

**JESU KRESTE, KHOSI EA RONA, O TSOHILE!**  
**A STUDY OF ORAL COMMUNICATION IN AN EASTER VIGIL.**

**by**

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submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF THEOLOGY**

in the

**DEPARTMENT OF MISSIOLOGY**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**JANUARY 1997**

## **SUMMARY**

This dissertation examines the dynamics of the oral communication which takes place in the Easter Vigil at St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Thaba 'Nchu. The study uses an analytical framework drawn from Orality Theory and Speech Act Theory, to analyse oral communication in the preaching and singing of the Vigil. Through an approach of Participant Observation, details were obtained of the Easter Vigils of 1994, 1995 and 1996.

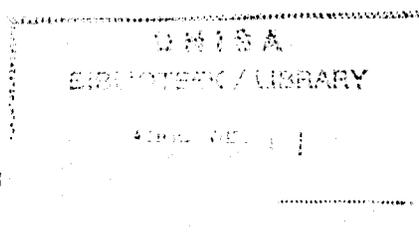
The historical and cultural background of this All-Night Vigil is traced in European Church History and African Traditional Religion.

The roles of the Mothers' Union, the St. Agnes Guild and the Guild of Bernard Mizeki are also highlighted.

## **Key Terms**

Easter Vigil; Orality Theory; Speech Act Theory; Preaching; Chorus Singing; Revival; Anglican Church; Mothers' Union; Bernard Mizeki Guild; St. Agnes Guild

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This project would not have been completed without the assistance of a great number of people.

Firstly, I would like to thank Fr. Kotsi, Fr. Lieta and the people of St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Thaba 'Nchu for their hospitality and co-operation over the three year period from 1994 to 1996.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the help and guidance of my supervisor, Professor Kritzinger.

I also thank my father, G.J. Poulton, and my husband, Chris Lubbe for their assistance in making audio and video recordings of the Easter Vigils over the three years, as well as the photographs.

Grateful thanks, too, to Gladys and Jacob Manala for their work of transcribing the contents of the video and audio tapes and translating them into English. Without their efforts, this dissertation would not have been completed. In this connection, I also thank Sello Pulumo and Dumisane Magagula.

I also thank Diane Prinsloo and Melvyn Hannibal for their work in editing and printing this dissertation.

Finally, I thank Chris again for his love, support and encouragement during this project.

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## CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The title of this dissertation is a quotation from the *Exultet*<sup>1</sup>, in which the resurrection of Christ is proclaimed. This resurrection message is the reason for the celebration of Easter and the holding of all-night vigils, as well as the explicit purpose of the liturgy in the formal section of the Easter Vigil. In the course of this study, I will examine whether this is also true of the other section of the Vigil, the *Mvuselelo*<sup>2</sup> or Revival.

### **1.1 The Relevance of this Study**

Western society has been dominated for several centuries by the written, and more so by the printed word. Literacy has many advantages, but it has some disadvantages which are not immediately obvious to those whose thought and discourse are controlled by printed rather than oral communication. To a great extent, this writing and print consciousness has been carried over into the Western church, so that, for example, it is assumed that Christian maturity depends on the reading of a printed Bible.

The Modern Protestant Missionary Movement, emanating from Europe and North America since the late eighteenth century, has spread the close link between literacy and conversion throughout the so-called Third World. In Third World countries, including South Africa, many people are unable to read and write. However, they are not unable to think and communicate, as literates often assume. Oral communication is a distinct form of communication, which needs to be developed in the Church, especially among communities where this is the dominant form of communication in everyday life.

In this study I examine the dynamics of oral communication, and then study an event where Christian oral communication is central, namely an all night Easter Vigil.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Exultet* is an ancient Easter hymn, sung or recited during the Easter Vigil. See 2.3.1.

<sup>2</sup> The *Mvuselelo* or Revival is the informal part of the Easter Vigil, which consists of sermonettes preached by members of the congregation on a given text, as well as choruses.

In this study, I want to highlight the unique features of this type of Christian communication and indicate the challenges which it poses to the mission of the mission-founded churches<sup>3</sup>.

The original title of this research project was "The communication of the Gospel to Illiterate People in the district of Ladybrand." However, during my research, I realised that there are problems with the title, and with the exact focus of the study. Firstly, the term "illiterate" is actually derogatory, since it defines people in terms of what they *cannot* do, i.e. read and write, or are not, in the same sense as the term "non-white". I have therefore decided to describe them in terms of what they *can* do, or how they do communicate, i.e. orally and visually, using symbols.

Secondly, I realised that I could not write anything meaningful about the communication of the gospel to oral communicators and societies, unless I first made a study of the **existing** forms of communication used by oral communicators themselves.

I therefore decided to study an event in which oral communication is prominent, and in which a great number of communicators are involved, namely an all-night Vigil. This could perhaps be described as the most democratic and participatory event in the life of a local mission-founded church. See Chapter 4, for a fuller discussion of these aspects of communication.

Thirdly, I realised that the scope of my earlier title ("in the district of Ladybrand") was far too ambitious for a dissertation of limited scope such as this. I therefore decided to focus my attention only on the Easter vigil held each year at St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Thaba 'Nchu. This event attracts Anglicans from far and wide, including people from Ladybrand, where I was living from 1991 to 1994.

