious relationship the church has with Christ. The phrase “body of Christ” is “theologically more significant, suggesting more directly that in a true sense the church *is* the body of Christ” (O’Neill 1966:38).

Küng (1967:230) has pointed out that there was a development in the understanding of this concept. The church as the body of Christ is Paul’s own original image. His development of this idea in Romans and I Corinthians differs from the use of the image in Colossians and Ephesians. In the former two books Paul sees each local community as the body of Christ, whereas in the latter two books the image refers to the universal church. While they complement each other, the two aspects should not be confused as each has its own purpose.

In Romans and I Corinthians Paul is concerned with the relationship of believers to one another, with the emphasis on the horizontal (Bianchi 1992:37). The body of Christ is the body of Jesus on the cross, the resurrected body and the body present at the Lord’s Supper. Through baptism Christians are united to Christ, share in the fruits of Christ’s redemptive act in the Lord’s Supper and thus become themselves the body of Christ in their community. That is, they are united in one body. As a consequence, whatever differences may be noticed between the believers, they are fundamentally equal (Küng 1967:226-228) and their differences contribute to the richness of the church. In the body of Christ “all have equal access to the gifts of the Spirit. This equality in the Spirit does not mean that all are the same. Rather the gifts of the members vary and their individual functions are irreplaceable. No one

can claim to have a superior function because all functions are necessary and must be equally honoured for the building up of the body (Fiorenza 1992:20).

In the same vein *Lumen Gentium* picks up this theology of the body of Christ within which the laity find their rightful place. They participate in the church's own mission: "All lay persons, through those gifts given to them, are at once the witness and the living instrument of the mission of the church itself" (#33).

Paul's understanding of the church as the body of Christ is similar to Israel's identity as the people of God. "The church as the Mystical Body of Christ ought not to be viewed in isolation from the church as the people of God; after all, they are two complementary images of one and the same reality" (Klostermann 1967:233). Küng (1967:225) believes that one can only understand the church as the body of Christ once one has understood the church as the people of God. Because they are constituted a people by Christ, the new people of God is the body of Christ. Their relationships to each other follow from this. Their membership of the one body compels them to serve, to encourage, to give generously, to be conscientious and to love without pretence (Rom 12:7-9; I Cor 12:27-30). The equality of the members of the people of God is described in new language, this time with an emphasis on the centrality of Christ and the unifying role of the Holy Spirit. While they, like the people of God of old, are chosen by God to be members, the new emphasis is on the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are given to them for the building up of Christ's body, the church. *Lumen Gentium* refers to these gifts as "a wonderful diversity" (#32). To be a Christian is to be called to active altruism, to consciously build community by being concerned for the other members of the body. Through

baptism and confirmation one is commissioned for the mission of the church (Klostermann 1967:240-243). “Because through the Lord’s Supper they *are* united in one body, then they *ought* in their everyday lives to live as members of the one body and realise the unity of the one body” (Küng 1967:229).

The development of Paul’s theology of the body of Christ in Colossians and Ephesians carries a related but different emphasis. Not only must believers live in unity and love with one another, but they must also recognise their connection and dependence on Christ who is the head of the body. As members grow they grow into him (Eph 4:15-16; Col 1:18). Just as he has given his life for them, so ought they to remain subject to him (Eph 1:15-23; 5:23-24; Küng 1967:231-233). “It is not simply a moral consecration of our life to Christ, . . .but our acts are to be considered as his own and they must be so in fact” (Congar 1965:77).

While it may seem healthy that Pius XII and then Vatican II returned to Paul’s image of the church as Christ’s body, this concept could also be open to abuse. The emphasis on Christ as head and the inter-relationships of the church’s members could generate “a static and immutable image of the church, a concept of the church as hierarchic and monarchical” (Michiels 1989:90). The church would then be structured as though it were a business in which there were clear lines of communication between the authorities and those who have to obey them. This latter view is in fact supported by Schofield who bemoans the fact that the chief image for the church in the Vatican II documents is that of the people of God. He sees in this a playing down of the hierarchical and juridical structures of the church and a watering down of the idea that the Roman Catholic Church is identifiable with the Mystical Body of

Christ (Schofield 1993:98). In contrast, Michiels believes that the people of God concept should be the basic one, particularly as it is able to assume the other images and allow them to make their own particular contribution to our understanding of the church (Michiels 1989:92). Whatever the argument about images, most theologians seem to be in agreement that the underlying concept of church which comes through the many images used in the Vatican II documents could be described as *koinonia*, participation and co-responsibility. The concretization of these concepts will require new forms of church leadership and administration (Michiels 1989:96), forms which can enable the faithful to make full use of their gifts (Kelley 1982:80). We shall be looking at this in the next section.

Meanwhile, to complete this section, it is appropriate to note that the re-discovered view of the church reflected in the Vatican II documents recognises the uniqueness of the individual Christian, while emphasising the relationship of believers one to another, as well as their relationship to Christ. Believers are reminded that they are called to community, not for their own sake, but for mission to the world. This raises two consequences for a parish. Firstly, most Catholics have been brought up in – and often still experience – a juridical church of structures, including a ritualistic liturgy. To move into the vision emanating from Vatican II and later developments (paragraph 2.3) formation is required. This cannot be left to Sunday homilies or haphazard meetings and courses which may occur from time to time. A parish which is convinced that it is a church in mission and ministry will offer a continuing, well-planned and evaluated programme of formation which will extend to as many parishioners as possible. We shall see how the leadership of St. Joseph's Parish puts a never-ending energy into preparing, through formation, people to participate in the church's mission.

The second consequence is of even greater importance. Those involved in formation need to have an ever-deepening personal relationship with Christ. This would form the heart of their teaching. Without this they could be trainers of a better management system, as opposed to contributing to the building up of the body of Christ. Believers do not necessarily deepen their relationship with Christ by “going to Mass” on Sundays. The parish formation programme needs to include the faith dimension at its core so that the interconnection between the parishioners is founded on a shared personal relationship with Christ, the head of themselves the body. The effect on those involved in the church’s mission is that they will be working less from coercion, however mild, as from an inner motivation. We shall have occasion to discover to what extent the servant-leaders of St. Joseph’s Parish work from such an impulse, particularly through their formation in a Covenant Community.

In this section we have outlined the main tenets of a renewed mission ecclesiology which can be found in the Vatican II documents, particularly *Ad Gentes* and *Lumen Gentium*. As pointed out, leaders need a corresponding style of leadership in order to bring this new thinking into practice. We now look into the Vatican II documents to discover if such a renewed style can be found there.

### **2.3 Leadership According to Vatican II**

The Vatican Council’s statements on Christian leadership can be classified under two headings. The first could be entitled “a theology of divine power”, and the second “a methodology of leadership”. I shall deal with these in that order.

### **2.3.1 A Theology of Divine Power**

According to Vatican II teaching, Jesus, while still on the earth, entrusted the twelve apostles with the power to rule the church in his name. Now the risen Christ continues to rule the church through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. The pope enjoys a sacred primacy over the whole church. He is the vicar of Christ and the visible head of the whole church. He possesses an infallible teaching office which is permanent in nature and must be believed in by all the faithful. The pope has supreme and universal power over the whole church and he can exercise this power anywhere in the world without hindrance (AA #23; CD #4; DH #15; LG #14,18,20-22,27).

As Jesus entrusted the apostles with their mission in the world, so the bishops are entrusted by the same Lord to be the shepherds of the church. Their commission, then, is divinely instituted so that anyone who listens to them listens to Christ, and those who despise them despise Christ. Through episcopal ordination the bishops receive a special grace from the Holy Spirit to sanctify, teach and rule the church. One of their most important duties is preaching the Gospel and when they do this as a college they “proclaim infallibly the doctrine of Christ”. Bishops are the legates of Christ and through the authority and sacred power they have received with their ordination they govern their dioceses (which are referred to as “local churches”). Although they possess their governing power in their own right, they may not use it unless they are in communion with the pope and traditional doctrine. Indeed, bishops have no power at all unless they are united with the pope who has supreme power over them (LG #18,21-22,25,27).

Ministerial priests share in the sacerdotal dignity of their bishops, though to a subordinate degree, and consequently possess sacred power by which they form and rule the people. They depend, however, on the bishop for the exercise of this power. The priests of a diocese, who are signed with a special character, form a presbyterium and work in co-operation with the bishop for the care of souls which is their primary function. They have to pass judgement on the authenticity and good use of the gifts of the laity. They are to support their bishop and act as his mouthpiece. Being hierarchically united with him, they make him present to the assembly of the faithful. This requires the obedience that a son has for his father (AA #3; CD #28; LG #10,28; PO #2,5-7,12-13).

“At the lower level of the hierarchy are to be found deacons who receive the imposition of hands ‘not unto priesthood, but unto ministry’” (LG #29).

The laity, who in their own way “share in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ”, are assigned to their own role in the mission of the people of God and work mainly in temporal affairs. They have the right to receive from the pastors what is necessary for their spiritual good. They have a right and a duty to participate in the apostolate of the church by using the talents they have received from the Holy spirit and, if they do not work to help build up the body, they are to be regarded as useless (AA #2-4,10; LG #31,37).

The Council documents present a clear hierarchy of spiritual power in the church which originates with Christ, is given primarily to the Supreme Pontiff and through him is passed on in various degrees to the bishops, ministerial priests, deacons and finally the laity. This pyramidal structure is presented in the documents as divinely ordained and appears alongside the description of the church as a community of equals, as described above (paragraph 2.2).

What appears as an obvious contradiction today needs to be understood within the context of the time. The renewed theology of a church which of its essence is in mission to its own members, as well as to the world around it, came mainly from the *periti*, or experts, who were invited to participate in the Council, not least of whom were the theologians who accompanied their bishops and who worked in the background, sowing these new ideas and assisting in the writing of the documents. For a church steeped in centuries of rigid theology and juridicism, it could be regarded as a miracle that these ideas were accepted virtually unanimously by the 2,400 bishops who voted on each document. The traditionalists could feel safe with their accustomed ecclesiology and yet at the same time felt they had followed the advice of Pope John XXIII who had expressed the need for fresh air to enter the church. Meanwhile the progressives could feel happy that a more community-oriented church was accepted and that the Council's teaching laid a basis for developing this further.

The heavy emphasis on a divinely instituted hierarchical system has, in the author's view, prevented the dynamic theology of the church as mission from receiving the emphasis it deserves. Much of the creative and exciting writing of the post-Council era has been stifled by a traditionalist juridical system which regards itself as immutable and which insists on worldwide uniformity. We return to the comments made at the beginning of this chapter about the existence throughout the church's history of a variety of ecclesiologies and the attempts made to introduce a more conciliar ecclesiology. The Gospel-based mission theology of *Ad Gentes* will not penetrate the minds of most Roman Catholics unless there is breakthrough in an understanding of church leadership. If the church is mission its leadership must be ministry.

### **2.3.2 A Methodology of Leadership**

Intermingled with the above theology of divine power are many exhortations to leaders in the church concerning the way they should exercise their leadership. The bishops are to see their pastoring role as one of *diakonia*. In their commitment to serving the faithful, they should not only listen to them, but also be willing to lay down their lives for them. They should treat their priests as helpers, sons and friends. They engage in regular dialogue with their priests and are compassionate and helpful to those who are in danger or who may have failed in some way. Through the senate of priests the bishops consult with them and discuss the pastoral needs of the diocese, although the clergy only have a consultative voice. It is important for them to approach people in order to initiate and promote dialogue with them in humility and courtesy. They have a duty to favour the lay apostolate and to recommend those sodalities through which lay people can participate in church life. They may entrust the laity with certain duties, provided they preserve their superior ecclesiastical control (AA #20–25; CD #16,28; ES #15; LG #24,27,28).

Priests should regard their bishop as a father and obey him with all respect, knowing that they are his co-workers in preaching the Gospel. Their primary concern is the “care of souls” and this demands that they get to know their parishioners and offer them spiritual formation and training for the apostolate. As a father and teacher, they are to instruct the laity, teach them, guide them, lead them, train them and warn them. They have a grave obligation to ensure that the faithful, especially the young, receive a Christian education. Part of this task is the support of Catholic Schools and those students who attend university. They have the duty to provide the laity with moral and spiritual help so that they can work for the renewal of the temporal

order. In all of these tasks the clergy will work as brothers with the laity and express special concern for their apostolic activities, while attending especially to the poor and weaker ones. They should recognise and promote the dignity and responsibility of the laity, be willing to listen to them, use their prudent advice, respect their experience and competence in various fields of human activity and confidently assign them duties in the church. Fostering the charismatic gifts of the laity, they should give them the freedom to act, even inviting them to take initiatives in undertaking their own projects. While they do not belong to the world, they have to live among people and they will cultivate the basic Christian virtues which enable them to treat everybody with the greatest kindness (AA #7,22,25,30; CD #28-29; GE #2,9-10; LG #28,37; PO #3-6,9).

“The laity have the right to receive in abundance the help of the spiritual goods of the church, especially that of the word of God and the sacraments from the pastors”. Because of their competence and knowledge, they may be obliged at times to make known their opinions. They should disclose their needs to the clergy and promptly accept in Christian obedience their pastors’ decisions. If the bishop decides to convoke a diocesan pastoral council lay members will be part of it and will offer their advice. Using their own special competence and responsibility, they work for the renewal of the temporal order. They may be commissioned to take on some duties in the church provided they remain under ecclesiastical control. Where the church’s freedom is hampered they may take over some priestly duties, such as teaching Christian doctrine and encouraging people to receive the sacraments. They collaborate more closely with the hierarchy by becoming members of mandated sodalities (AA #7,17,20-21,24; ES #16; LG #37).

This list of rather repetitive exhortations preserves the hierarchical system described in paragraph 2.3.1. At each of the strata of the pyramid control is still preserved over those below, while members at each layer live in obedience to those above. This strict grading of power is softened somewhat with references to a spirit of service and relationships of friendship and help. On the whole the laity remain passive receivers in the church, although they may be allowed to use their initiative at times.

Noticeable in this list is the mixture of metaphors. The bishop is superior to his priests whom he treats as helpers, sons and friends. The priests are to be fathers, teachers and brothers of the laity. These words affirm what was stated above concerning the juxtaposition of juridical and mission ecclesiologies. In pastoral practice the power structure predominates and the Gospel-oriented ministry approach to leadership loses out, except in particular circumstances. Given the human propensity for power and control over others, a strong, indeed, a resolute and fervent commitment to expressions of Jesus' teaching on servant-leadership (as found in Mark 10:41-45) are needed to encourage ecclesiastical leaders to change their patterns of thinking and behaviour. Else we shall continue to hear pious platitudes about service while decision making, for example, is reserved to those higher up the hierarchical pyramid. I stated above that a mission ecclesiology will not be accepted until a servant-leadership is inculcated on a wide basis. The opposite is also true: church leaders will not take on board a servant-leadership unless they are convinced of a mission ecclesiology. Which comes first? Neither; they arrive together. The challenge facing Roman Catholics is to accept in mind and heart the full renewed ecclesiology of Vatican II which sees the church as mission and leadership as ministry. As we shall see, this is what was done over a number of years in St. Joseph's Parish.

The mixture of new language and old habits has been the cause of much tension during the past 35 years. It is O’Riordan’s opinion that Paul VI tried to preserve these two viewpoints in a “bifocal synthesis”, but that he eventually moved towards the primacy of hierarchy when he saw unrest in the church (O’Riordan 1991:609). It would seem to be an impossible balancing act for any leader, something like a divinely appointed boss trying to act like a friendly janitor. Perhaps it is for this reason, from his experience in the corporate world, that Greenleaf has stated that an organisation cannot adequately renew itself while there is “a single chief atop a pyramidal bureaucracy” (Greenleaf 1996:79). Heavy-handed or benign, the use of power by such a leader is “destructive of the human spirit in both the power-holder and the subject” (1996:83). Gittins agrees: “Hierarchy and dialogue are incompatible” (1999:45). From his experience in the political field Burns maintains that the old idea of authority worked while it was “legitimated by tradition, religious sanction, rights of succession and procedures,” yet without the mandate of the people (Burns 1978:24). Today all those in authority must take into account the influence that followers have on them. The way forward would seem to be a replacement of the humanly created hierarchy with more participatory and democratic structures (Bianchi & Ruether 1992:7) which are more in line with the Gospel (see also Hornsby-Smith 1989:37). The Vatican Council, which opened up the possibility for changed structures, was not a finishing point, but rather an important stage on a continuing journey. Since 1965 there have been further developments in the experience of being church and these have implications for a different style of leadership as groups have attempted to work out this bifocal synthesis in the context of their own cultures. We reflect on these in the next paragraph. They will provide us with a world-wide setting against which we can analyse in

more detail how the staff in St. Joseph's Parish have found their own unique approach to mission and ecclesial leadership.

## **2.4 Developments in Local Churches**

As we have just seen, the bishops at the Vatican Council did not conclude with a uniform ecclesiology but rather a dualist one which took into account the two basic trends to be found among the participants. This is not necessarily to be seen as a contradiction. The Council's documents express the summit of previous deliberations and point towards further reflection in the future. In the words of Robinson: "The significance of the decrees of Vatican II lies in the movement (and the momentum) they reflect. The great hope lies in the fact that they determined nothing, but left things open" (McBrien 1966:ix). The Council "was an event in the church which is continuing to have an impact" and this is seen in a variety of new theologies and other pastoral initiatives (Vandenakker 1994:43). Since the Council it has been the task of regional churches to work out how the theology of *Lumen Gentium* could be implemented in their territories. This opened up the field for further debate and since the Council there have been a plethora of books and articles contributing further to the subject. While it is not my brief to review this material, three main directions are noticeable, each of which has its own contribution to make to the kind of leadership needed in the church today. For want of better terms, I name these the Juridical Church, the People's Church and a New Way of Being Church.

## 2.4.1 The Juridical Church

The preference of Paul VI for the hierarchical model of church rather than a mission ecclesiology has been re-affirmed consistently under the rule of John Paul II whose twenty year reign has been marked by such events as the removal of Archbishop Hunthausen from Seattle because of his stance on nuclear disarmament and his support for gay rights. A number of theologians, such as Hans Küng and Charles Curran, have been removed from their teaching posts at Catholic universities because of their “dissident” views. Many others, including Leonardo Boff and even Edward Schillebeeckx, have been questioned in Rome concerning their teaching. It is clear where members of the Vatican think ecclesiastical power resides and what obedient response they expect from all Catholics. This view is summed up in the *Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests* of 1997 (referred to hereinafter as the Instruction). I take this document as an example of a juridical view of the church for two reasons. Firstly, it offers a theology of leadership and examples of its practical implementation. Secondly, it was signed by representatives of no less than eight Vatican dicasteries<sup>1</sup>, probably the first time that a document has been published in this way. It represents, then, the current Vatican view on church leadership.

The Instruction begins by explaining the importance of the laity’s active participation in church life, in both the spiritual and temporal orders. In this way they help build up the church and, by necessity, work in collaboration with the ordained. With an increase of pastoral

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<sup>1</sup> Dicasteries are the Vatican departments through which the world-wide church is governed. The eight involved in this document are the departments for the clergy, the laity, the doctrine of the faith, divine worship and

initiatives since the Council there needs to be, as a matter of priority, a “full recovery today of the awareness of the secular nature of the mission of the laity” (Instruction: Foreword), although they are also called to assist the clergy in the latter’s more restricted area of ministry.

The common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood complement each other, the latter being at the service of the former. There is, however, a difference of essence between the two. The Instruction explains the nature of this difference. The ministerial priesthood is rooted in apostolic succession and is invested with “potestas sacra” so that the priest acts in the person of Christ. “This is an essential point of Catholic ecclesiological doctrine” (Instruction:1.1).

The exercise of *munus docendi, sanctificandi et regendi* constitutes the essence of pastoral ministry, and the laity can only co-operate in some of these functions to a limited degree (Instruction:1.2). The ministerial priesthood is absolutely irreplaceable and necessary for the church to exist and it may not be regarded as “posterior to the ecclesial community” (Instruction:1.3).

Because of a shortage of ordained ministers, the clergy may entrust certain functions to the laity, provided the character of Orders is not required and the laity realise that they have no right to these tasks. In order to “avoid confusion” (the phrase is used five times in the section entitled “Practical Provisions”) the Instruction attempts to define the meaning of ministries and offices or functions. The functions are those tasks which are entrusted to the laity by the

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discipline of the sacraments, the bishops, the evangelisation of peoples, institutes of consecrated life, and the

clergy, whereas ministry strictly speaking belongs to the ordained. The problem is that, because of a shortage of clergy (which the document describes as “transitory” (Instruction:2.12)) lay people are fulfilling ministries which can only obtain their proper fulness if done “in virtue of sacred ordination” (Instruction:2.1). The functions which the laity are asked to fulfil are “exclusively the result of a deputation by the church” and so they are designated “extraordinary ministers” (Instruction:2.1).

In order to preserve the distinction between cleric and lay, which comes from the will of Christ, it is necessary to keep the laity as far as possible from taking on clerical ministries. Some examples are offered: The ministry of the Word properly belongs to the bishop, then to priests and then to deacons. The faithful may “be invited to collaborate, in lawful ways, in the exercise of the ministry of the Word”. “Preaching by the non-ordained can be permitted only as a *supply* for sacred ministers. . . .and this cannot be regarded as an ordinary occurrence nor as an authentic promotion of the laity” (Instruction:2.2).

The non-ordained may collaborate effectively in the pastoral ministry of clerics, but they may not direct, co-ordinate or govern the parish. Deacons are preferred to the non-ordained. In order to keep as many ministries as possible in the hands of priests, those who have reached the retirement age of 75 should consider continuing in the active ministry. Another possibility is to entrust a number of parishes to one priest (Instruction:2.4). And so the list continues.

The above makes it clear that the pre-Vatican II pyramidal ecclesiology is firmly entrenched in the present Vatican departments where an understanding of church leadership is that of divine power being passed on from Christ downwards, with the power to perform true “ministry” in the hands of the ordained only. Even bishops’ conferences may not make rules about the participation of lay people in the ministry of the Word without the “recognitio” of the Apostolic See (Instruction:2.2). Far from encouraging the development of local contextualized theologies, this top-downwards leadership style is regarded as a uniform model for the universal church, “a unitarian organisation as if it were one great, world-wide diocese, with one sole liturgy, one visible head, one embodiment” (Boff 1986:13). O’Riordan has pointed out that this authoritarian approach to leadership is attractive in a world which is facing “insecurity, confusion, uncertainty and impending chaos at all levels of life, social, economic, political, moral and religious” (1991:613). But, he continues, it has not been successful. The Instruction is being ignored and lay people everywhere continue to participate, with the encouragement of the clergy, in what are officially regarded as clerical ministries. In the United States, for example, half the 19,000 parishes employ 20,000 lay people and religious as pastoral workers. Most of these are women who have studied or are still studying theology and who sacrifice time and finances to participate in church leadership (Horan 1998:261-263). This situation is not going to be overturned by a single Instruction, however many dicastery presidents and prefects have signed it.

#### **2.4.2 The People’s Church**

Once the renewed images of the church were taken on board by the Vatican Council, efforts were made throughout the world to concretize this more organic view. A large number of

renewal movements have appeared, such as *Renew*, *Genesis II* and *Called To Action* in the North America, *Christian Life Experience* in the Philippines and *Alpha* in England and South Africa. These offer evangelization experiences and sometimes, as with *Renew*, personal growth through the use of small groups. The difficulty is that once the programme is finished it is business as usual in the parish. They do not touch the parochial structure which is where the primary need for renewal is to be found (Vandenakker 1994:147).

The search for community and a more missionary oriented church has led in many instances to the setting up of smaller groupings of Christians who could better experience what it means to be church. The following brief survey points to how widespread this movement has become.

#### **2.4.2.1 North America**

In a study of small communities in the United States in 1996 it was discovered that a large number of such communities were to be found throughout the country. In general, “they were showing both dynamic new growth and considerable stability over time” (D’Antonio 1997:76). These communities range from groups of charismatics to campus ministry groups, from Hispanic ministry groups to intentional communities which meet in the members’ homes and invite a priest to celebrate the Eucharist with them. One well-known movement towards small communities in the United States was initiated by Baranowski who envisages a parish consisting of small faith communities. This is set up through a three-phase process which leads parishioners to listen to and value one another, focus on prayer and commit themselves to the group “for the long haul” (Baranowski 1988:25). Baranowski calls these faith communities “churches”, each with its own lay pastor or facilitator. The formation of these

pastors is integral to the re-structuring of the parish. “Making pastoral facilitators a priority keeps the church at the smaller level a priority” (1988:55). The primary role of the priest is to form these facilitators. Coinciding with this intense formation programme is a change in leadership style of the priest. He now shares his leadership, while remaining the co-ordinator of the overall pastoral plan of the parish. A feature which differs from the Lumko approach and that used in St. Joseph’s Parish is the way Baranowski has the priest choosing the facilitators and organising the membership of the groups himself. Despite a sharing of leadership, he is here using the top-down method. It is disappointing that Baranowski offers no theological explanation for the ecclesial nature of what he calls “churches”. Nor does he emphasise the missionary thrust which needs to be central to any group calling itself church.

In his study of parishes in America, Brennan expresses the conviction that the present shape of the parish is inadequate to meet the needs of believers today (Brennan 1990:ix). One of the obstacles to changing parochial structures is the mentality of clergy, religious and laity who are ingrained with a “vertical ecclesiology . . . which sees the church as an end in itself” (1990:9). Brennan suggests the parish be rejuvenated through three possible strategies: the creation of small faith communities, provoking parishioners to face the challenge of responding to the faith as adults, and deepening family life. He hopes that these strategies will lead to a re-structured parish of “adults, awakening to faith, growing in faith, supporting each other in faith” (1990:87). Unlike the detailed planning of Baranowski, Brennan leaves parishioners to use their imagination as to what process they will use. The main emphasis is on mutual support and upliftment with no stress on these groups being missionary by nature.

Notwithstanding the changes brought into parish life by the post-Vatican II reforms, these examples show that there are thousands of American Catholics who are not satisfied with present parochial structures and are seeking a community experience in small groups. Apart from initiatives such as the Latin American / North American Forum, (which meets occasionally in Notre Dame), plus a few limited studies, such as Lee and Cowan's (1986) and Pelton's (1997), there seems to be little theological reflection on the North American experience of small communities and what it has to say about mission and its relationship to shared leadership.

#### **2.4.2.2 Africa**

The same need for change in the parish structure is being experienced in Africa, especially in the cities where immigrants from the rural areas experience instability. Materialism is a lure, but the traditional religious orientation of the African could be used as a foundation on which to build Small Christian Communities (Peil 1982:38). Tanzanian priest Sirikwa has divided a parish into groups of up to 15 families. Their meetings include the usual community experiences of shared prayer, singing and discussion about life problems (Sirikwa 1982:43-44). The small community, to which parish leader Lembagusala belongs, follows roughly the same structure, but there is far more emphasis on discussion about social issues. This is because "the most appropriate setting for the deepening of one's faith in Jesus Christ is that of communities like ours" (Lembagusala 1982:51). While the previous two authors have written about the structure and content of the community meetings, two other authors touch on more foundational issues. Lefebvre (1982:53-54) writes of the necessity for all community leaders to undergo regular formation. This stress on training is crucial to the development and

maintenance of small communities, particularly as the role of the leaders is not to do everything for the members, but to encourage them to make use of their own charisms. Edele highlights the importance of a change in the attitude of the parish pastor. From wanting to remain in control, the clergy must now learn to “en-trust” the laity with responsibilities. If not, community members will be prevented from using their talents to the full (Edele 1982:61-62).

The small community experience in East Africa was initiated by members of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of East Africa (AMECEA) at their triennial plenary session in 1976. Although they did not touch on formation in their final report, they did accentuate the changed role of those in leadership.

Christian leadership has the vital role of stimulating, encouraging and strengthening the exercise of the many gifts of the Spirit in every Christian community. This implies making people aware of these gifts and readiness to enable people to use their gifts (AMECEA 1 1976:251).

Three years later the bishops took up the subject of Small Christian Communities. They referred to the issue of formation and training as a key area for everyone. “A serious effort is to be made to re-educate clergy, religious and laity according to the authentic principles of Vatican II, especially in ecclesiology” (AMECEA 2 1979:270). They once again took up the question of the role of the ordained minister, using similar words to their previous report. One statement, which on the face of it sounds startling, describes the theological nature of the small communities, but it does not elucidate what the bishops had in mind. They strongly affirm that “The Christian communities we are trying to build are simply the most local incarnations of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church” (AMECEA 2 1979:265). This sentence has ramifications concerning the ecclesial nature of these communities and, in turn, the ecclesial

status of their leaders. Unfortunately, the theological statements of the AMECEA bishops have not been developed in any comprehensive and scholarly study. It has been said that there is no theology of small communities in Africa (East Africa 1983:96). A large number of articles on the subject have appeared in English over the past 25 years in such periodicals as the *African Ecclesial Review* and *African Christian Studies*, though they tend to concentrate on practical issues. There are complaints that the small communities in East Africa are merely seen as an addition to the “old way of being church” and that “hierarchical, clerical and often paternalistic control is still the most dominant” (East Africa 1983:98). This situation might have been alleviated somewhat for pastoral leaders if a cogent and thorough study of the ecclesiality of these communities in Africa had been undertaken.

We cannot leave Africa without a brief reference to the Lumko Institute whose publications have been sold in 78 countries. This author has already pointed out (Prior 1993:268) that the Institute’s books are so oriented to the *ad intra* that they can be used to involve laity in leadership positions in the church without the need for any re-structuring of the parish. The experience of members of the Institute’s staff who have conducted workshops throughout the continent bears this up. A priest can remain firmly in charge while lay people “help him out” with his duties.

Throughout Africa the involvement of many lay people in pastoral leadership is happening, usually because of a need for services. A lack of theological reflection on present practice makes it difficult to assess the ecclesial status of the small communities and suggests that leadership is being shared by the clergy out of necessity. In both North America and Africa

large numbers of lay people are involved in leadership positions in the church, to such an extent that one could label these “churches of the people”. But in both continents there is still a need to cultivate a consistent and more broad policy based on firm missiological principles.

## **2.4.3 A New Way of Being Church**

### **2.4.3.1 Latin America**

Reflection on the ecclesial nature of the base communities is probably richer in Latin America than in any other continent. The literature is vast. It is not my purpose to summarise it here, but to point to areas of ecclesiality and mission which are germane to this study. At Medellin the bishops recognised these communities as “the first and fundamental ecclesial nucleus, . . . the initial cell of the ecclesial structures and the focus of evangelization” (quoted by Cook 1985:241).

Most of the communities were initiated by sisters and priests (Barbé 1987:94) (contrary to a widespread myth that they “sprang up spontaneously from the grass roots”) and all of them remain firmly attached to the wider church. The size of their membership varies considerably and many of them would be classified as parishes by African standards.

The leaders of the base communities in Latin America are aware of the oppressive system most of the people labour under. This is why catechesis is rooted in the concrete situation and why mission is at the core of the communities. Through a process of reflection on the Scriptures, especially during the time of Lent when there is a huge increase in the number of

reflection groups, the life situation of the people is analysed and action follows. Thus “mission is not a separate activity in the base communities but their very life-blood” (Cook 1985:128).

Boff is convinced that a new ecclesiology needs to be further developed as a response to the new church which is coming about in Latin America. The church exists where people “continue to come together, convoked by the word and discipleship of Jesus Christ” (Boff 1986:13). The lack of the Eucharist most of the time is experienced as a painful loss, but it does not mean that the church is absent. Boff stresses the necessity of the local church being in communion with the universal church but it must take on its own shape and ethos. He echoes the statement of the AMECEA bishops (paragraph 2.4.2) when he says:

The local church is the universal church rendered visible within the framework of a time and a place, a medium and a culture. It is the universal church concretized; and in being concretized, taking flesh; and in taking flesh, assuming the limits of place, time, culture and human beings. . . . The particular church is the church wholly, but not the whole church (Boff 1986:18).

Concerning leadership, Boff stresses that the community comes first; leadership is a service to the community and subsists within it. The people are primary; the organisation is secondary. The purpose of the hierarchical function is to be a principle of unity. Responsible leadership commits oneself to “a task that benefits the group, and is opposed to such concepts as chief or patron” (Canin 1993:120). This is not to excise clerical leadership from the church, but to offer it a new set of tasks and set up new relationships between bishops, priests and lay people (Boff 1986:24,26,32). “The theology of Vatican II . . . transcends the linear conception and supplants it with a triangular one, in which each of the three terms (bishops, priests and laity) acquires weight of its own and becomes the vehicle and vessel of ecclesial substance”

(1986:32). For Kelley the new understanding of leadership comes from a belief in the immanence of God:

Today people tend to see God as within and if people participate with God in creation the very nature of our understanding of leadership is changed, in the church as well as in society generally. . . .If God is in each of us, then we all have gifts and insights to share. Leadership becomes a role of liberating those gifts for the mutual benefit of all (Kelley 1982:80).

Boff adds a further element to church leadership which is not mentioned by many authors, although it will be found in the publications of the Lumko Institute and in St. Joseph's Parish. Working for the liberation of persons moves people towards communion, not just in the base community, but also among the leaders who do not work alone but in teams. This togetherness manifests true and deep fellowship and is rooted in faith (Boff 1987:185). Pastoral teamwork thus becomes a factor in a mission oriented church and reflects before the parish servant-leadership whose source is in the Trinity.

Reading such radical theologians could give one the impression that the total church in Latin America, and in Brazil in particular, is re-inventing itself. While there is a strong movement to respond theologically to the new movements on the continent, there has been, at the same time, a cooling off in the attitude of the Latin American bishops towards the base communities. Ten years after the encouraging words of Medellin and after a change of leadership in the Vatican, along with the appointment of many traditionalist bishops on the continent - Dussel calls this a "right-wing backlash" (Dussel 1981:83) - the bishops in Puebla described the communities as "a cell of the larger community". They also speak rather paternalistically of them as "an expression of the church's preferential love for the simple

people” (Cook 1985:241). From experiencing leadership within these communities the members are being officially subjected to a leadership from above.

The birth of the base communities was hastened because of the explicit support of the hierarchy. The daily grind of poverty and political oppression helped preserve Christian mission as a central focus. Today the social situation is no better and the hierarchy has become less supportive. The communities continue and no traditionalist bishops can stop them. Wherever I visited communities in Brazil pastoral leaders told me: “There is no other way”. The church’s structure has changed and, with a new emphasis today on inculturation, it will advance further. It is the duty of theologians to continue to dialogue with the reality they live in and re-write the people’s experience of being a church in mission. With this reflection will come a new understanding of leadership. Part of that re-writing will need to be concerned with a new model of ecclesial leadership which is necessary for the implementation of an inculturated church-in-mission, as has been realised by the staff of St. Joseph’s Parish.

#### **2.4.3.2 Asia**

At an official level the church in Asia has been developing its own contextualized ecclesiology through the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC). The results of their deliberations is recorded in the reports of their plenary assemblies, the first of which was held in Taipei in 1974. Although from the beginning the bishops spoke in terms of building up local churches as the realisation of the mission of the church in Asia (Emmanuel 1990:60), this ideal was not spelled out in great detail until the fifth meeting which was held in 1990 at Bandung, Indonesia. The bishops called for a renewed sense of the mission of Christ in all the

baptised: “The missionary nature of the gift of faith must be inculcated in all Christians” (FABC 1990:4). This mission comes about through witness, dialogue, proclamation and working with others against social sin. Having undergone formation, it is the task, particularly of lay people, to work towards the renewal of Asian society according to the values of the Gospel. Mission entails not only deeds, but also the witness of a community in which Christians live in harmony and engage in mutual service (FABC 1990:5-6). It was at this meeting that the bishops first used the phrase “a new way of being church”. This had been coined by Filipino theologian and bishop Francisco Claver. The idea of a local church is a new one, he wrote, and it must be truly participatory (Claver 1985b:319). In fact, he sums up the whole of Vatican II’s teaching as “participation” (Claver 1983:328; 1985b:317). Through Basic Ecclesial Communities every believer can participate in the church’s life and mission. For McCoy, these communities are the closest Christians can get to the New Testament idea of church-in-mission (McCoy 1993:71). Lay people must be empowered for leadership. Getting rid of clericalization means that a new way of being church requires a new kind of leadership (Claver 1985b:322).

The FABC’s next meeting was held in Manila in 1995 under the theme “Christian Discipleship in Asia today: Service to Life”. The bishops returned to the same theme. A new way of being church, they wrote, requires each parish to become “a community of communities” and a credible sign of salvation and liberation (FABC 1995:1). The church needs discipleship communities totally immersed in the life of the Trinity. The Spirit of Christ animates the mission of the disciples of Christ who have to pitch their tents “in the midst of all humanity, building a better world, but especially among the suffering and the poor” (1995:4-

5). Within the overall mission of the church it is the laity in particular who “must act as an evangelizing and liberating force in the struggle for the fulness of life” (1995:1).

At their seventh plenary assembly, held in Samphran, Thailand, in January 2000, the Asian bishops addressed the theme “A Renewed Church in Asia: A Mission of Love and Service”. They proposed that the church become truly local, indigenous and inculturated. Believers need a deep interiority, a faith rooted in the life of the Trinity and manifested in the parish as a communion of communities. Authentic participation and co-responsibility between clergy and laity require Basic Ecclesial Communities which should be open to building up Basic Human Communities. This renewed church requires the empowerment of the laity so that they can use their skills for a new sense of mission (FABC 2000:2-3). The document puts heavy emphasis on Asian values and the need for the emergence of an Asian inclusive approach to every area of life. This Asian-ness is “founded on solid values, is a special gift the world is awaiting, for the whole world is in need of a holistic paradigm for meeting the challenges of life” (FABC 2000:6-7). An integrated approach demands that the whole community become agents of evangelization. Mission takes place in mutuality and exchange, and inter-religious dialogue is a necessity for all ministry (FABC 2000:9).

Throughout the deliberations of these past three assemblies certain common themes are noticeable. A new understanding of the church is required: it is based on the life of the Trinity, is expressed in all of life, particularly through witness, and the formation of Christians is essential in order to bring this about. At the Manila meeting there was a strong emphasis on the laity being fully involved in the mission of the church. But it is at Samphran that bold new

steps were taken. The final document highlights two new missionary “movements”. The first is the necessity of the church to be fully Asian. Christians live in Asia, are Asian and need to express their faith in an Asian way. This clearly determined movement is a response to the Vatican’s present efforts to impose a uniform pattern of church life at the universal level. It is also a response to the many criticisms by Asians of other religions that the Christian churches are Western impositions on their cultures. Not only is this new movement important for the Asian church, but for the universal church, too, which can learn from them.

The second new emphasis is the “necessary” movement towards dialogue with other religions. In the aftermath of the excommunication (later lifted) of Fr. Balasuriyah of Sri Lanka for his attempts to use Asian concepts in developing an indigenous theology, this stance of the FACBC once again makes plain that the church wishes to be very much part of Asia. Asia is its home. In saying this, the Asian bishops have taken seriously the teaching of Vatican II that the church is to enter into communion with different cultural forms (GS #58) and consequently express itself in various ways (AG #6. See also #11-12,18–19,22). Because of its universality each part of the church “contributes its own gifts to other parts and to the whole church” (LG #13). Having admitted that the dawning of the new millennium is a time of crisis (FABC 2000:2), the bishops have taken a bold stand on the renewal of the church both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. They have not, however, developed a leadership model for those pastoral ministers who have to implement this vision and until this is spelled out no structural change will take place. We shall see later how the leaders of St. Joseph’s parish have been implementing such a model for some time.

### **2.4.3.3 The Philippines**

The Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, the only country in Asia where the majority of the population is Christian, has been working out its own post-Vatican II ecclesiology, particularly in the area of Basic Ecclesial Communities (or Basic Christian Communities). As will be pointed out in Chapter Four, this has had an influence on the leadership of St. Joseph's Parish. It is appropriate, then, to complete this chapter with a brief review of some of these developments.

It is not an exaggeration to state that Basic Ecclesial Communities have been one of the most significant developments within the Filipino Church over the past 30 years. They have been "central to the Church's strategy for social change" (Smock & Lintner 1986:617). The Bishops' Conference made official reference to them in 1974 when it stated that these communities are indispensable "for the effective evangelization and participation of our people" (Giordano 1988:91). In a later (undated) letter they wrote that Basic Christian Communities are a sign that the Church is self-reliant and mature (1988:91). At the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines in 1990 the clergy and laity together claimed that their renewed vision of church finds expression in Basic Ecclesial Communities (PCPII 1992:137-140). Although they can be found throughout Luzon and the Visayas, the most developed communities are found in Mindanao where the local Church had looked for a way to combat the threat to peace coming from poverty and the Muslims' claim for independence.

Manuel Gabriel, a priest of the archdiocese of Manila, is one of the most knowledgeable people when it comes to base communities. Not only did he organise his parish on the BEC model, but

he has studied these communities throughout the Philippines and has written a number of books and articles on their life (for example: 1984; 1985a, 1985b). I spoke with him a number of times, but here I refer to what he has written.

For Gabriel, a Basic Christian Community “promotes the mission of the Church to transform society through evangelization” (Gabriel 1985:x). These communities possess four elements. Firstly, the community “is a call, a gift and a grace from the Father”. It is “an ecclesial community, a local Church”. Secondly, the base community is a commitment to being God’s people in society. It requires concrete expressions of mutual service. Thirdly, the base community “is a totally new Church - where a new shape is emerging from below, a Church from the roots, fulfilling the kingly, prophetic and priestly mission of Christ”. Fourthly, the base community “strives to be fully humane, just and seeking wholeness in people. This dialogue of faith and life, the Gospel and social reality are integral to the Basic Christian Community. Justice and faith are inseparable. To know God is to do justice” (Gabriel 1985:97-99).

It was not long after he started to establish the base communities that Gabriel realised he had more work on his hands than he could manage (Gabriel 1985:16). He responded by setting up the Lay Formation Institute. “For Basic Christian Communities to take root in the minds and hearts of the people, formation is a “must”. Organisational tasks set up the skeleton; formation provides the life/spirit” (1985:40). This statement puts into focus the whole issue of whether leaders re-organise the parish to make it more efficient, or whether they empower people for a community church.

The role of the priest changes in this kind of parish. It is his job to provide interface among the different parish units, to co-ordinate the thrust, programmes and strategies of the parish formation team, to link the parish with the wider Church (the archdiocese), and to provide “the integration of all groups along a common parish direction” (Gabriel 1985:19). This change of role is commensurate with the need for a new style of church leadership.

Two important pastoral consequences follow from this formation initiative. Firstly, the laity become part of the decision making process in the parish which is an expression of co-responsibility and accountability (Gabriel 1985:36). Secondly, parishes become financially self-reliant and as a result the parishioners achieve greater self-respect and dignity (Gabriel 1985:27-28; see Prior & Lobinger 1983:37-38).

In his book *Beginnings of a Shared Journey Towards BCC* (1985a), Gabriel describes how the parish became more of a community by being involved in the threatened demolition of a nearby housing estate. “The work for justice,” he writes, “becomes a constitutive element in the parish ministries and puts our BCCs into the mainstream of our people’s struggles” (Gabriel 1985:42-43; cf. Synod of Bishops 1971). This experience coincides with Lim’s view that it was the “eviction of squatters, labour disputes, peasant movements, cultural minorities and bias against the poor in society” that gave birth to the Basic Ecclesial Communities (Lim 1989a:28). Smock and Lintner agree: “Basic Christian Communities have been central to the Church’s strategy for social change. In a country whose deteriorating economy has pushed 70 to 80 per cent of the people below the poverty line, the Basic Christian Communities embody the Church’s strategic option for the poor” (1986:617).

Basic Christian Communities become an acceptable part of church structure in much of the Philippines and, as in Latin America, this has been accompanied by much theological reflection. This is healthy. The stumbling block, though, is an inability to see that a renewed leadership style is required to ascertain that Basic Ecclesial Communities are truly ecclesial and not merely pious groups within the church. The Filipino church structure is heavily hierarchical. For example, on one occasion a bishop told me how he re-organised his diocese to make sure the Basic Ecclesial Communities were brought under his authority. On another occasion a bishop informed the participants of a workshop which I was facilitating that the hierarchical structure of the church is “divinely ordained” and cannot be changed. It is the opinion of this author that the highly successful move towards a community church in the Philippines will eventually founder unless medieval concepts of authority are jettisoned and a participatory style of leadership is inaugurated.