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<sup>3</sup> I prefer to speak of "Mission-founded churches" rather than "mainline churches", as the rapid growth of African Initiated Churches has made the latter the "mainline" churches in South Africa. It is also more accurate than the term "Mission churches".

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

### *1.2.1 Oral Communication*

The aim of this research is to discover how oral communication functions in the context of a rural congregation of an African mission-founded church. This involves analysing each communication technique used in the vigil, but, as all communication takes place between people, it is also necessary to study the people and the relationships which operate between them, and between members of the church and church structures in so far as these affect inter-personal communication (See Chapter 4).

It is also important to study the relationship between the formal, organized communication structures of the Anglican Church (Church of the Province of Southern Africa) and the informal, popular expression of religious belief by the ordinary lay members of the Church. Oral forms of communication operate in both forms of religious expression, but more particularly in the informal events. In this study, this is specifically shown in the relationship between the official, prayer-book dominated part of the Easter Vigil, and the less formal *Mvuselelo* section of the Vigil.

### *1.2.2 Gender Roles*

Oral Communication remains the main issue to be discussed, but in the course of the study, the issue of gender roles emerged as a significant topic for discussion.

Since a majority of the active members in a parish such as St. Augustine's are women, it is also important to discuss the respective roles played by men and women in the oral communication process, in order to understand the process and the underlying relationships which it reflects. This will give insights into the status of women in the church, and by implication in the surrounding social structures.

In all rural churches, the Mothers' Union plays an important role, especially in the lives of the women members. "Women's groups constitute a powerful female response to Christianity" (Gaitskill 1995: 211). All regular attenders among the

women aspire to become members of the Mothers' Union. However, traditionally this has been the only section of church life where women are allowed to exercise authority, which is largely kept apart from the male-dominated authority structures of the parish as a whole, and the denominational structures which underlie them.

The attraction of such spirituality to women, both as mothers and as the subordinate sex in male-dominated churches, underlies how the spread and appropriation of Christianity has been gender-specific. It also confirms the importance of orality - as opposed to the dominant image of literacy - in African mission Christianity. Above all, the history of the *manyanos* demonstrates how African women converts put their own stamp on Christianity. In the teeth of opposition, they held on to a distinctive and fervent female group solidarity which helped to sustain them in times of personal and community upheaval (Gaitskill 1995: 212).

In this connection, it is interesting to note that the particular Anglican congregation under discussion does have a small number of women Lay Ministers<sup>4</sup>.

### **1.3 Research Methods and Sources**

#### *1.3.1 Methods*

The major method used has been Participant Observation, which involves domain analysis and theme analysis as discussed by Spradley (1980). I attended the Thaba 'Nchu Easter Vigil for three consecutive years (1994, 1995 and 1996), with the kind permission and full co-operation of the parish priests and parish councils.

I have also used interviews as a method of gaining information. Some were formally pre-arranged, as for example the interviews with Fr. Kotsi and Fr. Lieta (See Appendix 2 and 3). Others were informal discussions with members of the church, for example over tea in the Rectory lounge while the clergy were preparing for the 1995 vigil.

#### *1.3.2 Sources*

In addition to my personal notes, made during my participation in the three vigils of 1994-6, I have relied on two major sources of material, namely video and audio

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<sup>4</sup> Lay members of the Anglican Church who have been licensed by the Bishop to perform specific tasks, e.g. assisting with communion, preaching and conducting funerals.

tapes made during the vigils. The longer video material for the 1995 vigil was recorded by a member of the Thaba 'Nchu congregation. The short record was made by my father. In 1996, my husband recorded the video tapes, while I recorded the audio tapes myself. The content of the tapes has been transcribed and translated into English by Mrs Gladys Manala and two students at the Rosebank Bible College, Dumisane Magagudla and Sello Pulumo.

## **1.4 Theoretical Perspectives**

### *1.4.1 Oral Communication*

In order to have adequate "language" and analytical tools to describe the dynamics of oral communication in the Easter Vigil, I have studied the works of a number of scholars of oral communication, especially Vansina (1985), Finnegan (1976 and 1992), Naudé (1995), and Ong (1977 and 1982).

A number of perspectives taken from this literature have been combined into a theoretical framework, which enables us to understand the dynamics of oral communication within the Easter Vigil. In this section, I briefly describe this theoretical framework of interpretation.

Ong (1977) has pointed out the differences in thought forms and methods of communication between oral and print-dominated cultures. According to Ong (1977:21), at the root of this difference is the *participatory* nature of oral communication. Oral communication centres on inter-personal relationships and interaction, which are largely absent when one is reading from a document, rather than listening to a person speaking:

Oral utterance thus encourages a sense of continuity with life, a sense of participation, because it is itself participatory. Writing and print, despite their intrinsic value, have obscured the nature of the word and of thought itself, for they have sequestered the essentially participatory word - fruitfully enough, beyond a doubt - from its natural habitat, sound, and assimilated it to a mark on a surface, where a real word cannot exist at all (Ong 1977:21).

Both Vansina (1985) and Finnegan (1992) emphasise the role of **performance** in oral communication. All oral communication takes place in a communal context, whereas written communication can take place between isolated individuals, and in some cases the communicator and his/her audience never actually meet face to face. This difference is brought sharply into focus where the author of a manuscript is dead. The author has gone, but his / her words remain and can be read centuries later by a living audience.

Vansina (1985: 34) discusses **story telling** as the best known situation where oral performance takes place. This includes **dramatisation**, and a high level of **audience participation**, as in most cases the audience already know the story.