In St. Joseph’s Parish the establishment of BECs has been the fulfilment of a long-held dream of Fr. Marc<sup>2</sup>. Through their involvement in ministry, many hundreds of parishioners have committed themselves to service over the years. (It is estimated by parish staff that throughout 1994, for example, 2,000 parishioners had been involved actively in the parish). This commitment has proved to be a firm foundation on which these more intense communities can be built. They are “the basic paradigm for being Church today”, says Padilla (1997:146) and that is why Fr. Marc refused to initiate BECs before people were ready. He did not fall into the trap of using these communities as a means for better parochial organisation. Where the latter

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<sup>2</sup> Fr. Marc Lesage, a Belgian missionary, was pastor of St. Joseph’s Parish, Las Piñas, Metro Manila, Philippines from 1967 till 1998. The study of leadership in chapters 5-7 of this study is a critical reflection on his leadership style in that parish.

has occurred they usually collapse when the pastor is changed. In contrast, Fr. Marc presented the idea of BECs from time to time and only took concrete steps to help set them up when he received a positive response from a group of keen parishioners. It was 20 years of “awareness-raising, motivating, initiating, planting the seeds of community, of creating friendships and building trust, of forming people and challenging them” (Padilla 1997:149). His patient, enabling leadership style demonstrated for the parishioners the essence of what he meant by neighbourhood missionary communities.

## 2.5 Conclusion

The vision of a more organic church has led to the establishment of small communities throughout the world. Because of the diverse nature of these groupings it is difficult to assemble them under a single title such as “Basic Christian Communities”. The large number of believers involved does point to a widespread felt need for a more intense community experience than that offered by the average parish.

The purpose of this section has been to show that there is a worldwide movement within the Roman Catholic Church for a more organic community experience of church. Many of these communities were born out of a struggle for justice and a more dignified way of life. Many others found themselves inexorably drawn into the missionary movement as they strained to preach and live the Good News. It must be admitted, though, that many of these small communities are introverted and exclusive. Their members have found a Christian *modus vivendi* which is more attractive than the structures of the institutional church. If the church is missionary by nature then these communities must have mission as their *raison d’etre*, else

they are not truly ecclesial. It is the duty of those with pastoral supervision to see to this but they cannot unless they believe in and put into practice a style of leadership that is founded on a passion for spreading the Good News . In other words, a missionary thrust is needed to encourage members of Basic Ecclesial Communities to hold mission as the core of their faith life.

This leads into the subject of the next chapter in which we shall study a method of servant-leadership which could be used to concretize the new mission ecclesiologies which have developed since Vatican II.

# **Chapter Three:**

## **Servant-Leadership**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter I briefly laid out the theological foundation for an organic model of church-in-mission which can be found in the Vatican II documents. I also noted some of the developments that have taken place since then, and concluded that a changed leadership style is required to translate a renewed ecclesiology into practice. Such a style is hardly present in church documents and in practice exists only sporadically where particular efforts are being made in a number of countries to implement a mission-oriented ecclesiology. In this chapter I shall make a study of some leadership theories from the corporate world which has been busy studying and experimenting with leadership styles for decades, a time-frame which parallels the post-Vatican II years. My purpose is to discover if the world of commerce and industry can make a contribution to the church. Is there, for example, a leadership theory that might show us how to implement a missiological ecclesiology, whose seeds we discovered in the Vatican II documents?

### **3.2 Where is Leadership Today?**

One thing that has become more obvious to me over the years is that there is a lack of leadership in the Roman Catholic Church at a number of levels. Although the terms “leaders” and “leadership” are commonly used, in most cases they refer to what Burns calls “executive leadership” which is based on bureaucracy (paragraph 3.6.2). Hornsby-

Smith (1989:190) offers many examples of how parish priests have used coercive forms of what he calls “veto-power” to suppress the intrusion and dissemination of views. In my experience it is rare to come across a bishop or pastor who has a clear vision for the ecclesiastical region under his authority. For example, how many church leaders – the more relevant question is “How few?” – have brought in an outside facilitator and worked out with their diocesan / parish leaders a mission statement and a plan of operation? Even when such action has taken place, how many have followed through with a number of evaluation stages, which include a re-planning process in the light of their reflection on experience? It seems obvious to some (for example, Burns 1978:460) that the least a leader should do is work on immediate, short-term and easily definable goals. Reflection on these can lead to intermediate and long-term planning. These are presumed steps for those institutions - both companies and churches - which are well organised, efficient and successful.

Among some efforts in this direction, a particularly effective contribution is being made ecumenically within the Southern African church by the professional services of Community Consulting Services and Sophia Consulting Services, both of which are run by Dominican Sisters from Johannesburg. The South African based Lumko Institute is perhaps the best example of an organisation which has a clear vision of a church-in-mission at parochial level. It produces publications which offer a participatory methodology to bring this vision about. I have pointed out in detail elsewhere (Prior 1993) how even this Institute’s publications lack a fully missiological basis and that many church leaders use them to motivate laity to shoulder more parish activities without, however, changing their own style of leadership.

This poor quality of leadership is not confined to the church (see, for example, Coleman 1992:241). Despite the progress being made by many companies, and a plethora of books written on the subject of leadership, the majority of businesses still seem to suffer from a lack of good leadership. Many writers on leadership theory bemoan the fact that there is such a dearth of leadership in the business world. Burns writes of a craving for compelling and creative leadership and believes that today's crisis of leadership comes from "mediocrity or irresponsibility of so many of the men and women in power" (Burns 1978:1). The call for good leadership, he says, "is one of the keynotes of our time" (1978:451). Gardner sees the problem in the followers: they are looking for a parental figure to call all the shots (Gardner 1990:xi-xiii). One of the major assertions of Greenleaf's theory is that society suffers from a widespread alienation because of so many low-serving institutions. He believes that the churches have failed to fulfil their crucial role in societal and institutional renewal (Greenleaf 1996:179). Jaworski believes that the static, hierarchical model of leadership is stultifying unused potential. In order to harness this wasted, hidden talent, a new "open, flexible and participatory kind of leadership is necessary" (Jaworski 1996:6-3.65). Among many other authors who have written on the subject, similar views to the above are to be found in Greeley et al (1981:120), Wyn (1984:6-13), Carver (1990:1-23), Bianchi & Ruether (1992:10), Gilmour (1993:85) and Robbins (1998:482-486).

### **3.3 Studies on Leadership**

There has been a vast amount of material published on leaders and leadership during the twentieth century. Bass, picking up on Stogdill's work (1974), analysed 4,725 works in his 1981 study (quoted by Rost 1991:4). Rost himself studied a further 550 books, chapters and journal articles from the 1980's for his own volume (1991:9). Faced with this

enormous amount of material I wondered where I should begin. Many of the books left me with a dissatisfied taste until I found a few outstanding works which not only lifted the quality of study to a higher plane, but confirmed for me that most leadership books do not have much to offer the serious student. They are full of platitudes and often centre their work around an endless list of qualities required by leaders. D'Souza (1989), for example, lists 18, DeBrin (1998) offers 30, Brown and Brown (1994) give us 33 and Greenslade (1984) expects the leader to have 46 discernible qualities! Not only is this expecting the impossible – must *all* leaders possess *all* these qualities? – but such lists beg the question as to whether a leader should be the only one “in leadership”. Is everyone else merely a passive follower?

Another problem with many of these studies is that they do not have a careful definition of leader and leadership from which they work out their theory. Shaw (1981) describes how everyone knows what a leader is until one is asked for a definition. He then offers five definitions himself, beginning with a person “who leads the group toward its goals” and ending with “a person who engages in leadership behaviours” (Shaw 1981:318). While the latter is too vague to be useful, the former is a limitation of what is regarded by many as the three areas of group influence: goals, relationships and personal fulfilment. See, for example, Benson (1987:63-73), D'Souza (1989:69-71) and Parker (sa:17-18). Douglas (1978:102-120) prefers observation, intervention and assessment. In a placatory gesture Chemers suggests that despite the seeming chaos, the various theories are saying the same thing in slightly different ways (Chemers 1984:105).

A further difficulty arises from confusion over the terms leader and manager. Many authors use the words leader and manager interchangeably. For example, Brown and

Brown (1994:13), in an otherwise excellent study of empowerment in organisations, speak of managers, empowered persons and leadership without defining any of these terms. Bridges (1995:7) deals only with managers, though their task is not only to manage transitions in an organisation but also to exercise leadership. Other authors also use the term manager only, although they are describing what many would call leaders, for example: Stewart (1994), Henry (1991) and Weaver & Farrell (1997). It will be important to define our terms, particularly as this study is concerned with leadership and its effect on the missionary nature of the church at parish level. We will need to know who can be called a leader and how that leadership can be exercised to lead a community into mission.

### **3.4 The Development of Leadership Theory**

I described in Chapter One the reasons for my own interest in the subject of leadership. Major authors have theirs. In the following paragraph I shall outline the influences on three seminal thinkers, Robert K Greenleaf, James MacGregor Burns and Joseph C Rost. I shall then describe what I regard as the main themes which need discussing under the title “leadership”, pointing to the three above-mentioned non-mainstream authors, but also referring to others who have a contribution to make. I will include comments on the influence they could have on a parish attempting to become a church-in-mission. My own summary description of leadership will conclude the chapter. While developing this I shall keep in mind the overall purpose of this chapter which is to seek for a leadership style which would be appropriate for leaders who wish to implement the missionary ecclesiology of Vatican II. In the process we shall discover if such a theory offers a contribution to the science of missiology.

### 3.4.1 Influences on the Major Authors

There were five major influences in Greenleaf's life which were to culminate in the outlining of his theory of servant-leadership (Greenleaf 1996:43). The first was his father who, although of limited formal education, left "a little corner of the world a bit better than he found it" and for this he "stands tall as a true servant" (1995:17). Greenleaf followed the advice of an unnamed lecturer at university who advised members of the class to become involved in a large institution and influence it for the good (1995:18). A third influence was a writer who encouraged him to look holistically at life. The fourth influence was a radio commentator who spoke about the important contribution that older people have to make. Greenleaf regarded his 38 "working years" as a preparation for his most productive and satisfying work, during which he developed his theory of servant-leadership between the ages of 60 and 75.

The fifth major influence came about during the student unrest in the 1960's. "The students' attitudes", he wrote (1995:21) "seemed to me to stem from a lack of hope, a lack of belief by those young people that they could live productively in the world of institutions as they then were (and still are)." He regarded the student unrest as symptomatic of a massive mental illness in society. He discovered that one of the more popular books among the students was Hermann Hesse's *Journey to the East*. Reading this book was to prove pivotal for Greenleaf in outlining his theory of servant-leadership (Spears 1995:21). He summarises the story as follows.

In this story we see a band of men on a mythical journey, probably also Hesse's own journey. The central figure of the story is Leo who accompanies the party as the *servant* who does their menial chores, but who also sustains them with his spirit and his song. He is a person of extraordinary presence. All goes well until Leo disappears. Then the group falls into disarray and the journey is abandoned. They cannot make it without the servant Leo. The narrator, one of the party, after some years of wandering finds Leo and is taken into the Order that had sponsored the journey. There he discovers that

Leo, whom he had known first as servant, was in fact the titular head of the Order, its guiding spirit, a great and noble leader (1977:7).

Leo is the leader because he is the servant first. His servant nature cannot be taken from him because that is what he is “deep down inside”. Because of this people bestow leadership on him. “Leadership is something given or assumed” (1995:20). Greenleaf wrote *The Servant-Leader* in order to offer hope to the students and, to anyone else who would listen, with the hope that they might join forces to work for a better society.

Greenleaf’s theory is explained in his three core books *The Servant as Leader*, written in 1969, *The Institution as Servant* and *Trustees as Servants* (published along with other essays in 1977). Also important for this study have been recently published shorter essays and collections of essays concerning religious leadership (Greenleaf 1996; Greenleaf 1998; Spears 1995; Spears 1998; Bogle 1999; Carver 1999;) which include formerly unpublished talks by Greenleaf, as well as articles about his leadership theory by other authors.

The major influence in Burns’ life was his decades as political advisor to a succession of United States’ Presidents, both Republican and Democrat. His major publication, *Leadership* (1978), which Kellerman refers to as “his path-breaking book” (Kellerman 1984:79), appeared a few years after Greenleaf’s first book. Among his dozen publications Burns has co-authored two high school textbooks on the American political system (1958; 1981), as well as books on leadership, such as *State and Local Politics: Government by the People* (1963) and *The Power to Lead: The Crisis of the American Presidency* (1984).

Rost, a student of Burns, claims he has been thinking about leadership since his high school days. Throughout his own teaching career he kept the subject to the fore in his

teaching of history and social studies, including a programme to develop church lay leaders. His interest in the subject intensified when he became a schools superintendent and this led to a career at the University of San Diego where he set up the first doctoral School of Leadership in the United States. Leadership is not his job or profession, he says, but his life (Rost 1991:xiv). His major work, *Leadership in the Twenty-First Century*, is a critique of the contributions of both scholars and practitioners of the twentieth century and a proposed direction forward for an understanding of leadership for what he calls a post-industrial paradigm.

### **3.5 A New Understanding of Leadership**

Rost (1991:18) has described how the emphasis on leadership studies has changed throughout the twentieth century. During the first two decades writers spoke of how only great men (and a few women) could be leaders. In the 1930's attention was given to the contribution of democracy to leadership. During the next twenty years scholars described the traits that should belong to all good leaders. In the 1960's leadership became a study of the behaviourists: how should leaders act? The next contribution, during the 1970's, was made by those who demanded that each particular situation be taken into account. From the 1980's onwards there has been an emphasis on excellence: to excel as a leader one needs to possess a list of qualities and be able to use them to get one's followers to willingly put into action one's own wishes. While Rost's list of mainstream authors is somewhat artificial - it is roughly paralleled, though, by Shaw (1981:315-316) - it does point to the development of ideas about leadership throughout the last century. It must be noted, however, that the movement is cumulative. As new ideas are introduced, so they are carried on into the following decades. We now turn to the main tenets of leadership theory

which may support us in an effort to implement the Vatican II theology of church-as-mission and which could serve as an analytical tool for the later chapters of this study.

### **3.6 Definitions of Leadership**

In the light of the above progression of ideas, Greenleaf stands out as a unique and inspiring scholar and practitioner in the area of leadership. Rost, while claiming that he himself goes beyond, does admit that Greenleaf developed a completely new understanding of leadership (Rost 1991:35).

#### **3.6.1 Visionary Leadership**

Greenleaf does not have a tight definition of leadership, as do Burns and Rost because he works from a visionary stance through which he sees the world becoming a better place.

He believes that leadership is a spirituality, for to lead is to

*go out ahead to show the way. To me, lead stands in sharp contrast to guide, direct, manage or administer because these words imply either maintenance or coercion or manipulation. As I use the word lead it involves creative venture and risk (1996:54).<sup>1</sup>*

The religious leader brings a value dimension to his/her leadership. It is for this reason that Greenleaf sees the vital role that the church could play. Religious leaders need to nurture this spirituality in others and act as role models. Religious leading is a new frontier (1995:55; 1996:36.55) and thus has a missionary dimension. It is the essential factor by which a more caring society can be found.

Greenleaf's vision lifts his leadership theory out of a primary concern for the success of an institution and its financial profit and puts people first.

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<sup>1</sup> All words in italics in quotations are the author's own.

*If a better society is to be built, one more just and more loving and providing opportunity for people to grow, the most open way (and the most effective and economical course, while supportive of the social order) is to raise the performance as servant of as many institutions as possible by voluntary regenerative actions initiated within them by committed individuals: servants (1998:179).*

This concern for the welfare of others echoes Scripture. We read in Philippians Paul's appeal to Christians to give preference to others (Phil 2:3). It is the essence of the church as the people of God where everyone should feel at home in the parish. The very purpose of the charisms given to the baptised is that they be used for others. Greenleaf's theory, which he summarises as Servant-Leadership, parallels the renewed mission ecclesiology of Vatican II and needs to be present as a motivating force in every parish which strives to become a church-in-mission.

### **3.6.2 Executive Leadership**

Burns describes two kinds of leadership: transactional and transforming. The former he regards as the most common, the latter what he would like to see in all institutions. Before investigating these, I would like to suggest that he describes another authority style which he describes as institutional leadership, although he is reluctant to grace it with the title "leadership" because it is based on bureaucratic behaviour which is antithetical to leadership (Burns 1978:296). These three form a leadership continuum: executive – transactional – transforming.

"At the root of bureaucracy lies some kind of struggle for power and prestige" (Burns 1978:299). This kind of behaviour acts on its own and not in service of others. It works within a world of procedures, rules and givens which must be unquestionably accepted by the followers. It holds to a society of superiors and subordinates, the former holding power

over the latter in virtue of their position in the system. Instead of helping people stretch towards their potential, it consciously or otherwise preserves the status quo and keeps people in conformity. It is an institution braced against change (Burns 1978:295-300). Executive leaders often lack the support of their followers because they have been appointed or imposed. They possess a bureaucratic authority by which they may demand compliance from their followers. The latter, meanwhile, often possess a predisposition to obey, rather than make use of a conscious decision (1978:371-373). As Burns develops his transactional and transforming styles of leadership, it becomes clear why he will not allow bureaucracy or executive leadership to be included. I include it in a continuum, however, because it does exist, and very much in the Roman Catholic Church. It is generally presumed to be leadership, although, as seen above, Burns – and I with him – will not accord it such a status.

### **3.6.3 Transactional Leadership**

From the arena of politics Burns defines leadership as

the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realise goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers (Burns 1978:425).

This is transactional leadership which is what happens in the market place: “Leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another: jobs for votes, subsidies for campaign contributions” (1978:4). It is where quick agreements are made and solutions found to please those who support you as leader. The agreements are marked by reciprocity (both leader and followers get something out of it) and flexibility (what we agree to today may not suit us tomorrow). Relationships are characterised by volatility and this requires continuing adaptability (1978:258). Followers can be categorised as attentive, semi-active and latent (1978:263-264).

This theory of Burns has implications for a parish. The semi-active and latent do not present much challenge to the leader. The parish pastor may, however, enter into transactional agreements with the attentive for they, too, have their own agenda. He may be willing to settle for what they want, or at least part of what they want, provided they leave him to get on with what he wants. This leaves the pastor in charge, no challenge to the system, and most of those who know what they want satisfied with the compromise. This may sound cynical, but is it that far from the truth? I am not referring to pastors as politicians keeping themselves at a distance from their constituents' complaints, but pastors who are satisfied with the status quo and who do not want any lay person rocking the comfortable boat of which he is in charge. His power status is preserved; meanwhile he offers the services usually acceptable in a parish: regular services of the Eucharist, celebration of the sacraments, the general care of those in need, etc. I agree with Burns (1978:265) that this is not a simplistic arrangement whereby one remains in charge and the rest are passive followers. The attentive members of the parish have taken a leadership role in making their own demands and in that sense the pastor has become an active follower to them. Leadership is shared to a certain extent and it is based on a transaction between the various members of the parish, authoritative leader and followers.

This system gives rise to much conflict as the parties concerned are all keen to see that their own constituency is satisfied. How this is solved will depend on the skills of the leader and how much he/she is willing to give in order to satisfy the demands being made. Greenleaf regards conflict as necessary for growth. Sometimes the leader might even see his/her role as one of sowing confusion and thus creating a challenge which could open the members to change. "Struggle is of the very essence; it is life-giving" (Greenleaf

1977:233). Confusion can also arise when the institution has not yet caught up with the leader's personal vision. Greenleaf cites Pope John XXIII as an example of this. His personality shone through the stultifying structures of an ancient institution and the resultant "lift of spirit" affected large numbers throughout the world. Pope John's positive reassurance of so much good in the world enlarged and liberated the human spirit. Yet, he had to wait a long time, till he was seventy seven, for his opportunity. "And with his spirit, vision and astute leadership, he lifted the spirits of many millions and left an irreversible imprint on the Catholic Church" (Greenleaf 1977:234-237; 1996:143.158).

In a chapter on Socrates as a model for the leader, Grob (1984) offers a positive view when he emphasises the nature of dialogue as a means to obtain wisdom. The give-and-take of critique leads to a mutual offering of perspectives. In this dialogical process the identities of leader and led are continually in question as they engage in the critical exchange of ideas that will lead them to wisdom (Grob 1974:274-278). The very process of attempting to achieve the idea of a consensus decision includes mutual listening, particularly to dissenters' views and conflicting ideas (Wynn 1984:43). A conflictual atmosphere, far from causing the break-up of a group, can lead to productive thinking and creative solutions (Kaufmann 1991:120-121). Many of those involved in pastoral leadership feel that conflict should not exist, dreaming as they do of an ideal parish where the faithful live and work together in love and harmony. The fact is that whenever humans gather there will be conflict! It is often the sign of a group's health, for conflict is unresolved differences, a sign that the group members care about the quality of their work (Weaver & Farrell 1997:88). The challenge is to learn how to deal with it (D'Souza 1989:364).

Conflict can be minimized to a large degree if the leader is able to mobilize a large personal following (Burns 1978:266). This can come about if a leader possesses charisma and draws from the congregation a significant number of admirers who are willing to go along with him/her. Else by dint of unselfish hard work the leader can prove to the congregation that he/she is for *them* and wishes selflessly to serve them. As a result many will fall in with what such a leader wants as they are confident it will be for their good. This could also be called heroic leadership (1978:244-248) which Burns finds helpful in transitional or developing societies. One of the problems he envisages is that people will give up their own freedom and escape from conflict which is necessary for growth. "The spectator can love the performer without hating anyone else" (1978:248). The difficulty with such strategies is that they do not last much longer than the leader. If, for instance, the majority of a congregation were willing to work along with their pastor in a more community-oriented style of parish - and this would include commitment to service and mission - it does not mean that they would be willing to do the same for his successor. Even if the latter were to work at building up similar confidence in the parishioners, by the time he has done this the momentum has been lost. Attraction to a personality is not a firm foundation on which to build church life. If we believe with Gardner (1990:74) that "the release of human possibilities is one of the most basic of leadership goals", it is paramount that "hero leaders" do not lead alone but empower others to participate in the church's mission, not as mere assistants, but in their own right as members of the baptised. They collaborate within the community of faith as stakeholder partners (Gilmour 1997:37). This could ensure continuity.

Crucial to transactional leadership are goals. The task of leadership is to enter into agreements which will satisfy the goals wanted, whether these are shared or not with one's

constituents. “The object is not a joint effort for persons with common aims acting for the collective interests of followers, but a bargain to aid the individual interests of persons or groups going their separate ways” (Burns 1978:425). This does not rule out any ethical considerations. On the contrary, transactional leadership would not work unless it was based on “honesty, responsibility, fairness and the honouring of commitments” (1978:426). The examples I have given above point to the insufficiency of such a leadership style for a church situation. While it may be the only way politicians can try to satisfy as many constituents as possible, it does not reflect the servant attitude that we find Jesus teaching and practising in the gospels. Nor can it be an effective means by which to bring about a parish-in-mission, in which all – both pastor and parishioners – are moved by a commonly held belief in the Gospels to serve each other and the world about them.

### **3.6.4 Transforming Leadership**

While Burns accepts that the above model may be the only way by which politicians can handle complex situations, he regards his model of transforming leadership as true leadership. To his definition of transactional leadership he adds: “Leaders can also shape and alter and elevate the motives and values and goals of followers through the vital *teaching* role of leadership. This is transforming leadership” (Burns 1978:425). This kind of leader is working at a higher level, not just concerned with settling agreements with followers, but also lifting them to a higher consciousness of themselves and a deeper commitment to the world about them.

The transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents (1978:4).

Burns, like Greenleaf's vision (paragraph 3.6.1), is here dealing with values, not mere strategy. It is not a matter of keeping as many people as possible satisfied, but of consciously working for fundamental human values. The leader takes a moral stand and urges the followers to rise to it.

Burns makes an important distinction between wants and needs. Wants are subjective, he says; they are "direct, conscious, internal, physiological and to a degree indiscriminating" (Burns 1978:64). This helps us see why it is that the pastor has to be on guard lest parishioners seek to satisfy their wants by making use of a structure, for example a parish group, to obtain their own objectives, although that structure was originally set up because of the needs of others. Needs are more fundamental; they are concerned with what is humanly important for oneself, as well as others. They come not only from within the person but from one's environmental situation. Thus, while persons may *want* to be comforted, to be served and to be given, their deeper *needs* are for acceptance (including self-acceptance), community and to be at the service of others. Leadership is at work where people's wants are being transformed into needs (1978:68). In the parish this means the pastor does not do all he can to satisfy whatever people say they want (transactional leadership), but helps parishioners to recognise the deeper human needs of themselves and others. Thus they may be led to see the need for their own further formation, the need for basic human services of those in informal settlements, the need for an holistic AIDS policy, the need to educate men about the dignity of women, and so on. As stated above, the leader is dealing with human values which "indicate desirable or preferred end-states or collective goals or explicit purposes. Values are standards in terms of which specific criteria may be established and choices made among alternatives" (Burns 1978:74). There is an ethical core to the task of leadership. Leaders work to "lift" their followers from their

present wants to deeper human needs, or values. To be a leader is to be a moral person. It is to “move followers up through the levels of need and the stages of moral development” (1978:428). Burns longs to see a new kind of leader who will infuse followers with enlightened motivations, purpose and missionary spirit (1978:437). In turn, the followers, acting on “raised consciousness” will arouse motivation for growth within others. As we shall see, those participating in leadership with Fr. Marc were affected by this raised consciousness.

### **3.6.5 Leadership in a Post-Industrial Paradigm**

Having dismissed all previous studies of leadership as inadequate because they belong to an industrial paradigm, Rost (1991) presents his own theory which he claims is needed for a post-industrial paradigm for the twenty-first century. Acknowledging his debt to MacGregor Burns, to whom he dedicates his major work, he still regards his mentor’s study of leadership as insufficient for the contemporary age. Rost’s own definition is:

Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes (1991:102).

There are four main elements in this definition and all must be present for a relationship to be called leadership.

#### **3.6.5.1 An Influence Relationship**

The leadership relationship is multi-directional in that anyone can lead and follow. As well as the leaders, followers influence both leaders and fellow followers. Leaders and followers may change places in the relationship. If “influence” makes the relationship work then it is leadership. All influence is non-coercive, so if there is any use of power,

authority or coercion (all of which are condemned because they make use of force) leadership is not present (Rost 1991:105-107).

### **3.6.5.2 Leaders and Followers**

The practice of managers directing submissive, passive subordinates is something of the past. In the post-industrial paradigm anyone can be leader or follower. As we live in multiple relationships today, a person will be leader in some systems and follower in others. Even in one relationship leaders and followers can exchange positions. All followers are active, even if not fully so all the time, and this means that followers and leaders together practise leadership. They “develop a relationship wherein they influence one another as well as the organisation and society. This is leadership” (Rost 1991:108). Rather than thinking of one leader with numerous followers, Rost would have us think of leadership as a “communal relationship” or a “community of believers” (1991:111). Later he was to exchange the word “followers” for “collaborators” “because the concept fits the language and values of the post-industrial paradigm” (Rost 1993:109). I keep to his original term here because reference in this study is mainly made to his major work.

We see in Rost’s theory the interchangeability of leadership and followership. Greenleaf had already opened the way for such an understanding of mutuality. Admitting his indebtedness to group dynamics theory (Greenleaf 1996:96-97), he lists the many roles of leaders. But, how can a single leader fulfil so many roles? Greenleaf responds by distinguishing between leadership and the leader. The many roles of leadership are necessary and equal in importance. These roles are taken by anyone who can fulfil them appropriately (1996:98). All the members share in the leadership of the group, each in his/her own way. This is why the appointed / elected chairperson or chief may be merely a

titular head. This is a necessary role but “if all the other roles are well cared for, the titular head may be a quite nominal role”. It is a situation in which “all lead and all follow” (1996:97-98).

This distinction between leadership and the leader is an important one for it opens the way for all members of a group or institution to be actively involved in its life. In their distributed-actions theory of leadership, the Johnsons come to the same conclusion from the task-maintenance perspective. They define leadership as “the performance of acts that help the group to complete its task and to maintain effective working relationships among its members” (Johnson & Johnson 1987:55). Any member of the group who performs such an act shares in the leadership of the group at that moment.

According to Keating (1978:29-40), a team can move through five stages of growth (the last stage is seldom, if ever reached, he maintains). From complete domination by the leader at Stage One, many teams reach the stage described above, which Keating calls the “constructive stage” in which the leader is a “co-ordinator”. Peck (1995:90-94) proposes four stages – pseudo-community, chaos, emptiness and true community. What Greenleaf describes is Peck’s last stage in which “half as many words are spoken, and two or three times as much is said” (Peck 1995:94).

Burns, too, sees a distinction between leaders and leadership. The latter is shared with followers who influence the leaders by their response to their leaders’ stimulation. The leaders, in their turn, modify their behaviour so that there is “a ceaseless process of flow and counter-flow” (1978:440). The idea of a leader being apart from and above the

followers must be de-mystified. On the contrary, a real test of good leadership is “if top leaders can make their followers into leaders” (1978:442).

### **3.6.5.3 Community Building and Teamwork**

Attached to this issue of shared leadership is the call to build community. Greenleaf maintains that the institutions of our society have alienated one person from another. The school has alienated education from the community and special institutions have likewise alienated, for example, the mentally retarded and old people. Human service requires love, and love requires unlimited liability. “As soon as one’s liability for another is qualified *to any degree*, love is diminished by that much” (Greenleaf 1977:38). Community is required whenever one attempts to serve others (1977:38-39).

Community will not be re-established in society through mass movements or by quick-fix solutions. These are mere “aspirins” and “gimmicks”, by which procedures are introduced “with the hope of accomplishing what only better leadership will do” (Greenleaf 1996:30). What is needed is for each servant-leader to demonstrate his/her own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group. This approach will not prove popular (Greenleaf 1977:10.39; 1996:67). It is “gradualism” (1996:68), or evolutionary by which change “occurs over a long period of time and often involves the personal growth of individuals” (Spears 1995:1).

If community is so high on the agenda for leaders, it is necessary that they work with their pastoral assistants in teams. Working together is a key element in institutional renewal. Greenleaf sees this issue as “the overshadowing challenge of our times”. Churches and schools, in particular, need to work at the full participation of all their members in all their

roles. Working together is not merely a strategy for the transformation of an institution. It is necessary for the fulfilment of the individual's human potential (Greenleaf 1977:238-239). The power of a team is that it "wields a growth-building influence on its members". It is a circular process: "the person builds the team and the team builds the person" (Greenleaf 1996:90). The inhibiting condition that keeps people from working together and thus building each other up needs to be seen as an illness. The servant-leader, then, will never work alone. He/she does not feel threatened by the contributions and challenges of the other members, but invites them. It is the group or team that comes first and the leader is a servant of that entity, just as the institution comes first and the team is the servant of all its members (Greenleaf 1996:91-92). The distinction is between possessing the solutions to human situations, on the one hand and, on the other, seeking with others for healing which is something that one never totally achieves but continually seeks after (Greenleaf 1996:95).

Directly connected to the issue of teamwork is the method by which the members come to decisions. Learning from his experience as a Quaker, Greenleaf firmly believes in consensus which requires "a critical quality of faith" in each other. Although it often requires "painstaking effort and patient waiting" the process is worthwhile (Greenleaf 1996:77.85). Although he does not elaborate on these comments, Greenleaf is here highlighting a principle which could make far-reaching changes in a parish if it were to be put into practice. I have a vision of a parish being led by a pastoral team whose members all share in leadership in their individual ways. In such a team consensus is the only meaningful method of decision making, else the members work out of an executive or transactional model (paragraphs 3.6.2 & 3.6.3).

While consensus decision making can be time consuming, it does reflect the equality of the team's members and the seriousness by which each is expected to contribute to the team and the parish at large. Consensus requires maturity on the part of all as each has to be listened to and every opinion needs to be weighed before a final decision is made. For this reason, forming a pastoral team is not to be seen as merely bringing a group of well-meaning parishioners together, but must include a programme of personal formation and a deepening of the members' prayer life. In this way a team can fulfil its double purpose of creating a community among themselves by making decisions of value and leading the parish as a whole in its missionary calling as a community serving the world. We shall see how this process was followed in St. Joseph's Parish.

Before this deepening has taken place, a team may find it difficult to reach consensus on a regular basis. Other decision making processes may be used, the most common of which is the "majority vote". Johnson and Johnson (1987:97-107) offer a list of seven methods, along with a number of cautions about the use of each. They conclude that consensus is the most effective method which often produces a creative and high-quality decision. Similar sentiments are expressed by Keating (1978:65-77), CAFOD (1986:15-17), Benson (1987:118-121) and D'Souza (1989:407-420). For that reason, but particularly because of what I said above about personal growth and spirituality, all parish team members need to work towards achieving this process as a matter of routine.

The consequences of Greenleaf's enabling type of leadership, Rost's interchangeability of leadership and followership and Burns' flow and counter-flow between group members, is found in the growth potential of the group members. The test for a leader is:

Do those served grow as persons; do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on

the least privileged of society; will he or she benefit, or at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf 1996:121-122).

This stirring challenge to pastoral leaders could lead to a changed face for parishes in which the appointed pastor would have as his main focus the enabling of other follower-leaders. Together they would form a pastoral team stretching their energies ever outwards to touch others with their enabling brush. No one is called to become a mere passive follower, but is invited to participate in parish life, perhaps firstly as a learner, and soon as a participant in a community life of mutual support and missionary outreach. These “new” leadership ideas, stretching from the late 1970’s to the early 1990’s, and at the same time scientifically presented by leadership theorists, offer a vision and a practical possibility of how to implement the new ecclesiology of Vatican II and thus turn the parishes of the Roman Catholic Church into missionary communities. Although the main three authors referred to above were unknown to the leaders of St. Joseph’s Parish, we shall see how the latter have been tapping the potential of their parishioners in order to move them towards forming a parish which resembles in practice such a vision of leadership.

#### **3.6.5.4 Real Changes are Intended**

In contrast to Burns who demands that action prove that leadership is present, Rost believes that the *intention* to change is enough to show that leadership is in place. The intention enables those in the relationship to assess the quality of their leadership in the here and now. The changes they intend must be substantive and transforming, but as their assessment of the situation may point to a need to change their ideas, it is necessary that they be able to reformulate their intentions. Also, changes rarely come singly and quickly. Thus it is unnecessary for them to actually put their intentions into action before their relationship can be classified as leadership (Rost 1991:113-117).

### **3.6.5.5 Leaders and Followers Develop Mutual Purposes**

Through reflection leaders and followers come to an agreement about what are their mutual purposes. They are consciously achieved through their mutual interaction, using non-coercive means. This is true mutuality. In the industrial paradigm leaders are concerned with the realisation of specific goals which are often stated in quantitative terms. Purposes tend to be more holistic, are qualitative and refer to what is ordinarily called vision or mission. "Leadership has more to do with who we are than with what we do" (Rost 1991:119). Like Greenleaf (1995:55; paragraph 3.6.1) and Burns (1978:428; paragraph 3.6.4) before him, Rost is strong on the morality of the leadership process. The ethics of leadership is concerned with the way in which leaders and followers interact and work in mutuality to form their intentions. They work at convincing each other on what to believe in and how to act. This influence is interactive and may not in any way include force. Thus, Rost rules out physical force, any attempt to command obedience, the threat of punishment or certain consequences if someone does not agree, and even the inclusion of rewards for compliance. A more subtle form of coercion is intimidation which, being a psychological influence, is more covert and indirect. All these he calls power wielding which is immoral. People must always possess the ability to choose for themselves. Any kind of threatening behaviour prevents this. Persuasion is the one element which preserves personal choice and it occurs through reasoned argument. In this way alone can a group come to genuine mutuality in an atmosphere of freedom (Rost 1991:157-162). To this I would add the influence of example. Seeing a pastoral team working as a community in service of the parish is already an invitation to others to follow. Many of the parishioners I spoke to in St. Joseph's Parish saw their pastoral leaders in this light.

Rost here raises some important questions. He claims that his theory of leadership is valid for all situations. I am trying to imagine a boardroom in which managers are attempting to come to a common agreement on policy. Even if they come to consensus, and this is a big IF, how do they treat the rest of their workforce? Do they have to find consensus all the way down the line, or do they impose, however politely, their decision (intention) on the rest of the company? Rost may counter that he is writing about the leadership itself only and not about all employees. In response, I would ask, "If your sense of mutuality is so important for your leaders, why is it not as important for the rest of your staff?"

In the parish setting this is an important issue. My thesis is that the missiological ecclesiology, expressed in a community-oriented church, which is found in the Vatican II documents is closer to the Gospel than the pyramidal system which exists at present in the Roman Catholic Church. Advocates of the former have little choice but to make use of a community-oriented leadership style by which they may attempt to implement this model of church. This begins with team leadership, as opposed to a single head of the pyramidal organisation. Rost has presented a fine model by which the members of that team can work for consensus as they search for mutual purposes and a common intention, or missionary thrust. I agree with him that this is an ethical issue. However convinced the pastor may be that the parish should be a church-in-mission, he has to respect the leaders with whom he is working as persons. In the language of Rost, this means accepting that leadership will be shared among them all, that they are called to a process of non-coercive influence on each other, that they intend substantive changes in parish life and that they work for a common purpose. Their next challenge is how to present this vision to the community at large. If they impose it on the parish they are reverting to the methods of the pyramidal system. Do

they, then, have to wait for consensus among all parishioners? I think the answer lies in between. Without using force, they challenge parishioners to new insights and work with those who pick up the gauntlet.

### **3.7 The Ethics of Leadership Decisions**

A more serious question concerns Rost's belief that, while the leadership process must be ethical, its content need not necessarily be so. "Their mutual purposes can be moral or immoral" (Rost 1991:124). For him, leadership is in place if the members follow the ethical principles of non-coercive influence in order to achieve mutuality of purpose. The morality of the decision is irrelevant because there is no one best solution for all situations and "people of high moral principles take opposite sides" (Rost 1991:163). As an example, he takes President Reagan who, he says, manifested a high level of leadership, although many would regard some of his actions as immoral. For Rost, leadership was present and the ethical process of achieving it was intact. The quality of the decisions is a different matter. I find it difficult to follow how he cannot apply similar principles to leadership's content, or decisions. As McLuhan said so long ago, "the medium is the message" or, as Padilla puts it, "What they [members of the formation team] want to say is actually expressed in how they do things" (Padilla 1997:49). Lumko staff put it in this way:

"the method you use conveys the content of the learning. To put it in simple words: people learn more from the way you treat them than from what you say!" (Padilla & Prior 1997:66).

From the world of education Dewey is in agreement:

The development of the natural sciences since the seventeenth century has demonstrated that falsity of the idea that reason and thought apart from action can issue in valid knowledge (1986:92).

Dewey goes on to argue that it is in action that one demonstrates the validity or otherwise of one's ideas. In a community church the decisions for change must include and reveal in themselves the respect and mutual influence that was part of the process by which those decisions came about. Decision making is concerned with values, and values, manifested in action, are a matter of morality. Let us take an example.

A parish council in a wealthy neighbourhood in Gauteng uses the ethical principles of Rost to come to a common decision. They have more finances than they can use for their present needs and wish to invest R500,000.00 for an unspecified project in the future. In the same vicinity is an informal settlement where many have been recently affected by flooding of a river through their area. Cholera is rampant and there are many other problems, such as malnutrition and illiteracy. According to Rost, the parish council has used ethical means to come to a common purpose. The question is to what extent they are bound to the same process in the use of their excess finances. In a mission-oriented church the parish has responsibility, not only for itself, but for its immediate neighbours and the wider world. While these parishioners cannot solve the problems of the world, they do have an obligation to be aware of and to respond to social problems in their area. Their leadership content is not devoid of moral value and may in this instance, as I believe it does, have moral consequences.

When it comes to leadership in the church the ethical issue is central. In a Church which is guided by the Gospel of mission and ministry, every decision made can be judged to be moral or otherwise. Each decision made by parish leaders manifests whether they see themselves as a church-in-mission or a self-centred congregation. I realise that in practice

this may not be so straightforward. Often it is through reflection in hindsight that one sees the full implications of a decision. It is for this reason that Greenleaf writes of the “ambiguity of leadership”. To what extent must one listen and not point the way? To what extent can one point the way without having to justify each step? Leadership is situational. There are no ready-made answers for each problem or issue that arises. Rather “it seems to be a fresh creative response to here-and-now opportunities” (Greenleaf 1977:34; 1996:29). The Johnsons agree. A particular leadership act may be an appropriate solution to a problem on one occasion but not on another. The members need a certain flexibility and an ability to diagnose what behaviours are needed at a particular time (Johnson & Johnson 1987:56).

The ultimate test of one’s actions is ethical: “What values govern one’s life?” (Greenleaf 1977:149). Living servant-leadership is a matter of faith, of foresight, of being able to conceptualise the situation on behalf of others. Greenleaf offers three examples. John Woolman, the American Quaker, worked tirelessly for the emancipation of slaves. Greenleaf muses that if more had listened to him there would have been no civil war (1977:29; 1995:187; 1996:25-26,67,72-73,81,157-159,170-171). He describes how Thomas Jefferson refused all kinds of entitlements during the war of independence in order to give his energies to the writing of a new democratic constitution (1977:30,165). He pictures Nikolai Grundtvig, the inventor of the Folk High Schools in Denmark, as the instrument through whom a population of underclass peasants were to win – within half a century - the right to land and the franchise (1977:32; 1995:187; 1996:27-29,46-47,73-74,115-116,268-271,305-307). Attempting to copy such successful leaders may not necessarily lead to one’s own success. Studying them, however, will show one how each of these three leaders took on a role that was “uniquely appropriate for him as an

individual. Each drew on his own strengths and accepted a role that was very right for the time and place he happened to be” (1977:35). None of these found it easy and each had to break new ground without any guarantee that they would succeed. It was the values by which they lived that drew them on, whatever the opposition and pain. “It requires little faith to take a step that involves little risk” (1977:245). Likewise, core Gospel values – and, in the light of this particular study, the missionary essence of the church – must enlighten and direct the decisions of pastoral leaders.

### **3.8 Education and Growth for Leadership**

Burns agrees with Greenleaf concerning the essential nature of education. It is not

the imparting of “facts” or the teaching of skills, indispensable though these are; it is the total teaching and learning process operating in homes, schools, gangs, temples, churches, garages, streets, armies, corporations, bars and unions, conducted by both teachers and learners, engaging with the total environment, and involving influence over persons’ selves and their opportunities and destinies, not simply their minds (Burns 1978:448).

Both Burns and Greenleaf agree that education and leadership are almost inseparable because they are both concerned with the raising of motivation – a moral activity – and not indoctrination or coercion. This is why leadership cannot be restricted to those who have been formally appointed or even elected as leaders. It happens wherever and whenever people are being influenced in an upward direction, that is, towards “some higher values or purpose or form of self-fulfilment” (Burns 1978:452).

For Greenleaf, the leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types of leader. The former tends to preserve the status quo and conforms to “normative expectations”, whereas the latter is characterised by psychological self-insight. The servant-leader acknowledges the need for one’s own healing and it is this journey which enables the leader to bring

healing to others. The power to view solutions to problems comes from seeing them within oneself, not “out there”. As one puts one’s own house in order, one discovers ways of helping others do the same (Greenleaf 1977:13,36-37,44; 1996:18-19). Thus the need for maturity which is the ultimate aim of human growth. Children are not just sponges who soak up the cultural influences around them. From being passive followers in their early years, through a healthy environment, they can become potential leaders (Burns 1978:83.86). It seems clear to myself that this is the process towards maturity which is required of those who will engage in education for social and political transformation. Consequent to this, pastoral leaders need to grasp the importance of education which is not about imparting academic knowledge, but which is concerned with rounding out the person’s full personality and potential.

In the earlier part of the 1970’s Freire had already pointed this out when he spoke about the need for teacher and learner to become “critical co-investigators in the learning process” (Freire 1972:53; see Prior 1993:99-104). A few years later Burns, in an independent study, is writing about teachers and students being joint searchers for the truth (Burns 1978:461). This has implications for a parish. The commonly experienced monological communication *to* the parishioners has to give way to a dialogical process in which a team of leaders and the parishioners *together* search for the truth. This opens up the way for a new crossing of frontiers at a number of levels: psychological, personal, social and ministerial. Beginning with childhood and continuing throughout life, this familial relationship enables people to grow and take responsibility for the lives of themselves as well as others. To be a leader, and particularly a servant-leader, one needs to be mature. This is not a matter of being “perfect”, but certainly it includes self-knowledge

and self-acceptance, as well as an on-going openness to life by which one allows human growth to take place.

From a sociological angle Burns and Greenleaf have identified the need for an educational process that could save society from alienation and selfishness. They echo here the basis of a missionary Christianity, namely, that God became a human being in Jesus to save humanity from its sinful situation. Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve, tried to persuade his disciples that the way to salvation is through a life of service (Mark 10:41-45). *Ad Gentes* stresses that the mission of Christ to the world is carried on through the mission of the church, whose members “must walk the road Christ himself walked, a way of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice” (AG #5). Greenleaf’s description of leadership as “creative venture and risk” goes beyond managing others to offering them vision and a way of implementing it. This is the challenge of a church-in-mission and we shall need to ask how the exercise of leadership in St. Joseph’s Parish reflects this serving and educational attitude.