In some cases, the performer is a specialist, in others, anyone can take part in story telling. Vansina (1985:40) also shows that performances take place on **specific occasions**. They are not random events.

Finnegan (1992:92) discusses different kinds of performance. They include the two extremes of **planned performances** before an audience at a scheduled time and place and the **informal** telling of anecdotes, as well as several types of performance ranging between these two extremes. In a sense, all human communication and interaction is a performance. However, due to the centrality of oral forms of communication in oral societies, their societal structures are generally more performance-oriented than those of writing-dominated cultures.

Finnegan (1992:96) also examines the **roles of different participants** in the oral communication process. It is important to note how a performer carries out his/her role, whether he / she relies on **words, gestures, music or dance**, as well as the performer's age, sex and social position. In many cases, the performers and audience interchange, so that the audience become part of the performance.

Finnegan (1992: 97) also distinguishes between **different kinds of audience**. Primary audiences are those for whom the communication is intended. Secondary

audiences are those who “overhear” the communication, such as those who research an act of communication. In some cases, a performance may apparently be meant for one audience, but actually aimed at bystanders. Finnegan also distinguishes between **homogeneous and heterogeneous audiences**, although she allows that no audience will be totally homogeneous. She also distinguishes between mass communication and more personal forms of communication, although here again there will be degrees of difference between the two extremes (Finnegan 1992:98-100).

Finnegan (1992:104-108) also stresses the importance of aspects of communication **other than the strictly verbal**. She notes the use of **music**, whether sung communication is accompanied and by whom, as well as visual and material aspects of communication. This includes special **clothes** worn by performers or audience, and visual symbols involved, such as jewellery, arrangement of hair, facial markings, and equipment used in the performance. Finnegan (1992:106) also notes the importance of **movements** in performance, as well as performance skills and conventions in a society. The **form of delivery** may also convey meaning, and often outsiders are unaware of implicit irony, paradox or allegory in an act of communication.

Finnegan (1992: 97) has also distinguished seven different possible relationships between the performers and the audience in an act of oral communication:

1. A clear distinction is made between the audience and the performers.
2. The audience and the performers are relatively separate.
3. General separation between audience and performers, but with some active contributions by those who otherwise perform an audience role.
4. Active participation by different participants in different roles at different times.
5. Little or no separation between “audience” and “performers”.
6. Solitary performance with no apparent audience.

In studying the Easter Vigil, a clear distinction has been discerned between the **formal** style of liturgical worship, which follows closely the Anglican Prayer Book (APB 1989) and the **informal** style of the Revival. The more formal section of the service is similar in many ways to the rituals performed in many predominantly white congregations at Easter. The Revival is uniquely African and it is therefore the primary focus of this study.

#### *1.4.2 Oral Theology as a form of Local Theology*

In addition to analysing the dynamics of oral communication, I also describe the nature of the “local theology” (in Schreiter’s terminology) which is expressed by the Easter Vigil, and in particular in the sermonettes preached during the *Mvuselelo*.. This particular local theology is an “oral theology” as Naudé (1995) has pointed out in his study of the songs of a Zionist church.

The idea of a *local theology* contrasts with the traditional idea that there is only one “correct” form of theology, namely the form originating in the West. Schreiter (1985:6) sees the theology produced by a local community as the product of the interaction between the Gospel, the traditions of the church there and the local culture. In this way, there can be as many theologies as there are church communities. According to Schreiter, the work of establishing a genuine contextual theology begins with a long period of listening to the culture and community, in order to discover their needs, values, interests and the symbols used (Naudé 1995:121).

Naudé (1995:123) correctly states that both an “etic” or outsider perspective and an “emic” or insider view are necessary in order to develop an accurate understanding of communication within a social group. The researcher is an external observer, and needs to correct his/her perspective through contact with that of the actual participants, wherever this is possible.

Naudé (1995:25) uses the hymns sung by an oral church community as the basis for stating their underlying theological beliefs. He has also been influenced by Ong’s

description of an oral consciousness. He states that, although there are hardly any totally oral communities today, there are still many communities where oral forms of thought and communication are dominant (Naudé 1995:33).

In oral societies, words exist only in spoken form, and their meaning is dependent on the context in which they are spoken (Naudé 1995:34). There is no context-free “dictionary definition”. Vocal inflection and physical gestures and movements also play a part in defining meaning (Naudé 1995:37). See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the way gestures are used in the Easter Vigil at St. Augustine’s Thaba ‘Nchu.

### *1.4.3 Speech Act Theory.*

In order to have an appropriate analytical framework to examine the sermonettes, I have also used insights from Speech Act Theory in analysing the sermonettes. According to E.J. Botha<sup>5</sup> (1991:65-66), a speech act or utterance may have three aspects.

An utterance is a **locutionary act**, that is, it is coherent and grammatically acceptable to the hearers. In addition, an utterance may be an **illocutionary act**, that is, it achieves its most obvious purpose - as a warning, a greeting, a request or an order. Finally, an utterance may have a different intended effect on the hearer. This occurs when a specific reaction is desired from the hearers, and the utterance is then said to be a **perlocutionary act**.

Speech Act Theory distinguishes between **constative**, or descriptive utterances and **performatives**, which are action-oriented, that is, they bring about a result. For example: “I swear to tell the truth”.