### **3.9 Leadership for Change**

In the Roman Catholic Church in which authority in the pyramidal style is so heavily stressed, and where parochial leaders are usually appointed from outside the community, the stress on leadership being close to the ground could sound astonishing as well as challenging. Johnson and Johnson (1987:49) have pointed out that not only do leaders need followers, but the followers have influence over them. One of Burns’ insights was to bring together conceptually the roles of both leaders and followers (Burns 1978:4).

“Leadership,” he says, “is inseparable from followers’ needs and goals” (1978:19).

D’Souza (1989:30) believes it is the needs of the group which determine who to have as

leader, and so “new situations change the requirements of leadership”. For Brown and Brown (1994:115) the essence of a liberated organisation is empowering as many people as possible so that they can become self-directed and committed. While looking at the organisation from the leader’s perspective, this opinion still confirms Greenleaf’s view that leaders are for the others and not for themselves.

Greenleaf’s sociological angle on leadership as service is paralleled theologically by the concept of equality among the members of the people of God. As we have seen (2.2.1), *Lumen Gentium* teaches that there is a fundamental equality of all the baptised (see also Ross 1991:145-146). The leader’s role is to serve. Vatican II and the present Vatican teaching could not accept Greenleaf’s locus for leadership in the community, yet sociologically it is correct to say a person without followers is no leader. A person may be ordained into or appointed to an authoritative position in a congregation, but that does not make that person a leader.

To bring about a renewed ecclesiology at parish level, the people need to be fired with a vision and this comes from a prophetic figure, a person with foresight. The high demands that Greenleaf puts on a leader are similar to the role Jesus played. While being part of Jewish life, he could see it with a “third eye”, from a deeper perspective. His high moral stance led people to notice an authority in him which was not possessed by their religious leaders (Mark 1:27; Mat 23:1-7). To move into what Rost calls the “post-industrial paradigm” the church needs imaginative leaders who can persuade their followers to risk change. Such leaders are likely to be stronger, more self-assured and more successful than most (Greenleaf 1998:114) and will have the ability of drawing others along with them. Where is society going to find these new leaders?

### 3.10 Hope in Youth

Greenleaf puts his hope in the young. This is perhaps because it was as a young college student that he first heard the challenge to work within an institution in order to change it (paragraph 3.1.3). In an essay entitled *An Opportunity for a Powerful New Religious Influence*, written in the 1960's (Greenleaf 1996:102-110), he foresees such a force emerging through young adults. Through their prophetic voices, they "might generate a new religious force of great healing dimensions" (1996:103-104).

The new prophets of a changed world will not necessarily be among "the theologians, philosophers or people of literature". Many of the new change agents will function in their professional field at a high level of excellence, while others will function at the same level in more remote areas of society (the "little" people.) They will be the new prophets, restoring the role of religion by re-connecting people with their truly spiritual human roots. Greenleaf lists ten criteria which these young people need. He admits that most exceptional young people will not measure up to all of these qualities! The answer is in an "Institute of Chairing" through which undergraduate students (among others) could be instructed in a new vision for the future. It is not enough to fine tune the status quo or give a building a new coat of paint when there are termites in the foundation (Greenleaf 1996:314). What is needed is a new type of institution in which young adults would use their abilities to shape "stronger and more serving institutions" (1996:244-245).

Those who teach in seminaries have a particularly important role in preparing future pastors to be servant-leaders. This plea to the seminaries is particularly poignant for Greenleaf, not only because of his own Judeo-Christian tradition to which he often refers, but because, for him, any renewal of society's institutions is a religious matter. In many of

his essays he explains how the word “religion” comes from the Latin “re-ligio” which means to re-bind. Traditional people were religious in the sense that they were “bound to the cosmos” (Greenleaf 1977:317). One of the problems with religious leadership today is that it fails to re-bind estranged people to this relationship, “to renew the glue that holds civilization together” (1996:115). This is a major task for the churches today (1977:80). The transformation of institutions, then, is a religious act by which humans are once more bound to their Creator in such a way that “they can belong in this world and be at home in it” (1977:248).

In an address he gave to university students in 1966, Greenleaf pleads with them to prepare themselves for the task ahead.

If you believe with Kazantzakis that your duty is to re-make the world and bring it more in accord with virtue and justice, more in accord with your own heart, then you have the obligation to prepare yourself *now* by cultivating the life style that will make it a reasonable expectation that you will do your share (Greenleaf 1977:298).

It needs to be remembered that Greenleaf was speaking in the heady days of student protest and demands for societal renewal. Since the 1980’s there has been a change in university student attitudes. Today some of the most conservative social views will be found among this group. The hope of renewal coming from them as a body seems remote. This does not take away from the fact that Greenleaf’s theory offers a practical way to implement the renewed ecclesiology of *Ad Gentes* and *Lumen Gentium*. The church as the people of God means bringing people together into community where they use their Spirit-given gifts to build up the body of Christ. Trained to do this, they engage in missionary outreach and work to help bring about a transformed world in which the Spirit of Christ is alive and active. As we shall see,

a strong force which made St. Joseph's Parish the missionary congregation that it is was the leadership of young people.

### 3.11 The Institution as Servant

The sales of Greenleaf's original essay *The Servant as Leader* totaled more than 200,000 copies. The biggest purchases were made by congregations of Roman Catholic sisters (DiStefano 1995:65). The huge interest shown in this work motivated Greenleaf to write a further essay (Greenleaf 1977:49-90) in which he dealt with leadership within institutions. He believes that society has rapidly moved from one constituted by individuals to one dominated by institutions<sup>2</sup>, which are not, in his view, "meeting the standard of what is reasonable and possible in their service" (1977:51-55). In particular, he picks out governments, business practice, health and social services, universities and the churches.

Greenleaf's own definition of an institution is:

A gathering of persons who have accepted a common purpose, and a common discipline to guide the pursuit of that purpose, to the end that each involved person reaches higher fulfilment as a person, through *servicing and being served* by the common venture, than would be achieved alone or in a less committed relationship (1977:237).

In the light of this definition one can see why Greenleaf insists on the renewal, not only of individuals, but of the institution itself. Once transformed, it is a thing of beauty and becomes a powerful driving force for service. Within its ambit the individual discovers the conditions for personal growth and higher achievement, goals which one cannot reach on one's own (Greenleaf 1977:239-240). Achievement in institutions is essential, but not

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<sup>2</sup> Greenleaf speaks here out of the individualistic society of the United States of America. My experience with people throughout Africa and Asia has been of traditionally community-oriented societies. This does not, however, nullify Greenleaf's stance on institutions, especially as they continue to impact for the worse on more traditional peoples' lives.

enough: “It is the quality of people, seen over a life span within the context of their particular achievements, that must be weighed” (1977:289). The question to be answered, then, is: how can institutions transform themselves in order to better serve their own constituents and the public at large, thus contributing towards a better society? Or, to use the words he addressed to the School Sisters of St. Francis:

Will you accept the challenge to build of your religious order an entity of such commanding distinction as servant . . .that the force of the model you present will move your church – and the world? (1977:245)

Looking at so many of today’s institutions one may wonder whether anything could be done to renew them. Greenleaf admits that “human institutions are weak and full of error” (Greenleaf 1977:285). As they “grow old, large or respectable” they become encumbered with bureaucracy, they have “feet of clay” (1977:294). He pleads, however, with individuals to take a responsible institutional role and put as much goodness into it as he/she can (1977:285). The dream is for a complete transformation and this cannot be achieved in a piecemeal fashion; one needs a total strategy of institution building (1977:242). It is here that the church has a vital role to play, as we shall see in the next paragraph.

### **3.12 The Growing Edge Church**

The challenge that Greenleaf puts before businesses and the universities becomes criticism when he turns to the churches “because their role could be so pivotal in the regeneration of what many regard as a sick society” (Greenleaf 1977:80). The greatest service the churches could offer would be to work for a society which is more just and loving. This is what Greenleaf calls the “growing edge”. The churches could become “the chief nurturing force, conceptualiser of opportunity, value shaper and morale sustainer of leadership everywhere” (1977:81). Instead, their basic deficiency lies in their inadequate service to

contemporary society (1996:169). They could take on this role if they fulfilled two tasks. The first is for the pastor to function as *primus inter pares* among those lay people who share in the leadership of the parish. The second task is to build up and support, by means of leadership formation, those who work in other institutions (1977:81-82). The pastor would then be acting as a servant and the lay people would be encouraged to use their gifts for all in a partnership. There is a basic equality among people and no one should enjoy any advantage over others “whether of wealth, or education, or position, whatever it may be - except as he/she uses it to further the interests of the common good” (1977:281). The responsibility of the churches to lead in the transformation of society is of so great importance that to settle for a level of mediocrity is “truly diabolical” because it is substantially less in quality than what is reasonable and possible with their available resources, human and material (Greenleaf 1977:247).

Greenleaf’s belief that individuals can become better persons and achieve more within institutions is supported by Keating whose final phase of group growth, called the “esprit stage”, can only be reached with full group consensus (Keating 1978:37). This stage is marked by high group morale and a deep level of trust. “The group is highly productive, accomplishing tasks beyond what the talents of the individual members would seem to justify” (1978:32).

Aware that such a “bonus effect” (Keating 1978:33) derives from working in partnership, it could be asked why so few institutions, including the churches, actually succeed in this. One of the answers to this question can be found in Greenleaf’s distinction between the formal and the informal in institutions. The Roman Catholic Church falls under his indictment that bureaucracy increases as an institution becomes old and venerable. The

formal, or structural, aspect of the church is a priority today in the minds of Vatican officials and any dissenting individuals are censured. In February 1989 163 theologians signed a document (known as the *Cologne Document*) entitled “Against Incapacitation – for an open Catholicism”. In it they expressed concern that the Roman curia is “energetically filling episcopal sees throughout the world without respecting the suggestions of the local churches and neglecting their established rights”. They also expressed disquiet over qualified theologians being refused official permission to teach. They regard this as “an intrusion into the dialogue-like structure of theological thinking which the Second Vatican Council emphasised in many passages” (*Cologne Document* 1989:140; paragraph 2.1). The Vatican responded by issuing “The New Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity” in which theologians were told that they could not think differently from what may be written or said by the pope or college of bishops, even if the opinions of the latter are not proclaimed as definitive (*New Profession of Faith* 1989:211). While Cooper regards the oath as no more than an act of humility to Christ the Head who speaks through his church (Cooper 1989:346), McCormick and McBrien speak of “an atmosphere of coercion resulting from a policy of intimidation” which gives rise to such documents (McCormick & McBrien 1991:184). They speak of the pyramidal structure of Vatican ecclesiology which denies the breakthrough made at Vatican II (1991:186). Instead of being answerable to the hierarchy for their opinions, theologians primarily write and teach for the sake of the whole community of faith and, beyond that, for the wider community (1991:189).

Many are “waiting for the next pope” to change things. Although it is vaguely possible that a second Pope John XXIII may open the windows again, the very use of such language solidifies the pyramidal approach to ecclesiology. Rather than seeing the church primarily

as universal and then replicated at local level throughout the world, there is a need to accept – and put into practice – the Vatican II teaching, found in its missionary document, that the church is principally where believers gather:

All over the world indigenous particular churches ought to grow from the seed of the word of God, churches which would be adequately organised and would possess their own proper strength and maturity. Adapted to the living of a full Christian life, they should contribute to the good of the whole church (AG #6).

From the start the Christian community should be so organised that it is able to provide for its own needs as far as possible (AG #15).

Rahner sums up the issue as follows:

The church is founded locally on the word of God and it is these communities world-wide which make up the universal church. The universal church is, as it were, contained in them. The local church is not only an authorized agency of the one universal church which could just as easily dispense with such an appendage; rather, this local church is the event of this very universal church itself. This starting point for a theology of the parish does not lie in a deduction of the parish from the monarchical summit of the church through the episcopal territories to a narrowly boundaried local ecclesiastical organisation. The parish church is not only the result of an atomizing division; it is, rather, the highest degree of actuality of the total church (Rahner 1958:28-30; quoted by Kress 1985:88).

A renewed respect for the church at parish and national levels is required. Their contribution to the church catholic could bring out the “wonderful diversity” (LG:32; paragraph 2.2.3) of the charisms within the universal church and healthily contribute to its life.

### **3.13           The *Primus inter Pares* in the Parish**

The climate of fear affects the parish clergy too. Many feel demoralized because they cannot defend theological positions they disagree with. “They become torn between their official loyalties and their better judgements and compassion” (McCormick & McBrien 1991:188). As a result they keep their opinions to themselves and proceed to work in those areas of life which are not controversial. Thus Greenleaf’s “operational institution” is

perpetuated at the managerial level, often at the cost of the emotional health of parish leaders.

Other clergy prefer to stick to the administrative structure and prevent the conceptual from operating in order to suit their own purposes. "It is easier to be a dictator than a participatory leader, and it is much simpler to do everything yourself than to involve others" (Collins 1991:27). The temptation to remain in control of the situation and do as much as one can oneself is being exacerbated by the continuing shortage of clergy which, by default, is leading many to "keep the plant going", as opposed to allowing and encouraging wider participation which, in turn, would introduce teamwork and an atmosphere of renewal. The shortage of clergy is thus helping to perpetuate the leadership style that needs to be changed. What is needed is a paradigm shift in the attitude of the clergy or, in Greenleaf's words, a change from the lone chief to a *primus inter pares*. The latter would bring a renewed sense of mission into the church through the formation of as many lay people as possible and their involvement in parish leadership. In this way the pastor would mentor the role of servant for the other leaders to imitate and teamwork would become normal in the local community. We shall be seeing later how, with a single pastor caring for 10,000 regular church-goers, this was achieved in St. Joseph's Parish.

### **3.14 Towards a Description of Pastoral Leadership**

Whereas Burns and Rost offer detailed *definitions*, Greenleaf is content with a *vision* of how leadership could appear. I would like to conclude this chapter by taking a middle course and offering a *description* of pastoral leadership. This relies on a vision of a parish being a church-in-mission, as well as needing a detailed implementation of the vision in pastoral practice.

**. Vision .**

**. Description .**

**. Definition .**

Diagram 2

Leadership is a *process* which occurs between a group of people responsible for others. While there is usually an appointed or elected leader, leadership itself is *shared* by all the members of the group. Leadership, then, is an *influence relationship* by means of which each member of the group has an effect on all the others through interaction and dialogue. The leader should be *more knowledgeable* than the other members of the group in general pastoral matters, but acknowledges the need to learn from the others at all times and be influenced by them. Pastoral leadership is an inherently moral phenomenon which is manifested in two ways. Firstly, it always keeps *the mission of the church* in mind so that all decisions are in some way geared towards implanting the Gospel in the lives of the Christian community and beyond its boundaries. Secondly, the method by which decisions are made within the leadership group and implemented in the Christian community is always by way of *ministry* or service. This excludes anything that has been mentioned in this chapter concerning power wielding, coercion or bureaucracy. Thus, there is an *ethical* dimension. Leadership does not belong to the leader but to the community, just as the leader is there because there are others needing to be led. Leadership, then, is about what ought to be done in regard to others (Gini 1997:68). When the two concepts of mission and ministry are put together we have the true meaning of church and of servant leadership (paragraph 2.1; Kraemer 1958:143). The *teaching role* of pastoral leadership is a core element. As the members of the leadership team engage in continuing education and personal formation, so they never tire of stretching the members of the community to *grow beyond* the status quo and into a richer and more human future, even though this includes

risk. Finally, the pastoral leader must be a *strong* person, convinced of his/her role as the servant of the church-in-mission, and energetic in enabling others to share in the parish's leadership. Like love, the more leadership is given away the stronger it becomes.

### **3.15 Conclusion**

The vision to be found in *Ad Gentes* and *Lumen Gentium* of a church of equals being served by the clergy is paralleled by the leadership theories of Greenleaf, Burns, Rost and others. Having seen the renewed mission ecclesiology of Vatican II in chapter two, we have now studied how a particular leadership style is needed to implement this. We shall now look at how this ecclesial missiology was actualised in St. Joseph's Parish. But before engaging in that analysis we need to situate St. Joseph's Parish geographically and historically which I do in the next chapter.

# **Chapter Four:**

## **The Church**

### **in the Philippines**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The islands of the Philippines have had a unique colonial history which has helped shape the country civilly, politically and ecclesiastically. The purpose of this chapter is to situate the parish of St. Joseph's in its geographical and historical context. This will enable us to see what influences from the past may still be present. More importantly, we may detect challenges which are facing the parish. In the subsequent three chapters we shall note how its leadership has responded to them.

#### **4.1 Geography of the Philippines**

The Republic of the Philippines is an archipelago which was named after King Philip II of Spain. It is situated in South East Asia, with Taiwan to the north, Malaysia to the south west and Indonesia to the south. It consists of approximately 7,100 islands, of which only 11 have an area of more than 1.6 square kilometres. The total length of the country is about 1,800 kilometres and the width is about 1,100 kilometres. The islands are loosely grouped into three

areas. The northern ones are referred to as Luzon (the name of the largest island), the southern ones are referred to as Mindanao (the name of the second largest island) and the central islands as the Visayas.

The Philippines consists of mountains (the highest being Mount Apo at almost 3,000 metres), inland fertile plains and many lakes. There are many volcanoes, the latest of which to erupt was Mount Pinatubo in 1992. Its ash still covers a vast area and has left hundreds of thousands of people without their homes and fields. The American military base in the area was covered by two metres of ash and was abandoned. The largest lake is Laguna de Bay which is situated approximately 8 kilometres east of St. Joseph's parish. There are many forests and the large mahogany trees are much sought after by other countries. This has led to extensive logging, much of it illegal (Mananzan 1996:175). Many church groups have been involved in efforts to have it stopped. Palm trees are widespread and are most often used for the building of houses.

The temperature throughout the islands generally ranges between the mid to upper 30's, although it can drop to the mid-20's during the rainy season (June to September). Typhoons are common. One of the workshops I conducted in Bohol was delayed for a day as many could not reach the island by boat during a typhoon. Excessive rain often causes floods and the loss of life. The hot temperatures in Metro Manila are exacerbated by the pollution caused by excessive numbers of motor vehicles. Exhaust fumes often give rise to a blue haze about a metre above the road. The most common ailment is the upper respiratory tract infection.

13,500 people per 100,000 of the population of Metro Manila are affected by this disease each year (Sumith 1988:19).

The 350 years of Spanish and American administrations have brought about considerable cultural uniformity throughout the country. The only exceptions are the remote mountainous areas where traditional life has, for the most part, been preserved, and the south of Mindanao where there is a strong Arab/Muslim influence. Despite the 400 years of Western colonization and subsequent materialistic way of life, the people of the Philippines remain Asian and, indeed, Filipino in their hearts. For example, one of the most important social graces is *pakikisama*, or smooth interpersonal relations, through which they conform to group expectations, extend help to those in need and offer hospitality to guests (Ante 1991:23-24).

There are about 75 languages spoken throughout the Philippines. Tagalog, largely spoken in Luzon, has been adopted as the national language, although I found it is strongly resented in the southern islands where the people would prefer to speak English when communicating with visitors from the north. Tagalog has been affected by some of the other widely spoken languages and is often referred to as Filipino.

## **4.2 The History of the Church**

The history of the church in the Philippines is mainly the history of four hundred years of the Roman Catholic Church's presence in the islands, except for the last hundred years when Protestant Churches came to the country and some indigenous churches sprang up. A history of the Philippines can be found elsewhere (see, for example, Agoncillo 1975, Ante 1991,

Deats 1967, Gutierrez 1995, Phelan 1985, Schumacher 1979, & Zaide 1979). My intention is to situate the study of a particular parish in its historical context and thus, while outlining the history of the church in the Philippines, I shall do so with certain phenomena in mind. Particular historical events have led to the inculcation of various attitudes which have permeated the Filipino Roman Catholic Church, and in many ways the society as a whole, and which, therefore, have had an influence on the parishioners of St. Joseph's in Las Piñas.

#### **4.2.1 The Church comes to the Philippines**

The first European known to have arrived in the Philippines was the sailor Ferdinand Magellan. By accident - he had been headed for the Moluccas - he arrived in Cebu on March 16, 1521. Two weeks later on Easter Sunday Magellan planted a large cross on a hill top and declared the country a possession of Spain. "Thus, from the beginning, the purposes of Spain and of the Roman Church were inseparably linked" (Deats 1967:14). Only two weeks later Humabon, the king of Cebu, was baptized, along with his wife Juana and 800 others, according to Mananzon, under the threat of death (1995:165).

A mere fortnight later Magellan died and "with no catechesis, no knowledge of the Christian religion" (Gutierrez 1995:379) all visible signs of the Christian faith soon died with him. Before he died, Magellan had given the queen an image of the *Santo Niño*.

It was 44 years later that the Spanish returned to the Philippines, this time under the leadership of Miguel de Legazpi. He met resistance in the town of Cebu and so his soldiers sacked it. As well as his soldiers, Legazpi also brought with him a contingent of Augustinian

friars who had been working in Mexico and who would now evangelise a new land. Juan Camus, one of the soldiers in the group, found the image of the *Santo Niño*, which almost certainly had been given by Magellan to Queen Juana and before long a church was built in its honour.

Six years later Legazpi had settled in Manila which was to become the capital of a country named after Emperor Philip II of Spain. A national consciousness among the people began to emerge as the church spread across the islands and a political infrastructure accompanied it. In most places the priest was the only Spaniard and so fulfilled the roles of both spiritual and civil authorities. The missionary's knowledge of at least one of the local languages also placed upon him the role of mediator between the people and the government.

#### **4.2.2 The Consolidation of the Church**

As the Spaniards gradually took hold of the archipelago other missionary congregations joined the Augustinians and the larger part of the country was divided up among them.

There are varying opinions concerning the degree of violence used in the conquest of the Philippines by the Spaniards. Mananzan maintains that "the Church was born in the Philippines at sword point" (1995:165). In contrast, Gutierrez (1995:380) and R.E. He (Encyclopedia Britannica:850) claim that it was a welcome and benign entry. Schumacher (1979:22-38) suggests that it was less cruel than many other conquests, such as that of North America. However, the conquistadores were determined to impose submission on the natives, else they would not have been able to colonise the Philippines at all. Nor may one forget that

the missionaries accompanied the conquistadores, needed them for protection and in many places, as pointed out above, were representatives of the Spanish government before the people. However positively we may want to construe events, or search for good intentions, the church in the eyes of the natives could not but be seen as inextricably tied to the Spanish political agenda. Despite this, there were many examples of church personnel who, while they accepted the right of Spain to colonise, did oppose injustices within the system.

What cannot be denied is that the Church eventually dominated the whole country and its people. As a consequence, those Filipinos who were later to seek political independence discovered that they had to attack the church because it upheld a foreign colonial power.

#### **4.2.3            Evangelisation**

Before the arrival of the Spanish the population lived in separate principalities, called *barangays*, and were grouped under local rulers (Mananzan 1995:164). Some of these were sophisticated with their own literature and legal system (Ante 1991:18). In their systematic evangelization of the country, the missionaries decided that the people were living in too scattered a manner to be brought into a systematic catechesis that was needed to provide a firm foundation for Christian living. Thus they worked on a *reduction* system by which the people were brought into villages where they could live "within the sound of the bell" (Gutierrez 1995:384). But this did not work out as smoothly as the missionaries had hoped, for most of the people still depended on their fields and so remained where their livelihood was (Schumacher 1979:61).

In the outlying areas, where the priest had to depend on making occasional visits, the results were far from ideal. In the larger settlements primary schools were opened for boys and here a solid foundation in catechesis and the Christian way of life could be assured. Some of the friars engaged in road building in order to facilitate movement from one settlement to another. Others founded hospitals. Soon many of the missionaries were assisted by Filipinos, both men and women, who proved effective in spreading the faith among their own country people.

#### **4.2.4 Filipino Opposition**

Although the Church spread rapidly, there were many who resisted the missionaries, sometimes with hostility, because of the way they had been treated by the conquistadores, or because of the immoral behaviour of some of the Spaniards, or because of the bad example of the missionaries themselves. Concerning the latter, Archbishop Benavides of Manila complained that the religious orders in general carry “a certain lack of love for Indios”<sup>1</sup> (Schumacher 1979:66-67). The Jesuits, ignorant of the Filipino understanding of property, were accused by the people of taking their property, both land and houses. People also complained about the exorbitant fees for church services rendered. The traditional belief in the ancestors was savagely attacked by the missionaries who described it as idolatry. This kept many from entering the church. While in a few cases there was resistance to the new religion by baptised persons, the more common practice was to hold on to the old in secret while overtly conforming to the new (Mananzan 1995:166).

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<sup>1</sup> The name commonly used to describe the Filipinos during the colonial era.

#### **4.2.5 The Faith is Assimilated**

From the beginning the missionaries preached the Gospel in the native languages, using as many indigenous terms as possible. The missionaries attempted to persuade the people to give up their old practices by introducing Spanish customs, such as fiestas, processions, plays and Masses celebrated with pomp and accompanied by music and singing to attract the people. “This meant the virtual hispanisation of society” (Mananzan 1995: 166). Acceptance to the sacraments was a slow affair and only those judged able to live the Christian life in its fulness were accepted. Members of sodalities were encouraged to care for the sick and needy. These strict religious practices led to a widespread faithful practising of the Christian faith by the new converts, often to the surprise of the foreigners.

Many missionaries did not want to overstep the traditional Filipino leaders and so traditional structures were kept in place as much as possible. The Jesuits even formed a confraternity for traditional leaders who would “act as the guardians of the faith and practice of the new Christians” (Schumacher 1979:80).

#### **4.2.6 Comment**

The influence of the Catholic Church on the social and political situation is still strong. When President Ramos, for example, made moves to change the constitution so that he could remain in office, Cardinal Sin denounced his intentions and Ramos backed down. The same cardinal was instrumental in the recent downfall of President Estrada once it was widely known how corrupt he had become. Church personnel, even at parish level, need to be aware of this influence which they possess and not abuse it. Although it was not an abuse of power, there

was an occasion when the parish leaders at St. Joseph's tried but failed to use their influence in a political matter. They sided with a particular candidate in the election for mayor. They made their opinion known and actively cavassed for him. The opposing candidate won the election with a large majority. When I visited the parish a year later I heard that he was the best mayor they had had for years. This story brings out the necessity of having one's ear to the ground and knowing how people are thinking. It also brings out the question of whether as church leaders they should have taken sides.

### **4.3 The Seventeenth Century**

The colonisers were well established in the archipelago by the year 1620. Before long, however, they found themselves at war with the Dutch who had decided to take over the Moluccas and control the lucrative spice trade. For the following 50 years Filipinos were conscripted into the Spanish army and their rice crops were requisitioned, often without payment. The missionaries, although against the mistreatment of the local people, supported the war lest Protestantism replace the Roman Catholic Church. After the Dutch threat had passed, the patience of the long-suffering Filipinos wore out and revolts broke out in many places against the civil authorities. Because of the civil role played by the clergy, as well as their sometimes antagonistic attitude to established beliefs, traditional priests and some fallen-away Christians burned church buildings, attacked mission establishments and even killed some of the priests (Mananzan 1995:167). Once again, the missionaries' tie to the colonisers worked for the worse against them.

A second threat to the Spanish were the Moslems in the south who forced the missionaries out of Mindanao and even threatened them in the Visayas. “Year after year Church buildings were looted and burned, and thousands of Visayan Christians killed or carried off into slavery” (Schumacher 1979:102). With the government in Manila disinterested in far-off places, many missionaries became military leaders. Others were killed or taken into captivity and held for ransom (Schumacher 1979:105-107).

Luzon was not without its strife, but here it was between the Spaniards themselves. The civil leaders claimed to uphold the king's authority, while church leaders claimed their authority came from God. Conflict ensued over, for example, appointments to ecclesiastical posts. There was further conflict between religious orders or between a religious order and the bishop (Schumacher 1979:119-123).

#### **4.3.1 Church Authority and the Friars**

The most persistent struggle between the bishops and friars was over the issue of parish visitation. The friars claimed that their parishes were exempt from episcopal jurisdiction (Schumacher 1979:124-125).

In the main, the friars managed to preserve their independence because there were few secular priests. Archbishop de la Cuesta of Manila, armed with a Vatican document supporting his position, tried to impose his right to visitate the parishes in his archdiocese. He was unsuccessful and “archbishop and governor together abandoned all further efforts to disturb the status quo” (Schumacher 1979:138-139). Schumacher ruminates that, had the religious

seen what eventually resulted from their “victory”, they would have regretted their action. A “disastrous decline of religious spirit” was to occur in the nineteenth century (1979:140).

#### **4.3.2 The Development of the Nation through the Church**

These internal squabbles should not distract us from noting the development of the church in the Philippines. Not only were Christian communities built up everywhere, but special attention was given to education. Both primary and high schools were founded, and in 1595 the Jesuits opened the first college. That, and a further college founded by the Dominicans, were later to be known as the University of San Ignacio and the University of Santo Tomás (Schumacher 1979:145). In the seventeenth century Filipinos were admitted to these universities (Schumacher 1979:150). Nowhere else in colonial Asia was this equality in education practised. The Filipino students were later to use their expertise in revolting “against the inequality practised in other spheres of life” (Schumacher 1979:150). While studies at university level were conducted in Spanish, local languages remained the medium of education in all other schools.

Concern for the local population extended to health care. In a letter to the Spanish king in 1662 Archbishop Garcia Serrano listed seven hospitals within or near to Manila. On the whole, the missionaries “had a deep impact on the development of the Filipino people, not only religiously but also socially and culturally” (Giordano 1988:16).

### 4.3.3 The Missionaries' Contribution to Filipino Development

The missionaries were also concerned with the Filipinos' material welfare. For example, they introduced improved methods of agriculture and introduced many new foods and other crops. Through the *haciendas* of the friars the clearing of land took place, as well as agricultural innovations and large-scale irrigation. This led to increased prosperity in southern Luzon (Schumacher 1979:179-181).

Further influence, perhaps problematic, was brought to bear on the indigenous population by the introduction of a European written literature. The Filipinos already had a number of written languages. An example of the Hanuoo Mangyans' script, which is still used on the island of Mindoro, can be seen in the diagram below. These languages possessed an

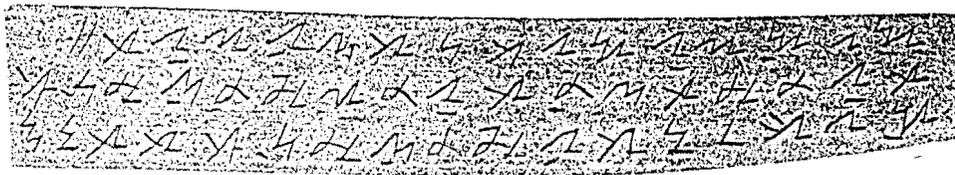


Diagram 3

interesting characteristic: there were no vowels. As Eppie put it to me, "Our languages were open-ended. There was a flow to the sound and in our speech we were able to include various vowels which gave the consonants new and vibrant meaning. All this was done away with by the Spanish who imposed their own notation on our languages and forced their understanding of our pronunciation into a stilted Western one. This has confined us when it comes to the world of ideas and creativity" (Ong-Casuncad 1996:9).

In the light of this, I have to question Schumacher's statement that there was no pre-Hispanic written literature (1979:177). While the first Filipino books, especially the dictionaries and grammars, were intended for the missionaries, "they also had the effect of standardising the hitherto unwritten languages and making universal the use of the *handier* Roman alphabet" (1979:177. Italics added). While the missionaries provided translations of various Spanish pious works, they never translated the Bible into any local language.

#### **4.3.4 The Growth and Decline of a Filipino Clergy**

As has been seen, the Church spread rapidly throughout the Philippines. Yet the tremendous work of the Spanish missionaries was to be stunted, even reversed in places, because they made no attempt to develop a native clergy. One of the difficulties was the matter of celibacy which usually takes on only once a Roman Catholic ethos has become inculcated in the believers, sometimes through a few generations. Another problem was that of education. It would take some time to take native candidates through a sound secondary education and then introduce them to the philosophical and theological training required for all Roman Catholic clergy. However, a more serious reason for there being so few local clergy was due to the Spanish friars discouraging indigenous vocations because they "did not want to relinquish any of their administrative control" (Giordano 1988:14). The only candidates deemed suitable were the locals born of Spanish parentage, though even their suitability was questioned by some (Schumacher 1979:195). Members of this group augmented the religious orders and also became the first secular priests of the country. Overall the friars saw the solution in continuing to import Spanish missionaries.

There were some who disagreed with this policy and an attempt was made in the second half of the 18th century to accept candidates from among the Filipinos themselves. Thirty two such priests were known in the archdiocese of Manila, among whom were men of outstanding character (Schumacher 1979:199).

In 1767 the Society of Jesus<sup>2</sup> was banished from the Spanish Empire. As soon as the Jesuits, who had pastoral concern of 130 parishes in the Philippines, were expelled Archbishop Sancho of Manila took the opportunity to “break once and for all the independence of the other religious orders by forcing them to submit to episcopal visitation or suffer the deprivation of their parishes” (Schumacher 1979:202). All the empty parishes were filled with secular clergy, most of them Filipinos. This was achieved through the archbishop hastily ordaining, after a minimum of training, a sufficient number of native clergy to fill all the vacant parishes. These Filipino priests were pawns in the struggle of both archbishop and governor against the religious orders (Schumacher 1979:203).

It goes without saying that these new priests did not live up to the archbishop's expectations and even he had to decry the many and widespread abuses he came across. In response, the religious orders ceased to take in native candidates and the pressure to fill vacant parochial posts increased. The overall result was disastrous for the Church. Pastoral care was at a minimum; in the schools the standard of religious education diminished; the missions to the mountain people were abandoned and many who had been newly evangelized lapsed into traditional religious practices. Concludes Schumacher: “the parishes fell into deep decay”

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<sup>2</sup> In the 1760's the Spanish monarch, with his Bourbon ministers and under influence of the French Enlightenment, introduced Spanish regalism into the empire. Part of this movement towards modernization included the centralization of power in the Crown and an effort to use the church as an instrument of the State. They attempted to subjugate the religious orders which, being supranational, were not so easily controlled. The prime target was the Society of Jesus which was seen as less susceptible to control than the other orders (Schumacher 1979:200-201).

(1979:209), a fulfilment of “the prophecies of doom made by the religious regarding the dire consequences of ordaining *indios* to the priesthood” (Mananzan 1996:168).

#### **4.3.5 Comment**

The Spanish not only subjugated the Philippines through their military might, but they also imposed their own interpretation on the local languages. This is the opposite to the missionary command which is to take the Good News *into* cultures. While much good was achieved through education, health-care and agricultural reform, it is difficult for a people to be grateful for that when they have had their land taken away from them.

The squabbles between the missionaries and the bishops is a scandal and one can hardly add to the seriousness of Schumacher’s comment (paragraph 4.3.1) that this aggressive behaviour was to have dire consequences in the decline of religious spirit in the church. It was a sad beginning for what could have been so different. This new missionary thrust might have led to a renewed society as the Filipino cultures received the Good News.

### **4.4 The Growth of Filipino Nationalism**

The Filipino clergy resented their inferior status and an incipient nationalism became evident among the local clergy. In the early decades of the 19th century the Spanish had become suspicious of the intentions of the Filipino clergy, especially as most of the Spanish colonies in America had achieved their independence from Spain. Between the years 1750 and 1850 profound ideological and technological changes were sweeping through Europe. The new economic order which followed the industrial revolution led to social reforms and a new

entrepreneurial class. Liberal ideas abounded and, once these arrived in the Philippines, created among the more educated Filipinos, particularly the clergy, a national identity (Ante 1991:19). Demands for national independence were soon to follow.

During the 19th century the friars began to increase in number again and gradually to take back the parishes which had been led by Filipino clergy. The work of archbishop Sancho was being reversed, a movement now sanctioned by both religious and civil authorities. The danger now was not the independence of the religious, but the potential civil independence aspirations of the Filipino secular clergy. Reducing the secular clergy to mere assistants to the foreign priests further fuelled the fiery nationalism of the natives (Giordano 1988:15).

The well educated Fr José Burgos was to become the leader of the Filipino clergy in their seeking for justice, though without any disloyalty to Spain (Schumacher 1979:221-224).

Efforts by Burgos and his followers were to fall on deaf ears as even the governors saw them as potential rebels against the Spanish regime. When a rebellion broke out at the Cavite arsenal in 1872, Burgos and many of his companions were arrested and tried. Burgos and two other priests were executed. (Later the Spanish authorities were to declare the trial illegal.)

Their deaths marked “the beginning of a permanent struggle for political independence and freedom” (Mananzan 1996:169). The civil authority's fear of rebellion and the missionaries' fear of losing their parishes combined to crush the just aspirations of the Filipino clergy: “The seeds of the later schism were being sown during these years, as well as the seeds of a revolution against Spain” (Schumacher 1979:229).

#### 4.4.1 The Church and Filipino Nationalism

It is of no surprise that, in the situation described above, the level of religious knowledge was generally poor. To exacerbate the situation, the population increased rapidly with no subsequent increase of clergy to care for them. This lack of clergy, plus a lack of proper religious instruction, led to a profuse growth of popular or folk Catholicism. Many movements appeared. They usually contained good elements, though their presence worried the authorities. Persecution led to further separation from church life and in some cases they evolved into sects. The relaxation in discipline and the decline in the piety of many friars - to say nothing of the corruption of some - all added to the worsening situation.

Nationalist aspirations became ever more vociferous in the 1880s. Many who had studied with Burgos returned from exile and shared an antipathy towards the friars who had for so long treated them as second class citizens and regarded the clergy as unworthy of parish priest status. Together they longed for a modernization of the country, a growing national consciousness and demanded that their equality with the Spaniards be recognised (Schumacher 1979:251).

The core of the opposition centred on the social and political position the friars held in Philippine society. These missionaries opposed the new liberties which had become commonplace in Europe and which were experienced by Filipino students who had spent time there. A further criticism was aimed at friar possession of vast *haciendas*. Once the source of agricultural and other forms of social progress, these properties were now seen as symbols of

the country's richness which had been stolen by the foreigners. The Philippines is "a State of monastic supremacy", said one national patriot (Mananzan 1996:168).

#### **4.4.2 The Independence Revolution**

By the 1890s the friars had become the main target for the nationalists, though some actually became anti-church as well. The Independence Revolution took place in 1896. Many of the friars actually supported the revolution and were active in the newly established councils. The Revolution was brought to a halt by the Peace of Biaknabato in 1897. Meanwhile, the Spanish-American war had broken out and American ships arrived in Manila bay. This was the opportunity for the second phase of the Revolution to take place in which Aguinaldo proclaimed independence for the Philippines.

Aguinaldo's principal advisor was Mabini, a mason, who drew up a constitution for the country in which a separation of church and state was envisaged. The church cause was taken up in a new newspaper *El Catòlico Filipino* (Schumacher 1979:279). Mabini also put pressure on the Filipino clergy to elect a church leader from among themselves. This they refused to do as they acknowledged the authority of the Holy See. Encouraged by Mabini, a semi-schismatic group, led by Aglipay, demanded the appointment of Filipino bishops by Rome and denied the authority of the Spanish bishops (Schumacher 1979:280-283). Meanwhile, the American-Spanish war had come to an end. At the Treaty of Paris (1898) Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines were handed over to the Americans. The pro-independence activists now found themselves up against a new colonial power. Faced with supporting either the Filipino independence movement or the United States take-over, the bishops chose the latter (Lim:

1989a:26-27). Both Aguinaldo and Aglipay fled into the mountains to become guerrilla fighters.

In general, the Filipino clergy supported the war against the Americans and the various guerrilla movements depended heavily on the local parish priests to supply them with funds and other supplies. In this way they became a thorn in the flesh of the Americans. Some priests joined the guerrilla armies in the mountains, either as chaplains or as fighters (Schumacher 1979:286-291).

#### **4.4.3 The Church in Disarray**

A new apostolic delegate, appointed by the Holy See, arrived in Manila in 1900. Despite an almost universal opposition by the Filipino clergy to the foreign friars returning to their parishes, the archbishop immediately supported the missionary friars and re-appointed them throughout the land. He also intended to keep the local clergy out of any higher office in the church. Thereby he became the natural enemy of the local clergy (Schumacher 1979:300-303). Aguinaldo, who was in hiding in the north of Luzon, felt driven even further into schism and threatened to punish anyone who accepted foreign priests. In 1901 the civil governor of the Philippines, Taft, proposed that, for the sake of peace, the Vatican withdraw all foreign missionaries and sell their *haciendas*. Although this was not carried out, the move did lead to the United States government purchasing the friars' lands. The Vatican announced that the Spanish friars would be replaced by clergy of other nationalities until sufficient Filipino priests could fill their places (Schumacher 1979:307). A large number of the friars returned to Spain.

To add to the internal disorder of the Roman Catholic Church, large numbers of American Protestant missionaries began to arrive. They brought with them the anti-Catholic prejudices common in those days and they engaged immediately in a widespread campaign of proselytising the Catholic population. To add to this, the American administration initiated a national public school system, most of whose teachers were American Protestants. The Filipino Catholic teachers found themselves in a subservient role to these foreigners.

During these troublesome times two men played a significant role in a movement which was to result in schism: Fr Aglipay and Mr Isabelo de los Reyes. The former had been a guerrilla leader and the latter a prisoner in Spain. De los Reyes had rejected Catholic dogma for an eclectic, rationalist theology of his own making (Schumacher 1979:318). He galvanized Aglipay into action. From 1901 increasingly aggressive statements were made by various groups of indigenous clergy who claimed Aglipay to be their leader. In 1902 de los Reyes proclaimed, without informing Aglipay, the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* under the headship of Aglipay (Schumacher 1979:318-321).

The *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* spread rapidly and soon claimed a quarter of the former Catholic population as members. Disputes broke out over church property which the Aglipayan priests had retained. Following a Supreme Court decision all the disputed buildings were eventually returned to the Catholic Church and the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* began to decline (Schumacher 1979:332). As Catholic priests, even foreigners, appeared in villages long abandoned, the people returned to the Roman Catholic Church in large numbers.

#### **4.4.4            Adjusting to a New Order**

Internally, the Church moved toward renewal by holding a provincial synod in 1907 which condemned all types of revolutionary movements. Institutional structures were renewed and the seminaries were re-organised. With so few indigenous priests, and with most of the Spanish clergy having left the country, the bishops turned to religious orders in other countries. By 1917 four of the nine bishops in the Philippines were from the local clergy.

The role of religious women in the Philippine Church had been sadly neglected (Schumacher 1979:344). Under the American administration the few Spanish religious women were soon augmented by large numbers coming from religious orders of other countries. Although most Filipinos attended the religiously indifferent public school system, these newly arrived religious offered a high standard of education for those who attended church schools, as well as preserving and strengthening the faith.

As Filipino society became more secularist under the American administration, the Roman Catholic Church became increasingly defensive. Church leaders were especially unhappy with political developments. A bid to unite conservative and nationalist elements to form a “great national Catholic party” ended unsuccessfully (Lim 1989a:28). For the most part, the voters, raised in the secularist world of the American public school system, would not brook any church interference in political life.

As the second quarter of the 20th century arrived, a new generation of Filipinos emerged. They had been brought up in a country of public schools, an improved transportation network

throughout the nation, sanitation and public health care (Giordano 1988:8). In general, it stood for democracy, progress and modernization, “while the old Hispanic influences symbolised stagnation, repression and the old-fashioned” (Schumacher 1979:357). The main drawbacks of the American administration were a fostering of economic dependence on the American economy and a lack of progress towards the development of a native Filipino culture (Giordano 1988:8-9).

#### **4.4.5 Comment**

The history of the twentieth century shows us how one country after another sought to achieve its political independence through violence against its colonisers. The Philippines was no exception. The sad story in the latter case is that the church worked in collaboration with the civil authorities and supported the subjugation of the local populace.

One of the dangers inherent in mission work is how missionaries can become cut off from their homeland and the change of thinking which takes place there. The Spanish friars in the Philippines are a typical example of an attempt to preserve a bygone era. It is a miracle of history that the majority of the population remained Christian, despite the supreme court’s decision about church property. At the centre of the clergy’s refusal to read the signs of the times there seems to be a lack of trust in the indigenous population and an inability to read the depth of faith that was obviously there. This is a warning to all those in pastoral ministry not to harbour a similar “colonial” attitude. Such possessiveness exists wherever a pastor, for example, wishes to control everything in “his” parish, rather than trust that others can be enabled to share in pastoral leadership.