Utterances are also classified according to their underlying purpose. Thus, an utterance may be **assertive** - declaring something to be true, or **directive** - urging

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<sup>5</sup> Botha is not the originator of Speech Act Theory. However, I have used his work as a model, as he has already taken the work of Austin, Leech (1983) and others and applied it to a religious text, i.e. Chapter 4 of John’s Gospel. I have applied insights from Speech Act Theory to the sermonettes produced at Thaba ‘Nchu during the Easter Vigil.

people to take action. It may also be **expressive**, or **rogative**, asking for information (Leech 1983:211-212).

## **1.5 Definitions of terms**

The definitions below are not necessarily to be considered universally valid. They are operating definitions, which explain the way certain terms are used and understood in this study.

### *1.5.1 Oral Communication*

We speak of Oral Communication as a process distinct from written communication, and unique to a primary oral society.

It is often assumed that all people communicate orally in the same ways. Walter J. Ong (1982: 1) has shown that this is a fallacy. Writing makes possible certain forms of thought which literates take for granted and assume to be universal. For example, writing makes it possible to keep accurate historical records, and this, in turn, leads to a different view of the past. Writing tends to create an individualism which is not present when, for example, memory is a collective activity.

Individualism is also fostered by private, silent reading, which is of course unknown to oral cultures. Even in early stages of literacy, reading is usually done aloud to an audience. Thus, all of Paul's letters recorded in the New Testament were designed to be read aloud to gathered congregations.

### *1.5.2 Literature*

Most people would describe literature as a collection of written documents. However, the meaning of the term can be extended to include the poetry, stories, proverbs etc. which store the memory of a people in oral form. Other scholars have argued that using the term "literature" and related terms in this way imposes Western norms on oral cultures. I believe that basic distinctions must be borne in mind, but we need a basis for comparison, and therefore, using "literature" to refer to both oral and written documents is helpful, since they record the same or similar kinds of material in

different contexts. This follows the view of Finnegan (1992:10) who advocates using "literature" as a generic term for various kinds of communication.

Steffen (1994:88) identifies three styles of literature present in the Bible. These are *narrative*, which accounts for 75% of the Bible, poetry, approximately 15 % and what he refers to as *thought organised format* - 10%. This latter category includes the letters of Paul, for example, where reasoned, logical argument is predominant.

However, Steffen notes that it is ironic that the majority of Westerners concentrate on the factual-logical when they attempt to communicate the Gospel. This is not an appropriate method of communication for the majority of the world's peoples, because it is foreign to their way of thinking and communicating: "The Concrete mode of communication dominates both Testaments, and is conspicuously evident in all three basic literary styles. This mode of communication relies on *objects* and or *events* to convey abstract concepts." (Steffen 1994: 89).

### 1.5.3 Culture

Culture is generally defined as the system adopted by a group of people for coping with their environment. The word is originally derived from the cultivating of ground (Elwell 1984:212). Culture includes the physical environment as well as social and psychological factors. The popular understanding of culture refers to the fine arts, but this, too, is gradually giving way to a wider view, influenced by developments in sociology.

Elwell (1984:212) offers the following definition of culture:

Culture includes all behaviour that is learned and transmitted by the symbols (rites, artefacts, language, etc.) of a particular group and that focuses on certain ideas and assumptions that we call a world view.

This emphasises another aspect of culture. Culture is an accumulation of learned forms of behaviour and adaptation, which are transmitted to successive generations. This concept of culture sees a culture as a static phenomenon, and tends to stress

the past of a cultural group. As a result, it fails to include cultural developments - culture is a growing system, which adapts to changes in the environment. This definition also reminds us that culture is more than observable actions; underlying and determining action is the world view of a cultural group.

Hesselgrave (1978:124) states that culture consists of "folkways, modes and mores, language, human productions and social structures." This is an extremely wide and general view of culture, including visible and invisible aspects, styles of behaviour, motivations, communication and society.

Luzbetak (1988:62) offers the following definition:

A culture is an essentially complete and detailed plan embracing all aspects or needs of human life, whatever the responses to these needs may be.

Therefore, culture is seen as a way of adapting to the environment in which a group of people live, and a series of problem-solving mechanisms.

Geertz (1973: 89) sees culture as a system of symbols, each communicating meaning for its users. This would include religious symbols as a subset, along with other traditions and ways of communicating and behaving.

#### *1.5.4 World View*

Closely related to the concept of culture is that of World View. A people's World View is the way they see the world, and is, to a large extent, culturally determined. It is also true that the World View of a group of people determines their culture. World View includes religion, philosophy and simply collective opinion.

Kraft (1979:53) defines World View as follows:

Cultures pattern perceptions of reality into conceptualisations of what reality can or should be, what is to be regarded as actual, probable, possible and impossible. These conceptualisations form what is termed the "worldview" of the culture. The worldview is the central systematisation of conceptions of reality to which the members of the culture assent (largely unconsciously) and from which stems their value system. The worldview lies at the very heart of culture, touching, interacting with, and strongly influencing every other aspect of the culture.

People are enculturated into a specific culture, usually as children. As they grow up, they are also educated to accept a specific view of the reality around them (Hesselgrave 1978: 124). All communication and thought within the group will take place in terms of the accepted world view. In many languages, including English, the word "see" can also mean "know". The world view is the way people see or know reality around them to be (Hesselgrave 1978:125).