#### **4.5 The Resurgence of the Roman Catholic Church**

A factor which supported the Roman Catholic Church at this time was its work in the field of education. Through the Catholic school system students emerged “with a knowledge of their faith commensurate with the secular education they had received” (Schumacher 1979:362).

Vocations to the priesthood and religious life also increased during this time, with the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) being the first to receive substantial numbers of candidates.

In 1925 the first national congress of Catholic Action was held in Manila in response to Pope Pius XI's request for the laity's involvement in the Church which would lead to a better social order (Kroeger 1985:111). Catholic Action is principally social action by which lay people work for the upliftment of those who are socially oppressed. This new social concern was also partially a response to a growing Communist movement (Schumacher 1979:371).

Giordano states that these efforts did not make much impact on social problems because the movement was “dominated by the hierarchy which for the most part was conservative and status quo oriented” (1988: 19).

This move by the Catholic Church into the social sphere, while taking on a new emphasis, is the logical conclusion for a Church which had been concerned with education and social services, hospitals and orphanages, community formation and agricultural innovations during the entire period of Spanish rule (De la Costa 1974:3; see also Kroeger 1985:106). From the 1930s onwards, with a reduction in anti-clericalism and the widening of the vote, the Roman Catholic Church began to exercise more influence on national affairs (Schumacher 1979:373).

The United States formally granted independence to the Philippines on July 14, 1946. The influence of the Catholic Church increased once the government of the country was placed in the hands of the indigenous people, most of whom were members of that church (Ante 1991:20).

Meantime, in 1939 Pope Pius XI had written a lengthy letter to the bishops of the Philippines on the occasion of the 33rd International Eucharistic Congress which was held in Manila. He exhorted the Church to form a united front on key social issues (Kroeger 1985:113).

However, it is Senden's opinion (1965:24-25) that the Catholic Church did not respond to the threat of the Communist and Socialist Parties by defending the rights of the workers and “organising them into Christian-oriented labour unions”.

#### **4.5.1 The Bishops' Call to Renewal**

In 1950 Fr Hogan and Juan Tan initiated the *Federation of Free Workers* (FFW). It was designed as a “democratic, anti-Communist labour union” (Kroeger 1985:120). In January 1953 the bishops called for “an alert and vigorous social conscience” (Kroeger 1985:122). Later that year the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) was organized. Despite the growing unrest among the poor over the land issue and the influence this group was to have, the bishops were “conspicuously silent about the socio-economic issues of the country” (Kroeger 1985:126). Even after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) little was said by Filipino church leaders about the increasing gap between the few wealthy citizens and the majority of the poor. When they did speak their basic approach “was paternalistic and charitable”

(Giordano 1988:21). The exception was Archbishop del Rosario who spoke of salvation of the whole person and condemned the focus on “saving souls” (Kroeger 1985:135-136).

The episcopal Commission for Social Action established the National Secretariat of Social Action (NASSA) in 1966. NASSA has grown in its approach from the “charity model” (which is concerned with giving help or providing for people’s needs), to the “organising model” (which is concerned with gathering people together and organising them to do something about their situation), to the liberationist model. This last approach demands that church leaders be in solidarity with the poor and are open to being evangelised and converted by them. (Giordano 1988:62-63; Padilla 1997:73-81; see paragraph 6.3-6.8). Social Action Centres were set up in most dioceses and their members were becoming increasingly impatient with lack of progress towards social development and economic upliftment. As a consequence public demonstrations increased (Kroeger 1985:147). A few bishops were beginning to recognise that economic progress for the majority was being stifled by unjust social structures. Bishop Labayen, for example, saw the necessity of moving from development to liberation (Kroeger 1985:153). He was one of seven bishops who wrote an open letter to President Marcos in which they asked him to “not tolerate graft and corruption, self-enrichment, vote-buying and goon-hiring” (Kroeger 1985:155). Meanwhile, student demonstrations increased and the Communist movement made large gains in support.

In November 1970 Pope Paul VI visited the Philippines and spoke of the “task of assisting the whole development of human beings”. This was to move the bishops to openly support such organisations as the FFF and YCW (Young Christian Workers) because their members “work

in these uncertain times with a sense of mission which springs from Christ's Gospel of love” (Kroeger 1985:161). Later that year the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference and Secretariat (MSPC/S) was established to foster integral development and to promote the growing number of BECs and lay leadership programmes in the south of the country. One of the most influential movements to emanate from this Conference was that of Basic Ecclesial Communities and this, in turn, led to greater lay involvement in the church from which then developed leadership training programmes (Giordano 1988:31). When martial law was declared by Marcos in 1972 a Christian-Maoist movement was inaugurated in response, with Fr de la Torre, SVD, as its foremost personality. The bishops adopted a “wait and see” attitude to martial law and were to become increasingly divided among themselves over how to handle the obvious injustices, many of which were a consequence of military rule. With the appointment of Archbishop (later Cardinal) Sin to Manila in 1974 Church opposition to the Marcos regime increased and government harassment of church personnel grew accordingly (Giordano 1988:24-25).

#### **4.5.2 Church-State Relations**

It can be seen how church leadership began to move in the socio-political direction because of martial law and the accompanying oppression. Yet this leadership was marked by a “lack of unity, divergent ecclesiologies and various perceptions of the church’s role in human promotion” (Kroeger 1985:189). In response to criticism, a group of progressive bishops issued a document, *Ut Omnes Unum Sint* in which they explained their socio-political stand. A group of conservative bishops replied with a document of their own: *Et Veritas Liberabit Vos*.

Concerned about their own disunity, the bishops managed to issue a letter in early 1977 in which they made strong criticism of the government. Cardinal Sin became more vociferous in his own criticisms (Lim 1989a:29). During the 1970s the majority of bishops issued pastoral letters to the faithful of their dioceses about social matters and these “contributed over many years to an understanding of the Gospel as faith-commitment and service” (Kroeger 1985:216). Through the various people’s organisations a conscientization process was taking place. “The poor became aware of their own dignity as well as the unjust structures of society” (Giordano 1988:38).

During the 1980s opposition to martial law became more violent. Eventually Marcos lifted martial law in January 1981, although a broad range of authoritarian controls continued (Kroeger 1985:223) and Marcos continued to rule in a virtually single-handed manner. The bishops issued a joint pastoral letter to the country in 1982 in which they laid heavy emphasis on the “safeguarding of human dignity as a necessary task in preaching the Good News and the integration of the values of justice and liberating love” (Kroeger 1985:233). Church personnel suffered further harassment and Cardinal Sin was continually in open debate with government officials. Yet in 1983 he called for reconciliation between the government and the Church, and the Filipino Bishops issued a joint letter entitled *A Dialogue for Peace*.

Church-State tensions increased when Marcos declared that he would imprison suspected rebels and subversives who would then have no right of appeal to the courts. The Bishops’ Conference condemned this action as immoral. The military regime responded on August 21 with the assassination - in front of television cameras - of Benigno Aquino on his return to the

country from exile. The country was plunged into “a period of national mourning and a widespread clamour for justice and truth”. This period of grief, and then anger, is now regarded as “the second founding of the Philippine nation” (Kroeger 1985:249).

During the weeks which followed the assassination the bishops kept a high profile and almost daily there were peaceful demonstrations in Manila and elsewhere in the country. The nation as a whole was now galvanised. With national elections approaching, the choice for most people was between voting against Marcos or boycotting the elections altogether. Marcos won the election, though with a largely increased opposition.

Church-State relations remained tense. Meanwhile, the economy plunged to a new low.

During that year alone the Filipino peso was devalued 57.3%, the inflation rate rose to 60.3%, the economic growth rate dropped to -6, and the foreign debt rose to US\$26 billion (Kroeger 1985:260). With increased opposition, which was met by an even more brutal response by the army, the bishops addressed the situation with a pastoral letter *Let There Be Life*. In his homily on the anniversary of Aquino’s assassination, Cardinal Sin “asked for national renewal through forgiveness of enemies, the promotion of peace, and communication among neighbours” (Kroeger 1985:265).

#### **4.5.3 The EDSA Revolution**

The gradual conscientizing of the people during the 14 years of martial law led enough people to unite their religiosity with political activity in order to bring about the fall of President Marcos (Lim 1989a:29-30). Having tried once more to rig an election result, this time in

February 1986, and in the face of a huge national and international body of observers, Marcos brought the military out on the streets. The soldiers with their tanks lined up on Epiphania de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) in Metro Manila to attack the troops at Camp Aquinaldo who had sided with Corazon Aquino, whose husband had been assassinated. Within hours they were faced by 2 million Filipinos whose leaders pleaded with them not to use their military might. While Corazon Aquino was hidden in a Carmelite convent, the National Council of Churches and the United Church of Christ together issued a statement condemning “the electoral process as marred by massive vote-buying, ballot-snatching, harassment and terrorism”. This, they went on, insults “the honour and dignity of our nation” (Lim 1989a:30). The Catholic Radio Veritas kept the people informed of events until it was forced off the air. Against the strong objections of the papal nuncio,<sup>3</sup> the bishops warned that “according to moral principles, a government that assumes or retains power through fraudulent means has no moral basis” (Smock & Lintner 1986:619). Once the United States government was able to read the situation and to persuade Marcos and his wife Imelda (who was generally regarded as the “power behind the throne”) to leave the country, the people’s revolution had succeeded.

During the six years of Aquino’s presidency the Catholic hierarchy kept a close relationship with the state, “though their institutional identities have remained distinct” (Lim 1989a:30). During the subsequent presidency of Ramos (a Protestant) the Catholic Church took a more distant stance. This gave Cardinal Sin personally, as well as many Church groups, the freedom to criticise the government, particularly on matters such as agrarian reform, graft and corruption.

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<sup>3</sup> Once the revolution was over Cardinal Sin was called to Rome to explain why he had interfered in a

#### 4.5.4. Comment

The contents of this paragraph are a necessary part of the historical study of the church in the Philippines. The brevity with which I have dealt with this era is necessitated by balancing these events with the study as a whole. A more detailed reading is well worth the time and effort.

One notices, for example, that the episcopal leadership of the national Roman Catholic Church was virtually dragged kicking and screaming by the laity into facing the evils of their political and social world. The bishops in general were in danger of falling into the trap that Freire describes so well (1972:38-39) in which the oppressed, once the roles are reversed, act like their former oppressors. Once the country had rid itself of Spanish and then American colonialism, the bishops did not realise that the people were still clamouring for *real* liberation: a claim to their own identity as Filipinos and the possession of their own land. While the land issue has still not been resolved, it was the laity who, moved by years of education in the social implications of the Gospel (provided mainly by the missionaries), conscientized the bishops to the evils of Marcos. The pastoral letters on social matters by so many bishops was the result of their own conscientization by lay people.

During the EDSA revolution the apostolic nuncio expressed no leadership qualities and responded as one would expect of a leader of an old and bureaucratic organisation: he opted for the status quo (paragraph 3.6.2). In contrast, Cardinal Sin ventured into the unknown, even risking assassination, to challenge the evil system that was oppressing so many (paragraph

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political situation.

3.6.1). The number of people who took to the streets is evidence that he was the leader they wished to follow and that he had correctly read how the majority of the people were thinking. A fine example of servant-leadership.

## **4.6 Conclusion**

One could be pardoned for judging the early missionaries to the Philippines in a negative light. Missionaries to other countries were often identified with the colonisers, but rarely could they have wielded such political, civil and ecclesiastical power. The friars were virtually untouchable. Also, their understanding of “private” land was a mistake that has been made by most Westerners who have invaded traditional cultures with a communal sense of ownership.

To assess the cruelty of the Spanish soldiers as milder than that of other colonial invasions (see, for example, Schumacher 1979:22-38) does not make the suffering of the indigenous people any less. The reality of being colonised for four hundred years has left a scar on the Filipinos, as I can attest from many conversations.

The reduction system was introduced as a convenience for the missionaries who seemed unable to understand how they were destroying traditional village life, as well as endangering the people’s livelihood. One possible positive outcome was the education of the young who would eventually form the basis for the Christian Church.

In general this was an inauspicious beginning for the church in the Philippines. The attitude of the missionaries to the indigenous population compares unfavourably with the purpose of the church's mission even in those days. It was Pope Gregory XV who founded the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* in 1622 to co-ordinate the world-wide missionary work of the Roman Catholic Church. In its first document which describes the purpose of the new Congregation, two elements were noted. The first states that missionaries were "not to use any violence and to keep aloof from any use of power and from religious war". The second was concerned with avoiding "any involvement in politics" (Metzler 1971:104). Due to a widespread disregard of the latter, the Congregation later threatened missionaries with penalties if they engaged in political activity. It is clear that in many ways the missionaries in the Philippines were out of step with current church practice, and certainly with the vision of leadership that is enunciated in this paper.

Like many missionary efforts in other countries, the church could have eventually won respectability and trust in the hearts of the Filipinos if the antagonism between church leaders had not worked to obviate this to a large extent. The descriptions of the squabbles between the friars and the bishops (including the apostolic delegate who represented the papacy) are given such prominence by historians that their behaviour must have had a severe impact on church life.

The friars claimed exemption based on Pope Adrian VI's bull *Eponi Nobis* which had allowed missionaries full power in both internal and external forums for the sake of conversions (Schumacher 1979:124-125). This ruling was superceded by the Council of Trent and a

number of subsequent rulings by Rome concerning the Philippine situation. Not only were the friars as a whole in transgression of church law (at one time they threatened the archbishop of Manila with a total desertion of the parishes if he insisted on visitating them), but they were putting themselves outside the ecclesiastical authority which brought them to the country. One is left wondering if the political and civil power they wielded had gone to their heads. The situation brings to mind a phrase of Lord Acton that Greenleaf was so fond of quoting: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely" (Greenleaf 1977:103,169; 1995:29; 1998:47).

One of the consequences of the missionary friars' attachment to political and civil power was their identity with a colonial power. Those Filipinos, including clergy, who felt the need to work for national independence found themselves working against church authorities. The vicious curtailing of these movements, apart from its injustice – other Spanish dominions had meanwhile attained their independence – must have caused severe qualms of conscience among many of the clergy. It would seem that it was only the matter of land ownership which prevented the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* of Aglipay and de los Reyes from claiming a sizeable proportion of the Catholic Church's membership.

Another issue which can be regarded as a blot on the missionaries' record is their almost total distrust of indigenous clergy. The church is mission. Missionary work is the means by which the Church can be brought into existence elsewhere (Masson 1969:52-53). This includes, as soon as possible, the development of an indigenous clergy. Although this can take considerable time in the Roman Catholic Church, particularly because of the requirement of

celibacy, it has always remained central to the missionary effort. Writing a long time later, Pope Benedict XV refers to the Catholic missionary practice of the previous centuries when in 1919 he said: “The main care of those who rule the missions should be to raise and train a clergy from amidst the nations among whom they dwell, for on this are founded the best hopes for the church of the future” (Hickey 1982:35).

As if the distrust by the Spaniards was not enough, once the Americans took over the Philippines in 1898 the Filipinos were subjected to further harassment. Van Ells has documented how the Americans expressed “condescending and bigoted racial attitudes” towards the indigenous population (1995:607). Carrying a belief in Western supremacy, the new colonists disparaged Filipino culture and society. For example, Roosevelt, who was later to become president of the United States of America, referred to the Philippines as a “jumble of savage tribes” (Van Ells 1995:612). Such an attitude could hardly have helped Filipinos develop a deeper sense of worth.

It could be asked whether this overall lack of regard for the Filipinos’ dignity might have contributed towards the lack of vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. According to the data presented in the 1996 *National Directory of the Church in the Philippines*, there is one priest for 12,142 Catholics. This compares unfavourably to South Africa (where we regard ourselves as short of clergy) where there is one priest for 2,500 Catholics). Alongside the 7,000 priests in the Philippines there are just over 10,000 sisters. If there were the same proportion of sisters per priest as in South Africa there would be 35,000. If one compared these Filipino figures to a comparable society, such as Catholic Ireland or Spain, they would

seem even more abnormal. It might be difficult to make any connection between these figures and the attitudes and behaviour of the missionary friars and American administrators (and such a study is outside my own brief), yet the question remains as to whether the missionary methods used in the Philippines has left an anti-clerical/religious feeling among the Catholic population as a whole. This comment does not take from my own personal experience of very many church leaders, laity, sisters and clergy, who are of the highest calibre and who can hold their own with theologians and pastoral ministers worldwide.

Despite the unpromising beginnings of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, the early missionaries left behind them more than their colonial methods. The Roman Catholic Church still claims nearly 80% of the population as adherents and has been a force for good in the lives of millions of the indigenous population. Clearly, many Filipinos saw through the arrogant missionary methods to the Good News itself and have, in their turn, become conveyors of the Gospel to others, particularly in Asian lands. The Filipino characteristic of seeking for smooth interpersonal relationships (*pakikisama*) (paragraph 4.1; also 2.4.3.2), along with a strong sense of justice, makes active church members responsive candidates for servant-leadership. While such leaders can be found throughout the country, a laudable example of this exists in the parish of St. Joseph's, Las Piñas, Metro Manila, to which we now turn.

## **4.7 St. Joseph's Parish, Las Piñas**

### **4.7.1 Introduction**

St. Joseph's Parish is just over 200 years old and so was in existence for half of the history recorded in the previous section. The final section of this chapter situates the parish in Las Piñas and thus sets the scene for a theological assessment of the leadership style which has made it unique in the Archdiocese of Manila.

### **4.7.2 Geographical Situation of St. Joseph's Parish**

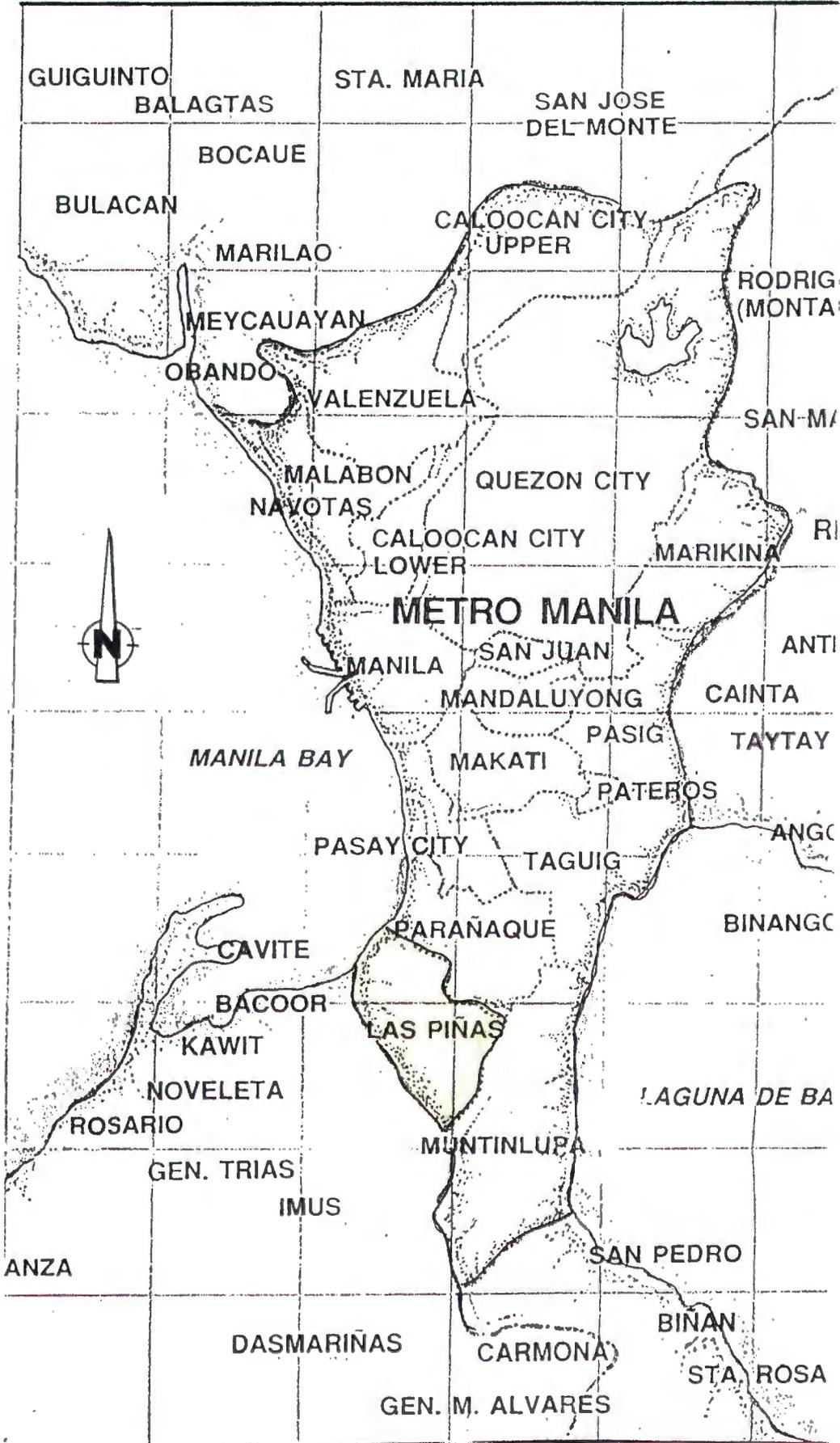
The original city of Manila is now one of 18 municipalities which comprise what is known as Metro Manila. Each has its own mayor and civil structure of government. One of those cities, Las Piñas, is situated some 12 kilometres south of the heart of Manila. It used to consist mainly of paddy fields with the population living in the far north of the area. It was for this reason that in 1797 Fr. Diego Kucera began to build the present church of St. Joseph's in that area. With the advent of the "green revolution" less paddy fields were needed and over the past 30 years people have moved in to fill the rest of the area. The municipality has a population of 350,000. Four other parishes have now been established in Las Piñas, each with its own church building.

### **4.7.3 Population**

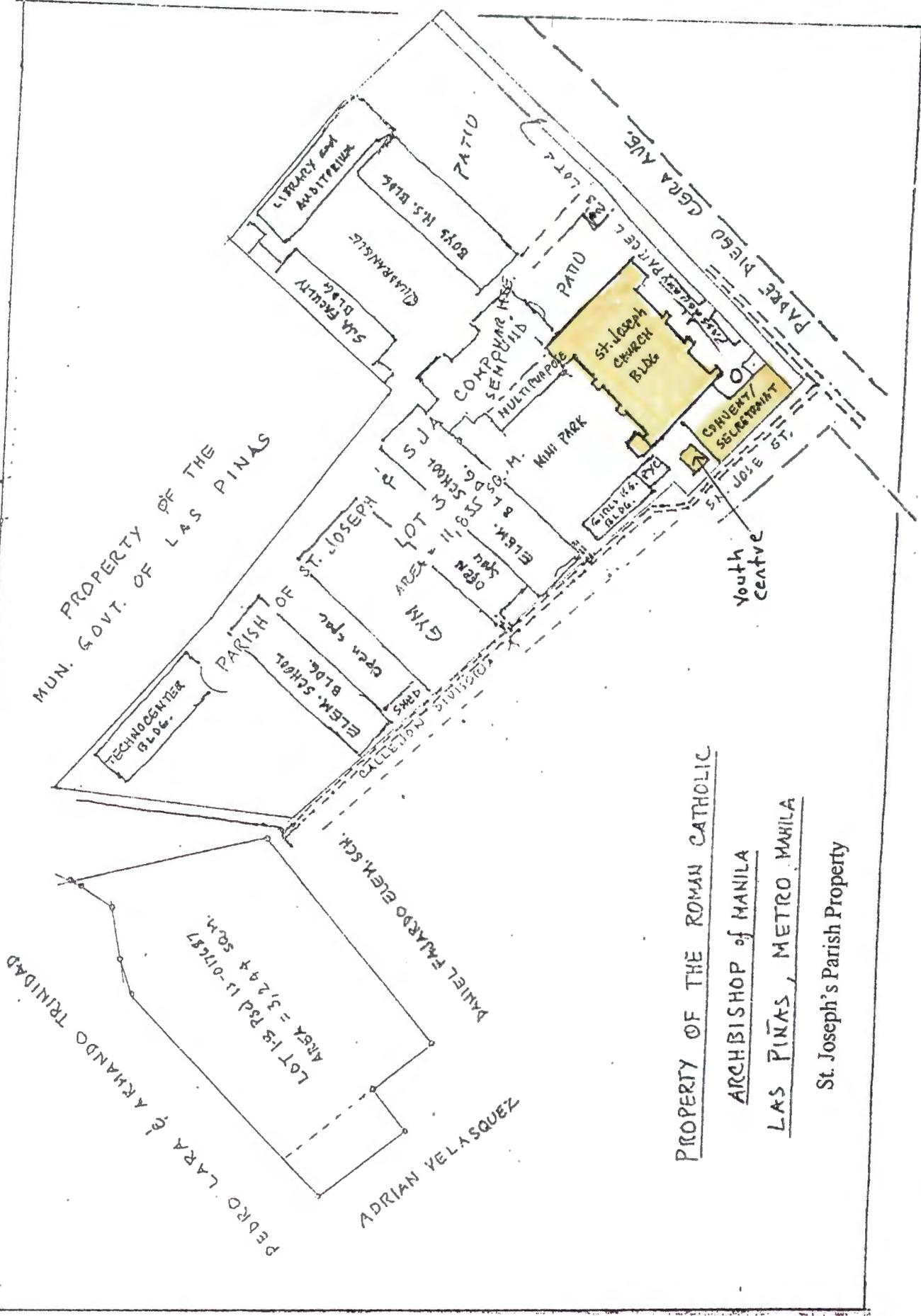
The parish of St. Joseph's consists of five *barangay*, or *barrrios*, - Manuyo, Poblacion, Ilaya, Aldana and Pulanglupa - with a total population of 50,000 people. Sixty five per cent of these are below 25 years of age. The average size per household is 5.5 persons.



# Metro Manila







PROPERTY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
 ARCHBISHOP OF MANILA  
 LAS PINAS, METRO MANILA  
 St. Joseph's Parish Property

The unemployment rate in most of Las Piñas is 10%, but the parish of St. Joseph's has an unemployment rate of 30% because the commercial and industrial developments of the past two decades took place in the neighbouring areas and not in the *barrios* of the parish (Padilla 1997:15). Of those who are employed, 43.4% are skilled (technicians, medical workers, engineers, factory workers, business people, professionals, employees and teachers), 21.9% are semi-skilled (mechanics, construction workers, drivers, beauticians, entertainers and sewerage workers), and 24.7% are unskilled (fishermen, salt-makers, labourers, domestic helpers and vendors) (Sumith 1988:6). There is a fairly good school system in the area which has contributed to 91% literacy.

The pollution in Las Piñas is extreme, much of it due to exhaust fumes from the second-hand diesel engines (imported from Japan) which are used in the buses and jeepneys (taxis) which account for about 50% of all traffic. As a result, there is a high rate of sickness, especially from respiratory diseases. The child mortality rate is 38 deaths per 1,000, due mainly to respiratory diseases and malnutrition (Sumith 1988:19).

About 20%, or 10,000, of the parish members of Las Piñas attend Sunday Mass on a weekly basis, half of whom are below 25 years of age. These are mainly from the poorer families, that is, those from the "isang kahig, isang tuka" group (living a hand-to-mouth existence). The rest of Las Piñas, which has been built up in the past three decades and which is covered by the other four parishes, generally has a population in the higher income bracket.

#### **4.7.4 A New Style of Leadership**

The parish staff speak of various eras in parish life. These are distinguished according to the amount and depth of involvement on the part of the parishioners. In this last section of the chapter I shall describe the tasks of the traditional mandated organisations, the introduction of working groups, the role of the seminar group and how the restoration of the church organ contributed to a deepening of community spirit. It will be noted that throughout these developments it is the leadership style of Fr. Marc which gently but firmly draws the people towards his dream of a participatory church.

##### **4.7.4.1 Mandated Organisations**

Parish activity in the late 1960's was reserved to members of mandated organisations, groups of lay people who formed an association in the parish under the guidance of the parish priest. They are "mandated" by ecclesiastical authority and have to follow a constitution which has been approved by the bishop (Canon Law:312,#2). They usually had their own spirituality based on the patron saint after whom they were named. While some of these groups were involved in external activities, they were mostly concerned with churchly matters, such as cleaning the building, decorating it with flowers on feastdays, and organising processions. Until the Second Vatican Council membership in such an organisation was the only way that lay people could be officially active in the Roman Catholic Church (Prior 1997:10). Over the years, however, they had in practice taken on the position of being the "official Church". Whenever activities were to be engaged in, the organisations took over. In the archdiocese of Manila these groups met only on Sundays, which meant that there were no meetings of the laity during the week, including the

evenings (which is when the present parish of St. Joseph's is at its busiest). Another aspect of these sodalities is that their membership was almost entirely confined to women. Men hardly had any active role to play in Church life.

#### **4.7.4.2 The Era of Working Groups**

When Fr. Marc Lesage, CICM<sup>4</sup>, was appointed to the parish of St. Joseph's in 1969 he records that "it was a very traditional parish, with traditional organisations" (Lesage 1996:1). In this post-Vatican II era the superior of his congregation wanted to experiment with a parish run by younger priests. Marc's predecessor had had a running battle with various civil authorities, including the mayor. "I'm still living in the stone age," he would say, referring to the way the townsfolk used to throw stones on to his roof at night. Marc was to transform this situation by laying the foundation for a new relationship of trust between the church and the town.

This new development in the parish is today referred to by the staff as the era of "working groups". These groups of parishioners

are invitational and temporary in character. They are open to anybody - previously involved in parish organisations or not - and are tasked to work on a particular feast or parish activity. At the end of the feast or activity, evaluation is done and documented, and the working groups are dissolved (Padilla 1997:23).

Before Fr. Marc arrived at Las Piñas there had been an attempt to found a Parish Council.

From its inception the members had been very much absorbed by the task of working out

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<sup>4</sup> Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae (Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary), an Order which was founded in Belgium in 1862 and whose members prefer to work with the unbaptised, for example, in the highlands of Northern Luzon.

their constitution and bye-laws. At the first two meetings which Fr. Marc attended the chairman discovered that they did not even have a quorum! Here was the opening Fr. Marc had been looking for.

As the feast of Christ the King<sup>5</sup> approached during Marc's first year at St. Joseph's, he asked the Parish Council members how they celebrated this feast. "Oh, it's very simple", he was told. "The Catholic Women's League will take care of the flowers. The Holy Name Society takes care of the security, the order and administration. The Third Order of St. Francis takes care of the altar" (Lesage 1996:2). Fr. Marc decided to bring in other people to participate in the planning. Together they introduced a rally and a procession. Fr. Marc describes the effect on the parish:

The result was very good. All of a sudden people saw there were more people involved, more people joining. The most important thing is it gave the impression, or the witnessing, that you didn't have to be exactly one of the traditional pillars in the parish to take up a position. Somewhere you could be involved without belonging to a mandated organisation. We saw new faces and I think this was the real take-off of the new trend (Lesage 1996:2).

Quintin Katalbas (George), a marine biologist who had not been active in the parish till then, recalls his first involvement which followed a request by Fr Marc: "When we had the Fiesta of Christ the King I got the youngsters who were criminals to work for the rally; the *bakubugong* [the undesirable people], I got them decorating the streets" (Katalbas 1996:1).

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<sup>5</sup> The last Sunday of the liturgical year, which usually occurs on the third or fourth Sunday in November.

The same process of changing the traditional way of celebrating liturgy, with the involvement of parishioners, was pursued at Christmas and Holy Week, as well as at various fiestas throughout the year. Fr. Marc reminisces how a conservative member of the parish approached him after the Easter celebrations of his first year in the parish and said: “I thought all the time that Christmas was the most important celebration in the church. But last night I realised that it is the Resurrection” (Lesage 1996:4).

Apart from fresh enthusiasm over the renewed liturgies, there were other positive consequences for the parish. An atmosphere was created in which parishioners felt free to give vent to greater creativity and flexibility. More people could become involved in parish activities without having to join one of the mandated organisations. It was from this active group that leaders were later recruited. The parishioners were becoming more parish-oriented, as opposed to being oriented to the mandated organisations (Padilla 1997:23).

The problem with the mandated organisations was their inward-looking nature, their lack of a sense of mission. They went from meeting to meeting with scarcely anything in between (Reyes 1996:5). To help counteract this, Fr. Marc introduced into the parish the *Cursillo* movement. This was a charismatically oriented movement which began in Italy and which was strong on building up a spirit of community between the members. Many parishioners joined this and at their meetings became used to praying, singing and enjoying each other’s company. Later most of the members of this movement joined the *Couples for Christ* movement which Fr. Marc introduced in order to get both husband and wife to attend together. To this day, this is still the strongest of the movements in the parish.

#### **4.7.4.3 The Seminar Group**

From the beginning of his time at St. Joseph's Fr Marc invited a group of six men to meet him once or twice a week in the evenings. Later he would refer to them as the "seminar group". Pepe Reyes refers to them as a "think-tank" (Reyes 1996:1). Two of these were Pepe himself and Francisco Christobal, a lawyer. Both these men are still parish leaders today. Unlike the others, these two did not only listen to Fr. Marc but argued with him. As a group they would pray and "talk about Las Piñas and gradually what we wanted Las Piñas to be" (Lesage 1996:1). Francisco remembers that Marc wanted men involved. "He believed that the parish can be better run if it is managed by the men. Because his reason was if you get the man you get the wife also. But if you get the wife you do not necessarily get the man" (Christobal 1996:1).

While these discussions continued Fr. Marc began to look around the Philippines to see if there were any other models for organising the parish. One important occasion for him was a visit to the first meeting in 1971 of the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (paragraph 4.3.11). The bishops of the southern region of the Philippines established this gathering in order to "foster integral development and to promote the growing number of BECs (Basic Ecclesial Communities) and lay leadership programmes" (Kroegeer 1985:164). According to Giordano (1988:106; see also paragraph 4.3.11), this Conference did more than any other in the country to foster the church as community.

With this strongly positive influence Fr. Marc could now give some direction to his evening discussions with the seminar group. “As we got deeper and deeper, the more they got excited about it, about what the parish could be” (Lesage 1996:4).

Gradually the group came to ask itself: ‘What does God want of this parish? What is God’s plan?’ Then we looked at it and said, ‘We would like to be a Christian community, patterned after the life of Jesus.’ What was that life? He was a man who worshipped, who prayed. He was a man who preached and a man who shared, cared for other people. And that’s how the idea grew: maybe that’s the parish we want to be (Lesage 1996:1).

From this has come the three-fold impetus of the parish, which has lasted until today:

*Pagsamba* (worship), *Pakikibahagi* (sharing) and *Pagkalinga* (caring) (See Christobal 1996:3).

#### **4.7.4.4 The Bamboo Organ**

A further important event was to take place which would advance the spirit of community in the parish. Fr Diego Cera, who began the ten year task of building the Church in 1797, took a further 8 years to build an organ for the church. It is a unique instrument in that most of the pipes are made from bamboo, the only one in the world. It also has an unusual keyboard which is so small that the organist has to make use of a variety of stops to achieve the usual range of sounds. Although it took many years to be built and certainly looks rather fragile, this organ has survived the building’s 200 years of life, despite the fact that the roof has been blown off in storms on a number of occasions. When Fr. Marc arrived in the parish there was only one organist who used to eke out the *Ave Maria* at weddings.



Two students from  
St. Joseph's High School  
at the Bamboo Organ



In 1973 a Mr. Gerard Klais dismantled the whole organ and shipped it over to his factory in Germany. He spent the next two years re-building it in an environment which simulated the humidity of Manila. Meanwhile, leaders in the parish decided that it would be important to re-decorate the church building in readiness for its return. Under the direction of Mr. Bobby Manosa - the most famous architect in the Philippines who offered his services free - the parishioners participated in what was to become a gigantic community building exercise. Men climbed scaffolding to remove the plaster that had been put over the original stonework. Women prepared food and drink. A brass band entertained everyone. In 1975 Sabena Airlines returned the organ to Manila free of charge. The mayor of Las Piñas, along with thousands of citizens, lined the route from the airport to the church building as the large crates were solemnly transported on wagons drawn by caribou<sup>6</sup>.

When the restored Bamboo Organ finally arrived in 1975, it was welcomed by a restored church and a renewed community spirit in the parish. . . .Both the church building and the bamboo organ, which are popular tourist attractions, have built up a sense of pride and identity of the parish community (Padilla 1997:24).

An annual two-week International Organ Festival is now held in the church. Musicians from many countries attend. Music played at these festivals is available on CDs and audio cassettes in the parish shop. "St. Joseph's parish, Las Piñas, is now part of 'the cultural map of the world'" (Padilla 1996a:9). The organ has made another contribution to the parish because of meanings that can be deduced from the nature of the bamboo plant. The bamboo symbolizes community. "You never see a bamboo alone. A bamboo is always a group of bamboo. And it's always so flexible. During a storm all the trees fall down, except the bamboo because it

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<sup>6</sup> Caribou are Filipino water buffalo which are used as beasts of burden, especially in the paddy fields.

sways with the wind. So we get a lot of things like that in terms of community building images. The organ continues to build and give identity to the community” (Padilla 1996a:10).

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

In describing the early years of Fr. Marc’s tenure as pastor of St. Joseph’s, I have shown how a parish which was run according to the traditional customs handed down over the centuries began to change because of his vision and style of leading. It could be noted, for example, that when he wished to increase the number of those actively involved in the parish he did not take any task away from the members of the mandated organisations who alone had been active. He included others in the tasks to be done and expanded the jobs to absorb new people. Sometime later the mandated organisations died away, not because they were suppressed, but because they no longer had a special role to play. Most of their members were now involved in other groups, often along with their spouses. By offering new life-giving ministries that which was obsolete disappeared. Through respect for others he obviated unnecessary conflict and was able to harness the energy and support for change from those who otherwise might have opposed him.

The fact that the working groups were “invitational and temporary” strengthened the possibility of involvement on the part of formerly passive parishioners. Firstly, they would not like to refuse a request from the priest and, secondly, they only had to help out for one occasion at a time. There was no long-term commitment. Further, Fr. Marc took the accepted feasts in the parish calendar rather than introduce anything new. This lessened the

possibility of opposition which would have worked against him when he later introduced new ideas.

In many churches, such as that in the Philippines, congregations consist mainly of women. Men do not seem to find a place for themselves. By inviting married couples to become involved together Fr. Marc gave the men the opportunity to participate. He also presented the image of equality between the genders which is a Gospel value the male-dominated country is in need of. Perhaps the most important consequence of this move has been the strengthening of family life in the parish. *Couples for Christ* is still the largest grouping and many attested to me in the interviews I conducted that this movement has done wonders for their marital relationship, as well as the way they relate to their children (see, for example, Arevaio 1996:2; Cristobal 1996:2; Reyes 1996:4-5).

The setting up of the seminar group manifests Fr. Marc's on-going desire to listen, the first of Greenleaf's qualities for leadership (Greenleaf 1977:21,221-222; 1996:157-161). It also showed a sense of trust in those whom he invited to share with him. In turn, that would have given them the confidence to confide in him and inform him of the situation as they saw it, rather than tell him what they thought he might want to hear. As he says himself, they sometimes argued with him. Through these regular and informal meetings he was creating the beginnings of teamwork which would enable the members to change and grow (Greenleaf 1996:90). He was already offering them the example of a new paradigm for the parish in which the leaders would listen and learn, rather than tell and dictate.

The restoration of the bamboo organ was more than a reconstruction project. Not only has the bamboo significance for Filipinos, as attested to by Padilla (paragraph 4.7.4.4), but the prominence given to the restoration project reminded the people of part of their cultural heritage, giving a poor and hardworking populace pride in themselves. What is even more noteworthy of this occasion is the way Fr. Marc turned it into a community building exercise. It was not a new organ that was important to him, but bringing people together, his dream for a renewed parish. He was exercising what is called situational leadership (paragraph 3.7). As Greenleaf says when putting examples of great leaders before us, do not try to imitate what they did but study them and discover for yourself the role which is uniquely appropriate for yourself (paragraph 3.7).

In this chapter, having geographically situated the Philippines in its Asian setting, I have briefly traced the history of the Church from its inception with the Spanish missionaries till the present day. Certain attitudes brought by the foreigners were noted. This was followed by a description of how Fr. Marc began his ministry in St. Joseph's Parish by inviting parishioners to actively participate in its life. This was only the beginning. In the following three chapters we shall study in more detail how his leadership style brought about a practical implementation of the renewed mission ecclesiology of Vatican II.

# **Chapter Five:**

## **Leadership for a Participatory**

### **Church**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

We concluded in Chapter Two that the seeds of a new ecclesiology - the Church as mission - can be detected in the Vatican II documents but that a changed leadership theory, which is required to implement that ecclesiology, is absent. In Chapter Three we saw how church leaders could learn a lot from the changed views of leadership among business corporations where the flattening of the hierarchical pyramid is leading to a more participatory style of leadership through which responsibility is shared. In Chapter Four I described how poor leadership in the four hundred years of Filipino ecclesiastical history has left the church with many problems. For example, episcopal leadership in the latter half of the twentieth century was not up to tackling the massive problems facing the people under the tyranny of President Marcos.

Before coming to Las Piñas in 1969 Fr. Marc had been busy reading the new ideas then in circulation in the church. He already had, then, a notion of a mission-oriented church. He manifested this during his first years, as we saw in the last chapter, by involving some of the parishioners in the life of the parish. Thus, working groups replaced some of the roles

of the mandated organisations, a seminar group became the first effort towards shared leadership, and the bamboo organ, along with the church building which housed it, were restored. These moves were only the beginning, yet they were important steps towards introducing an experience of the *ekklesia* of a relevant church. In order to implement Vatican II's vision of a church-in-mission a more participatory approach was required in parish life. Fr Marc would attempt this in a number of ways, as will be explained in this chapter.

## 5.2 Parish Structures

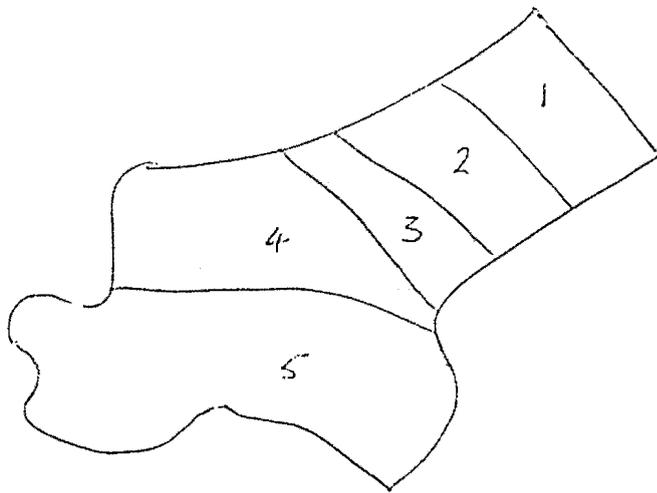
Although it did not happen in the early years of parochial re-organization, a break-down of the parish into smaller groups took place over the years. These will be referred to from time to time in the coming chapters, so I include of description of them here.

As the number of parishioners wishing to involve themselves in ministry increased, the parish staff found it impossible to accommodate their services in the central church building. This led them to de-centralize ministry. The parish consists of five civil districts which are *barrios*, from a Spanish word, or *baranguays*, the ancient Filipino word used before the Spanish arrived. Ministries were organized at *barrio* level which allowed more people to be involved in service and more people served. Later the parish team changed the title of these districts to *ugnayon* which means “harmony”, “co-ordination”, “brotherhood” (Mabale 1996:2).

When the number of parishioners involved in ministry increased even further the pastoral team divided the *ugnayon* into zones which they called *po'ok*<sup>1</sup> or neighbourhoods.

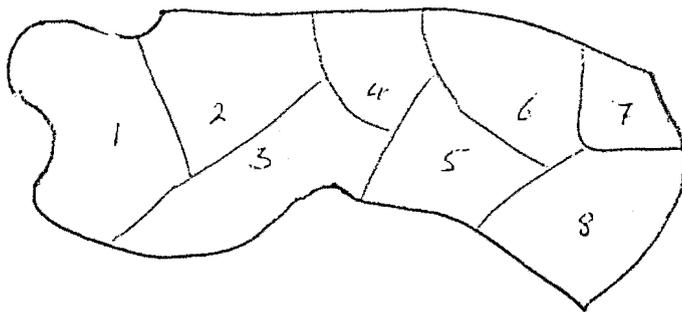
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<sup>1</sup> The Filipino word is spelled *pook*, but is pronounced, as written here, “poh-ock”.