#### *1.5.5 Ritual*

Ritual is an outward, visible expression or enactment of a religious belief or myth. Religious festivals will include specific rituals, for example the Lighting of the New Fire and Renewal of Baptismal Promises at Easter. In the case of St. Augustine's Church, Thaba 'Nchu, these ceremonies take place during the all-night vigil.

Some rituals may not be overtly religious, such as military parades, for example. Davies (1986:469), following Turner, distinguishes three types of rites: rites of separation, rites of transition and rites of incorporation, which may also be termed pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal rites.

#### *1.5.6 Rites of Passage*

Every society has Rites of Passage, which are performed at each crucial stage of an individual's life. These include birth, the beginning of adulthood, marriage and death. For some, there will also be special rites, such as becoming a tribal chief, or assuming some other public office. Graduations and ordinations are also rites of passage, as is initiation into membership of a church guild or organization (See 3.3.1).

#### *1.5.7 Symbols*

Symbols are usually graphic depictions of reality, as seen by a cultural, religious or social group. Meaning is given to them by common consent. For example, the most common symbol of Christianity is the empty cross, which points to the Resurrection of Christ.

It is generally agreed that symbols are arbitrary, i.e. they are not intrinsically related to the thing symbolised. Instead, the meaning of a symbol is given by consensus among those who use it. Therefore, it is also possible for one symbol to have more than one meaning in different contexts. Thus, a white garment may symbolise purity for one culture, but death for another.

A symbol is often an ordinary object or action, which is given a deeper meaning, (Davies 1986:469), for example the use of bread and wine in the communion service, symbolising the body and blood of Christ.

Krüger (1982:31) distinguishes between signs and symbols. According to him, a sign is a means of communication which needs to be interpreted by the person receiving the communication. A sign thus produces an interaction between its user and the person with whom he/she communicates. In contrast, a symbol "is a sign with an extra dimension, in that it implies a universe of meaning other than the everyday one". Symbols have an assigned meaning, which is agreed among the people using them. So, for example, it has been agreed among scientists that the chemical symbol for Copper is Cu. Symbols thus have an important role to play in art and science as well as in religion.

#### *1.5.8 Tradition*

Tradition is the collective, preserved memory of a group of people. It is often passed down to later generations in oral form, although literate cultures preserve some traditions in writing. Tradition includes history, myth, cultural norms and values, poetry, proverbs and skills passed on by apprenticeship.

#### *1.5.9 Liminality*

During rites, particularly rites of passage, there is a stage at which the initiate is between two statuses. He or she is, for example, neither a child nor an adult. At this stage, the initiate is seen as having a quality of holiness, or even dangerousness. During this period, they are apart from the community, as they are neither what they

were nor what they will become. In many societies, such initiates are kept physically apart from the rest of the community for the period of their initiation.

During the Easter Vigil, members of the guilds within the Church are enrolled, and this involves a change in status for the individuals concerned.

The concept of liminality in ritual has been expounded in detail by Victor Turner in his book *The Ritual Process*. Turner (1982) has studied the role of religious symbols in society and in the communication process. His research has been concentrated in rural African societies. His discovery of the importance of the equality of participants in African traditional rituals, where participants assume uniforms, to indicate the absence of status relationships (1982:111), is particularly important for this study.

He also uses the concept of **liminality**, to describe the process of transition in religious ceremonies. The term liminality, from the Latin *limen*, a threshold, refers to a stage of ceremonial transition from one state or identity to another. Liminal or threshold people have an ambiguous identity (Turner 1982:95). They do not fit into the normal societal classifications, and therefore are considered both sacred and dangerous. This applies to initiates entering adulthood, and to those assuming a new office, or joining a sacred society, or assuming any new status and role.

## **1.6 Development of the Research Project**

My original interest in this topic stems from my reading of Klem's (1985) book on oral communication, which emphasised the important role played by oral communication in African societies.

When I first began my research, in 1991, my husband and I had recently moved to Ladybrand in the Eastern Free State. For three years, we were responsible for four small rural Anglican congregations. The largest congregation was that of St. Peter's on the Hill, Westminster, and was composed of farm labourers with their families.

Using the method of Participant Observation expounded by Spradley (1980), I began to do empirical research among the people of St. Peter's on the Hill. I attended the monthly services which my husband Chris conducted, participated and made notes of events, with special reference to oral communication. I was also able to interview some of the members, with the aid of the Lay Minister, Mr Sergeant Mohlolo.

My supervisor, Prof. J.N.J. Kritzinger, suggested that I should try to attend an all-night vigil, for example as part of a funeral, in order to see oral communication at work in that setting as well. One of the farmers of Westminster told me about the vigil held on Easter Saturday night each year at St. Augustine's, Thaba 'Nchu. I approached the rector of St. Augustine's, Father Leslie Kotsi, who was happy to give his permission for us to attend, take photographs and record what was happening. We attended about three hours of the vigil for 1994. A man was present making a video of the whole service.

Approximately a month later, I was able to visit Fr. Kotsi, and discuss both the service and his parish with him. I have recorded the results of this interview and they are included in this study (Kotsi 1994, See Appendix 2).

Fortunately, Fr Kotsi had no objection to my attending the Easter Vigil at Thaba 'Nchu and therefore my father and I were able to attend a large part of the Easter Vigil for 1995. We were able to make a limited video recording of the event. Unfortunately, we ran into technical problems, so that we only have approximately 20 minutes of tape. We were also able to obtain a copy of the official video recording for 1995, made by a member of the congregation at St. Augustine's, Thaba 'Nchu. I took numerous written notes, and also many photographs. I have since analysed the service in detail, following Spradley's model of Participant Observation.