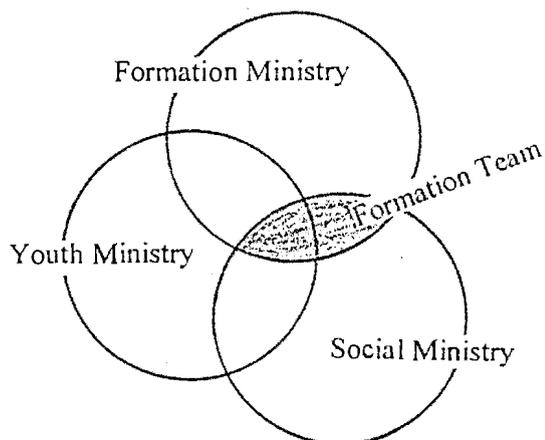


The Parish of St. Joseph's  
with its five barrios / ugnayon:

1. Manuyo
2. Poblacion
3. Ilaya
4. Aldana
5. Pulanglupa



The barrio / ugnayon of Pulanglupa  
with its eight zones / po'ok.



The central formation team consists of  
representatives from the three main areas  
of ministry in the parish (the dark area  
in the diagram).

Fr. Marc is the pastor / co-ordinator.

Diagram 4

Eventually formation programmes would be conducted by the central formation team for leaders in the *po'ok* at *ugnayon* level. When Basic Ecclesial Communities were introduced they entered the parish at *po'ok* level.

### 5.3 Initial Efforts

One of the factors which forced Fr. Marc to promote further participation was his poor knowledge of Tagalog<sup>2</sup>. In the 1990's parishioners told me how fluent he is in their local language. In the late sixties, however, he was struggling with the language and was unable to preach and teach in it. He says that, using English, he would, for example, prepare four sessions of a Bible study with parish leader Pepe who would then teach it in Tagalog.

Maybe it contributed to my delegating to others a lot of things because very often I would train people. Maybe, to a certain extent, it has helped me a little bit to rely very much on lay persons (Lesage 1996:5).

While Fr. Marc now sees this activity in terms of a learning process for himself, Pepe, who is now the assistant parish pastoral co-ordinator, remembers in more detail how they presented these sessions. He says that Fr. Marc would give the doctrinal part of the session and then he would present the practical part. This was followed by an open forum for questions and discussion. He admits, however, that they used a lecture form as the Lumko method (paragraph 3.2) had not yet reached them (Reyes 1996:2).

Fr Marc had managed to harness the labours of many of the parishioners to take part in the various fiestas in the parish through their *ad hoc* membership of working groups. Now he was looking for a more solid commitment. One of the problems was getting commitment from the men. This he did through getting the few men already involved to invite their

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<sup>2</sup> The main language of Southern Luzon and other nearby islands which President Marcos declared to be the official language of the whole country.

friends. He was also concerned that people of different classes should work shoulder to shoulder in the parish. Traditionally, a fisherman or jeepney driver would not consort with a doctor or company manager. Fr. Marc overcame this by inviting the poorer members of the parish to join the *Bayanihen ni Kristo* (the Heroes of Christ). Once this was well established its members were invited to participate in parish ministry alongside the better educated parishioners. As this commitment to ministry continued the *Bayanihen ni Kristo* disappeared (Reyes 1996:7).

This strategy was original, yet amazingly simple. Not only were the majority of parishioners poor, but their condition was accompanied by a low sense of self-esteem. They were not invited to participate in civic duties, except the occasional (rigged) election. The 14 years of martial law added fear to their little self-respect. Those who volunteered for the working groups were the more educated.

Fr. Marc invited fishermen, manual labourers, janitors and drivers to become “heroes”, that is, those who are “distinguished by exceptional courage and nobility” (New Collins Dictionary 1987:469). They met weekly for prayer and fellowship. Once they had built up friendship, trust and self-confidence, Fr. Marc then invited them to engage in ministries. By that time they already felt they were “members of the Church” (Reyes 1996:7) and joined in parish activities as a group. Once members of the different social strata were participating together in ministry, the heroes’ group fell away.

#### **5.4 Comment**

To implement a “people of God” theology means to reject the differences of dignity between people. Initially inviting the educated and the majority to participate together

would not have worked. Self-esteem and personal assurance had to be gained first. I have already referred to the opinions of Freire, Greenleaf and Burns that education and leadership are virtually synonymous (paragraph 3.8). Education is not concerned with feeding people with information. It is a process that can happen in all of life's circumstances and which aims at enabling a person to reach self-fulfilment (Burns 1978:452). Many of the less formally educated parishioners of St Joseph's, through their membership of a parish sodality and participation in parish leadership, discovered new levels of dignity. Subsequently they felt confident enough to form a bond with professionals. Moreover, they found themselves caught up in a missionary movement which had them serving people of their own social class. The educational cycle is complete: the subservient have been empowered to return to their roots and enable others to engage in the same process of growth. Fr Marc was putting into practice Burns' belief that "education and leadership shade into each other to become almost inseparable" (Burns 1978:448). By this means others were being helped to cross another of society's frontiers.

Gradually, then, both men and women of all social strata came to commit themselves to serving the parish in a variety of ways. Among the ministries existent today are the preparation of parents for the baptism of their children, visiting the sick, caring for the dying, conducting wakes and burying the dead. In the area of worship these ministries include Mass servers, commentators, lectors and Eucharistic ministers. These church-oriented ministries, though, are almost eclipsed by the social outreach ministries (which I deal with in Chapter Six). "From Baptism to death we have ministries," says Francisco Christobal (1996:4).

These efforts of the pastor were slowly bringing people from passivity into active participation in the church. A *sense of community* was beginning to develop among parishioners who had never seen the possibility of their being incorporated into parish leadership. Fr. Marc was using his power of leadership: to assess where the people were (*listening*), to *see ahead* to other possibilities than the present (foresight), to *challenge* the parishioners to see another way of being church (struggle), to introduce them to ways of *working together*, while *remaining available* for any who wanted to share their concerns with him (caring). He encouraged them not to be afraid to *communicate* the new insights that were developing. These are the attitudes of a servant-leader as envisaged by Greenleaf (1977:22-26,41-42,136-137,221-223,234-237,243,299-300; 1996:143,157-161; Fraker 1995:41; Bogle 1999:10).

In 1967 the majority of the parishioners were satisfied with an individualistic faith that was very much based on popular piety (Lesage 1996:1-2) which, as we have seen, was the result of centuries of Spanish influence (see Chapter Four). To attempt to impose a church-in-mission vision on them would have met with strong resistance. A foundation of trust had to be built first between the pastor and parishioners, as well as among the parishioners themselves. Although this would only become recognised later, the efforts at involving the less educated and those who did not want to belong to the pious associations, was bringing about a basic equality among the parishioners and a deeper sense of community than had been experienced even in the immediate past (paragraphs 2.2.1 & 3.3.2). Fr. Marc - who admits "I didn't have exactly a plan" - was laying a firm foundation. Many leaders in ministry impose base communities or other structures on the parish. But these end up as mere organisational models and will only last as long as they are controlled from above. When Basic Ecclesial Communities were later introduced into St. Joseph's parish it was

because the people were ready for them. They wanted them because they already felt united in a common experience of being one family (paragraph 7.3; Padilla 1997:147-151).

Underlying all this activity remained a concern: How can this newly participatory church continue into the future without relying on the person who was its main influence? The answer was to be found in the youth (see Greenleaf's faith in the young in paragraph 3.3.3).

## **5.5 The Community of the Living Water**

When he was an adolescent Fr. Marc had been a parish youth leader. He had found it exciting and worthwhile "to give life in the service of other people, to touch the lives of other people" (Lesage 1996:6). When he arrived at St. Joseph's there was no youth group at all. As he came to know some of the outstanding young people in the high school he invited them to meet with him and to experience a feeling of belonging. In 1976 he invited 60 students from the parish and government high schools to a week-end retreat. Half of the invitees turned up. They were so impressed with the week-end that they continued to meet every Sunday. From a time of chatting about typical adolescent issues - "their problems in college, the crushes that they have on the girls and the boys" (Lesage 1996:7) - the group moved into prayer and a sharing of the Scriptures.

Again, I had no plans, except that I wanted to be with young people. I saw how there was a need, in a country where there are so many young people, something wherein young people could belong and that's how this has grown. . . . Gradually something of prayer came out. The Scriptures were read. In fact, I have grown with this. In one way or another we got some depth into this, till we came to a point when we asked: "Can we not make it a kind of commitment?" (Lesage 1996:7)

Soon a core group, who became known as youth leaders, together with Fr. Marc, formed themselves into a co-ordinating committee. Each year a summer retreat was conducted, and

continues to this day. This has a two-fold purpose. Firstly, young people are invited to come together and reflect on their faith. Secondly, an invitation is put before them to join the on-going youth activities in the parish.

### **5.5.1 The Influence of the Charismatic Movement**

During the 1980's the Charismatic Movement swept through the Philippines and a number of Covenant Communities sprung up. These were groupings of believers who promised each other to live a more intense Christian life and to work at supporting each other at the levels of the spiritual, the social and, for some, the economic. Fr. Marc met with members of *Legaya ng Panginoon* (Joy of the Lord) community. One of their leaders accompanied the first group of youth at St. Joseph's and helped them set up their own community which was later to be called *Community of the Living Water*. From the *Legaya ng Panginoon* St. Joseph's took the *Christian Life Programme* which challenges young people to commit themselves to Christ and to service within the parish. It is similar to a *Life in the Spirit* seminar<sup>3</sup> "but it takes more elements of community living, since definitely after the programme we will be invited to be part of a community" (Candelario 1996:2; Ong-Casuncad 1996:4).

Using this programme, Fr. Marc led the original group through a prolonged period of discussion and prayer. But it was not all plain sailing. Epee recalls Marc's invitation to them to commit themselves to a covenant community. "Then in the meeting, what was said was, 'Father, we're too young to commit! We cannot. We're still too young.' I remember it very well because I was the one who said it!" (Ong-Casuncad 1996:4). (Fr. Marc records with amusement this event in exactly the same words (Lesage 1996:7).) After many years

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<sup>3</sup> A nine session charismatic reflection on the role of the Holy Spirit in one's life.

as a member of the Community, Aleli describes the requisites for membership as being for community, blending well with people and being able to embrace common life (Gutierrez 1996:2). Eventually in 1983 the *Community of the Living Water* was formed. The members made three commitments:

**Commitment to God:** they promised to follow Jesus by rooting their lives in prayer, the Word of God and in the celebration of the sacraments. This includes spending at least 15 minutes in prayer each day, as well as engaging in daily Scripture reading.

**Commitment to One Another:** they promised to love and serve their brothers and sisters in the community, especially in times of need. This could include offering financial assistance. It also meant allowing themselves to be supported by others.

**Commitment to the Parish and the Wider Community:** they promised to bring others, especially other young people, closer to Jesus and encourage them to become responsible for society. They make themselves available for any parish activities in which they are invited to participate (Candelario 1996:3; Ong-Casuncad 1996:5; Padilla 1997:95).

At first, as we saw above, the young people were hesitant to make the commitment demanded by a covenant community. One need not be surprised at this. The demands of such a community were entirely new to the people of St. Joseph's. The youth groups that were to be found in the neighbouring parishes were used by the clergy as a means of recruiting altar boys (*Knights of the Altar*) and members for the youth choir. These priests usually harboured an inner hope that many of these lads would eventually become priests



Aleli and Stela



Sunday Eucharist at St. Joseph' Church, Las Piñas



Youth leaders: Joy, Cie, Ronell, Stela and Aurel

themselves. Fr. Marc had a different vision. He wanted the young people to know that they are called to commitment and leadership as lay persons.

I was never invited by anyone to join the priesthood. There was nobody who talked to me about this. If people come to me and want to talk about these things, then I talk freely about this. But I let them also know the great need for leaders, you know, lay leaders in the community (Lesage 1996:7).

Apart from the *Community of the Living Water*, whose membership can vary between 25 and 40, there are four other youth groups centrally based in the parish and which are organised according to age: students from the elementary and high schools, university students and young professionals. A further eight groups meet in the *barrios*. Members of the *Community of the Living Water* take it as their responsibility to oversee the other groups and to train their leaders (Candelario 1996:4). Meetings in all these groups take place once a week. There are many activities which take place, especially in the three-storey youth centre which Fr. Marc built in 1992. A constant stream of young people are to be seen visiting the centre daily and meetings take place there almost constantly. A particularly busy time is the school vacation when two- and three-day workshops for youth are conducted throughout that period by the two full-time youth leaders in the parish conference centre.

### **5.5.2 Youth Formation**

The *Community of the Living Water* has a core team of five – Joy, Nhap, Estela, Cie and Eilleen. Their task is to plan what training is to take place among the youth of the parish. Throughout the year they are involved in leadership training, character formation and spiritual formation, depending on the needs of the youth. “Sometimes, like last month, we focussed on relationships” (Dimabyn 1996:2-3). At times they meet just for fellowship. They also contribute to the planning of the agenda for the annual parish convention

(paragraph 8.1). These five people who make up the core group of the youth meet regularly on their own. Fr. Marc trusts them to do that and is satisfied with regular informal contact with their co-ordinator Joy (Dimabyn 1996:5).

While this important ministry to youth is pursued throughout the parish it is to be noted that formation takes place at a deeper level for the members of the *Community of the Living Water*. They were originally introduced to the concept of pastoring by leaders from *Legaya ng Panginoon*. Today the Community has five pastors (three for the women and two for the men). These are more experienced members of the community who help the younger ones orient their lives. "As a community we commit ourselves to this person to share whatever is happening, and also to allow this person to guide us in whatever decisions we make in life" (Candelario 1996:3). An intense relationship sometimes develops between members of the community and their pastor, as is evidenced by the level of their interaction.

We meet our pastors at least once a month for personal direction, personal spiritual direction. I think I have to credit my growth in community to the relationships that I've had from the beginning with my pastor. I know that I have grown as a person and I've discovered myself in relation to my service, and especially my relationship with the Lord, through my pastor. I've been corrected many times in terms of shortcomings or difficulties I've had and the mistakes I've committed and all those things. And even in the major decisions I've had to make in my life, like, after graduation, what do I do, where do I go, what job should I get into. Deciding also in terms of my state of life (Candelario 1996:4-5).

This personal growth takes place particularly in the lives of those who take on the ministry of youth pastor. Chosen by the other pastors and Fr. Marc, the spiritual director of the community, they are responsible for helping the younger members of the community to grow in their relationship with God and the community members. It is the struggles of this ministry which especially helped Joy as she attempted to guide five younger people with different personalities, motives and backgrounds.

For me, what was difficult was not forcing them or teaching them a different way, but helping them in their own capacities. And there have been many times when I thought I had committed a mistake in terms of directing people and deciding with people (Candelario 1996:6).

The pastors have their own support group: “We meet for our own direction, our own need to share and to be supported” (Candelario 1996:6). Fr. Marc, too, is always available for them.

The key to the flourishing of the *Community of the Living Water* is personal commitment to Christ and to each other. To become a Christian one “must learn and believe and experience and love and minister and hope. This cannot be done apart from the community of believers” (Cooke 1991:83). Through their inter-personal sharing, mutual pastoring and three-fold commitment they are able to come to a deeper understanding of and dedication to their Christian vocation. The self-disclosure to me by young people of so many of their spiritual experiences in this community confirms the power of interpersonal relationships to enable one to encounter the divine (see Whalen 1967:14; Dulles 1994:217). The care and openness of their pastor has led to a depth of faith which these young people will never forget and which, as we shall soon see, has contributed over the years to the core of parish leadership. Before we reflect on that, it is opportune to comment on what has been going in the parish at a deeper level,

### **5.5.3           Comment**

The growth of the youth covenant community began with a recognition by Fr. Marc that there needs to be some structure for them in the parish. It would have been easy to call young people together to pray and sing, but he wanted something deeper. Although he was not sure what that should be, he was searching for an experience that would catch the

young people's imagination and form the basis for a life commitment to Christ. Greenleaf believes that there are prophets speaking in every age. What distinguishes periods of barrenness from periods of rich creativity is that in the latter there are people willing to respond to the prophetic voices. These he calls "seekers", people seeking for the truth. It is they who "make the prophets" and "the initiative of any one of us in searching for and responding to the voices of contemporary prophets may mark the turning point in their growth and service" (Greenleaf 1977:219). There were sufficient number of young people in St. Joseph's Parish who recognised the prophetic call of Fr. Marc to commit themselves more intensely to a life of discipleship. Else his talent may have withered away (1977:219). The life of faith was already present; it was waiting to be deepened.

The youth were not the only seekers. Fr. Marc himself, not sure of where things would lead, was also one who "seeks to seek" (Fraker 1995:41). He was willing to sit with the youth, listen to them, pray with them that they might together discern where their movement was going. Gardiner has said that "service above self could lead to the changes that would bring about global renewal" (Gardiner 1998:122). In a sense, the mutual listening of Fr. Marc and the young people, and their willingness to move into the unknown, could in hindsight be seen as the catalyst which would eventually lead to renewal in the parish on a global scale. It was not so much what they *did*, as their attitude of service which would eventually permeate the parish more widely. Or, in the words of Gardiner, by "listening unconditionally one can model the new leadership that places service above self" (1998:122).

We have already seen how Burns defines leadership as a reciprocal process (paragraph 3.6.3) and a "relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation" (paragraph 3.6.4). In his

turn, Rost defines leadership as “an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes” (paragraph 3.6.5). Using theirs and others’ leadership theories, I came to my own description of pastoral leadership (paragraph 3.14) whose tenets will be found in the above account of how the *Community of the Living Water* came about. The Community was the result of a process of prayer and reflection and through mutual listening leadership was shared within the group. While Fr. Marc was more knowledgeable about pastoral matters, he allowed himself to be influenced by the group members. While he was open to what may develop, he kept in mind the vision of a church-in-mission, knowing that he could move the youth forward only one step at a time. His method of dealing with the Community members was by way of service, challenging them to new insights (the teaching role of leadership), yet accepting them where they were. Overall, his leadership could be described as *strong*, in that he wanted to provoke others to reflect on discipleship at a more intense level; and yet *gentle*, in that he did not abuse his relationship of influence with the young people by the use of brute power, manipulation or coercion (Burns 1978:452).

It is to be noticed that it was not until 1983 that the *Community of the Living Water* was finally established as a covenant community. That is 16 years after Fr. Marc became the parish priest. Most Catholic priests do not remain that long in the same parish. If patient leadership takes that long to motivate such an important movement in the church, the question of continuity arises. Must a parish start from scratch each time a new pastor is appointed? We return to this issue in the final chapter.

## 5.6 An Image for the Whole Parish

Epee had been one of the youth pastors until he married. He continued his involvement in the parish full-time for some years on the formation team. Once the parish had committed itself to becoming a Communion of Communities (paragraph 7.3.2) Epee realised that this vision was the experience that he had already shared in the *Community of the Living Water* and which he still sought after.

**Prior:** What does this mean to you, this vision of the parish as a Communion of Communities? What does it say to you personally?

**Epee:** For me, I dream of it. I desire it because I have experienced community in the *Community of the Living Water*. I know what it means for people to live for one another. And if that experience, that way of life, is possible for all of the people of the parish, that would be the reality of a community, a Christian community.

**Prior:** So, what you experienced in the *Community of the Living Water* with the young people you feel is possible for the adults of this parish?

**Epee:** Yes! That is my dream. Right now, I'm out of it. I'm out of the youth community because when I got married it was very difficult because it is a singles' community. So I'm looking for the same life, the same relationship, the same community life. And it's only possible through these community groups!

**Prior:** Now what do you think it would do to the parish if you were able to form such community?

**Epee:** It's not exactly a kind of renewal anymore. It's a point of being a real church. If each small community can live out their own, their particular life in their faith, to be an authentic brother or sister to your neighbour, to be there when you are needed, and to have someone with you that you can rely on when you need someone. It's not just a functional thing. It's not even a structural thing. It's more of a reality of faith that is possible for anyone. It's not, I don't think, any more whether this person will become outstanding or not; that's not the point. It's any person who can become, can experience the reality of being a Christian in a real way. I think that's only possible in a Christian community. If I understand it, you are that way and you understand that I am that way.

Then we can live that way. But right now I don't know; I might have that desire, I may want to live, but if you're not the same I cannot live that with you because I cannot expect the same from you. So, it's not a reality. So, if there's a group of people who desire to live that way then for this group of people it becomes a reality as church. And that should be possible for each group. So, in fact, if your community lives that way then that is how, that is a true blessing.

**Prior:** You said it's not so much renewal as being real church. What's the difference for you between renewal and being real church?

**Epee:** I think renewal is trying to make better something that is there already, like renewing the ministry, service, renewing a particular activity that we do and making it better. I think renewal starts from an existing thing. But in my experience of community, it doesn't matter what you do. We can do anything. What matters is our life together, our relationship together. I am your brother, you are my brother and we live that out in our faith. And it so happens that it's Lent, then we do something for Lent. It's Christmas, we do something for Christmas. But no matter what we do, we just do it together.

**Prior:** It's the community dimension.

**Epee:** Renewal is something like making better something that we do. It's becoming, I think, it's really becoming that person in that community (Ong-Casuncad 1996:13-14).

In this section of our interview Epee points to an important distinction which we first came across, although in different wording, in Chapter Two (paragraph 2.3.2). The Second Vatican Council laid out the foundation for a new church, a church which is missionary by nature. However, the bishops were unable to divest themselves from the clothing of centuries (almost literally!) when it came to a leadership style necessary for the implementation of a missionary theology.

Although Epee does not specifically mention a church-in-mission and a supporting leadership theory, he makes a similar conclusion as above when he speaks of a restructuring of the parish as inadequate. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter (paragraph 5.1), a church-as-community is the necessary foundation for a church-as-mission. What so often happens in parishes, as indeed it had been happening in St. Joseph's, is that *programmes* are introduced to invite parishioners to renewal. But, Epee asks, the renewal of what? The same structure and leadership style! When he speaks of a "real church" he is aching for "a reality of faith", "our life together, our relationship together". This will demand a different leadership style and will result in a missionary

outreach, just as his own experience of community in the *Community of the Living Water* has spurred him on to tackle issues in both the wider parish and the wider society (for the latter, paragraph 6.2.2).

A second important point raised by Epee is the community dimension of all that is done in the parish. As he puts it, “No matter what we do, we just do it together”. This echoes the Lumko vision which sees community as the end point of all pastoral ministry (thus its built-in limitation (paragraph 3.2; Prior 1993)). Faced with an overwhelming number of issues, problems, including particularly a traditional passive attitude, where does the pastoral minister begin? For Lobinger, the instigator of the Lumko publications, it does not matter. The starting point for change might seem to be “off centre”, but “this is acceptable as long as we know where the centre is and strive towards it” (Lobinger 1974:16). The centre for him is always community building (1974:13-17). Likewise, when attempting to provide a practical method of raising awareness in the parish, which should lead to service of those living beyond the parochial boundaries, other Lumko writers speak in the same vein (for example, Padilla & Prior 1997:68-74). There is need to keep in mind that community building is the foundation for mission and not an end itself, else the community can become inward-looking and self-serving. It is possible that the intense experience of community that Epee spoke about could have culminated in a group moving in that direction. Hearing the expressions of holistic faith of the key members, and seeing the enormous outreach programme they are engaged in (see Chapter Six), it is difficult to believe that their covenant community could have ended up as an exclusive group. This has happened in other groups, though, and church leaders who are involved in community building need to keep the danger in mind lest they mistake the renewal that takes place through a community experience for the call to mission which identifies a real church.

## 5.7 Youth Leadership

As we have seen (paragraph 3.10), Greenleaf was adamant that real change in society would come through young adults. They need to be given a solid basis for their entrance into adult society (Greenleaf 1996:244-245). What is needed is not a tinkering with the present structure (what Epee calls “renewal”), but a new type of institution (1996:314). Many of the youth leaders of St. Joseph’s heard the challenge and accepted it. Fr. Marc himself is amazed at what they have achieved as a community, as well as in the parish as a whole (see Chapters Six & Seven). Speaking of the early days, he says: “I would look forward to the weekly community meetings. I got much more sometimes from them than I gave. It makes me all the time reflect on my prayer life (Lesage 1996:13). Speaking about them today, he says:

I look at the latest developments and see how with the youth I am almost not needed. A lot of young people can work it out. That’s my joy sometimes, to see now, when they do these seminars that I used to give 15 years ago. This group can just pick up and exist. They have been formed (Lesage 1996:12).

Having begun with a “situational” leadership style - that is, with no fixed plan, but reading the situation as it developed (paragraph 3.7; also Greenleaf 1977:34-35) - he discovers that he has empowered them. He holds no possessive control over the community. He has become less and they have become more.

It is also to these young people that he turns for support in sustaining his own faith. The youth pastors have, for example, made him reflect on his own prayer life. “The way they talk about the Eucharist, the way they celebrate the Eucharist, the way they read the Scriptures. These are the things that definitely sustain me” (Lesage 1996:14). He had developed such a close relationship with them that some of them would ask him from time to time, “Fr Marc, how is your prayer time?” and “How much do you share your life?”

(Lesage 1996:14), comments that could only be made by partners, and not mere supporters of the priest. While he found these challenges difficult to accept at the beginning, he realised that they were only asking him the questions he had been asking them from the beginning. He had demanded commitment from them; they were expecting it from him! This has led him to spend a quiet time every morning before the rush of work begins. It is a time for prayer and reflection. It is a time to ask himself: “What is happening to you? Where are you?” (Lesage 1996:14).

Listening to the stories of the community members, one becomes convinced that Fr. Marc was modelling a fundamentally spiritual leadership. He shares with the members a comprehensive spirituality which takes into account the individual’s own relationship with God, the mutual relations between members and the concrete reality of their daily lives. It is a relevant spirituality and also a dynamic one, for the members not only find enthusiasm for life in their meetings and activities, but feel they are continuing to grow. Nor is it a matter of the leader giving what he has to those who have little. In his turn, he is empowered by the mutuality of the community’s relationships, grows in his own faith life and receives renewed energy to serve. Taking from their mentor, many of the core members of the covenant community ministered to each other, as well as to the parish as a whole. Greenleaf sums it up well:

A leader initiates, provides the ideas and the structure, and takes the risk of failure along with the chance of success. A leader says: “I will go; follow me!” while knowing that the path is uncertain, even dangerous. One then trusts those who go with one’s leadership (Greenleaf 1977:15).

As we saw above (paragraph 5.3), the experience of this community for Epee leaves him wondering if it could not become a parish experience: “No matter what we do, we just do it together”. In his own words he is expressing the organic theology of church which had

been developing during the nineteenth century and culminated in the writing of *Lumen Gentium* (paragraphs 2.1 & 2.2.3). Through Fr. Marc's leadership a vision and experience of living in community has remained with this group of young adults in the parish. It needs to be noted that this longing for community shows that it does not exist - at least in the intensity with which it is experienced by the young people – on a wide scale in the parish. Many are still quite satisfied with their individualistic faith life based on traditional devotions. The fact that so many parishioners spoke to me about their admiration for the youth leaders and formation team that a spark had certainly been engendered in the parish. The community could be seen as a kind of pilot project for the parish as a whole, a sort of “Institute of Chairing” which Greenleaf hoped for (Greenleaf 1996:314; paragraph 3.10). Such an Institute would prepare young adults for leadership through offering them a new vision for the future. Rost, too, sees the need for training leaders for our post-industrial age, and has set up his own doctoral, masters and undergraduate programmes at the University of San Diego where leadership is studied from a multi-disciplinary perspective (Rost 1991:xiv).

Burns (1978:81-82; paragraph 3.8) is concerned about the imbalance of power in the nuclear family through which a child is rewarded for compliance and punished for deviance. He refers to a number of social scientists who have demonstrated that children, as they grow up, need to learn how to adapt to new experiences and reach out for more. Thus they progress from being passive followers to being potential leaders. According to Burns, adolescents need firstly, self esteem and secondly, a capacity for social role taking. With these two needs satisfied they are more likely to lead and change others (Burns 1978:83-100). This two-fold basis for community living and leadership training was present in St. Joseph's parish through various movements - for example, the *Heroes of*

*Christ* (paragraph 5.1) - but particularly in the *Community of the Living Water*, and it was to issue in the strong move towards mission which has come to characterise the parish.

## 5.8 Efforts at Inculturation

Another frontier which the *Community of the Living Water* has crossed is its efforts at inculturation. The community's members are in the forefront when it comes to preparing for the important feasts of the liturgical year, as well as the feasts which have been passed on from the Spanish tradition. It is especially in the latter that efforts have been made to discover the original purpose of the feast and to find new ways of celebrating which include post-Vatican II liturgical concepts and practice. The inspiration to become involved in this re-working of church customs comes from an expatriate who has so inserted himself into the Filipino culture that he wants every aspect of ecclesial life to relate with meaning to the people. (I was often told, usually with amusement, that "Fr. Marc thinks like a Filipino".) In this he is doing no more than putting into practice the teaching of Vatican II that the church is not truly established in a culture until the Gospel is deeply rooted in the mentality of the people (AG:21). Nhap, who works full-time with Joy in the youth centre, explains.

Fr. Marc made it a point early on when he came here to confirm the religious traditions in the parish. You will always find our parish in the newspapers. The religious traditions, he defended them and brought them back if they were dead. With the help of the parish staff we are trying to make these traditions relevant to us. But that was his initiative. We are conscious of that. So, for us, we appreciate our own religious traditions. In appreciating them we are really becoming more conscious of our culture. We celebrate them now for ourselves, for our community, for our society. People are really beginning to appreciate that we have a cultural heritage. We try to keep the original as much as possible and try to make them relevant to our situation (Velasquez 1996:2).

Bernhard Raas, who is known to the parish leaders at St. Joseph's, has written a book on the subject of popular devotions because he wants them to be a source of strength and hope

in difficult times and situations (Raas 1992:11). He realises that these devotions mean a lot to the people, but he is concerned that in practice they can be celebrated out of a subjective and emotional piety instead of a true and authentic devotion (1992:10-12). He is especially critical of the Santacruzán celebration which is a mixture of the Flores de Mayo devotions in honour of Mary and the finding of the true cross (a feast no longer in the Roman calendar). He finds the Santacruzán “a mere presentation of movie stars and beauty queens, a popular celebration but devoid of religious meaning”. To attempt to re-introduce a religious dimension into this feast “would be an exercise in futility” (1992:118-120). Through their own research and after much discussion, the parish leaders at St. Joseph’s found new meaning in the Santacruzán and this author was present at their first attempt to use the symbol of Jesus’ death as an opportunity for catechizing the parishioners. They replaced the “movie stars and beauty queens” with figures from the Old and New Testaments, showing how Jesus alone is the means of salvation.

I mention this issue, not to enter into a polemic, but to show how seriously the parish leaders take the challenge to make the practice of the faith meaningful in their own cultural terms. They would be unable to stop any of these deep-seated customs, even if they wanted to. Their response is to help the people reflect on their faith while they enjoy those celebrations which are so much part of their lives. These parish leaders are manifesting the teaching role of leadership which is an essential element for Burns: to lead is to shape, to alter and elevate the motives, values and goals of followers (Burns 1978:425; paragraph 3.6.4). I took this up in my own description of pastoral leadership: to lead is to possess a teaching role (paragraph 3.14). The members of the parish formation team never tire of stretching the members of the community to grow beyond the status quo.

In Chapter Two (paragraphs 2.2, 2.4.2 & 2.4.3) we saw how the more organic vision of church affected the Vatican II documents and has since led to a widespread move to a more community-oriented church throughout the world. Despite efforts to re-centralize church organization (paragraph 2.4.1) the efforts to contextualize the church in local cultures continues apace. Inculturation is now part of the life of the Roman Catholic Church. To look at the myriad ways in which the parish leaders at St. Joseph's are attempting to re-shape pastoral ministry according to local customs would take a full study in itself. That is not my brief. I mention the issue as a further example of how the leaders are helping to make their parish more of a missionary church through their efforts at inculturation.

## **5.9 The Role of the Parish Formation Team**

The parish of St. Joseph could not have achieved its high level of community relationships, its service of so many in need (see Chapter Six), the involvement of such a large percentage of parishioners, the standard of effectiveness among the large number of leaders, to say nothing of the necessary infra-structure to maintain all of this (see Chapter Seven), if there were not a high commitment by a large segment of the parish, and by its full-time staff in particular, to continuing formation. This is especially reflected in the existence of the parish formation team to which I have often referred. Its role is key to the development of a faith life of so many, as well as to the success of so many activities that take place in the parish in any one year. Its leading members - Epee, Aleli and Stela - write and conduct their own formation sessions for the leaders and trainers of the forty *po'ok* in the five *barrios*. They are involved in all three areas of parish life: *Pagsamba* (worship), *Pakikibahagi* (sharing) and *Pagkalinga* (caring) (paragraph 4.7.4.3).

I deal in more detail with the formation programme in Chapter Seven and I have gone into the subject of educational methodology in some detail elsewhere (paragraph 3.8 & 5.2; Prior 1993:97-104; Padilla & Prior 1997). Here I make a brief mention of this subject because of its relevance to a more participatory church and the leadership style required to bring it about.

The Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire believed that the “banking system” of education, by which the learners have to memorize what they are taught and repeat this in an examination, was the cause of the on-going poverty and ignorance of the masses in his country. It was a means by which the powerful could keep the powerless in a subjugated state. He wrote about the need for conscientization, a process by which people are introduced to a critical form of thinking about their world. This leads not only to a new understanding, but also to a motivation to change the situation (Freire 1972:77). Instead of a teacher who has the answers, one needs a facilitator who will pose life problems to the group and then accompany them in looking for solutions. This form of education, he says, leads to the “emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality” by which people become fully themselves (Freire 1972:53-54).

From the science of psychology Carl Rogers came to the same conclusion. He discovered through his counselling work that a person’s life will never change for the better if he/she does not put effort into doing it him/herself. His concern was not with helping people get rid of their problems but in helping them become self-directed. When applying this to the field of education he said: “A way must be found to develop a climate in the *system* in which the focus is not upon *teaching*, but on the facilitation of self-directed *learning*”

(Rogers 1969:304). This kind of learning cannot be directly communicated to another, but can only be appropriated through experience (1969:152-154).

These views have become evident and even indisputable to many adult educationists and leadership theorists today (for example: Burns 1984; Rogers 1986; Jarvis 1987; Bridges 1991; Henry 1991; Freire 1994; Stewart 1994; Weaver & Farrell 1991). Unfortunately this does not apply to many church leaders. The teacher-tell system, which was condemned by Freire and Rogers, is an appropriate model for a pyramidal church. Those above pass on truths to those below. In a more organic church, however, in which the equal dignity of all is stressed (AG#3-6; LG#9,10,32) and in which the people of God are journeying together, a conscientizing or facilitative model is not only more apposite but necessary. The members of a community church do not have all the answers, but struggle together to find solutions to issues as they arise. To facilitate is to respect the knowledge and experience of the other learners and it enables one to remain a learner oneself, very much as a leader always remains a follower at the same time (paragraphs 3.6.5.1 – 3.6.5.3). It is a participatory process, an educational methodology which was adopted by the parish formators at St. Joseph's and which has resulted in so many trained leaders continuing to attend formation programmes on an on-going basis.

### **5.9.1 Formation for a Participatory Church**

Before concluding this chapter I would like to include parts of interviews I conducted with two of the parish formators, Aleli and Josefina, who explain how engagement in formation has brought home to them the nature of a participatory church. Aleli began working at St. Joseph's in 1985. After obtaining her degree in economics she worked for two years in a company in the district of Makati, the central business district of Manila. Because of poor

relationships between staff members she left and Fr. Marc offered her a job in the parish. Within two years she was conducting formation programmes. With Stela, she is probably the best facilitator the parish has. She picked this up as she went along and found this work particularly rewarding once the parish leaders adopted the Freirean style of formation. She recalls that at the beginning she would look for a good programme and present it in a “teacher-student” style to the leaders. Then Fr. Marc and Stela introduced the Lumko approach which is based on the teachings of Freire and the methods of contemporary business management training.

**Aleli:** Since that Lumko thing many things have changed. Of course, we still take formation programmes from outside, but there’s this element of making our own formation programmes based on what we have, based on our own situation. So with the skills we were taught, we were able to develop programmes for the parish. And what I like most with the Lumko approach is the participatory thing. . . .Even if I’m not knowledgeable in the subject matter, I still feel confident because I believe in the people. I can draw it from people. It’s a big difference for me and I like it the way it is now.

**Prior:** So, it doesn’t bother you that you are no longer the knowledgeable person handing on. . .

**Aleli:** Not at all! Not at all! It’s been a relief for me! Before we would give the meeting. But now, teaching them the skills, they themselves can make their own agenda and they themselves handle the meeting without us directly involved in it (Gutierrez 1996:3).

Aleli believes that the method is better for the learners as well. Referring to feed-back that she has received, she says that this way of teaching is more interesting for the learners and they are able to retain it better (Gutierrez 1996:4).

With a parish of such a size the formation team could be kept busy continually conducting programmes. But if the participants at each meeting or course are different, then where is the real development? Aleli answered my query by referring to the commitment of the people. It is something that has amazed her:

Most of those involved, I think, are involved because of their commitment. Before I was not so much aware of that. I would see people involved, but for limited tasks, limited responsibilities. But now people are involved for. . . , even many times you would ask them to come back, they would be here. And I think it is because of their commitment. The commitment thing now is, I think personally, greater; it's deeper than before (Gutierrez 1996:5).

Aleli claims that she has the same commitment herself and that it came from Fr. Marc. On the part of the 120 or so leaders whom she trains to train others in the *ugnayon* and *po'ok* (paragraph 5.2), she puts the cause down, firstly, to getting them involved and, secondly, to on-going formation (Gutierrez 1996:7).

Another area of ministry that has been continuing for many years in the parish is that of catechetics. The practice of this ministry in St. Joseph's Parish manifests how formation according to the methodology described in the previous paragraph leads to a participatory church. A team of eight women teach catechism full-time in the local government schools. This group was set up by Fr. Marc, although the team leader had been involved in catechetics before Fr. Marc came to the parish. She is Josefina "Baby" Magno who is totally committed to this ministry. At the age of 17 she was sponsored by the parish to pursue a two year full-time diploma course at the Institute of Catechetics in Manila. Since then she has spent 35 years teaching catechetics. "This is my work," she says. "This is my life. I have given up everything, my career, my future, my everything. . . . I think it's my first and last love" (Magno 1996:2). Even when she was faced on three occasions with pressure from her family to get a degree, get married and live a "normal" life, she resisted in order to continue her ministry. The team teaches almost 17,000 students in one high school and five elementary schools within the parish boundary. Each class lasts 30 minutes and they can teach up to eleven classes a day. On Thursdays they meet to evaluate the past week's work and plan the work for the coming week. On Saturdays they meet to pray

together. On Sunday afternoons they conduct a children's liturgy in the school gymnasium which, unlike the Church, can hold the more than one thousand who attend. The Gospel is presented through a number of different means, including drama and dancing. In this they are helped by some of the high school students. Once a month Fr Marc celebrates the Eucharist with them. On the other Sundays the catechists themselves distribute Communion during the service.

Josefina attended a Lumko workshop at Baguio City in the early 1990's and this has changed her approach to teaching catechism. She used to use an input method which came out of books. Now the team writes their own lessons which are based on an interplay between the Word of God and life situations. "The catechism we had, we had to talk and talk and talk! Sometimes it brought your students to sleep, while with this method we enjoy it" (Magno 1996:4).

It was after the Baguio City experience that the catechists introduced their weekly prayer meeting. At all Lumko workshops shared prayer is an integral part of the teaching and live-in experience. Ministry is not a matter of "teaching children catechism"; nor is it an exercise church leaders feel they ought to do, or an education in the faith which the students need. All parish activity, including catechetics and ministry formation, is geared towards helping Christians enter more deeply into a personal relationship with Christ. In all Christian teaching there is a proclamation that faith and salvation come from Christ who inspires believers to become inspired with the same spirit of mission which impelled Christ himself (AG#4&5). For this reason the catechists see their weekly prayer experience as an integral part of the their work. Their shared prayer has brought them together and has affected even their family life.

We share the Gospel. That's one reason why we treat each other not only as co-workers but as a family. And it extends to our other relationships. I'm very happy. The relationships we have among the catechists extends to our families (Magno 1996:7).

It would not be without relevance to comment that the high morale among the catechists might also be ascribed to the support which they receive from the parish in general and from Fr. Marc in particular. This is the role of a pastor-facilitator whose job is not just to set things up but also to see to their on-going life. The first task Rogers (1986:118) gives to the group leader is "to keep the group together, to keep things going". Stewart (1994:51-54) describes this encouraging role as "consulting". Merely asking for opinions and ideas is not enough, she says. One needs to meet team members face to face in a two-way communication. Informal methods of doing this on a regular basis can be the most effective. It is this kind of informal "checking out", as opposed to "checking up", that was often referred to in my conversations with parish leaders.

All eight catechists are paid by the parish and earn more than their colleagues in neighbouring parishes. Many parishes do not have catechists because of the low rate of pay. Indeed, says Josefina, catechists in other parishes "are jealous of us because they can see the support they [the priest and people] are giving us" (Magno 1996:15).

In many ways I regard this group of catechists as the unsung heroes of the parish. They work away unseen by the parishioners, except the students, many of whom are not interested in religion. While those involved in ministries and neighbourhood groups see expansion taking place, the catechists meet group after group of high school students day after day, and week after week, in what could become endless monotony. The joy exuding from Josefina in such a long-term commitment is one more example of servant-leadership in practice.

## 5.9.2 Comment

The first point that strikes me in reading these accounts is the conviction that follows the users' practice of the participatory method of learning. Both Aleli and Josefina are enthused by the "easiness" with which they can teach and the liveliness of those who are taught. The adults show interest (Gutierrez 1996:4) and the school students enjoy the experience (Magno 1996:4). These two formators have both received confidence from putting this facilitative method into practice.

This confidence has galvanized both Aleli and Josefina to write their own programmes in collaboration with their fellow formators. Instead of relying on ready-made material – often from other countries – they now prepare sessions which are suited to their audience. This educational method has resulted in a process of contextualization, or inculturation, in which reality, as it is known by the learners, is the starting point of the learning process. The formators' approach is based on the belief that the learners have the potential and desire to learn. The result is meaningful and self-directed learning (Rogers 1969:200).

As mentioned earlier in this paragraph, the life of faith in Christ is the core of these activities. Aleli's deep commitment to the adult formation programme comes out of her experience of prayer and sharing in the *Community of the Living Water*. For Josefina, her life-long commitment to catechetics is buoyed up by her weekly prayer experience with the other catechists. The spirituality of both is Gospel-based and has enabled them to accept the pain that comes with ministry, although both are positive about the contribution they are making to others' lives.

Josefina's seven-day week strikes me as excessive and raises the issue of how much time lay people are expected or are able to offer to church life. In this case it is clearly voluntary. When I suggested to her that she was probably not very well paid, she responded: "It doesn't matter! Once you like the work that you are doing there is fulfilment in it" (Magno 1996:7). I would like to have interviewed some of the other catechists, but was unable to manage it, so I do not know if they would express the same satisfaction. Josefina, however, assured me that, unlike her, the others are all graduates who could have found a teaching job elsewhere, but preferred to work as catechists in St. Joseph's Parish. "They are committed to the work", she said (Magno 1996:8).

This word *commitment* has already arisen in this text many times and I shall return to it in the final chapter. Meanwhile one can see that the formation experiences of both these women has convinced them of the participatory nature of church life.

## **5.10 Conclusion**

The beginnings of a participatory church at St. Joseph's came from bringing people together: men being asked to invite their friends to participate, people of different social strata gathering together, the sense of parish pride in the preparation for and the restoration of the bamboo organ. Like a good leader, Fr. Marc did not model himself on others. He was able to conjure up "creative responses to here-and-now opportunities" (Greenleaf 1977:34; 1996:29). He saw needs and he discovered ways of involving others in satisfying them (paragraph 3.3.1).

Fr. Marc's own unwavering commitment to a participatory church, and the underlying spirituality which fired him, rubbed off on those with whom he worked. The pastoral

leaders caught his enthusiasm and made efforts at deepening their own spirituality through prayer and sharing. True to their mentor, they communicated this vision and fervour to those whom they taught through a facilitative method. The pyramidal structure of the parish was gradually being flattened into a circle in which the renewed vision of church rippled from the centre outwards.

A key stage on the journey towards a community church was the inauguration of the *Community of the Living Water*. Here young people were invited into intense relationships with God and each other. They were to pattern for the parish the way of being church. Here parishioners could see what it means to be a participatory church, the people of God in tangible form. With many parishioners, particularly the young, having discovered their calling in the church, Fr. Marc then used his leadership abilities to move them outward in mission towards others in need. We turn to this in the next chapter.

# **Chapter Six:**

## **Leadership for Liberation**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In the last chapter we saw how the sense of a communitarian and participatory church was developed in St. Joseph's Parish. This was inspired by the new emphasis in *Ad Gentes* and *Lumen Gentium* on more organic images for the church. Along with these can also be found a strong call for the church's involvement in society. This is particularly noticeable in the document *Gaudium et Spes*. But it can also be found, as we have seen (paragraphs 2.1 & 2.2.2), in *Ad Gentes*' emphasis on the church as missionary by nature and in *Lumen Gentium*'s image of the church as the creation of the Holy Spirit. All the baptised have been graced with gifts of the Spirit in order to use them for the building up of the church and for the transformation of society. Padilla (1997:73-81) has identified three models in social ministry: that of charity, of organisation and of liberation, concepts which will be explained below. In this chapter we shall reflect on how the leaders in St. Joseph's Parish grew through the first two and are now struggling to implement the third.

### **6.2 First Efforts at Social Involvement**

From the beginning of his work in St. Joseph's Parish Fr. Marc made efforts to relate church-going with the social needs of the area. He emphasised this because on first

arriving at the parish he had witnessed a church almost totally oriented to the celebration of the sacraments and popular devotions. There was a lot of unrest in the country during the 1970's due to martial law and President Marcos' dictatorship. In general, the church's clerical leadership was reticent about becoming involved (paragraph 4.5.1 & 4.5.2), although many lay groups had become active. Fr. Marc invited Fr. Senden, the director of the Asian Social Institute, to give talks in the parish, especially on days of recollection.<sup>1</sup> Fr. Marc describes the effect of this first effort (at which most of the participants were men).  
Over a six week period

he came once a week with a team. It went from the social teachings of the church to the situation in the Philippines, and how the church as a parish should respond to the social situation. It ended up with the question: "What can you do in your parish to respond to the needs of your community?" And so they came up with high school evening classes for adults, which is still going on now after 26 years. That means we offer our buildings free. The teachers would - at the beginning - teach free, and the students would pay a very minimum fee. But you had to be 18 years old or married. Now twice a week we have something like 200 students who study there. . . .Some of them have become attorneys, some of them are managers. These are all people who, because of financial reasons, or because they were very naughty [at school and therefore dismissed] and were not able to finish (Lesage 1996:9).

There are two aspects to be noted about this original effort at involving parishioners in social ministry. Firstly, Fr. Marc called in someone from outside the parish. This was a discerning strategy. Involvement in social issues can be a touchy area for ministry, particularly in a church which has been used to a heavy concentration on personal piety. This is attested to by the small number who turned up for this first course. The outsider, who is at the same time an expert in the field, is more likely to be listened to and, indeed, in this case, was found acceptable. The second aspect to be noted is that Fr. Senden asked the few parishioners present what they could *do* in response to the call of the church to go

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<sup>1</sup> Occasions on which believers spend time listening to input on Christian life and take a time of silence to reflect and connect the teaching with their own lives. It is a kind of mini-retreat.

to those in need. The new awareness they had received must issue in action. At this stage it will still be at the level of charity (see the next paragraph) but it is a new beginning.

### **6.3 The Charity Model of Social Ministry**

Through the higher education offered in the new high school evening classes people could break out of the cycle of poverty which had entrapped them and their families for decades. Many other activities were soon to follow. A medical and dental clinic offers free services. The Las Piñas Technocentre was inaugurated in which people were trained in technical skills such as electronics, refrigeration and air-conditioning. It was originally set up by a British company which still supplies the equipment and trainers. Those who run the Parish Labour and Employment Desk assist in job placement and train people in skills and entrepreneurship. They work at enhancing the value of work among workers, advocate workers' rights and assist in organising the informal sector of both workers and employers. A Social Action Centre provides relief and assistance in times of emergency, such as floods. A Justice and Peace Centre provides free legal advice, and a Day Care Centre was set up to look after small children whose parents were working.

So many services for the poor were set up that many felt this was a transformation of parish life. For the first time the parish as an institution was involving itself in outreach to the needy. In this "charity" model of ministry it is the task of the parish social workers to provide for people's needs. The people come to depend on these actions of provision to such an extent that many can eventually feel that they cannot help themselves. Meanwhile, the role of leadership has remained with the parish leaders. This model is based on a traditional, hierarchical way of seeing society. There are people at the top who are rich and have power; there are people below them who are poor and powerless. Social action is

getting the ones higher up to help those who are lower down (Padilla 1997:73-74).

Members of the Parish Social Centre perceive the needs of the people and respond by instituting projects. They do the planning, the implementation, the follow-up and the evaluation. It is a model through which one can express one's pity for the poor, feel sorry for them and offer them what one can afford. Even in this paternalistic model Fr. Marc saw a deeper principle involved. Instead of just dishing out services, as it were, one needs to take into consideration the people one is helping:

There was a relationship, you see. It was not just going to the doctor and getting medicines. We had a group of lay persons who would be in charge of the patients. In other words, talking to them, asking them where they came from, being with them, to make them feel this is not just a hospital that you're sitting in. But we're trying to build community. That element was there, even in this kind of social involvement (Lesage 1996:9).

One of the major assertions on which Greenleaf built his theory was the reality of massive alienation in society today and the fact that so many institutions are "low serving", that is, they do not respond adequately to the situation (paragraph 3.11; Greenleaf 1996:179).

While it is essential at times to give poor and hungry people what they need, in the long run it does not solve the situation. In fact, the giving prolongs the relationship of provider-dependent. While dependence persists community cannot be built, as we saw with the members of the *Heroes of Christ* who had to discover their self-worth before they could relate on an equal basis to others (paragraph 5.3). The fact that social services were needed in Las Piñas could not be questioned (paragraph 4.7.3). But to remain at a level of mere giving also could not go on. The parish was ready for the next step.

#### **6.4 The Organisation Model of Social Ministry**

The organisation model is so named because the social workers do not so much give the poor what they need as gather them together and organise them to do something about their

situation. Leaders need to trust that the poor are gifted and are capable of improving their lives. (Padilla 1997:74-77). The first project to take place under this model - *Operasyon Saniliry Lupa* (Re-Settlement Housing Programme) - was in 1984 when the leaders decided to do something about the 10,000 squatters in the area. These were mainly fisher folk who were squatting on government-owned land. The government, wishing to erect an international exhibition centre (paragraph 1.1), decided to demolish their dwellings and re-locate the people elsewhere, far from the sea on which they depended for a living.

The parish Social Action Centre defended them by organising them, barricading their land, dialoguing with the people concerned and seeking the help of the media. These efforts succeeded in preventing the demolition. In 1986 the parish approached the new Aquino government to ask it to buy the land adjacent to the squatters' area for re-location, and the government did. The squatters now hold titles to a small piece of land and pay a small amount monthly (118 pesos)<sup>2</sup> to the National Home Mortgage Corporation for 25 years (Padilla 1997:75).

Through this campaign the people in need had become involved themselves and shared some of the responsibility for the action taken.

#### **6.4.1 Other Centrally-Based Services**

Other social ministries soon followed and all of them come under the highly organised social outreach programme in the parish called *Pagkalinga* (the caring ministry) which is administered by five full-time staff.<sup>3</sup> In the *Paunlad* Trade and Development Centre people are trained in crafts with the hope that they can set up their own businesses. It links with other NGOs which have the same objectives. The members of the community can buy-rice in bulk from the *Butil ng Buhay* (Grain of Life) cooperative and sell it at a cheaper rate than the commercial retailers. The parish supplied the original equipment for the *Patak ng Buhay* (Water of Life) project. Now members of the community sell drinking water in the

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<sup>2</sup> About US\$4.00

<sup>3</sup> The information in this section is taken from Sumith 1996b, Padilla 1997:73-81, Rodriguez 1996 &

squatter camps and other poor areas at a rate which is less than that charged by the commercial water dealers.

Women from the parish have been trained by a national NGO as community health workers in primary health care. They provide preventative medical care and prepare herbal medicines. Both basic and advance courses were provided for them. These women also run the *Botika sa Baryo* (Barrio Drugstore) where drugs are sold at the cheapest prices possible. There is also the ecology project which is aimed at environmental awareness among the parishioners. People are taught how to divide their waste into recyclable and bio-degradable categories.

A project which has had significant success is the *Laya sa Hirap* (Freedom from Poverty) programme. Those women who, through a screening process show they have business potential, are trained in entrepreneurial skills and are given a loan which they use to begin a small business, for example, selling cooked food, toy making, capiz<sup>4</sup> making, dress making or running a *sari-sari* store.<sup>5</sup> While they begin with this dependent relationship, the purpose of the project is to enable women to become financially independent and self-sufficient.

We're happy when some of our beneficiaries, after a year or two years being part of *Laya*, she will call, she will tell us, "I don't need you because I am successful". Now we can say that *Laya* more or less has done its part (Rodriguez 1996:7).

These women form cells of five members who care for and help each other make their business a success. Each is responsible to the others in the group for reimbursing the loan.

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Manguerra 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Capiz are sea shells which are used for windows (all the windows in St. Joseph's Church are made from capiz which let in the light but not the heat) and for various decorative purposes.

<sup>5</sup> A sari-sari store is a small shop, often run by a single person, which sells small items such as foodstuffs and soaps.



The interior of a 400 year old Spanish church on the island of Bohol



A church roof juts above the volcanic ash from Mount Pinatubo (Below:) Sari-Sari Store, Baguio City



“The aim,” says Allan, is to “tap into their own potential, especially on the entrepreneurial side” (Rodriguez 1996:3). To date, there has been an 80% success rate in the businesses and a 100% success rate in reimbursing the programme.

#### **6.4.2 Involvement of the Needy**

The core issue in all these initiatives is the active involvement in the process itself on the part of those seeking support. Instead of handing out to people, the parish leaders organise them to do something about their situation themselves. They are empowered to act. The process could also be named an “awakening model” because “one awakens people to their responsibility towards transformation” (Padilla 1997:75). The parish social workers aim at co-ordinating people’s efforts and providing the values and skills training when it is needed as, for example, when they involved the squatters in searching for a solution to their homelessness. While the parish usually supplied the initial finances for these projects they are now, by and large, autonomous. The parish social workers have little to do with the day-to-day running except to offer further training when requested and to audit the books. At the basis of this organising operation is trust. Instead of offering hand-outs, the social workers have been helped by Fr. Marc to believe in the poor and their capability of improving their lives. One works *with* the poor, not *for* them. Rather than trying to save them from their situation, one shows trust that they can work to transform their situation of poverty (Padilla 1997:76). Freire agrees:

Even when one must speak *to* the people one must convert the “to” to a “with” the people. And this implies respect for the “knowledge of living experience” (Freire 1994:26).

This often means initiating the project, but not imposing it on anyone. Fr. Marc waited for the parish leaders to catch up with him on a number of occasions; using the same organisation model of service the social workers often have to wait patiently until people

are ready to participate in their own upliftment. Greenleaf, too, speaks of the need to go beyond handing out to people:

It is not enough for churches to minister directly to the hurt and the needy, important as this service is to the recipients, or to those who minister as a means of finding wholeness in their own lives (Greenleaf 1996:180).

He asks for more trust which can lead to society-building on a large scale. It is particularly the members of religious institutions who need to nurture the servant motive in others (1996:181).

One sees this in action in such groups as the *Laya sa Hiras* where the members of each small group of women take on responsibility themselves for the other members. Each is accountable to the others; if one does not pay the others lose. They work as a team, encouraging and supporting each other as crises occur. As Greenleaf says of leaders, they take considerable risk and this is the foresight which helps make a church institution the “growing edge”, contributing to a more just and loving society (1996:181; paragraph 3.12).

This approach is reflected in Burns’ transactional model of leadership in which leaders and followers come to an agreement concerning what strategy to follow. The leaders usually initiate the programme or policy and work at motivating the followers to come to an agreement as to how to how they can activate the policy together (Burns 1978:262).

The teaching of Vatican II also speaks about the need to involve people in their own advancement. Because of the more intense development of human relationships in today’s world, genuine dialogue is possible at a wider level and this can lead to a greater respect for the full dignity of men and women. God’s desire is that humans form one family and show their love for God by loving their neighbour. Each person is invited to work for

his/her personal improvement, as well as improve the social conditions of others. In this way everyone could live a genuinely human life (GS#23-26).

## **6.5 Strategy Guided by Values**

It was noted above (paragraph 6.3) that Fr. Marc saw a deeper motive for social ministry than helping people in need. His overarching view of the value of a participatory church was to goad him into social action when another pastor might have been satisfied with the new sense of community in the parish. This aspect of his leadership style became evident over the problems surrounding the *St. Joseph's Credit Cooperative*. This had been set up in the late 1960's with a purpose to provide credit services to parishioners at low interest rates. At its peak it had 4,000 members, but due to mis-management it went through tough times with the membership dropping to less than 1,000. Fr. Marc tried to intervene but the cooperative management claimed independence from the parish. They were legally correct in this. Perhaps this was a way of trying to protect themselves from criticism of their bad handling of the business, and especially for not reducing the number of office staff.

Meanwhile criticism in the parish was growing and Fr. Marc feared a run on the cooperative as those who had invested in it became aware that they may not get their money back. This would have destroyed it altogether. Fr. Marc told me that such an event would sour relations in the parish and set back the move towards a participatory and liberationist church for many years. Once again, he called in an outsider, this time a member of a foreign funding agency, who listened to all those involved and recommended structural reforms which are now being put into place.

Reflecting on these events one can see that there is something going on at a deeper level than trying to save an institution, or even trying to prevent being hit by the flak of a failed

credit cooperative. The parishioners in general, Fr. Marc told me, believed the cooperative belonged to the parish because it used the title “St. Joseph’s”. While the cooperative’s trustees were unwilling to make clerical staff redundant because of a fear of spoiling friendships, there was a need for “a moral act, one of moral courage, vision and intellectual energy” (Carver 1999:4). This can only come from people who look beyond strategy to the underlying values that their actions expose.

Leadership at a high level must be concerned with – perhaps I should say *obsessed* with – values (Carver (1999:5).

Carver goes on to bemoan the fact that so many company board members are so concerned with keeping their staff happy that they lack the moral fibre to act on behalf of the clients who in fact own the company. The cooperative’s trustees were handling the possessions of their *investors*, not of their staff. If they had possessed a “moral ownership” (Carver 1999:6) of the cooperative they could have lifted their sights and discovered the values on which the business was founded in the first place. This could have encouraged them to make the unhappy decisions of the moment which were necessary to save the institution in the long run. Leadership, as we have described it, was missing. On the contrary, the description by Greenleaf of old institutions had been fulfilled: as they “grow old, large or respectable” they become encumbered with bureaucracy and are unable to fulfil their servant role (Greenleaf 1977:294; paragraph 3.12). Creative leadership is required to renew such a structure and this can only come from someone who is not so much concerned with the externals as with the values for which the institution was set up in the first place. This was the role Fr. Marc and the outside evaluator were able to contribute.

While Carver makes the distinction between strategy and underlying values - though he wants them “married” in practice (Carver 1999:5) - Senge (1995:221-225) defines reality

itself as inter-relationships. He is concerned that “things” have taken primacy over people in today’s world. The major crises which are threatening our planet are of our own making. What is need, he says, is a paradigm shift in thinking so that individuals and institutions may accept that patterns of inter-relationship are what characterise reality. While Greenleaf realises that the immense changes he calls for (paragraph 3.13) will take a long time to permeate institutions, Senge wonders if we have the luxury of time. Unless we make “conversation and community” - the concrete expression of inter-relatedness - the basis of our institutions we will never enable them to become the life-givers that society is in so much need (Senge 1995:225). Although he may not have been conscious of it, Fr. Marc could see beyond the practical problems faced by the credit cooperative to the whole issue of ownership and accountability, to the lack of “conversation and community” which the trustees could have had with their clients. If they had related in a more transparent way with the clients they would not only have expressed servant-leadership in the way they managed the credit cooperative, but they would also have been putting into practice the participatory leadership style that was being introduced to the parish as a whole. What were needed were leaders willing to venture out and take a risk, to go ahead and show the way “in creative venture” (Greenleaf 1996:54; paragraph 3.6.1). It was a disappointment for Fr. Marc that what was happening in one sphere of the parish, namely, through the work of the pastoral workers, did not spill over into this particular area of community development.

## **6.6 Development as Formation**

A problem which could attack the very root of the organisation model for social ministry came to light in one of the most daring of the parish social projects. It is the belief of the parish staff that formal training is not the only arena where adults are helped to grow. As

we will see in the interviews with Allan and Ferdie (paragraph 6.7), and as we have already seen in texts of Greenleaf and Burns, whenever any interaction with people takes place, particularly when development programmes are being pursued, there is an opportunity for people to grow. While he was still a member of the *Community of the Living Water*, Epee became involved in running the *Paunlad* Trade and Development Centre where, among other things, *karoake* cabinets were made for Sharp, Christmas lanterns were marketed in the United States and fishing floats in Singapore. In line with the hope of some of the leaders to move from the centre into the *barrios* and from there into the *po'ok*, (paragraph 5.2) the *Paunlad Trade and Development Centre* has led with this process. New workers begin at the central training location where they are taught basic skills. Then they are able to use these skills as they engage in cottage industries at home. *Paunlad* sees to the marketing of the items.

This work did not begin so smoothly. As I heard from St. Joseph's personnel so often, it was not merely a matter of offering jobs to the poor, especially the squatters. In the *Paunlad* Training and Development Centre Epee was involved in various training methods towards production. These included both hand and technical skills. But, for him, the more important training was the transformation of the person and the heart:

When you are confronted with organising so many projects for the people, we realised how damaged the people were. For example, they wanted to work but they didn't exactly know how. They want to work, but it's not very easy to change from doing nothing to all of a sudden going to work every day at eight o'clock till half past five.

But the damaged part is these people have no more dreams. You have told them about what we are planning to do for the future. They say "Yes", but this doesn't register because the only thing they can think of is, "What do I eat tonight?" So, in the training centre, thinking that this job will eventually be theirs doesn't make sense to them. The only sense they can understand is how much money lies in their hands. And if you talk to a person and only then you realise that this person doesn't look forward to a future, I would say that's damage (Ong-Casuncad 1996:6-7).

Epee explained to me how he tried to initiate a collaborative style of leadership in the centre by holding workers' meetings at which the purpose of the centre and its ways of working could be discussed. The people were uninterested. They just wanted to be told what to do so that they could receive their pay at the end of the day. It was almost a case of executive leadership (paragraph 3.2) in which the leader wants to go his own way, although in this case the desire on Epee's part was for participation. He was like a leader without followers (paragraph 3.6). Epee was, in Greenleaf's terms, the conceptualiser, though without the operational units wanting to play ball (Greenleaf 1977:140; also paragraph 3.12). Greenleaf's language may sound rather patriarchal, but what he is describing speaks to the situation we are considering. Business leaders today conceptualise the need for change. But rather than decide on strategies themselves, they are concerned with "building strength and bringing sharpness of focus to many people and building a dependable staff" (1977:140). It is a great dream but not practical, at least at the beginning, with people with such a narrow focus as those Epee was dealing with. It was an important lesson for Epee and the pastoral team. Leaders can go too far ahead, presuming that they have followers. On the other hand, their task is to use this foresight and even to create a challenge or struggle (Greenleaf 1977:233), while patiently hoping that others may catch up with their dream later.

## **6.7                    The *Pagkalinga* Workers**

Despite these and other problems, a widespread social concern is evident in the parish and this points to the prominence that the members of the parish leadership attach to the relationship between the Gospel and daily life. This is noticeable, for example, in the number and calibre of the persons employed by the parish in this field of endeavour. Allan, who works for the *Laya sa Hirap* project (paragraph 6.2) joined the parish staff, after many

years as a seminarian and then a politician, because he wanted to be involved in the challenge of building community. Apart from wanting to help others lift themselves up, he finds that he himself grows as he interacts with people. His commitment to community is based on a belief in the innate dignity of each human being.

When I say I believe in people, I believe in their inherent potential, to enhance change, to effect change in their own lives. . . . Sometimes they may be lacking in hope. . . . It's only that you have to give them some training and then they can become aware of their inherent potential as a response to their present situation. So, I do believe in people. Every person has his own capabilities; he can take charge of his own life, especially if he works with other people in the community (Rodriguez 1996:3).

Ferdie, who works full-time with Allan, also sees the wider perspective of their work.

Aside from giving out loans we train the mothers how to become business women, how to become entrepreneurs. We monitor their projects to see to it that their projects don't flunk, and that the amount we loan to them will become doubled.

We train them, give them seminars. We give them training about entrepreneurship, also leadership. We raise their consciousness about health, sanitation, education for their children and how to build their homes. Not only providing them access to loans, but also enriching their values (Manguerra 1996:3).

The overall director of the parish's social ministry is Ben. Following his studies for a Masters in economics, he worked with a government agency which was concerned with regional economic planning. However, he fell out with Marcos' "capitalist cronies", as he calls them, and was blacklisted by government agencies. He then moved into the world of computer technology. During this time he had not been interested in the church because he saw it as irrelevant. He had been working for the underground political opposition and, buying a gun, had planned to join the guerrillas. These plans were overtaken by the EDSA revolution in 1986 (paragraph 4.5.3). Ben began to appreciate the church's involvement in the social and economic situation. "I had a kind of conversion experience and I decided to drop my computer business and I decided that I would join an NGO". That NGO turned

out to be St. Joseph's Parish because their approach was holistic, "not only spiritual, but you have a lot of social action programmes" (Sumith 1996:3).

Despite Ben's enthusiasm for social action, Fr. Marc was not satisfied that he was ready for social ministry. Once again, he was looking for that deeper motivation (paragraph 6.5) that is so necessary if one is not to engage in hand-outs and organising projects on behalf of others. One can be well organised, but what is the inner motive for one's actions, or, what are the values that underlie one's strategy? We have seen (paragraphs 5.7 & 5.9.2) how the *Community of the Living Water* and shared prayer formed a basis for most of the parish's leaders. Their spirituality fed their work in formation, just as Fr. Marc's spirituality, both shared and private, fed his pastoral leadership. Fr. Marc invited Ben to become involved in an evangelistic programme, *Christian Life Experience*. Every week-end for two years Ben went from door to door to share the Scriptures with people and to pray with them. He was amazed at how they opened themselves to him. Many were moved to return to the church and became involved in the parish.

I was affected by it; I was sort of also converted by it because originally I had only been interested in social action. Then I saw the spiritual need of people, the people in their privation, people needing a place where they can turn and pour out their problems (Sumith 1996:4).

Meanwhile Ben pursued a Masters of Theology course at the Jesuit university college, the Ateneum. Once Fr. Marc noticed the change in Ben he appointed him co-ordinator for *Pagkalinga* (social ministry) in the parish. It is noticeable that, although the parish was in need of a co-ordinator for the growing number of social projects, Fr. Marc was careful about who would be taken on. At the same time he is concerned with the calibre of the person. Most of the parish full-time leaders had come into parochial employment through the *Community of the Living Water*. They were known. Ben was an "outsider". While

working for regional planning in Cotobatu City the central government imposed its national plan on the office (Sumith 1966c:1). What influence had the workings of the government department, and his later altercation with government agencies, had on him? He was ready to engage in violence; what does that say about someone who wishes to work for the development of people? He had had a “sort of conversion experience”; how lasting would that be? Fr. Marc was cautious. He saw the need for Ben to be confronted by a Christian spirituality at both personal and academic levels. It was only when he felt he was sufficiently changed that he hired him for the parish, although he confided to me that he kept an eye on him as he seemed more comfortable with office organisation than with personal contact.

### **6.7.1 Monitoring the Social Programmes**

Ben sees his job as monitoring the many social programmes in the parish which he does through meeting each person involved once a week. At these meetings they plan together to meet the various needs or problems which have arisen.

We give them awareness sessions also and formation programmes. And also skills training. For example, we show them how to do simple accounting or how to make a simple inventory. We have a training module for this using the Lumko approach (paragraphs 3.2 & 3.7). So, we train these people. Of course, there are more inputs than in the usual awareness programme because it is technical training. But it is participatory in that they have to do workshops (Sumith 1996c:5).

As I have mentioned, Ben is highly organised and claims that this is necessary to face the huge challenges that the personnel of St. Joseph’s are confronted with.

A lot of our people are living in re-settled areas. According to our statistics, only 60% are employed, that is, working eight hours a day with salaries, and so on. 40% are what you call the informal sector. They are either unemployed or working part-time, for example, the laundry women, the market vendors, the fishermen who live on a day-to-day basis, and so on. In other words, if they cannot work there is no income (Sumith 1996c:7).

Ben admits that he sometimes gets quite impatient about the lack of progress in the parish programmes because he is “result-oriented”. “Sometimes I feel that things are not moving up very fast, as I want it to. But maybe that is part of the process. We just have to live with that” (1996c:11). Whatever the slowness Ben perceives, those involved in the social programmes at St. Joseph’s had their spirits lifted when in 1992 CARITAS<sup>6</sup> gave an award to their parish for the best social action programme to be organised in Metro Manila. One would expect an international agency to be most appreciative of such a well organised outreach programme, particularly as it works out of the charity and organisational levels of assistance. Ben enjoys being the key person in a busy network of helping agencies. He needs to let go, however, and trust people in the *barrios*. I was told, for instance, that in the *barrio* where he is involved he appoints the leaders himself, whereas in all the other *barrios* the people elect them. The strategy of organisation is essential for so many social programmes, but until the value of trust from the parish centre underlies this, there will be little movement towards the liberation approach to development as described by Padilla in the next paragraph.

As a corollary to this paragraph, it is relevant to mention that the involvement of the parish in social ministry is much appreciated by many of the parishioners. For example, Josie remarks that it is good that the church does not only deal with spirituality but also with people’s everyday needs.

You find other churches [parishes] just spiritual, just spiritual. The priest will say the Mass and then no one will answer. They are not so much concerned on the social level. But here in this parish they come together. And that is the Gospel! (Magno 1996:16).

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<sup>6</sup> The Roman Catholic international aid agency.

Josie emphasises here how a balanced Gospel spirituality calls a parish to form community among its members and to care for all in need. We have seen how the leadership of St. Joseph's Parish worked at community building first and from this standpoint moved into social outreach, firstly, through the charity model and then the organisation model of ministry. The third stage of social development is now beckoning them, as we shall see in the next paragraph.

### **Three Models of Social Ministry**

#### **Charity → Organisation → Liberation**

The stages are cumulative in that each model does not disregard the previous one, but carries it forward, usually at greater depth. Charity becomes true love (service, as opposed to handing out to those in need). Organisation is needed in the third model to assure continuity and fairness. The ultimate aim remains the liberation of the total person.

Diagram 5

## **6.8 The Liberation Model of Social Ministry**

The number of parishioners wanting to engage in ministry increased dramatically during the 1980's. This caused the pastoral leaders to de-centralize the ministry training programme. Not only would ministers now be trained in their own *barrio* (later to be called *ugnayon*, or community), but they would minister there as well. As the numbers further increased the *barrrios* were divided into *po'ok*, or neighbourhood groups (paragraph 5.2). While this development was a good managerial decision, the pastoral leaders began to realise that what they had done had further implications. As more people became involved in ministry so they became more liberated in their person.

The participatory method is a liberating method. Every person is given the chance to talk, to question, to criticise, to analyse, to decide for themselves to do something about their situation (Lesage & Padilla 1996:74).

While this was taking place in the area of *Pakikibahagi* (sharing ministry), it did not take place in the area of *Pagkalinga* (caring ministry). As we saw above (paragraph 6.5) a main

development in the parish is not affecting a parallel one. What was needed was a new model of social ministry: the liberation model.

Boff has pointed out that a paradigm shift has to take place in the way evangelisation takes place. He calls it an “evangelisation of liberation” in which the Gospel is inculturated in such a way that the evangeliser and evangelised are not two factions in the church but evangelise each other. The result is a creation of the church by both, which results in a missionary community (Boff 1990: 67-68). Using a similar ecclesiology, Padilla (1997:77-81) has outlined how social ministry will not get beyond the organising model until it is taken to the *po'ok*, or neighbourhood groups. It is no longer the priest and social workers, but now the members of the community itself who work for the transformation of life:

To be in solidarity with the poor means a change in life-style, in the way we look at things, in day-to-day decisions (1997:78).

It means not taking action on their behalf, but allowing them to develop and work out plans for themselves.

Applying this liberation model to the social ministry available in the parish, Padilla sees it lacking for the most part:

Social ministry is still a ministry, an apostolate. It has to go down to the zone, the village, the BEC level. In terms of social consciousness, the parish has to improve on that. For example, we always participate in political activities. Like, if there is an election we participate. But we never have a political analysis, or a critique of the political situation. That means our kind of help is only in terms of actions. I think we need to grow, to develop our social consciousness, social awareness (Padilla 1996b:15).

This is very much in line with the leadership theories we have considered. Greenleaf, for example, says that the servant-leader will periodically say: “Let’s get together and talk about this” (Greenleaf 1998:78). The test for leaders is whether they can influence the

evolving of a powerful vision through wide participation. While the key leader contributes, authority on its own can achieve nothing (1998:79). This trust in others is rewarded when the poor discover their self-respect and find the courage to act on their own behalf.

Referring to an occasion when this happened, Freire says:

It was as if the “culture of silence” was suddenly shattered, and they had discovered not only that they could speak but that their critical discourse upon the world, their world, was a way of remaking that world (Freire 1994:38).

The *Social Action Centre* in the parish was renamed the *Community Development Centre* in order to make known at large this development in vision on the part of the pastoral leaders. The social workers were to make all their commitments *barrio-* and *po'ok-*centred. Each *barrio* now has its own social ministry co-ordinator and programmes are conducted there rather than in the parish centre. Instead of starting new projects, the social workers are now working with the pastoral leaders to help the people set up base communities. All social activity will eventually take place in these neighbourhood groups where there is more chance of personal inter-action and therefore progress in development. The parish centre will remain the co-ordinating body. Social consciousness raising takes place regularly during liturgies in preparation for feast days, and a Social Action Day is held each year to increase this consciousness. “Every time the parish vision is discussed and expounded social consciousness is now integrated in it” (Padilla 1997:80).

## **6.9 Two Concerns about Social Ministry**

Through Fr. Marc's inspiration and leadership style, parishioners first of all became actively involved in the parish community and were then led to consider the needs of others. This latter outward movement was seen by many at first as acts of charity towards the physically and educationally destitute. That a highly organised institution was set up under Ben to co-ordinate the many activities was a good management decision. Most

seemed happy with what the parish was offering. I have two concerns, however. The first, which I picked up from Padilla (1997:19-21,262-269), is concerned with the liberationist model for social ministry.

### **6.9.1 Social Ministry Skills**

The participatory method is a liberating method. Every person is given the chance to talk, to question, to criticise, to analyse, to decide for themselves to do something about their situation. Every person has wisdom, has a piece of truth, has depth of faith that when drawn out and put together spells a depth of learning and growth for the participants.

For a long time, people have wallowed in silence and in obedience to higher authorities. To be given a chance to talk and to think and to decide for themselves is indeed liberating and transformative. The task of the facilitator is to enable people to participate in the learning and growth process. The brilliance of the facilitator is seen in how well she/he can enable the brilliance of the participants to shine forth (Lesage & Padilla 1996:74).

These wise words are a practical application of Pope Paul VI's teaching that development is not merely an economic issue because it is concerned with people and their quality of life (PP:17). John Paul II took up the same theme in an encyclical to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio*. He taught that development must be measured according to the totality of the person which includes the transcendent reality. Thus the promotion of human rights is an integral part of development (SRS:29.32; see Prior 1993:232-235).

This church teaching is in line with Greenleaf's own vision for an institution such as a parish. For him, committed individuals engage in regenerative actions in order to build a society which is more just and loving (Greenleaf 1998:179; paragraph 3.12). What is more, if people are being truly served (as opposed to being helped or given hand-outs) they will become healthier, wiser, freer and more likely themselves to become servants (Greenleaf

1996:121-122; paragraph 3.6.5.3). He is describing here a liberationist model of human development which takes place, for example, in the leadership of the *Community of the Living Water*.

At this juncture a note of caution would seem to be in place. Describing the personal and community development that takes place in the liberationist model of social ministry presents a fine vision for pastoral workers. It is ultimately missionary in nature for it challenges people to work together to stretch beyond boundaries, whether they be spiritual, personal or social. Its implementation, though, will be painful and on-going because of the maturity required of persons who are engaged in relationships at this depth. The members of any team who wish to work out of this model will need to learn and regularly practise communication skills. These will include appropriate self-disclosure, listening, responding with empathy to another's communication of self, confrontation (in the sense of putting the truth as one sees it before others), assertiveness, decision making and conflict management. Most people need to be taught how to use these skills and this usually takes place in short training programmes. However, Kevin Egan warns:

Skills training requires time, and so short-term training programmes cannot be expected to remedy developmental gaps in growth. This is an important consideration to bear in mind in doing skills training with candidates for ministry (Egan 1993:164).

Concerning the on-going nature of this training, Egan continues: "Unused skills die away or remain unintegrated" (1993:164). Gerard Egan concurs (1985:190-191). In other words, the practising of these skills needs to continue. With a leader such as Fr. Marc, who seems to have a natural ability to make use of these skills, and who passes them on to others (note, for example, the observations of the leaders of the *Community of the Living Water* (paragraph 5.5)) the challenge will always remain for those who work with him to imitate

his style. If the main leader, like most of us, is still struggling to master these skills, then it will be necessary to include training courses for all pastoral leaders in the annual parish programme.

## 6.9.2 A Spirituality for Social Ministry

This leads on to my second concern. Fr. Marc was happy with the outreach programmes and continually kept in touch with those leading them. He chats to the leaders, asks them about progress, encourages them and sometimes challenges them. For example, Mel says:

There are cases when we really do not know what to do anymore, when solutions have run out of our hands. Then he [Fr. Marc] will just talk about things, about hope, about light and the spirit not to give up (Gubaton 1996:9).

On the same subject Epee relates:

In all major decisions in my life, whether good or bad ones, he [Fr. Marc] was part of it. And he, I don't know if he accepts it, he would call himself a brother to me. He filled up a lot of my father-roles (Ong-Casuncad 1996:17).

Allan has another perspective on Fr. Marc's liberationist role:

Fr Marc is very supportive. Then he gives us a lot of freedom to organise *Laya sa Hirap* the way we think it will be more successful. It seems to me he's giving me a big space where I can work as naturally as I can.

**Prior:** He doesn't chase after you at every moment.

**Allan:** No, although sometimes he will ask where I am. Sometimes he will correct me saying: "You seem to be spending all your day at accounting; it seems you're always at the computer. People need you. People need to be with you. People need some listening ear." Sometimes he corrects me on the task. Once he told me all these things are for my own growth as a servant, in my service to the community (Rodriguez 1996:10).

As a leader who is at the same time immersed in, and yet standing back from, the situation, it would seem that Fr. Marc is seeing all these projects at a deeper level. He is Greenleaf's conceptualiser who sees the whole picture (Greenleaf 1977:81; paragraph 3.12). Possessing

the dream of what could be, he must remain in the real world, yet in a detached way eye daily events “in the perspective of a long sweep of history” (Greenleaf 1996:22). It is not a matter of helping people, or even of liberating them, but of becoming an instrument of the Holy Spirit who breathes wherever and whenever (Jn 3:8). Ultimately it does not matter how many programmes the parish is involved in. What matters is that the leaders immerse themselves in the Spirit of Christ and allow themselves to become guided by that Spirit. Thus it was important for Marc that a man who had been prepared to act in violence should spend two years in evangelistic activity before being allowed to involve himself in social welfare. The one who spends a lot of time at the computer is encouraged to relate to those whom he is trying to uplift. As with all the leaders surrounding him, he was concerned about the values out of which they acted. In order to keep in touch with the foundational value of his own life, he saw the need for a quiet time for himself each morning after the first Eucharist at 5.30am and before the work of the day began:

That’s the time. It’s a very good experience. Whenever I have big problems or difficulties, and I do have a lot lately, these are the moments wherein I just balance myself and say: “What is happening to you? Where are you?” (Lesage 1996:14).

Knowing the value of this prayer for himself, he encouraged the members of the *Community of the Living Water* to undertake personal prayer time each day. In this practice he was tapping into a centuries’ old tradition. By spending time away from the crowd in prayer (Mt 4:1-11; 6:5-6; 14:22-23; 26:36-46) Jesus deepened his relationship with the Father and was strengthened to accept God’s will in his life. Pennington has shown how from the fourth century onwards men and women have left aside their intellectual pursuits and sought solitude in the desert or at the feet of some spiritual giant (Pennington 1980:9-20). Since Vatican II there has been a renewed interest in meditative prayer (Johnston 1974:15), particularly since the American Cistercians (see, for example, Pennington 1977)

developed Centering Prayer as a means of silent prayer for people caught up in the busy world of pastoral ministry.

By putting aside 20 to 30 minutes at a time, one acknowledges before God one's insufficiency and dependence (Healey 1967:671). Pennington insists on the necessity of silent prayer in a messy world. One "allows one's Christ's nature to breathe, to expand, to catch up his/her whole being in the movement of love" (Pennington 1977:80). The charismatic nature of the church is not necessarily manifested in a plethora of parish activity, even if it is for the good. A frenetic effort to uplift others can hide a deep anger within, or can be an outlet for one's energies, or can even be a fill-in for want of anything else to do (there are few distractions in the Philippines apart from television). The Christian life is centred on a continuing personal commitment to Christ which is expressed in authentic (that is, serving) love. This is where mission is born. The true believer is moved by love to accept others as they are, and yet to challenge them to find their inner core. One may feel the need to engage in many social programmes, but these actions, good in themselves, have no meaning without the action of the Holy Spirit who carries one into effecting the *missio Dei* in concrete life experiences. This is the "secular spirituality" which *Lumen Gentium* seems to be alluding to when it speaks of the gifts that everyone has received and use in ordinary everyday life (LG#12; paragraph 2.2.2). Growing in holiness means living out the gifts of the Spirit and the laity do this principally in temporal affairs (LG#34). Fr. Marc understands the need for that interiority which is the base for all action, and that is why he insists on it for himself and encourages his pastoral leaders to seek it too. The overly busy life of St. Joseph's staff could extinguish the Spirit so that the parish office resembles any other busy organisation. Daily quiet can energize from within. As they work for the transformation of society the pastoral staff need to be continually aware

that they are sharing in the kingship of Christ (LG#36) who motivates them into the arena of the *missio Dei*.

## **6.10 Conclusion**

In this chapter we have seen an overview of how parish leaders developed in their outlook towards social ministry over a number of years. From the first efforts initiated by the pastor, the parish leaders moved into the charity model in which they helped people out of their difficulties, and then into the organisation model, in which they involved people in their own upliftment. It was during this period that their attitude towards social problems grew in depth. They learned that the programmes themselves were not the end result. Rather, they were a means for them to discover the value of personal inter-relationships and formation through working together and valuing the dignity of those in need. This eventually led them to name their new attitude the “liberation model of social ministry”. Now they attempt to work in solidarity with the poor and open themselves to be evangelised by them. They believe that social structures are changeable and that, if they can become a church of the poor, they will be able to create new or alternative institutions that will pave the way towards social transformation (Padilla 1997:78).

In Chapter 5 we saw how Greenleaf’s vision of servant-leadership began to take shape as St. Joseph’s Parish moved towards a more participatory church. In this chapter we have seen how, through the sharing of leadership in the various social programmes, the parish became more of a servant church. In the next chapter we shall see how those two pillars – leadership and service (or, in the words of Kraemer, ministry and mission (Kraemer 1958:135; paragraph 2.1)) - have become a structural part of this massive parish of 50,000 Christians, through a concerted and continuing effort at formation.

# **Chapter Seven: Leadership as Empowerment for Service**

## **7.1 Introduction**

We saw in Chapter Five how, through the leadership of St. Joseph's Parish, large numbers of parishioners were drawn into participating in church life. In the last chapter we saw how service to those in need became an essential part of parish life. In this Chapter I concentrate on what makes the above possible: formation. At St. Joseph's Parish formation of people has become a central activity. This formation not only offers information and skills to the individuals, but it is also the key to a transformation of the parish itself and, indeed, in some cases, of the social fabric of Las Piñas. Formation empowers believers to relate in a more mature way with each other and with Christ as the Head of the parish, his body.

The full-time formation team consists of ten people. They are Joy, Nhap and Eilleen (who care for the youth), Estela and Aleli (who deal with adult formation), Ben, Mel, Allan, Ferdi and Eric (who deal with social issues). As the pastor, Fr. Marc is the central figure. He is the inspirer who appears as one step ahead of the others and shows them the way (Greenleaf 1996:54; paragraph 3.6.1). Remaining open to the unknown, he engages in

dialogue with the other leaders, listening to them and learning from them. Consensus is the preferred method of decision making (Greenleaf 1996:77.85; paragraph 3.6.5.3). In effect, Fr. Marc is sharing leadership so that it becomes a mutual relationship (Rost 1991:102; paragraph 3.14), as opposed to the top-down authority-over-subjects model. As we have seen (paragraph 3.7) this participatory method is an indispensable medium for a church-in-mission. To bring it about, on-going formation is necessary and this, in one form or another, takes place throughout the year.

There are two main parts to this chapter. In the first I firstly describe (7.2-7-3) and then analyse (7.4) the annual formation programme which includes as many parishioners as possible, while still concentrating on leading members of the various geographical areas within the parish boundaries. We shall discover how this formation programme required a well-organised and efficient leadership structure, including the strong personality of the pastor at its centre. In the second part of this chapter I describe (7.5) how the central formation team initiated Basic Ecclesial Communities and conclude (7.6) with a critical analysis. It will be noted that the inauguration of these communities was not merely an organisational decision. Rather, they are the logical outcome of the formation programme. Through them all parishioners can be brought into a missionary church which is participatory and ministry-oriented. The leadership style of the central team spread to the other leaders throughout St. Joseph's and enabled the parish to become a church-in-mission.

## **7.2 The Annual Formation Cycle**

### **November - January**

The contents of the formation programme is decided on by the formation team after a thorough consultation with the parishioners. This begins in November when all those who attend the Eucharistic services are given a double-sided sheet of paper which contains a series of questions, firstly, about the formation which has been taking place during that year and, secondly, what they would like to see take place during the following year.

Members of the youth group hand out pencils to the parishioners who then fill in their responses to the 15 questions as they are read out one by one over the public address system. "About 4,000 people (about 40% of the Sunday Church-goers - children are not included in the survey) participate" (Padilla 1997:27). "Because of this survey, we get a feel, a pulse, of what people are feeling, what people are saying" (Padilla 1996a:4).

The results of the survey are analysed and listed under three or four categories, such as "strengthening neighbourhood relationships", "knowing more about the Bible", "responding to the needs of the poor", and so on. These are given to the parish pastoral council in December for their consideration. The categories are then presented to the parishioners in January at the Parish Convention. The 900 to 1,000 parishioners who turn up for this festive occasion are divided into about 120 groups, each with its own facilitator. They are asked to make concrete suggestions for how their responses to the questionnaire in November could be put into practice throughout the year. They are also asked to suggest the pastoral theme for the year.

The Parish Convention is the final decision making body. The formation team has to write the training programmes for the year according to the wishes of the convention. "For example, one year the parish staff believed that we should work for environmental issues.

In the November survey people did not find it a need. They did not mention it. The parish pastoral council also did not. It was voted down” (Padilla 1996a:6). When, two years later, it was proposed as a priority at the Parish Convention (a controversial garbage disposal unit had meantime been built within the parish boundary) it became the task of the social ministry team to plan the awareness sessions on that subject which would be conducted in all the *ugnayon*.

The Parish Convention is also a time for festivity. The youth put on various sketches, live bands play rousing music and everybody shares with their neighbour the picnic food they have brought.

Another activity which takes place in the parish formation centre in November is the annual International Course. For two weeks the pastoral team presents the overall vision of the parish as a Communion of Communities, using both their own material and the training books from the Lumko Institute. People come from all over the Philippines and other Asian countries to attend. Epee regards this as a most important course. He calls it a “school for parishes” to which people can come from all around and learn how to transform their parish structure into a Communion of Communities (Ong-Casuncad 1996:19).

## **February**

The International Bamboo Organ Festival is held in February and keeps a large number of parishioners busy planning it and organising the events which take place over a ten day period. Musicians and music lovers come from many parts of the world, particularly Germany and Japan. There is a reduced entrance fee for the local people.

## **March - April**

The Lenten season occurs during March and April. Formation programmes are conducted during a four week period in all the *po'ok* of the parish. Then during Holy Week the focus is gradually changed from the *po'ok*, to the *ugnayon* and finally to the parish centre where the Triduum celebrations take place.

## **May**

In May the Fiesta of the parish is celebrated in honour of St. Joseph. During the nine days previous to the feast itself formation sessions, based on a particular theme chosen for that year, are conducted daily during liturgical services in the Church.