To some extent, being the wife of a priest allowed me to be accepted as part of the congregation. There were also disadvantages, such as the fact that some of the people may not have felt free to give honest answers to my questions, for fear of

offending my husband, or the church. I have tried to bear this in mind when interviewing members of the congregation.

An added disadvantage has been the fact that we had to leave Ladybrand in May 1994. However, we were aware that we would be moving for about six months beforehand, and I consciously tried to gather as much data as possible in the time available. Fr. Kotsi had no objections to my attending his services and vigils over Easter 1995.

His successor, Fr. Abraham Lieta, was also willing for my husband and I to attend the 1996 Easter Vigil. We did so, and were able to record approximately four hours of video tape.

### **1.7 Overview of Following Chapters**

The chapters to follow will include a brief discussion of the historical origins of the Easter Vigil, both in the Western Church and in Africa (Chapter 2). The historical survey will enable us better to understand the background to the annual Easter Vigil, in terms of the history of the Church in Europe and in Southern Africa. We will also seek to understand the specifically African aspects of the vigil at Thaba 'Nchu, and how these aspects relate to the formal liturgy of the Anglican Church which was introduced by European missionaries.

Chapter 3 is a discussion of the Formal part of the Easter Vigil at St. Augustine's Church, Thaba 'Nchu. This included baptisms in 1994, the Lighting of the New Fire and blessing of the Easter Candle, and the Liturgy of the Word. I have also included the enrolment ceremonies for the Mothers' Union and St. Agnes Guild in this section, as they are also set out in print.

The focus of the dissertation is on oral communication, as seen in the formal part of the service, and especially in the informal part, known as the *Mvuselelo*. This will be fully discussed in Chapter 4.

## **CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND** **TO THE EASTER VIGIL**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I highlight two aspects of the background to the all-night Easter Vigil in Thaba 'Nchu which I examine in this study. These two aspects represent the major factors that have influenced the shape and the content of the Vigil.

- a) the historical background and development of the Easter Vigil from European Church History
- b) The cultural and religious context of all-night vigils in African Traditional Religion.

Easter has always occupied a central position in the Christian Calendar. It is the only feast which can certainly be traced back to apostolic times, and commemorates the death and resurrection of Christ, which are the foundational events of Christianity.

A celebration at night, on the eve of Easter took place from early times, and was often a time for baptism of new converts:

..a nocturnal celebration of a single night, constituting the Christian Passover. It was also, or soon became, the normal occasion for converts to be initiated into the Christian Mystery...Thus it combined the commemoration of both the death and resurrection of Christ and the celebration of both baptism and the Eucharist (Jones et al 1992: 459).

A fast was held on Holy Saturday, and no Eucharists were held on this day in either the Eastern or Western church (Jones et al 1992: 462). This is still true today for Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.

The Easter Vigil itself is traditionally structured as follows:

This great service has four parts which traditionally follow one another in the following order: the lighting of the new fire and blessing of the paschal candle together with the singing of the Easter song of praise, the Exultet,

the vigil itself, the baptismal liturgy and the Easter eucharist (Davies 1989: 245).

## 2.2 The Development of the Easter Vigil in European Church History

According to Dix, Saturday night vigils were a common occurrence in the early church.

There is said, too, to have been the 'vigil' service, at which the church, in the hope of the second coming, regularly kept watch all through the Saturday night with lections and chants and prayers until the eucharist at cock-crow consoled her for the delay of the Lord's coming, by its proclamation of the Lord's death 'till He come' (Dix 1946:325).

A vigil on the night before Easter is mentioned in the Didascalia (a Third Century Church Order), 21:

The celebration of the Pascha began with a lengthy vigil. 'Watch all night in prayers, supplications, the reading of the prophets, of the Gospel and of psalms in fear and trembling and continual supplication until three in the morning....'

Dix (1946:338) records that "The *Pascha* or Christian Passover....was, like its Jewish prototype, a nocturnal festival. A vigil was held from the evening of Saturday to dawn on Sunday". Exodus 12:41-42 records that the Israelites were awake throughout the first Passover night, and the idea of vigil, waiting for the coming of the Messiah, persists in modern Jewish tradition (Berger & Hollerweger 1991:38).

The symbolism of light overcoming darkness can only be effectively demonstrated in a nocturnal celebration: "The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night. It should not begin before nightfall; it should end before daybreak on Sunday" (Irwin 1991:58).

Irwin shows how the entire vigil fits together logically: "The service of light (overcoming the darkness of this night and therefore of Satan and his realm) leads to the service of the Word. This review of salvation history and recounting of liturgy of baptism, which leads to the liturgy of eucharist" (Irwin 1991:59).

Huck (1992:110) similarly records the origin of the Easter Vigil:

This yearly Passover of the Church certainly has its roots in Jewish Christians who continued to celebrate Passover, but this annual celebration of Israel's passover and of Jesus' passover eventually drew to itself the community's need to climax the long initiation process for new members of the church. Around these catechumens, the already baptized renewed their own life-and-death experience.