## **June**

Not much can happen during June because that is when the schools re-open. So the formation team spends the time planning and writing the programmes which will follow.

## **July**

In July the birthday of the parish is celebrated. The last Sunday of the month is called Parish Day at which there are painting contests, singing contests, sports, a parade and a Eucharistic celebration. These festivities are preceded by a month of formation programmes based on the theme, *We the Parish*. These are written by the formation team who train facilitators to conduct them in all the neighbourhoods of the parish.

## **August - October**

The months of August, September and October are called the Formation Season. About half of the parish's 120 neighbourhood leaders attend weekly sessions conducted by the formation team. Each subject is presented over a two-year cycle in order to cover all the leaders. This time of the year is chosen because - apart from so much happening in the other months! - this is the rainy season and not many of the parishioners would turn out for meetings at the parish centre.

During this season a seven minute catechetical instruction is given at the Sunday Eucharist by the members of the formation team. They present this before the Scripture readings so as not to interfere with the theme of the day and the homily. The topics vary from year to year. In recent years they have included the Bible, pro-life issues and voter education (Gutierrez 1996:7).

The Formation Season concludes with the celebration of Christ the King, the last feast in the liturgical calendar. It can be seen that the parish staff "make use" of various liturgical and other events throughout the year to engage as many parishioners as possible in formation. According to Estela, formation "is definitely very important. We feel that's the key to everything that we do in the parish" (Padilla 1996b:19; see also Gutierrez 1996:7). It is the key in the sense that this year-long effort at formation educates parishioners in an organic view of the Church in which each has a part to play. The programmes vary in their objective. Some are conducted as general presentations for whomever will attend, or at the Sunday liturgy when there is, as it were, a "captive audience". The most effective formation programmes, it seems to me, are those conducted for the 120 or so leaders from the *ugnayon*. Not only are they undergoing continuing education in the faith, but they have

the task of taking their learning to the other members of the *ugnayon* and *po'ok*. In this way a large number of parishioners is being touched. They are continually hearing about how Christian faith touches life. With this goes an invitation to participate in community and socially-oriented activities. Through this on-going formation they discover their Spirit-given gifts and are challenged to use them to build community in their own neighbourhood. Many who traditionally were “passive” Christians also have felt the need to become involved in affairs of the town.

I witnessed one of these events. At a Lumko workshop in Baguio City the formation team wrote a programme to challenge people to reflect on the consequences of the new garbage disposal unit being opened within the parish boundary. They faxed the programme to St. Joseph's where other leaders conducted it throughout the neighbourhoods of the parish. When we returned to Las Piñas the overall opinion of the people was that a mass meeting should be held. They had a list of concerns, including the planned arrival of three large garbage trucks every minute through their neighbourhood, and that little had been done to prevent toxic wastes from poisoning their drinking water. A march took place through the streets and the mayor was invited to attend a meeting outside the garbage plant and he was given a copy of their concerns. The matter eventually arrived at the desk of President Ramos who postponed the opening of the new unit for some months until the concerns of the people were addressed.

Through this conscientization process the parish formation team had not only alerted parishioners to a problem in their neighbourhood, but had helped them connect their Christian faith with daily life. The result was a deepened sense of community and a step forward towards a better quality of life.

### 7.3 Ministries in the *Barrios* / *Ugnayon*

The number of people involved in parish ministry grew steadily over the years, to such an extent eventually that prospective helpers were being turned away. In order to absorb more people into parish ministry these ministries were then organised at *barrio* level, instead of centrally (paragraph 5.2). Pepe gives another reason for this decentralisation. He explained that they had been used to making decisions at the centre and communicating these to the *barrios* where the decision was to be put into practice. During one of the evaluation meetings of the parish they discovered that people in the *barrios* had complained that often the decisions made at the centre were not meeting the needs of the *barrios*. "So we gradually shifted from the centre. We go to the *barrios* now" (Reyes 1996:3).

The parish consists of five *barrios* in each of which live 10,000 people. Instead of relying on centralised leadership, in 1993 each *barrio* was asked to put forward leaders to be trained centrally but who would exercise their ministries in their own *barrio*. The idea of doing this was first discussed by the formation team who then put it to the Lingap (parish pastoral council)<sup>1</sup>. The Lingap voted in favour and the formation team implemented the decision.

The ministries in the *barrios* came under the same three categories of ministries as at parish level. *Pagsamba* (worship) ministries are concerned with liturgical celebrations, *Pakikibahagi* (sharing) ministries are concerned with teaching and formation programmes, and *Pagkalinga* (caring) ministries are concerned with social development (Padilla 1997:23). The leaders in the *barrios* started to look after their own youth, care for family

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<sup>1</sup> *Lingap* is short for *Lingkod ng Afing Parokya* (Servants of the Parish).

life, attend to social needs and problems, visit the sick, conduct wakes and even conduct their own formation programmes.

As more people attended these training programmes and became involved in their neighbourhood, the *barrios* were further sub-divided into zones, called *po-ok* in Tagalog, which contain about 1,500 people each. There are 40 zones in the parish. All zone leaders are elected by the people and meet together as the *Lingap*, or parish pastoral council, four times a year. One of the conditions for accepting leadership in the zone is attendance at the on-going formation programmes which are presented by the full-time staff at regular intervals throughout the year.

In order to harmonise the ministries in the *barrios* each was assigned a co-ordinator. His/her job was to communicate to the *barrio* the decisions of the parish council, while communicating back to the centre the issues and concerns of the *barrio* members. Godofredo became one of these co-ordinators. He had originally been asked to join one of the first working groups. From that he joined PREX (the *Parish Renewal Experience*) which involved door-to-door evangelism. He and his wife joined *Couples for Christ* and then he was asked by Fr. Marc to become a *barrio* co-ordinator. This job required that he attend to the needs of the parishioners in the *barrio* of *Pulanglupa*. This system worked well for many years. But by 1995 the members of the central pastoral team felt dissatisfied with it. Although it was a decentralized structure, the weight of *barrio*-based pastoral decisions still remained at the centre, principally with Fr. Marc.

On the initiative of the formation team the *Lingap* decided to make the *barrio* co-ordinators “*pastoral* co-ordinators”, a phrase which denotes a change of responsibilities. At

the same time they replaced the word *barrio* with the Tagalog word *ugnayon*. The latter word means “harmony, co-ordination, brotherhood” (Mabale 1996:2). When describing his job as *barrio / ugnayon* co-ordinator, Godofredo described himself as a messenger “because we send a lot of invitations to our members” to attend meetings (Villasenor 1996:2). Instead of being “messengers”, the *ugnayon* co-ordinators were taking on a pastoring role in their area. Their new “role is bigger, different. It’s now being concerned with the problems of the people in the *po’ok*, in the *ugnayon*, in the ministries: problems like why they are not able to attend the meetings, why the *barangays* [*barrios*] are not helping one another, why there is a problem with the children’s groups in one place, problems that normally before we threw back to the parish priest” (Mabale 1996:2). This change of role for the pastoral co-ordinators of the parish has not been an easy transition. Being a messenger does not carry much responsibility. Pastoring people is a very different task. It demands training and a different attitude towards the members of the *ugnayon*, a pastoring one, as opposed to merely an administrative role. Fr. Marc recognises this and believes that four of the five co-ordinators “are still in the old stage” (Lesage 1996:13). The exception is Leo who has understood the new role and attempts to put it into practice. However, it is not so easy for him either, particularly because of the time factor, but also because of the responsibilities of the new role as pastor. He says that originally he did not want to take on the job

because I know pastoral work is something that you have to really be sacrificing a lot of your time. You’re not anymore concerned with, ‘What the heck if they don’t do it; I’m just the co-ordinator’. It’s more like you have to bring them closer to the parish. They have to understand more that relationships are more important than activities. You have to bring them to a process wherein participation is not limited but it’s wider. In a sense, it’s like being a priest in the *barrio* (Mabale 1996:3).

Leo is carrying three concerns about his involvement in the parish: the time he is now giving to the parish, his lack of training for his *ugnayon* responsibilities and the expectations of the people. We look at each of these.

### 7.3.1 Commitment of Time

Leo's full-time job is as a manager in the Manila Electric Company. In the parish he is a commentator at Sunday Mass once a month; he takes Communion to the sick every second Sunday; he is an officer of the credit co-operative which can involve up to two or three meetings a week and he is a member of the *Lingap* (parish pastoral council) which meets monthly. On top of that he took on the job of pastoral co-ordinator and this requires a further monthly meeting. It should not be forgotten that he is also a married man with six children. When I asked Leo about these heavy responsibilities he carried, he replied that his wife had committed herself to supporting him in his ministries.

And a very good thing is when Fr. Marc asked me to be the *ugnayon* pastoral co-ordinator she [his wife] is one of the two persons I consulted. I asked her if she wants me to join, to be the co-ordinator, if she thinks it would be good for the family. And she said, "Go ahead and join, despite knowing you are hesitating to accept it. But I know deep in your heart you want to have it." So I was happy when she said that. So I got her support. I got the support of my boss from the company. And that was it. I said "Yes" to Fr. Marc (Mabale 1996:6).

We have already heard (paragraph 5.9.2) Josefina describing her presence in the parish seven days a week. Later (paragraph 7.5.4.1) we shall hear Josie, using almost the same language as Leo to describe her reluctance to take on work in the parish because of the heavy commitment of time. I also noticed the heavy hours put into their work by other parish personnel, particularly members of the formation team. For example, having travelled for up to an hour by taxi to get to work by ten in the morning, Stela would work often till after ten at night before taking a taxi home. The first impression an outside like myself gets when visiting St. Joseph's Parish is a sense of wonder at the dedication of so

many who are involved in parish leadership. They exceed by far the handful of helpers that I have found to be the backbone of parishes in many countries. Yet, one has to remember that there are ten thousand regular church-goers in St. Joseph's Parish, plus 40,000 non-church-goers whom the parish leaders are striving to reach through the *ugnayon* and *po'ok* leaders. The large number of parish workers is perhaps far too small for the amount of outreach they are attempting. Despite their overload, leaders like Leo and Josefina have an exciting vision of what a church-in-mission could look like and they want to help bring this vision about. Yet, it needs to be kept in mind that burn-out is a serious problem among pastoral workers in many countries. Whatever one achieves, there is always far more to do. It would seem necessary to build in checks and balances, perhaps limitations on the number of hours spent on specifically "parish work", in order for other areas of the pastoral workers' lives – particularly their family life – not to suffer.

### **7.3.2 Training as a Pastor**

When I asked Leo about the training he needed for his role as *ugnayon* pastoral co-ordinator he admitted that "it skipped our planning" (Mabale 1996:5). The *Lingap* made the decision and Fr. Marc did the appointing.<sup>2</sup> Although he does attend a week-end formation meeting sometimes, he feels that he was not prepared for the role that is expected of him by the people in his *ugnayon*. At the time of our interview he had not felt able to share his misgivings and problems with Fr. Marc. He did not elaborate on this, but one is left wondering if he is apprehensive about "letting Fr. Marc down". As the only one of five pastoral co-ordinators who has grasped the nature of their job (see Fr. Marc's comment in paragraph 7.3), the whole plan for these pastors could collapse if he pulls out.

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<sup>2</sup> We come back to this issue of Fr. Marc's central leadership role in paragraph 7.6.

The members of the formation team have made formation such a central issue that it is difficult to understand how they could have slipped up in this particular case. “The formation team believes that formation is empowerment” (Padilla 1997:130). As with Burns and Greenleaf (paragraph 3.8), Padilla also links education with formation for leadership:

It is only self-directed, self appropriated learning which affects people’s behaviours significantly. Experiential learning therefore animates change and transformation (Padilla 1997:131).

If the parish leadership wanted the five *ugnayon* co-ordinators to take up a more pastoring role, a changed behavioural stance, preparing them for this should have been a priority. This is particularly important because these co-ordinators are the link between the central pastoral team and the parish as a whole. If leaders at every other area of parish life receive formation it seems a serious lacuna for these pastors to be excluded.

### **7.3.3 Expectations of the People**

Leo’s third concern came upon him totally unexpectedly. We have already heard him say that his new role is “like being a priest in the *barrio*”. He went on: “The demands personally in my life style are also so big that they have to look at me as an archetype of a priest” (Mabale 1996:3). When I probed him further I discovered a deep spirituality which has probably been perceived by the people. They see him as a priest, one called to serve them. In Leo’s own words:

I have a life philosophy. It’s just three words: to love, to serve, to sacrifice. To love God, to love other people, to translate this love into service, service in all areas; and to do the service with sacrifice, not for my benefit but for the benefit of others. . . . I was really afraid to accept, to make this part of my faith, my philosophy. But I said to myself, “What is the meaning, then, of service if it is not in the essence of a selfless act of sacrifice?”

I don't want to differentiate my personality, my life from work, to family, to parish. For me it's one whole set. It's not a switch that I'm different when I'm at work, I'm different when I'm with my family and I'm different here [in the parish]. No, I don't want that to happen to me. I want to be one consistent Leo that they will be involved with wherever I am. I want to be consistent in all areas (Mabale 1996:9-10).

Once again, it is Padilla who has pointed out that

a new way of being church needs a new way of thinking and living. The vision of a renewed way of being church requires more than a change of programmes, or structures, or styles. It is a spirituality, a way of life (Padilla 1997:130).

The way the *ugnayon* co-ordinators were made into pastoral co-ordinators appears to manifest a weakness in the leadership style of the formation team. They would claim that it was not a purely structural decision (see Padilla above), yet it seems to be so. No doubt, it was a decision made for the best pastoral reasons. Yet, if we believe that the way we act manifests the content of our acting (paragraph 3.7), then the process should have included, not only the five co-ordinators, but members of the *barrios*, or *ugnayon*, also. The central formation team seems to have been ahead of the people in this matter. While leaders must "venture forth" (Greenleaf 1996:54; paragraph 3.6.1), they need to make sure they have followers walking with them.

Indeed, this re-structuring points to a core problem for this and many other Roman Catholic parishes: one ordained minister cannot care for 50,000 parishioners, or even 10,000 weekly church-goers. Leo's own references to priesthood express a glaring need: each *ugnayon* needs its own ordained minister. Apart from many practical details (such as whether he should be full-time, and whether he could be paid a respectable salary, or whether he should pursue a seminary training course before ordination), it is clear that Leo is being treated as a pastor and is responding as one. This development has not been deliberate, but has appeared as a necessary response to a pastoral situation. In turn, that

situation has come from an effort, conscious or not, to implement *Ad Gentes'* and *Lumen Gentium'* vision of a church-in-mission, and a style of servant-leadership as described by Greenleaf, Burns, Rost and others. The fact that deep theological and pastoral issues - such as the meaning of "pastoring" and what relationship it has to ordination, and the basis on which the pastoral co-ordinators exercise jurisdiction on behalf of the church - have arisen from what is clearly a wise leadership response to a pastoral situation, should not form a barrier to acknowledging this situation and being open to new solutions. From the implementation of a renewed ecclesiology, through an appropriate leadership style, there has emerged the seriousness of pastoral circumstances which are calling for a change of leadership structures in the Roman Catholic Church. We return to this issue in the final chapter.

#### **7.3.4 The "Regenerative" Nature of Servant-Leadership**

*Ad Gentes* (#7) and *Lumen Gentium* (#10) have echoed Paul's teaching that all the baptised have been gifted by the Holy Spirit in order to participate actively in the Church's mission. This requires that pastoral leaders need to approach as many of the parishioners as possible in order to educate them in this teaching and encourage them to become active. This is being done in St. Joseph's Parish by means of the members of the formation team training *po-ok* leaders who, in turn, conduct training sessions in their own neighbourhoods. The resultant increase in ministries is a consequence of their action.

Greenleaf has argued that the role of an institution's leadership is to enable individual members to achieve personal growth and higher achievement, goals which cannot be reached on one's own (1977:239-240; paragraph 3.6.5.3). He calls for a total strategy of transformation that will change an institution into a model of service and so affect for the

good both the Church and society (Greenleaf 1977:245; paragraph 3.2). Fr. Marc could have been satisfied with the “success” of having hundreds of people involved in ministry and mission at the centre of the parish. Instead, his style of service and of empowering others led him to spread formation outwards to every corner of the parish. The very stipulation that all those who accept nomination for leadership in the *ugnayon* and *po-ok* should accept on-going formation as part of their job, points to the replication of his own model of leadership, as well as that of the parish formation team. Leadership at each level of the parish means growing in one’s own personal life, as well as serving others.

I often asked Fr. Marc from where he learned his leadership style. He had no answer except, “It seemed natural to me to do it this way”. The fact that his style has been replicated is a living proof of Greenleaf’s belief that servant-leadership is regenerative (1996:32). One might ask why we come across so few liberating visions. Firstly, says Greenleaf, because they are so rare. But also:

So few are those who have the gift for summoning a vision, and the power to articulate it persuasively, have either the urge or the courage or the will to try! And it takes all three (1996:35).

Greenleaf offers no evidence for quantifying true leaders as “so few”, but Rost would seem to agree with him when he insists that schools of leadership need to be set up to teach potential leaders to consciously think and act in ways that are consistent with the post-industrial framework (Rost 1991:187). Despite certain limitations, it is this rare and most effective style of leadership which was initiated by Fr. Marc and then passed on to a central formation team. From there it has been “regenerated” by other parish leaders so that a transformative style could bring home to as many parishioners as possible the missionary nature of the church.



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## 7.4

### Leadership for Empowerment

The above description of the formation programme in St. Joseph's Parish is an example of how pastoral leadership (described in paragraph 3.14) has been vigorously put into practice. It has become clear that the parish's leaders have manifested an *influence relationship* in the way so many people have been drawn into formation. Further, they have proved themselves to be *more knowledgeable* than the parishioners in general by their ongoing pursuit of better ways to lead; they have willingly shared this expertise with their followers. The formation programme is aimed at making the parish more of a church-in-mission and relevant to the needs of their locality. We have seen how these qualities were used to help make the parish more participatory (Chapter Five) and at the service of those in need of human development (Chapter Six). What is of particular interest in the formation programme outlined in this chapter is the *teaching role* that the parish leadership has exercised with the intention of helping the members of the congregation *grow beyond* the status quo (paragraphs 3.6.4 & 3.14). This leads to a more detailed analysis of the leadership style implemented by the formation team. We approach this by noting the advantages and disadvantages of various leadership styles of a number of contemporary theorists, and letting the values-driven theory help us see what is going on beneath the surface in St. Joseph's Parish.

#### 7.4.1 Leadership Styles

There is a wide variety of leadership styles described by theorists. Spriggs (1993:52-64) offers us the standard tri-partite distinction of *authoritarian*, *democratic* and *laissez-faire*, though he seems incapable of deciding which is Christian. He tends to favour the authoritarian and concludes his biblical excursus with a reminder that all authority is derived from God and must be used in service (1993:61). Another scriptural approach to

leadership is offered by Carey who has chosen four styles: *servant*, *shepherd*, *steward* and *episkopos*. They range in that order from being concerned mostly with individuals to being concerned mostly with the community at large. Carey would want to see the leader score a ten on all four roles, although he admits that this is impossible. Team leadership is required so that both individuals and the parish as a body are properly served. The narrow focus of these two approaches – neither is concerned with a church-in-mission, nor with learning from contemporary leadership theories – makes them inappropriate as an analytic tool for St. Joseph's Parish.

Cooper (1993:50-53) describes five styles of parish leadership. With the *classic style* the church's heritage is passed on. The *charismatic style* is open to initiative and spontaneity, but revolves around the one leader. The *human relations style* brings members of a parish team together and generates commitment and personal satisfaction. The *systematic style* helps parishioners identify their gifts and empowers people to make use of them. Cooper's fifth style he regards as a requisite for a parish leadership team. It is the *mutual style* in which individual personality and style are highly valued, and authority, accountability and labour are shared (1993:56-58). Yet he admits that this is not the most suitable style for most parishes because it requires a

high investment of time, energy and resources to train everyone in a multiplicity of ministries, combined with the large investment of time required for group formation, development, and evaluation (1993:58).

This is clearly what the team at St. Joseph's has done. They considered it a necessary investment to help the parish grow towards becoming a church-in-mission. Cooper's other leadership roles overlap (why does the systematic style, for example, have to leave the human relations style behind?) and do not provide a lucid analytical tool for our purpose.

In his slim volume Keating (1978) deals well with the issue of leadership in a pastoral situation. He describes leaders with a task emphasis and those with a relationship orientation.<sup>3</sup> He rightly says that parish leadership needs to contain both, though these may be shared between more than one leader. It is clear from the descriptions in Chapters Five, Six and Seven of this study that the leaders in St. Joseph's Parish have preserved both and, indeed, have fulfilled a third dimension which is found when the former two are well served, namely, the personal fulfilment of the group's members (see paragraph 3.3). Despite pressure of time and work, most of the parish leaders have expressed joy in the sense of community and service they experience. Despite its advantages, though, this theory does not do justice to the complexity of issues in St. Joseph's Parish.

Swain (1986) posits four leadership styles which he has seen developing in the church throughout the past fifty years. The first is the *sovereign style* which was predominant before Vatican II and which denotes the existence of a supreme authority in the structure. It patterns a father-son relationship, or paternalism. It makes for an efficient system and keeps the institution in control. Parishioners, however, do not want to be treated like children and want a say in their parish life, and this requires delegation and decentralization (Swain 1986:40-41). Swain saw leadership moving into a *parallel style* which is patterned after the behaviour of young children: they may be in the same place but play on their own. Pastorally, this style gives rise to individualism by which people get on with their own task without having to relate to others. There is a lack of communication and thence of personal relationships, the core of community. (1986:55-56). The third to develop is the *semi-mutual style* which is neither mutual (the next style) "nor a clear alternative" (1986:67). The pastoral team plans together but executes its decisions on an

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<sup>3</sup> This is developed in greater detail, in a different context, by Douglas 1976:68-82.

individual basis. This can result in stress among the members and even a wish to return to the parallel style where time and energy are not wasted on planning which does not have an effective consequence (1986: 67-76).

Swain's final style he calls *mutual* for it has a heavy stress on sharing at the levels of authority, accountability and tasks. It results in strong relationships between the members. Ministry is a "joint performance" and reflects the theological terms "People of God" and "diversity of gifts". It entails a "profound and radical equality that cuts through all distinctions of office, rank, personality, sex and age" and leads to interdependence (1986:85-86). For Swain "style *is* the substance of leadership renewal" (1986:31) and he developed his theory of leadership styles to explain how parish leaders can move away from the authoritarian or sovereign model and towards a more participatory style. In this he is in agreement with the leaders of St. Joseph's who, as we have seen (paragraph 3.7), agree that one's method manifests one's beliefs. It is the core of this thesis that a servant-leadership style is required to implement a church-in-mission theology. Swain fears that most parish leaders will not attempt this because they are task oriented; they are not willing to expend the energy and human resources for group process, the heavy burden of consensus building and clear communication (1986:87-89). Our study of St. Joseph's Parish has shown how a reasoned and methodical attempt has been successfully pursued with the aim of constituting a central parish team which, in turn, shares its processes and learning with other groups of leaders in the parish. Swain's *mutual style* of leadership has much to commend it, particularly because of the emphasis put on this kind of participatory style. He does not explicitly connect this, though, with the renewed ecclesiology of Vatican II. Furthermore, I find Swain's second and third styles somewhat artificial. While they point to elements which do exist in parishes, the jump from individualism to mutuality in

the final style does not give justice to the organic growth which takes place in many parishes, even if they have not reached full mutuality.

A large number of leadership theorists agree that there are three basic styles: *authoritarian*, *democratic* and *laissez-faire*. Bothwell sums them up as follows:

The authoritarian style is directive, impersonal, and allows no give-and-take with the followers. The democratic style encourages subordinates to communicate openly, to participate in decision making, to work co-operatively. The laissez-faire leader gives followers complete autonomy and provides no structure or direction (Bothwell 1983:216-217).

Within these three, Bothwell further distinguishes another ten styles. The leader's task is to be effective and so must choose the style which is appropriate to the given situation (Bothwell 1983:222). Shaw, who uses the word *autocratic* instead of *authoritarian*, agrees with Bothwell and observes that people react more positively to non-directive leaders than to directive ones (Shaw 1981:326-331). Gordon (1985:34-48) makes the same tripartite distinction, but uses the titles *laissez-faire*, "*I'm in command*" and "*I believe in people*". The last-named leaders take the greatest risks and achieve the greatest leadership success because these leaders regard "people as seeking responsibility and capable of achieving high degrees of self-direction, ingenuity and creativity" (1985:36). While using the same titles as Shaw, Johnson and Johnson (1987:46-48) remark that these different styles will affect group productivity and the attitudes of group members. They comment that

satisfaction with democratic leadership tends to be highest in small, interactional-oriented groups. Members are more satisfied with autocratic leadership in large, task-oriented groups (1987: 47).

At first sight it would appear that the leadership team in St. Joseph's Parish have tended to use the democratic style. They certainly do not sit back and allow things to happen, but nor do they wish to coerce parishioners into new forms of church life, although there are a

number of leaders who have felt pressurized in taking up leadership positions (paragraphs 7.3; 7.3.1; 7.4.5.1; 7.5). The Johnsons' comment about the difference between small groups and large task-oriented ones points to the ramifications of what might otherwise seem simple distinctions. Although the parish is large and, in terms of numbers, cumbersome, we have noted the efforts which have been made to create a sense of community and participation. In this respect, the tri-partite distinction made by Badaracco and Ellsworth (1989) is helpful in understanding the complexity of the parish situation we are studying. We turn to their study in the following paragraph.

#### **7.4.2. A Leadership of Integrity**

Dissatisfied with the simplistic approach of many writers on leadership, Badaracco and Ellsworth agree with Rost (1991:13-36) that what is needed is more than “vacant and mere platitudes” (Badaracco & Ellsworth 1989:9). They present three models of leadership and insist that, whichever one leaders choose to work with, the core issue is integrity, that is, a consistency between what one believes, how one acts and what one aspires for one's institution (1989:9). The three leadership styles described by Badaracco and Ellsworth are named *political*, *directive* and *values-driven*. The political style is akin to Burns' transactional leadership theory (paragraph 3.6.3) in which the leader attempts to enter into a contract with the followers. The aim is to win them over as much as possible to the leader's views, but ultimately winning the followers' support might entail astute organising from behind the scenes by using discussion, negotiation, give and take and coalition building (Badaracco and Ellsworth 1989:22-23). When conflict arises they seek compromises, for political leaders “seek what works, not what is perfect” (1989:30). As Burns puts it (1978:258-262), leaders are bargainers and are ready to adapt at any time to suit the wants of their followers, although their ultimate aim is to activate, mobilize and

motivate people to accept their own purposes. This leadership style is well named for it describes how politicians work at what they want and yet balance that with attempts at satisfying as many people as possible. This is not an accurate description of leadership in St. Joseph's Parish where the ideals of community and service were used to challenge the parishioners to become ever more missionary minded in the true ecclesial meaning of that word.

Badaracco and Ellsworth's theory of directive leadership is close to what has been described above as the authoritarian style. The emphasis is on achievement and success and to reach this followers have to be "pressed, stretched and inspired to meet ever higher standards" (Badaracco & Ellsworth 1989:40-41). Companies are not democracies; it is the task of leaders to listen and persuade and, if necessary, command. They reinforce their policies through direct, forceful and consistent words and actions. It is to their own vision that the organisation must be directed (1989:45,51,63). While this style may describe the attitude and actions of many pastors, it is inadequate for assessing the pastoral situation of St. Joseph's. This leads us to reflect on the third style of these authors which sheds light on the way this parish has been led forward over the years.

### **7.4.3 Values-Driven Leadership**

In the values-driven leadership style it is not the leader's performance that matters as much as the dedication and creativity of the entire institution. The leaders hold to those values with which the followers identify. The latter then become committed to the organisation itself and not to the leaders. The members find in the institution a source of self-fulfilment and personal integrity because their reserves of energy and commitment are drawn out by the leaders (Badaracco & Ellsworth 1989:66,70). No single leader can bring about such an

ethos in a large organisation; it is the organisation as a whole which makes the difference. The shared values “determine how people in a company perceive problems, seek alternative solutions and make decisions” (1989:72).

This process is discernible in St. Joseph’s where, through the pastor and then the team of leaders he gathered about him, an ethos of *mission* and *ministry* began to permeate the whole parish. At the beginning the leaders invited parishioners to become involved in ministries, both liturgical and social. But it was the continuing formation sessions, conducted at every level of parish life, that was to deepen people’s awareness of what involvement in ministry is all about. Once many were involved in service, the leadership could have been content to accept that the parish had become a busier place with more needs than before being satisfied. The leaders realised, though, that, in itself, involvement does not necessarily signify a maturity of faith. Indeed, many could be serving in the parish because they have been asked “to help out”, rather than out of a sense of Christian responsibility. The widespread formation programme invited active parishioners to engage in self-reflection and to discover that a church-in-mission requires a sense of commitment and accountability that is not found in a passive congregation which expects to be served by its full-time pastors. Over time this new attitude led to an environment of mission and ministry which, in turn, fed active parishioners, and even drew in many inactive ones into its own ethos.

The role of the leaders here is paramount to the growth of a mission-minded people. They carry the responsibility of promoting and defending the values which underpin the parish. “This is a responsibility which leaders can share but should never delegate”. They cannot compromise on issues involving an organisation’s basic values (Badaracco & Ellsworth

1989:79,86). This is why Fr. Marc correctly kept his finger on the pulse of the parish and would make decisions himself - though always after consultation - about the appointment of key leaders. The appointment of the *ugnayon* pastoral co-ordinators is an example of this. He was preserving in key areas the values inherent to a church-in-mission and knew that these values had to be maintained if the parish was not to revert to its previous state. It is a delicate balancing act to know when to intervene and when to let go. As Badaracco & Ellsworth put it (1989:88): “Excessive top-down intervention can undermine these values, but autonomy without high standards and accountability can result in lackadaisical performance.” The leader’s profile is not so visible, but it is still of central significance. With emphasis on the parish itself and not the person of the pastor, the parishioners express loyalty to and feel a sense of ownership of their church. The strong leader has spawned strong followers who, in turn, increase the strength of the leader (Badaracco & Ellsworth 1989:87). This theory well explains the central role of the pastor at St. Joseph’s Parish and the importance of him being involved in all major decisions which would affect the parish’s values of mission, participation and ministry.

These views also coincide with Greenleaf’s foundational statement that it is *institutions* which are needed to change society. As we saw in paragraph 3.6.1, Greenleaf believes (1995:55; 1996:36.55) that religious leading is a new frontier. It has a missionary dimension and is the *essential* factor by which a more caring society can be found. The institution of the church, led by servant-leaders, is to act in service of society and offer it the values needed for its renewal. For Burns, there is an inherent moral dimension to leadership. Through their teaching role, leaders can lift people to a higher consciousness of themselves and a deeper commitment to the world around them (paragraph 3.6.4; Burns 1978:4).

This vision of social renewal was the aim of St. Joseph's leaders while they strove to raise people's awareness through the multiplicity of formation programmes. People are liberated when they participate in on-going learning. They recognise more of their potential and participate in achieving this. The group provides the locus "where every person can be a source of learning." The members of the community form one another (Padilla 1997:140-141). This pastoral initiative accords with and concretizes the teaching of Vatican II on the church as the body of Christ. Fundamentally equal, the different gifts of believers, which are developed through on-going formation, contribute to the church's richness and enable Christians to participate in the church's mission (Paragraph 2.2.3; LG#33).

Having reflected on how this has occurred through St. Joseph's formation programmes, we now look at how the leaders took this a stage further through Basic Christian Communities.

## **7.5 Basic Ecclesial Communities**

### **7.5.1 Introduction**

The appointment of five ugnayon pastoral co-ordinators marks a significant shifting of pastoral focus in the parish. From centrally organised ministry there is now a *barrio-* or *ugnayon-*based ministry which reports to the central leadership. Through this dialogue the formation team and the *Lingap* (Parish Pastoral Council) members came to realise that the increasing number of those attending meetings and participating in ministry in the *ugnayon* was - albeit accidentally - endangering the spirit of community which had been laboriously built up over the years. This heralded a further sub-division of the parish into zones, or *po-ok* (paragraph 5.2). These were to form the basis for the BECs. The progress towards these was not, however, a smooth one. In the following paragraphs I shall describe how the first notion of BECs was introduced to the parish (paragraph 7.5.2), the initial steps

towards setting them up (paragraph 7.5.3), the development of the vision of a parish as a communion of communities (paragraph 7.5.4), and the value of the BECs in the eyes of a number of formators (paragraph 7.5.5). I conclude (paragraph 7.6) with some analytical comments.

## **7.5.2 Sowing the Seeds**

Fr. Marc had never ceased to keep looking around to see how other pastors were running their parishes. A man who was to leave a deep impression on him was Filipino priest Fr de Silva who had introduced Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) into his own parish. On his five or so visits to that parish, Fr. Marc spent three or four days at a time listening and observing. He liked what he saw, especially because the BEC approach enabled as many parishioners as possible to become involved, instead of the limited number, although still large, who were engaged in ministries. Fr. Marc shared this new vision with his parish councillors and invited Fr de Silva to conduct a seminar with 40 parishioners. The response was negative.

They were very happy with the seminar, to hear how he's working in his parish, and how his parish is developing. But nothing happened. The reason was because they were all very happy with their own parish, because they were all holding ministries. So, "You do it this way. We do it our way through ministries." And whenever I talked to people about communities, and so on, it was something like, "Yes, it's all very nice, but we're also doing very well. We have our ministries" (Lesage 1996:10).

Although BECs were not the immediate result of that retreat, more good seems to have come out of it than Fr. Marc had originally perceived. Quintin Katalbas, for example, looks back to that retreat with Fr de Silva as the turning point in his life:

In 1973 I was selected as one of the candidates to go on a retreat with Fr. de Silva in Antipolo. About 40 people took part in the retreat. That's where I was re-born. Fr. de Silva gave me peace of mind and convinced me what I would do as a Catholic. That is the story of how I got involved in the parish (Katalbas 1996:1).

Fr. Marc made a further five or six attempts to introduce the idea of base communities. On one occasion he invited Fr Manni Gabriel, the renowned Filipino expert on the subject in the archdiocese of Manila, to talk to the parish leaders. But no one would budge. In retrospect Fr. Marc feels that he did the right thing by not forcing the issue: “When I look back at it, I never forced it. It’s not my nature” (Lesage 1996:10). About another twelve years were to pass before the vision was caught and it occurred because by then the parish had too many ministers! Members of the parish council wanted to stop any more parishioners from becoming ministers because the parish had enough. This led them to ask if the only way to be active in the Church was through official ministries. It was at this time that the five *ugnayon* were divided into zones or *po’ok*. All the parishioners were encouraged to become involved in their own neighbourhood. Instead of the ministers serving the parish’s need from the centre, or within their *ugnayon*, each *po-ok* in the parish was to be served by its own members who would be trained by the *ugnayon* leaders.

### **7.5.3 Initiating Basic Ecclesial Communities**

The system by which the members of the *po’ok* worked to transform their neighbourhoods into *Mumunting Katolikong Kapitbahayan* (MKK, or Basic Ecclesial Communities<sup>4</sup>) is as follows.

Firstly, by means of a survey of the area, the *po-ok* leaders discover the number of people in the area and those interested in a more intense form of Christian community life. They assess the living standards of the people, as well as their daily issues and problems. This survey is referred to as *babad*, or an immersion experience. Those interested in forming an MKK are then invited to undergo three months of formation. This includes sessions on

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<sup>4</sup> MKKs and BECs are interchangeable terms.

community building, leadership and methods of Bible sharing. At the end of this time they elect their own leaders. The priest is called in to celebrate the Eucharist and to anoint the leaders. This ceremony marks the ecclesial nature of the new community and its link with the whole parish (Prior 1993:114-117).

### **Initiating Basic Ecclesial Communities**

- 1. Survey of Neighbourhood**
- 2. Three months of training for all interested persons**
- 3. Interested persons elect BEC leaders**
- 4. At Eucharist in the BEC the priest anoints the leaders**
- 5. Leaders attend weekly formation sessions,  
conducted by central formation team**

Diagram 6

The leaders now attend intensive weekly formation sessions. They learn various skills (how to communicate, how to facilitate meetings, and so on). They learn how to conduct services of worship. They undergo a basic Bible seminar and attend sessions in Gospel-based spirituality. They are taught how to use “MKK Notes” which are reflection papers connecting the Christian faith with current social issues. They learn how to write their own “MKK Notes” so that they can lead their own communities to reflect on and discuss any serious issues which might arise in their area.

All the BECs and other neighbourhood groups meet in their *po-ok* on Sundays. On the first Sunday of the month they engage in Gospel Sharing, usually using the Seven Steps method from the Lumko Institute. On the second Sunday the leaders conduct a community building session which has been prepared by the full-time formators. On the third Sunday they

discuss a social project for their area and on the fourth Sunday they celebrate Family Day. On that day no meetings of any kind are allowed in the parish. The idea for this came from complaints heard from some children who said they never saw their parents on Sundays because they were so busy at parish meetings.

#### 7.5.4 A Communion of Communities

Structurally the parish was beginning to move towards what Lumko Institute in South Africa calls the Church as a Communion of Communities,<sup>5</sup> although it still has a long way to go. Fr. Marc is not so sure that the vision has been truly bought by all the ministers and *po-ok* leaders. Many are still “in the old stage”, as he puts it, even if they have new titles. Yet, progress has definitely been made. Fr. Marc quotes Leo, one of the *ugnayon* pastoral co-ordinators: “One day he said: ‘You know, two people were quarrelling and they called

#### *Lumko’s Five Stages of Church Growth*

A Provided-For Church	A Church of Helpers	An Awakening Church	A Church of Disciples	A Communion of Communities
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Diagram 7

me in. Before I would never have minded. I would have said ‘It’s not my concern.’ Now, because I’m a pastoral co-ordinator, I have to go and talk to them and I will use my authority” (Lesage 1996:13). This is not only a growth in responsibility for Leo himself and the parish, but also for the other *ugnayon* co-ordinators who may learn from him.

A critical moment for Fr. Marc was his attendance at a Lumko international course in pastoral ministry in Lesotho in 1989. He says that, although he had the vision of Basic Ecclesial Communities, he did not have the method to bring them about. That Lumko

course pointed the way ahead. "That was to me, I would say, a turning point, a milestone" (Lesage 1996:13). He has no illusions, however, about the real situation in the parish.

There are plenty of leaders who still do not accept the vision Fr. Marc has. "They are at Stage One," he says (1996:13), referring to the "passive stage" in the Lumko five stages of church growth (Prior 1993:88-91;1997). Yet, working with them excites him for he knows that the break-through to a true sense of responsibility cannot come from the centre, but must be caught by the leaders themselves. He meets with the five *ugnayon* pastoral coordinators and the Parish Council Chairperson twice a month. The first meeting is a formal gathering at which the business of the *ugnayon* is discussed. The second meeting takes place in the parish house on Sunday evenings where they enjoy a meal together.

Developing relationships is as important for Fr. Marc as completing tasks.

There is a third element which can be added to the above two (work and relationships) and that is the faith dimension of life (Lobinger 1984:26). The parish can be well organised and actively involve a large percentage of its members, but for what? The goal of the parish becoming a Communion of Communities answers this question. According to Epee, it gives direction to all that happens, especially in formation sessions. "[In the past] we gave training continuously but with no particular direction or focus" (Ong-Casuncad 1996:12). For him, the critical change came when the parish goal was clarified with a vision of going towards a Communion of Communities.

I think it is very much the vision of Fr. Marc as parish priest that we gradually grew and began to understand his vision. It gradually became our vision as well (1996:13).

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<sup>5</sup> The fifth and last of the Lumko five stages of parish growth (Prior 1997).



(Above:) The author conducting a workshop at Antipolo, east of Manila  
(Below:) The exterior of the 400 year old Church of the Virgin in Bohol



## 7.5.5 The Value of Basic Ecclesial Communities

Leo, as we have already seen, is the most active of the five *ugnayon* pastoral co-ordinators. He speaks in terms of parish transformation through the introduction of Basic Ecclesial Communities.

**Leo:** I'm happy because somehow we're breaking through with the MKKs. That's important to me also.

**Prior:** I see you're touching your heart. They are close to your heart, the MKKs. Why do you particularly like the MKKs?

**Leo:** I was co-ordinator for the MKKs for six years. The first five years of that period were really a struggle. There were a lot of frustrations in the organization, a lot of people invited to join dropped out. I really used my time and my skills for these MKKs. So, in a way, I just held on when we were dealing with some concerns this last year. I said that it's going to go and I'm sure it will bear the effort it did over all those years. It will bear fruit in the next years.

**Prior:** For you, what is the ultimate goal of MKKs? What can they do for people and for the parish?

**Leo:** I think that's the most important thing that could happen to the parish.

**Prior:** The most important thing?

**Leo:** . . .that could happen to the parish. If you can make all these people feel that they belong to the parish through the small communities. If we can just bring them together regularly to pray, to discuss their problems, to find ways to support one another. I think, I don't know how to describe what will happen, but I just feel that the parish will further transform. It will transform. It will be different from what we are now (Mabale 1996:6).

There are other formators in the parish who have an equally vivid vision of how they would like to see the parish. We listen to them witnessing to their personal beliefs in the next two paragraphs.

Before offering critical comment on the move towards BECs, it would be worthwhile to assess what this movement means to a few parish leaders. The following three paragraphs

offer personal stories which set a context for the attempt to inaugurate base communities and train their leaders.

#### **7.5.5.1 Josie's Story**

The development of a church-in-mission demands new structures and these, in turn, require that more parishioners become involved in parish life. One person who was drawn into a more active involvement in the parish is Josefina Fabricante (Josie) who can trace her family back to the times of Fr. Kucera who founded the parish in 1797. The mother of three adolescent sons, Josie holds down a full-time job as assistant to the personnel administrator in her company. She admits that until less than ten years ago she was not involved in parish life, apart from attending the Sunday Eucharist. The change came when she and her husband were invited by another couple to attend a parish retreat and then a *Life in the Spirit* seminar (paragraph 5.5.1). After that they joined *Couples for Christ* in which they are still active members. It was this movement that brought Josie into greater relationship with her husband, her children and the parish.

By joining that movement I realised that really I'm not living alone now. I realised that, well, here are my brothers and sisters, people I can turn to, people in whom I can confide my problems, even family problems, problems with your married life, with your children. And I find that it sort of lightens my load (Fabricante 1996:6).

Because of her secretarial skills, Josie was asked by Fr. Marc to become a secretary in one of the *ugnayon*. This involved organising two meetings a month for about 17 people. After two years, that is, in 1990, Fr. Marc appointed her an *ugnayon* co-ordinator, along with Leo Mabale, and in 1996 he appointed her MKK parish co-ordinator. This involves meeting once a month with the five *ugnayon* co-ordinators, together with the parish formation team and twice a month with the MKK co-ordinators. At these latter meetings Josie gets feed-

back on what is happening in the communities, the good things as well as the problems.

“We try to help one another. We try to give advice” (Fabricante 1996:4.8).

Behind her organisational skills, Josie holds a vision for a different kind of parish:

I completely believe that this is really what our parish should be concentrating on. I think the MKKs have done a great job in bringing people closer to God and to the parish in general. There are also many who have joined the MKK although they had not been to Church for years. Reconciliation is another effect that these communities have had on a neighbourhood. Misunderstandings and even long-time feuds have come to an end (Fabricante 1996:4,7-8).

The key to the success of the MKKs is in trained leadership. At the time of my interview with Josie 21 leaders were being trained. Once they have received their eight weeks of formation, they go out in threes to begin *babad* (the immersion process). This consists of visiting all the homes in an area, assessing the general state of family life and inviting people to join the MKK when it is set up. Dominic, a taxi driver and one of the MKK coordinators, explains:

We go to the place where we will do the session. Then this night we have to report a record to our parish and we will tell them that we have already found a place. Then we will go for *babad*. We go from house to house and tell the people we will make a meeting there.

**Prior:** And then you explain to them what an MKK is.

**Dominic:** Yes, Yes. We explain to them that this is different. You will enjoy this meeting. So, don't miss this meeting. Then when the MKK is set up Stela and Aleli train the leaders. And I transfer to another place (Arevaio 1996:3-4).

It is the members of the parish formation team who will, in their turn, conduct ten training sessions for the future members of the MKK. Once these sessions are complete, the people have the choice of whether they wish to proceed or not with setting up the neighbourhood community. The fact that there were only seven MKKs in the parish in 1996 is ascribed by Josie to the lack of trained leaders. Without them – and they need to commit a lot of their

time to the task – the members of a neighbourhood community could not be formed or nurtured. The most important trait for an MKK leader is perseverance.