The earliest form of the vigil apparently included a series of readings and chants, much like the Liturgy of the Word today (Dix 1946:338). As is the case in traditional churches today, "the whole history of salvation is rehearsed in readings and song" (Jones et al 1992 :402). The climax of the vigil was the Eucharist, after midnight. Twenty three of Augustine's sermons preached at Easter Vigils have survived. He called it the "Mother of all Vigils" (Sermo 219) (Jones et al 1992:402).

The early readings included Hosea 7 and Exodus 12. In the fourth century, these were replaced by a longer series, beginning with the creation and the fall, the story of Noah, Abraham, the Exodus and a series of Messianic Prophecies. This list appears to have been standard in most churches up to the sixteenth century (Dix 1946:339).

Easter became the preferred time for baptisms in the early centuries of the church, and was preceded by a time of preparation. Tertullian speaks of the Easter season as an appropriate time for baptism (Berger & Hollerweger 1991:43).

In the Apostolic Tradition 17,20, he expresses a preference for baptism at Easter: "The Passover offers the day of most solemnity for baptism, when our Lord's passion, into which we are baptized, was completed."

The season of Lent has its roots in the second century, as a period of preparation for Easter, but was first formally organized in the fourth century (Dix 1946:343).

According to the evidence of the *Apostolic Tradition*, those who desired to become Christians had to enter a period of instruction which might last up to three years.....There then followed a period of final preparation involving a daily exorcism and ending with two days of fasting immediately before the baptism itself, which may have been at Easter, although this is not explicitly stated. The baptism began at cockcrow, after a night-long vigil (Bradshaw 1992:176).

Maximus of Turin, writing in the early fifth century, notes that both Easter and Pentecost are suitable days for baptism. Both feasts are preceded by a Saturday fast and a Prayer Vigil (Bradshaw 1995:143).

After the readings, a sermon was preached, and then the neophytes were baptised, and allowed to join for the first time in the intercessions of the church and the Eucharist (Dix 1946:338).

Berger and Hollerweger (1991:43) describe the early vigils as follows:

....the Easter Vigil moves without a break from the proclamation of the Easter message to the Eucharist, the victorious sacrifice of the Lord at the altar. The practice of conferring baptism during the Easter Vigil, which gradually became a set custom in the fourth century, seems to have originated in the desire to bring all members of the community together for this decisive, principal, and original Eucharist of the entire year; to this end it was necessary to incorporate all suitable candidates into the Church through baptism and confirmation before this Eucharist was celebrated during the Vigil.

Davies (1992:425) comments on the centrality of the Easter Vigil for the early church:

The Church was conscious that it owed its existence to the saving events of the cross and the resurrection, and there was a vivid sense of the presence of the Lord who was with his people in and through the celebration of these events and who would come again in glory to complete the work of his redemption. The Paschal celebration therefore was not a mere recalling of the past events; it made the power of those events present to the worshippers, who could thus make a renewed encounter with their Lord. The first century vigil centred upon the eucharist, the Passover meal of the Lord, but by the second century, baptism, by which new members were added to the church, was celebrated as part of the Paschal vigil.

### **2.3 Recent developments in the Celebration of the Easter Vigil**

The practice of holding an all-night vigil on the eve of Easter fell into disuse for many centuries, but efforts are now being made to revive the practice (Huck 1992:122). From the seventh century onwards, the vigil came to be celebrated progressively earlier, until at the end of the Middle Ages, it was commonly celebrated on Holy Saturday morning (Davies 1986: 425). The missal of Pope Pius V in 1570 actually ordered that this service was to be celebrated no later than Saturday noon.

For centuries, the traditional liturgy continued, including references to "this holy night", despite the fact that the service was being held in broad daylight. The Liturgical Movement in the Roman Catholic Church, which arose during the 1950s, actively campaigned to change this state of affairs. Their aim was to discover the roots of liturgy, and revive ancient practices, as far as possible. In 1951, Pope Pius XII restored the vigil to its original time of day, and made revisions. His reforms were experimental at first, until they were made official in Holy Week 1955.

Many of the Mission-founded churches have followed suit, so that revised liturgies have been published in the last fifteen years, many of which incorporate an Easter Vigil. In England, reforms in liturgy were influenced by the work of the Joint Liturgical Group, an ecumenical organization which was set up in 1963. Their proposals were adopted by most of the British Free Churches, and by the Church of England with a few modifications (Jones et al 1992:471).

We need not assume that the Easter Vigil was celebrated uniformly everywhere, but the basic structure is clear, and has been set out in the Anglican Prayer Book.

The introduction to the Easter Vigil reads as follows:

In the Easter Vigil, which from early times has been the centre of the liturgical year, the Church celebrates the resurrection of Christ and the redemption which he won. Christians share the fruits of this redemption in the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist.

It is called a Vigil because in early times the Church kept an all-night watch, meditating on the Scriptures and praying till dawn when Christ's resurrection was acclaimed.

The Easter candle is an important symbol in this service, and throughout Eastertide is a constant reminder of the risen Christ, the Light of the world.

The service is as follows:

**The Service of Light** during which fire is blessed and the Easter Candle is lit to represent the risen Christ.

**The Liturgy of the Word** in which, through readings from the Old Testament, the Church meditates on God's mighty acts in history.

**The Liturgy of the Eucharist** in which is included the Service of Baptism. In baptism the fruit of Christ's redeeming death and resurrection is brought to us. After the water has been solemnly blessed, baptism (with confirmation) is administered, and those who have already been baptised renew their baptismal promises.