Because I persevered I have established an MKK community. But it is not easy. But we keep on trying. Then when we feel that there's really no hope then we move on to some other area. But, you know, I really can see that when you persevere there's always a reward (Fabricante 1996:6).

Apart from meeting for Gospel sharing and being involved in the needs of the neighbourhood, the MKK members are also involved in parish ministries. For example, they conduct their own wakes and services for the dead, they prepare parents for the baptism of their children and they have their own Mass servers and collectors.

The contribution that Josie is making to the parish demands a heavy commitment of time on her part. She admits that originally she did not want to take the job on. One year she actually kept out of ministry altogether for six months because of the burden of the work.

Under the pressure of requests coming from Fr. Marc and the co-ordinators Josie took back the job as MKK parish co-ordinator.

One day I decided I will come back as a facilitator. I guess I really enjoy the work, Father. It's really hard. Well, as a matter of fact there are occasions when I'm practically forcing myself to go to the communities, especially if I'm tired. Especially it's very discouraging, like, I have to arrive at home about seven, or seven thirty. The traffic is terrible, the traffic situation here. Seven or seven thirty and then the meeting is at eight. So, sometimes I cannot even have my dinner. I go to the community only to find out only about four people are present! What you will do is we'll accept the meeting for next week. And then the next week comes and then they have, sometimes they have, the community has a party somewhere else and you're about five! "Oh, my God!" I say.

**Prior:** It's discouraging.

**Josie:** It's very discouraging.

**Prior:** But you've kept at it.

**Josie:** I don't know. I don't know. I really don't want to accept to be a co-ordinator. That's very true. But now I accepted it and I'm committed to it. And then I made an arrangement with my boss at the office. I told him I can stay late any day of the

week, but don't let me stay on a Tuesday because that's my MKK day! (Fabricante 1996:10).

Josie has raised a number of issues here, notably the time needed to be a co-ordinator and an MKK co-leader, as well as commitment to her work, although she feels it a burden.

Others have raised similar concerns. We return to these in paragraph 7.6.

### **7.5.5.2 Caught by a Vision**

Josie's enthusiasm for this vision of Church is echoed by Aleli, a member of the parish formation team. Speaking of the movement towards Small Christian Communities, she said:

I realise now what it means really to be a Church. It's not just involving myself in the centre. It's not just the people involved here in the centre. But it's all, it's everyone. And the direction the parish is going to now is aiming at that, to let people feel that you are also part of the Church. We have to be a part of the Church. We're all in here together. And that's what I like here.

It offers them the experience of belongingness, the feeling of being part of the parish, the feeling itself of being loved. I was attending once a session of a BEC, seeing new faces I had not seen before. And seeing the joy in their faces. I was telling myself: "This is the Church" (Gutierrez 1996:8).

Another member of the parish team who has caught the "parish vision" is Eilleen. When I asked her what her dream for the parish was, she answered:

My dream for the parish? Actually the Communion of Communities describes my dream. Seeing all our groups working, moving together, seeing all the young people working together, moving together. And seeing them not as individuals but as a group. For example, moving not as a pious group or not as a college group, but living together as one big youth ministry (Dimabyn 1996:9).

We shall hear in the next paragraph how much Eilleen was to suffer for her dream.

Meanwhile, Dominic explains in his broken English that the MKKs are the answer to the lure of the born-again Churches.

This [the MKK] is the one. I know because before we had plays, neighbourhood programmes, or something like that. But this is the one I know. This is the only one, the answer, the sign of the times (Arevaio 1996:6).

Fr. Marc's own dream of all the parishioners one day belonging to MKKs comes, like that of Epee and Aleli, from his experience of the intense relationships between the members of the *Community of the Living Water*. He regards this community as the most effective instrument to have sustained him in his faith. Most of the full-time pastoral animators in the parish are or were members. What happened for its members has become a model for what is possible for the parishioners.

The contents of this section show that for at least many of those involved in neighbourhood groups and in the MKKs the overriding motive was the dream of the parish becoming a communion of communities. Leo imagines a time when neighbours will pray together and support each other in their daily struggle for life. In such a Church one would see the Gospel not only relevant to, but *one* with human living. Josie has experienced the reconciliation of long-time feuds. She rejoices at how the Church's mission is bringing about seeds of the Kingdom. These good experiences buoy up the hope of these leaders that one day the parishioners as a whole may experience the joy and togetherness they themselves now experience.

### **7.5.5.3                      The Cost of Discipleship**

One can hear in the above testimonies the joy that this ministry is bringing to so many. One is also aware of the sacrifices that are demanded, especially of their time. The interviews brought out clearly the awareness most of these leaders had of the risks concerning their family life, or pressures coming from their work situation. Their decision to continue to accept these pains points once more to an underlying spirituality of service, of the cross,

that has seeped outwards from the parish centre. The painful commitment to service of Fr. Marc and his formation team has caught on. We return to this issue in paragraph 7.6.

To sit in the parish office of St. Joseph's can be a dizzying experience. Phones are ringing, faxes and printers churning and six computers are on line. The nine desks are piled high with folders, notes, liturgies for the coming Sunday and MKK notes for the next *po-ok* meetings. Fr. Marc sits at his desk, one of the nine, and is constantly on call, either on the telephone or from those who have come to the office to talk to him. At the desk by the door is Eilleen who quietly, politely and efficiently keeps the parochial cogs turning, that is, when she is not assisting Joy in the youth centre.

There is a large calendar (about three metres in length) on the parish office wall. It lists all the events which are to take place for the month. One of Eilleen's tasks is to check each meeting, note who should be present and invite them. After the meeting she contacts those who were not present to discover why not. She also follows up those who were at the meeting and took on tasks for the parish (Dimabyn 1996:6). Then the many fiestas need a lot of detailed organising: who is to get hold of the flowers, arrange the procession, and so on.

Like many of the other parish leaders, Eilleen has had to pay a price for working for the parish. Talking about her parents, she said:

Until now they've found it hard to accept. Because they expect me to have a good career, a good future. And there I disappoint them. They're upset. I give all my time here. Sometimes I go home at ten or eleven [in the evening so that I can] finish the work. So, they are disappointed, very disappointed. They haven't accepted my job.

**Prior:** Do they say much?

**Eilleen:** Sometimes, if my father is fed up.

**Prior:** It must be hard for you.

**Eilleen:** Yes, yes, yes. Sometimes I am quiet and don't speak because I've told them my side already. This is the kind of job I want, these are the kind of people I want to work with. This is my life, the parish life, the community.

**Prior:** You still choose this work rather than go into business. Why?

**Eilleen:** I think I love seeing people, especially young people grow, grow spiritually, in attitudes, in the way they relate to people. And I know these young people, they need to feel they belong. They need values (Dimabyn 1996:7-8).

Soon after this interview Eilleen gave in to the pressure from her father and took over his business which had gone down quite a bit. She spent an unhappy year building up and training someone else to run it. Now she oversees the business, which has become successful again, on a part-time basis and spends the rest of her time serving in the parish, especially in the area of the formation of youth.

During my visits to St. Joseph's Parish I discovered that the zeal and service-spirituality of this woman of less than 30 years of age is not an exception. At the end of my long interview with Epee I asked him if he would like to add anything else. Speaking in the same vein as Fr. Marc and Eilleen and so may others, he replied:

This is how I feel about our parish, our community. I feel that there is something here that can be shared. I feel that we are at a point that will never come again if we don't grab it. I mean, to become communities. It's like, Manni<sup>6</sup> uses the word *kairos*. I heard him speaking at the Mass for the alumni.<sup>7</sup> If we don't grab this chance it doesn't come again. It just simply passes us by. I feel that this is a parish, the same way you feel, because the Philippines is all parishes. That's the only transcending structure better than government. And if a parish has a particular model by saying, "This is possible, to become community as parish", then this, I feel, it's a powerful message in the sense that it's something that people can understand (Ong-Casuncad 1996:18-19).

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<sup>6</sup> Fr Manni Gabriel. See above #2.4.

<sup>7</sup> The alumni of St. Joseph's High School.

## 7.6. Conclusion

As we saw in our description of pastoral leadership (paragraph 3.14), leadership includes a teaching role by which members of the community grow into a richer and more human future. This was the role the pastor of St. Joseph's took on while he waited in patience for the lay leaders to catch the vision of BECs. Over the years formation had become an ordinary part of parish life and was accepted as such by the hundreds (even thousands when one includes the Sunday Eucharists and other liturgies) who took part in its on-going learning process. This long-term movement helped develop in parishioners a belief in themselves as the People of God, Temples of the Holy Spirit and the Body of Christ (paragraph 2.1). "It was one long history of planting the seed" (Padilla 1997:149). What evolved in the minds of many was a desire to inculcate in yet other parishioners this basis for a church as mission and ministry. The "awareness raising, motivating, initiating, planting the seeds of community, creating friendships and building trust, forming people and challenging them" (1997:149): all of this had been formative. What they had experienced they wanted to share with others. This led sociologically to a de-centralization of parish structures and theologically to BECs. The bishops of the Philippines have expressed the theological aspect thus:

Our vision of a church as communion, participation and mission, as a church of the poor - a church that is renewed - is today finding expression in one ecclesial movement. This is the movement to foster Basic Ecclesial Communities (PCPII 1992:52).

BECs are not merely a way of updating the church. They are "a way of life, a way of being church" (Padilla 1997:148). It is in the BECs that *all* Christians can be enabled to become members of a missionary church. Thus the re-structuring of the parish into BECs becomes a means by which the church can be re-born. These communities are genuine church, says Boff (1986:23) and they are helping the whole church to "re-invent itself" from the

foundation up. It is a church born of the faith that nourishes God's people (1986:25,33). In this light the re-structuring becomes a means for the new way of being church: "BECs as mediating structures are transformative" (Padilla 1997:147).

This structural and theological renewal needs a catalyst, a visionary, a teacher and motivator – someone with the ability to engage in transforming leadership (paragraph 3.6.4) and to be motivated by a values-driven leadership style (paragraph 7.4.3). The fact that it took 20 years for the original idea of base communities to be taken on board by the *Lingap* (parish pastoral council) points to Fr. Marc's role in fulfilling the first two of the above elements of leadership required – catalyst and visionary. His role as teacher came from his role as perpetual learner. For example, he turned to people outside the parish at two critical moments. The first was when he called in experts on Basic Christian Communities to sow the seed which would blossom many years later. The second time was when he travelled to Southern Africa, once the parish leaders had decided they wanted the small communities, to learn how to initiate them. Another source of external stimulus came from the courses that parish leaders attended outside the country in which they were exposed to new ideas, particularly in the area of BECs.

Pastoral leadership is a *process* between a group of people responsible for others. This has clearly been shown in the description of how the detailed, and at times complicated, web of formation programmes in St. Joseph's contributed to a new vision and a new structure for the parish. Pastoral leadership is also an *influence relationship* by which all those concerned interact in dialogue. "The influence and pressure flow both ways" (Gardner 1990:23). What has to be added to this description is the need for *outside influences*. Not all answers can be found within a pastoral team or even one large parish. Leadership must

remain open to new influences and relationships. There seems to be no leadership theorist who includes this aspect in his/her publications. Greenleaf writes of the leader's need to find "a fresh creative response to here-and-now opportunities (1977:34), but the examples he gives are of people who found the answers within themselves (1998:133-137), although, knowing the author's "seeking" character (Greenleaf 1977:221; Fraker 1995:41; paragraphs 3.2.1 & 5.5.3), one could presume that he includes looking "outwards" to others' views and practices. Many of Greenleaf's followers have looked outwards by using other disciplines to breathe fresh air on to the issue of leadership. We have already reviewed Senge's attempt to redefine leadership through a definition of reality as inter-relationships (paragraph 6.5). Another of Greenleaf's disciples, McCollum (1995:241-256), speaks of the need for interdisciplinary dialogue in which participants discourse about the underlying assumptions and beliefs of each other with a view to facing today's complex problems. He sees the possibility of leadership being influenced by this. Many other similar efforts can be found among the seventy authors who have contributed to Spears 1995 and 1998. These writers of leadership vision are turning outwards for further inspiration. While we may presume that leaders need outside influences this is not spelled out by these authors.

None of the other authors I have read on leadership refers to this aspect of leadership. When St. Joseph's Parish was in need of an outside influence, it was Fr. Marc who found it. In this he was fulfilling Greenleaf's stipulation that, despite the dialogue and consensus decision making process, leaders need to remain "more knowledgeable" (paragraph 3.14). The fact that they are able to "foresee the unforeseeable" and "push into the uncharted and the unknown" is what gives them their "lead". This is what puts them out ahead and qualifies them to show the way (Greenleaf 1977:22-23). The need for outside influence in

leadership is joined, then, by a certain research element, an ability to seek for new ways and methods which can be applied to the present situation. This is how the *teacher* element of leadership was fulfilled in St. Joseph's in the movement towards Basic Ecclesial Communities.

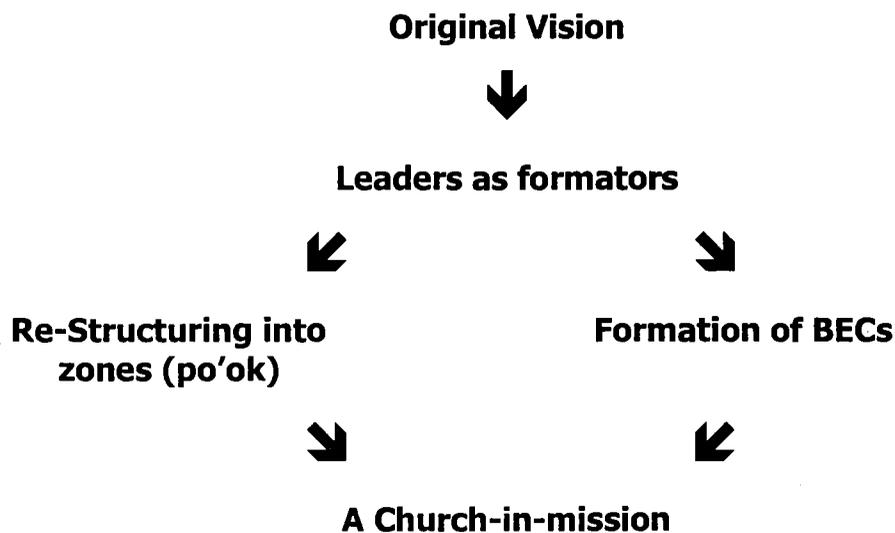


Diagram 8

The original vision of a participatory church came from Fr. Marc. Over the years he sold the idea to the leaders he gathered about him and who became the central formation team in the parish. As the numbers of those involved in ministry increased, the formators divided the parish into smaller sections, firstly into the *barrios* and then into the *po'ok*. At the same time they used the *po'ok* as a basis for the Basic Ecclesial Communities. This doubled-pronged approach led the parish to become more of a church-in-mission.

The concern here is to assess how the leadership style used in St. Joseph's Parish contributed towards bringing about the beginnings of a church-in-mission. Forcing BECs on the parish would not have worked. The pastor chose to bide his time until enough people were ready for the move. There is a certain vulnerability in this approach, a willingness to remain dependent on others before moving in the direction desired. Those who champion the executive style of leadership (paragraph 3.6.2) might regard this as weakness. Their view is simple: Leaders are concerned with maintaining power over their followers, expecting no questioning of commands, but rather compliance. An example of this is those Catholic priests who have imposed a de-centralized system on the parish,

calling the resultant “wards” or “blocks” Basic Ecclesial Communities. Parishioners have complied externally, but once the priest moves on the whole structure collapses.

Waiting for the assent of one’s followers is essential to good leadership, as we saw in paragraph 3.6.1 and 3.6.4 – 3.6.5. There are no leaders without followers, and leadership itself is a matter of mutual influence. Gini (1997:72) maintains that leadership is interactive and collaborative. With Burns he asserts that leaders and followers are dependent on each other. He agrees with Rost’s later development that the word “collaborator” is more appropriate than “follower”. He approves of Senge’s proposal that the final goal of leadership is to be directed towards others. In the light of this collaboration between leaders and followers one can see how the leaders’ task is to share their values with others. A value cannot be imposed. “Leaders can drive, lead, orchestrate and cajole, but they cannot force, dictate or demand” (Gini 1997:77). For Greenleaf (1977:28-30), the leader needs to be a disturber and an awakener. In practice this means persuading people about what “has the virtue of change by convincement rather than coercion”. Gini (1997:77), too, uses the word “convince” for the role of the leader. He sees this as suitable for an environment in which “followers must become reciprocally co-responsible” (1997:75).

In summary, the long, patient wait for the parish leaders to grasp the importance of BECs for a church-in-mission is a soundly accepted leadership style. It respects the followers / collaborators, trusts their own intentions and ministry and, indeed, supports them in the commitment they have for the kind of church they believe in. This is attested to by those same leaders exercising a similar patience once they were convinced of the importance of BECs.

The final issue needing to be addressed, and has been referred to elsewhere, is the “dominant” style of Fr. Marc. Once the central leaders joined him, firstly in moving towards a participatory church, then a church of justice and liberation, and finally in a church of BECs, he still kept hold of the reins. In fact, as we have seen, he played a key role in all major decisions, particularly those concerning the missionary thrust of the parish and the appointment of leaders. At first sight this appears to be a dominating and controlling role, approaching an executive style of leadership, as described (and condemned) by Burns (Burns 1978:296) in which decision making is reserved to the leader. The description of Fr. Marc’s style in the last three chapters, however, brings out some important facets of servant leadership.

By nature all leaders have power, which may be defined as a “capacity to control or direct change” (Gini 1997:74). How this power is exercised distinguishes a tyrant or dominator from a servant-leader. Burns (1978:12-17) defines power as a relationship between the power holder and the respondent. If the respondent refuses to enter into the relationship (for example, by wishing to remain compliant to issued commands) the leader can become a “single-minded power wielder”. Even if the leader uses coercion for the “good” of the followers, ultimately their autonomy will be diminished (Greenleaf 1977:42). If the two use their relationship “to tap motivational bases in one another and bring varying resources to bear” (Burns 1978:15) on the situation, change can take place to their mutual advantage. In this language the phrase so often used in pastoral situations - “to empower people” - does not mean giving followers power, but enabling them to see what power they have already and how to use it to achieve “real changes that reflect their mutual purposes” (Rost 1991:102). The long process of collaboration between pastor and parish leaders in St.

Joseph's was based on this trusting and respectful relationship. They went as far as they could together, while Fr. Marc always knew there was more to come.

It needs to be made clear that the influence patterns between leader and followers are not equal (Gini 1997:75). The leader has a certain moral presence, or force, which goes with the position. He/she is more knowledgeable than the followers (paragraph 3.4) and stays in front (Greenleaf 1977:15). Greenleaf (1977:24) calls this foresight, the "central ethic of leadership. "Leaders look forward and beyond the horizon" (Kouzes & Posner 1989:237). Even in the context of a mutual relationship of influence between leaders and led, leaders must know where they are going, else they do not lead. Above a functional competence, which everyone should have in their job, leaders "must bring some *added value* to the position" (Kouzes & Posner 1989:234). For Ruth (1997:328), the leader's task is to build trusting relationships with followers, listen to them and eventually enable them to become leaders themselves. Yet, to do this effectively, the leader needs to possess the capacity to think, and only then can he/she enable the followers to do the same.

The above authors all seem to be pointing in the same direction. An organisation - for example, a parish - needs strong leaders who are clear about their possession and use of power, have a vision of the road ahead and work in collaboration with their followers to find the best way forward. Strong leadership is not strong in coercion, but in service. Fr. Marc's seemingly controlling position as pastor turns out to be a strong servant-leadership which successfully, despite many bumps, led St. Joseph's Parish forward from passivity and an individualistic piety to a participatory church engaged in mission.

The formation programmes and the inauguration of Basic Ecclesial Communities brought large numbers of parishioners together in more intense relationships. Their meetings, based on Gospel reflection and training, give them a sense of what it means to be a church-in-mission. They also learn how to use their charisms in the service of each other and those beyond their community. This is a pastoral approach which helps the parish express its belief in the church as the body of Christ.

# **Chapter Eight:**

## **Leadership in Service Of Mission**

### **8.1 Introduction**

In this concluding chapter I draw together the insights gained in the previous chapters to show how they link together and form a coherent whole. After thus integrating the arguments of the study, I suggest some of the major issues which have arisen in this study which call for on-going research.

### **8.2 Integration of the Thesis**

At the beginning of this thesis I stated that a new approach to understanding the church could be found in the Second Vatican Council's documents. The church is missionary by nature. In raising the question of how this can become a reality in the parish, I see the response in a new kind of leadership without which the church will remain more of an organisation than an organic reality. This study, then, has been concerned with leadership and how it can contribute to a renewal of the church at parish level so that it can manifest its missionary nature. While engaged in this research it has become clear to me that the study of leadership theory can advance the discipline of missiology because it is only through a renewed style of leadership in the church that its missionary nature can become a concrete reality where most Christians experience the church, namely, in the parish.

In Chapter Two I briefly traced the development of this more organic understanding of the church and how it entered the Council documents. The Council Fathers took a radical line when they declared that the church is by nature missionary. The church is constituted by mission and expresses this by ministry or servanthood. I believe that a servant-leadership is required to enable the members of a parish to fulfil their fundamental call to mission. This renewed mission theology is spelled out under three main headings. Under the title the “People of God” there are two emphases. The first is on God who calls Christians to a life of faith; it is this divine call that constitutes the church. Secondly, there is a fundamental equality between the members of God’s *laos*. Those called to leadership are servants of the *ekklesia*. In the image of the church as “Creation of the Holy Spirit” the Council’s teaching replaces a primarily juridical ecclesiology with a dynamic one. Not only are the baptised the *laos* but, with the Spirit abiding in each, they are gifted to play an active role within the church and in working for the transformation of the world. The task of leaders is to discern, discover and encourage the full use of these gifts. In the image of the church as the “Body of Christ” emphasis is given to the unity that should exist between believers. The different gifts provide an enrichment of those united to one another in Christ. Consequently, no one in leadership may claim a superior function. The role of leadership is to discern and co-ordinate these gifts for the building up of the church.

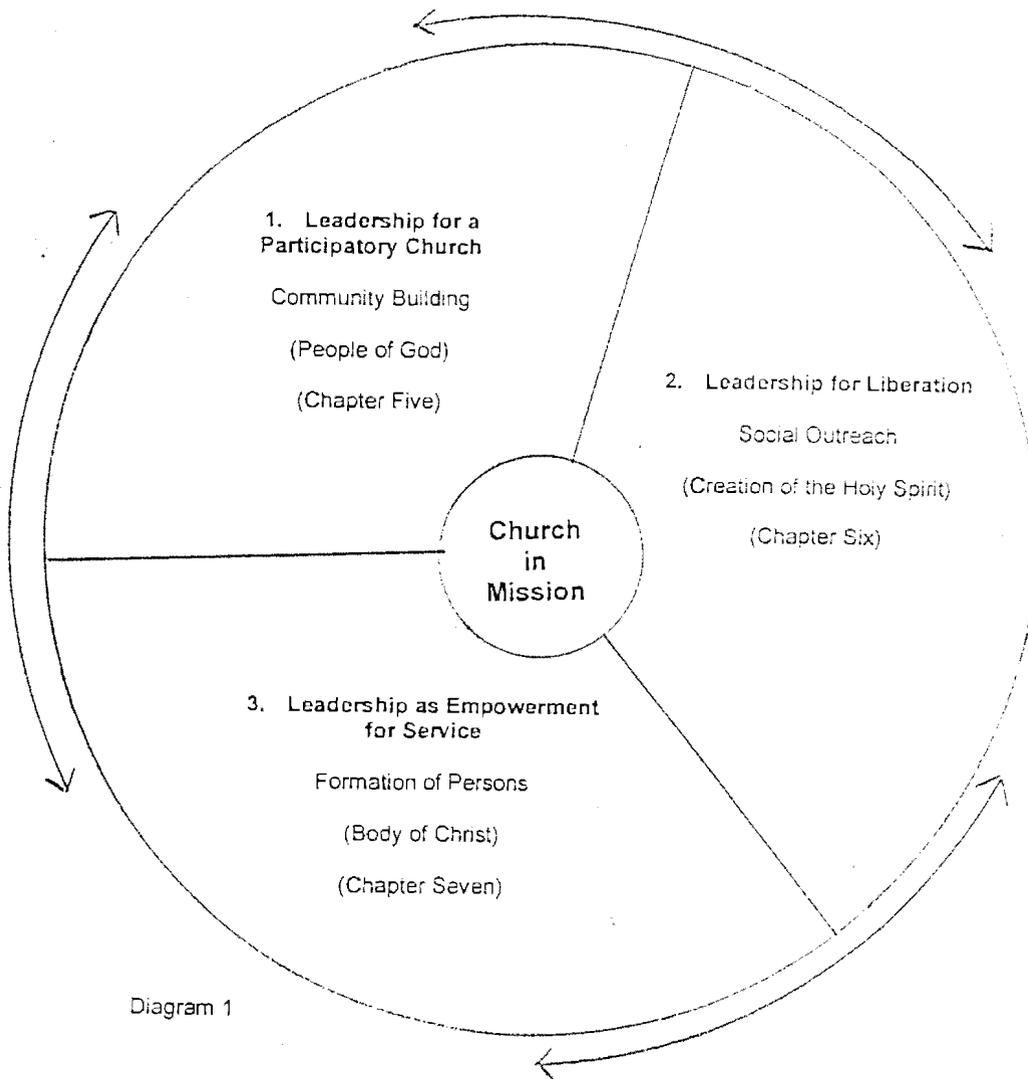
Unfortunately, a description of the servant leadership needed to implement this theology cannot be found in the Council documents. Theologically, leadership is described in terms of divine power which is possessed in its fulness by the pope and is shared, in diminishing degrees, by the hierarchy and then other clerics. A clearly defined pyramidal model of power is said to be divinely instituted. Pastorally, the documents are full of pious admonitions to service and love. They do not spell out how these are to be concretized, for

example, in a situation in which one who is called to be a servant is told that he should expect loyal obedience from those further down the pyramid. There is no serious contribution here to an understanding of a new style of leading.

In an overview of developments since the Council, we noted two movements. On the one hand, there can be found in contemporary Vatican documents a strong emphasis on a pyramidal style of leadership. This would seem to be echoed in most national hierarchies. On the other hand, there are movements throughout the world which express a new way of being church. The latter are more communitarian and participatory in nature and in many cases are described as “House Churches”, “Small Christian Communities” and “Basic Ecclesial Communities”. These movements are a spontaneous response to a felt need for a more intense experience of community and, in most cases, a leadership style which allows the members to give expression to their charisms.

In the search for an appropriate leadership style for a parish which wishes to become a church-in-mission I then turned to the corporate world and in Chapter Three reviewed the state of leadership studies today. Most authors concentrate their efforts on listing the many qualities needed by leaders to get their followers to buy into the organisation. The danger here is leadership can be further estranged because leaders are defined in contradistinction to followers. A few authors, notably Greenleaf, Burns and Rost, are concerned with lifting institutions as such out of their present lethargy in order to build a new society. It is not a matter of a single leader inspiring followers by his/her charisma, but the institution as a whole becoming a better place for those who work there. There is an inherent moral dimension to leadership: leaders serve followers in order to empower the latter to use their talents to build a better institution and a better world. The necessity of collaboration

between leaders and followers, as opposed to the latter helping out the former, was highlighted in this study. Leadership is not the sole possession of a single leader, but is to be shared with as many as possible. This led us on to reflect on the importance of teamwork by which the talents of all are enlisted for the good of the whole institution. The role of leadership is not to “keep the plant going”, but to work for change, for progress, for the betterment of the whole person. Greenleaf sees this role as a matter of vision, Burns as transformation and Rost as a relationship of mutual influence. All three are describing servant-leadership. In the language of the corporate world they are speaking similarly to Vatican II’s teaching in its Trinitarian theology of a church-in-mission. Applying those theories to the church, I came to a tentative description of pastoral leadership which was then used to critique the pastoral initiatives of the leaders of St. Joseph’s Parish.



The central part of this thesis (Chapters Four to Seven) has been concerned with describing and analysing this parish where an example of this servant-leadership has brought about the Vatican II vision. Before entering that study, though, it was important to put this parish into context. This is done in Chapter Four in which the particular history of the church in the Philippines is presented. The missionaries brought an unflagging zeal to their work, the result of which can be seen in the nearly 80% of the population who still regard themselves as members of the Roman Catholic Church. As children of their own time, they brought to the country a Spanish version of Catholicism which, by and large, seems to have suited the indigenous people. Two particular problems, however, stand out as negative influences. The first is the political and administrative roles the missionaries held in the name of the Spanish crown. Although they had little choice in this matter, history does judge them for bringing a colonizing power in the one hand, and the Gospel in the other. If there had been efforts to temper this power with a more benign administration, history may not have judged them so severely. Efforts, even brutal at times, to suppress moves for independence accentuates this missionary compromise.

The other negative factor is the internal squabbles among church leaders. I pointed out how the missionaries' stance over episcopal visitation was against church law and practice of the time. The style of leadership demonstrated by the missionaries was not conducive to community building and the call of the church to mission, even according to the standards of the time. The in-fighting among the clergy, to say nothing of their domination of civil life, led to a disrespect for church leadership and an emphasis on an individualistic piety. Any efforts to the contrary stand out as beacons of light. I concluded this chapter by introducing the geographical and social context of St. Joseph's Parish where a new model

of servant-leadership was introduced under the guidance of its newly appointed pastor, Fr. Marc Lesage.

In Chapter Five I described the efforts made to include more people in the life and leadership of the parish. Beginning with a few friends, the pastor was soon to include many more in the life of the parish in what was to become known as the “era of ministries”. Because of its importance in the growth of its members and its influence on parish leadership, emphasis is given to the young people’s *Community of the Living Water*. Here the youth learned how to grow into more intense relationships with God and each other and to base their life of service on a commitment to God in prayer. This experience motivated many of them to become parish leaders and to offer something of their experience of community to the parishioners in general. I used the theories of servant-leadership reviewed in Chapter Three to critique pastoral initiatives, such as the trust given to the youth, the intense community experience of the covenant community, efforts at inculturation, the important role of a central parish formation team and the educational methodology employed in leadership training. The effort made to draw the parish as a whole into a more participatory style of church concretizes the Vatican II’s teaching on the church as the people of God. These were the first attempts made to constitute the parish as a church-in-mission.

In Chapter Six I turned to the social ministry of the parish which covers so many areas of need that five full-time parish leaders are employed for this ministry alone and noted how the leaders grew from a handing-out mentality to an organisation model of ministry in which they invited those in need to participate in their own upliftment. Efforts at a third approach, the liberation model, in which people detect and decide their own response to

their needs, has been introduced into the parish, but has not yet been taken on in all the parish's neighbourhoods. Because of the intense inter-relationships needed to implement this model, it is necessary that on-going training in inter-personal skills be put in place. It is essential that ecclesial social ministry be based on an interior life of prayer, else it loses its heart. To work at the liberation of the whole person is an act of faith in the Risen Christ who desires that all have life to the full (John 10:10). This approach to social ministry implements the Council's teaching on the church as creation of the Holy Spirit in which all the baptised use their charisms for the building up of the community. It is also a transparent expression of a church-in-mission as frontiers of every kind of need are crossed in the name of Christ.

In Chapter Seven I took a critical look at the extensive formation programme in the parish. At the beginning this training was conducted by full-time trainers, using the parish's central buildings. The number of those being formed grew to be so large that many of the programmes were decentralized to the five *barrios* and then to the forty *po'ok*. Each *barrio* had its own co-ordinator and these later became known as pastoral co-ordinators, a change of both name and status. This pastoring role was not fully thought out ahead of time and not enough training preceded the change. Further reflection on the theological and pastoral implications of this change are needed. Meanwhile, nearly 200 leaders are now engaged regularly in conducting formation programmes throughout the parish, a sign of the regenerative nature of servant-leadership. What is needed in such a complex organisation is a values-driven leadership which emphasises the dedication and creativity of the institution itself, rather than individual leaders. It brings with it a greater sense of commitment and accountability that is not noticeable in a passive parish. To bring this about strong

leadership is required, not of domination but of enabling, in the sense of empowering people to make use of their gifts for the good of the community. It is servant-leadership.

In the second part of Chapter Seven I showed how the inauguration of Basic Ecclesial Communities is slowly bringing about a deeper sense of mission and ministry in the parish.

The teaching role of leadership is needed, although this does not rule out listening:

leadership consists of a relationship of mutuality with the followers, who are better described as collaborators. Influences from outside the parish were sought to include further stimulation of new ideas. Although there is an in-built vulnerability in servant-leadership, in that one has often to wait for others to catch up, all leaders possess power.

What differentiates the dominator from the servant is the way it is used. To empower people is to help them see what power they possess already and learn how to use it in service. The formation programmes and the neighbourhood communities are a pastoral approach which concretize Vatican II's teaching on the church as the body of Christ.

The opening words of Jesus in Mark's Gospel are "Repent and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). The vocation of the church is to obey these words by offering believers a community within which they can support each other in their efforts to be obedient to the word. In reviewing the development of the parish of St. Joseph's over a period of nearly 30 years, one notices that the core to each movement and programme was a spiritual one: how do we respond to Christ in this situation? The original re-organising of the parish into the three ministries of *Pagsamba* (worship), *Pakikibahagi* (sharing) and *Pagkalinga* (caring) was in imitation of the life of Jesus (paragraph 4.7.4.3).

The driving force behind the move to a participatory church was the vision of being God's people, God's community. The extensive care for those in need and those wanting further education and skills training came from a belief in the church as a creation of the Spirit in which all the baptised, recipients of charisms from the Spirit, are encouraged to use them in the service of others. The parish's comprehensive formation programme is geared to a deepening of the recipients' life of faith. It is not merely a matter of teaching skills but, more importantly, of liberating people from all that prevents them from living a life of *koinonia* in the body of Christ on earth. In taking seriously their call to co-responsibility Christians enter into that ministry for mission which is rightly called servant-leadership. We thus see how the Trinitarian theology of a missionary church was shaped into a living reality in St. Joseph's Parish by leaders who put into effect the theories of servant-leadership.

In conclusion, the Christian church has often - and quite rightly - been criticised by its enemies, but also by some of its most loyal members, for not living up to its own statements of faith, for not practising what it preaches. In this study I have done so myself as a loyal member of the Catholic Church. I have also gone one step further by arguing the full implications of its own theological statements. Vatican II's far-reaching insights into the church as the people of God, as creation of the Holy Spirit and as the body of Christ were not matched with the necessary leadership insights to make that missionary ecclesiology fully operational.

However, this study also affirms that there is within the worldwide church enough creativity and energy to produce the kind of leadership that can make Vatican II's vision a reality. In the life and work of Fr. Marc Lesage, a Belgian missionary working in the

Philippines, something unique and creative happened which can bring hope and encouragement to parishes all over the world. A sacrificial and a deeply spiritual servant leadership can educate, empower and motivate a parish to become truly missionary in the fullest sense of the world.

### **8.3 Leadership for Service**

In this section I shall list some issues which flow out of the preceding study. Further research in these areas would be of benefit to the study of servant-leadership in the church.

While describing how the leaders in St. Joseph's Parish have inculcated a servant-leadership model, that parish is certainly not unique. There are many examples around the world where the pastor and lay leaders are working for a church-in-mission through similar efforts. Even where a more hierarchical model of parish is still in existence, many pastors may be found working for the empowerment of the laity, albeit with a more limited vision. The argument in this study, though, is based on the belief that the church cannot truly fulfil its missionary mandate, that is, *be* church, unless its leadership changes from one of power from above to a servant-leadership based on the example of Jesus. Keane sums up the issue as follows:

One of the church's besetting sins has been that it called itself the servant of the world while it operated from a position of power. It was often assumed that it had most, if not all the answers to the world's problems when, in fact, the world was often passing the church by without taking it seriously or without believing in it. The servant model of church could be one of the best ways of helping the church to correct those faults by encouraging it to "step down" and to adopt a more simple and modest position in the midst of the world (Keane 1986:268).

The difficulty is not just practical but also theological. We have seen (paragraph 2.3.2) how the Vatican II documents have plenty of admonitions to humble service on the part of

bishops and priests. These will have little effect while theology supports another model. For example, the theology of power outlined in paragraph 2.2.2 bolsters a pyramidal model which is said to be “divinely ordained”. A number of theologians (for example Granfield 1987; Bernier 1992; Bianchi & Ruether 1992; Osborne 1993; Fiedler & Rabben 1998; O’Meara 1999) have pointed out how this model developed over the centuries and can be replaced today now that a different kind of leadership is needed. An ecclesiastical system which is modelled on the medieval political system – which included a belief in the divine right of kings – can today be replaced by a system more conducive to the contemporary belief in the necessity for democracy. Without such a change the church will become increasingly alienated from the people of today’s world. Yungblut (1974:2-3) puts it succinctly: the church needs to re-state its doctrine in language which is understandable to people who believe in evolution and depth psychology. The way ahead, according to Boff (1985:154-164), is to return to the foundation of the church which is the resurrection and Pentecost. The Spirit has given a plurality of gifts to all the baptised who enjoy a basic equality. There is no room for a theology which gives rise to one group in the church ruling the others by means of authoritarian forms of power. “There is not one group of rulers and another group of those who are ruled; there is one group of faith” (Boff 1985:159). At Vatican II radical steps were taken to re-think what it means to be church. Today an equally bold step needs to be taken to re-think the theological basis for ministry in general and the hierarchy in particular.

It has to be admitted that a change of wording does not necessarily lead to a change in practice. While a theological debate continues over the issue of hierarchy and its ramifications, the situation in the parishes could be changed. Apart from the questionable custom of using the word “priest” for a congregation’s leader (see Hebrews 7:11-28), the

emphasis in the Roman Catholic Church today is still overly sacramental. A commonly heard phrase is that a man is ordained priest to “dispense the sacraments”. There is a need to return to Vatican II which teaches that the proclamation of the word is the primary task of priestly ministry. Because the people of God are formed into one by the word of the living God, the priest’s first task is to preach the Gospel (PO#2,4). According to Boff (1985:87), it was the neglect of the word of God that led to a passive laity waiting for the ministrations of a sacramental priest. Rahner (1966:263), following Vatican II’s teaching that the word and sacrament are equal in dignity (DV#21), says that the proclamation of the word is an efficacious event in which the grace of God infallibly takes place in the believer. It is not an accident that Gospel Sharing, in which believers engage in a “mutual proclamation” (Prior 1993:208), is the basis of much of the renewal that is taking place in the ecclesial developments we reviewed in paragraph 2.4. This veneration of the Scriptures has led to “a new impulse of spiritual life” (DV#26) and can easily be introduced in all parishes without much effort. As Küng says,

the church has always found new life whenever it has tried to find its way back to Christ and his word and has accepted his word in order to become once more what it is: the possession and property of Christ, his body (Küng 1967:241).

To open the Scriptures lavishly to the faithful (SC#51) in such a way will liberate believers from what could be stultifying rites and rituals, lead them to a renewed sense of their worth as members of the body of Christ and motivate them to take their rightful place as Christian leaders.

Such reforms will lead to a new kind of church. It will not be like a political democracy in which, it seems, the lowest common denominator too often rises to the top. Neither would democracy sufficiently embrace the “plurality and complexity needed in fashioning the

church” (Bianchi 1992:35). Leadership needs to be strong and, while constantly engaged in a conversation of mutual influence with followers, it cannot be totally dependent on them. An ethos of democracy is necessary, though, in which the pyramid will be flattened and leaders find themselves not on top but at the centre of a community. The legitimacy of the charisms of believers are not derived from the will of the people, nor from structured authority (Coleman 1992:227). On the contrary, according to van der Ven (1993:325), legitimization is given to the church only on the condition that there is maximum participation by ordinary members in the development of the church at local level. A series of different studies could clarify the kind of structures needed for such a collegial church.

This new, yet ancient, way of being church will require a new kind of leader and therefore a new kind of formation. While formal training in theology will need to remain, there are possibilities beyond the present seminary system which could be investigated. This could enable students in the present system to be more in touch with the life situation of those they are being trained to serve. It would also be more suitable for married candidates when that day arrives. A different system of selection could also invite to ordination mature lay people who over a number of years have already proved to be servant-leaders in the parish. One of the challenges of mature leadership is knowing who one is, while at the same time being able to acknowledge the authority of others (Hahn 1994:59). Lobinger (1998) has recently re-opened the question of married clergy. One of his pleas is that a lot of study needs to be undertaken in order to “clarify what is at stake and suggest processes to follow” (1988:190). This is another area for further research.

As large numbers of lay persons moved into ministry in recent decades they took over many of the tasks which were at one time the preserve of the ordained. While this has

resulted in many benefits for the church, a widespread problem has been that of domination. The “lone ranger” model of ministry modelled by the priest of the past has not offered a good example to those who have succeeded him in many of his tasks. The use of power over people, and often a refusal to work in teams but alone, is causing a lot of friction in parishes. On top of that, for the first time in the Roman Catholic Church, men and women ministers are working side by side and this, too, has given rise to strained relationships. Both power and gender issues need to be further studied so that a new model of servant-leadership can be presented to those in ministry. Coupled with this is a need for a “secular spirituality” for lay leaders. Studies such as Cameli (1975), Fischer (1987), Donovan (1992) and Dulles (1997) made a good contribution to a spirituality for those “living in the world”. How can lay ministers live their Christian life amidst the worries and temptations of contemporary society? How can they base their church ministry on a spirituality of servanthood? Attempts have been made to respond to these questions (see, for example, Gutiérrez 1984; Stewart et al 1984; Green 1986 & 1988; Boff 1988; Andreas & Andreas 1994 & Reiser 1997) and these authors have much to offer. With the changing climate of ministry, including the problems raised above, much more research needs to be done in this area to help lay ministers base their commitment to leadership on a spirituality of service and mission.

We finish this section by returning to the pastor. For a parish to truly become a church-in-mission with full participation of the laity, an outreach to those in need and a formation programme to support this, a strong servant-leadership is needed. This will not come about while pastors do not believe in this vision, do not have the confidence to work at it, or do not have the energy to accomplish it. What is needed is strong servant-leadership from the centre (from the top, in the old language) which would assert that a missionary church is

the policy of the diocese. This could not be left to each pastor to implement as he wishes. A diocesan board or pastoral committee could be instituted with the specific task of visiting parishes in order to assess the pastoral situation and challenge the leaders to face the next step forward. This committee would parallel the work performed by a board of trustees in the corporate world. Instead of stumbling forward into the unknown (Hammer & Stanton 1995:57-58), there would be a values-driven policy with specific long-term goals and short-term objectives. Greenleaf sees the need for such a group - he calls them "trustees" - if an institution is to renew itself.

My hope for the future lies in my belief that there are many actual or potential trustees with such a motivation [to serve] and who might be roused into action by a realisation of the great institution-building opportunity that is before them.

Trustees as servants face one of the most exciting challenges of our times: to lead our moribund institutions, and some of the seemingly moribund people in them, into a future of greatness (Greenleaf 1977:131-133).

The fact that St. Joseph's Parish reached the level of development that it did, in a relatively short time, is due to its leadership, beginning with its pastor and then through the ministry of the many who shared in his leadership. For a wholesale move towards a church-in-mission - which is, after all, the teaching of Vatican II - a vigorous effort is required on the part of church leadership on a wider level to motivate congregations to move beyond the status quo. Strong servant-leadership is the need.

## **8.4 Conclusion**

The day after I first arrived in Las Piñas Fr. Marc asked me to accompany Mel on a tour of the high-density section of the parish where the people, hounded by Imelda Marcos, had been given homes, due to the efforts of the parish leaders (paragraph 6.4). During the hours which Mel took to show me the area and the parish's response to people in need by providing a clinic, a medicine depot, a water distribution point and so on (see paragraph

6.4.1), I heard no sense of pride in her voice. Mel believed that, despite almost insurmountable obstacles, formation would help this community eventually find its own leaders so that they could use their own abilities, talents and skills to solve their own problems (Gubatan 1996:4). The aim of development, Mel told me, is to enable people to build themselves into a community. Then they can see their needs and work out the solutions for themselves (1996:5-6).

Mel married a man from the “squatter community” and, against her family’s wishes, went to live in his home. They had two children and then tragically she died from tuberculosis. That quiet, powerful servant-leader has left behind her a legacy. “I didn’t realise we had a saint living with us until she died,” Stela told me sometime later.

My contact with the Filipino Church began during a course near Rome in 1987 at which Stela was a participant. She talked to Fr. Marc of the Lumko vision and later they both attended the Lumko International Course in Lesotho. From that event I received an invitation to teach in the Philippines. Through these “accidents of history” God was bringing together like-minded people who learned from each other that the vision of a church as missionary by nature is not just theoretically, but also practically possible.

Blessed be God!

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