Thus, all night vigils were celebrated in the early church, particularly at Easter and Epiphany, and the Easter celebration was particularly central to early Christianity.

### *2.3.1 The Exultet*

The Exultet is an ancient Christian hymn which is recited or chanted at the beginning of the Easter Vigil, when the candles have been lit, and dates back to Northern Italy in the 5th Century (Davies 1986:219). The Concise Oxford Dictionary describes the Exultet as follows: "In the Western Liturgy, the 'Paschal Proclamation' sung by the deacon at the blessing of the Paschal Candle on Holy Saturday, and so named from its opening word" (Livingstone 1977: 186). It is found in the Anglican Prayer Book (APB 1989: 204 - 206). This is a form of oral tradition which has been preserved in printed form by subsequent generations.

Because this ancient oral proclamation of joy captures the essence of the Easter Vigil, I have taken the title of this dissertation from it: "Jesu Krete, Khosi ea rona, o tsohile!" "Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!"

Before looking at the way in which this European Christian Tradition was received and adapted in Africa, I first discuss the background of all-night religious rituals in African Traditional Religion and Culture.

#### **2.4 All Night Vigils in African Traditional Religion**

The Revival, which is part of the Easter Vigil, by its nature as an all-night gathering, lends itself to exuberant prayer, singing, dancing and spontaneous preaching, all of which are known in African traditions.

In many African groups, especially among indigenous churches...dancing has become a means of worshipping in a satisfying traditional manner...Music, often highly rhythmic drumming or clapping, can be viewed in the same light (Thorpe 1992:114).

Among the San, regular gatherings are held for performances of the Trance Dance. These gatherings fulfil both a religious and a social function, as, besides the healing rituals, they “provide an opportunity for the San to meet, eat, drink, joke, make merry and engage in courtship” (Bame 1991:21). Like the Easter Vigil, the Trance Dance is performed at night, and usually lasts throughout the night. It is attended by a group of around three hundred people (Bame 1991:22).

Such customs are not limited to the San, however. Night time vigils are very much a part of many present-day African cultures, with night being a time associated with the activity of the ancestral spirits in many African societies.

In Africa the telling of tales is often only done at night. It may be that this is the reason why the revival services are held during all night vigils. The style of preaching on these occasions is closely related to traditional story telling, and even includes the use of the fly switch, the traditional mark of authority among African orators.

Presler (1994: 100ff) has noted that an all-night vigil or *pungwe* was held in Shona traditional religion before a funeral, and also “the important ritual of settling

and bringing home the spirit of the deceased is held at night” (Presler 1994:104). An annual festival to honour an ancestor is always held at night, and lasts through one or even two nights. Presler has found that community religious activity generally takes place at night, while individual rituals are performed during the day:

“Throughout Shona religious culture, night-time religious activity is associated with the gathering of the community, and conversely, most community religious gatherings are held at night” (1994:108).

Wells (1994:174) has also recorded that in Lesotho in the mid-Nineteenth century, the early missionaries opposed the custom of holding all-night gatherings for singing and dancing, due to the noise, and the proximity of these gatherings to the missionaries’ houses.

People have more time at night, because they are generally working during the day. Most of them are workers on white-controlled farms, mines and factories. The night is therefore symbolically the time when they are free to do as they like, when they are free from white control. On a practical level, night time is also cooler, and therefore a more convenient time for holding long services or gatherings.

Zuesse (1979:184) has recorded a similar phenomenon from central Africa:

Among the Alur, a Nilotic people of north-western Uganda and eastern Zaire... possession generally is part of rituals lasting at times throughout entire nights of drumming, dancing, and violent exertions. The value of such sessions as sheer entertainment should not be ignored in societies largely restricted to fact-to-face encounters and the monotonous uniformity of everyday life.

Thus, all-night gatherings were traditionally a celebration of community, which was often associated with interaction with the spirit world. Vigils have become an important part of the life of most rural congregations, and are also associated with funerals. The Easter Vigil is widely regarded as the most important of these vigils.

Vigils are also held during the year at Thaba 'Nchu on the night preceeding a funeral, or sometimes the unveiling of a tombstone. These involve a smaller group of people, usually the family and close friends of the deceased, and are led by Lay Ministers, often with participation from the Mothers' Union and Bernard Mizeki Guild as well.

The holding of secret night-time movements, or **Sephiri** is widespread in South Africa. Martin West (1975:130) has researched this phenomenon, specifically in Soweto. The meetings take the form of weekly gatherings for prayer and healings, mainly among members of mission churches. Participation in the Sephiri movements enables them to practice healing rituals similar to those of Zionist churches, without alienating their own church authorities. Thus, the Sephiri movement has its origin in a basic antagonism between African and Western forms of worship and religious expression.

Participants in the Sephiri movement wear distinctive uniforms, each uniform representing a different level of membership. The society studied by Pauw (1960:130) had four levels of leadership, with a group leader, or chief minister at the top of the hierarchy. Entry to meetings of each level was gained by knowing the relevant passwords.

## **2.5 Christian Vigils in Southern Africa**

The practice of holding an all-night vigil has become important in all black churches, right across the denominational spectrum, even though the process involved still needs to be researched in detail. The Easter Vigil meets the needs of many people in Thaba 'Nchu, not only on a spiritual level, but also as entertainment (See 5.3).

Vigils have become an important part of the life of most urban and rural African congregations, and are also associated with funerals. The Easter Vigil is widely regarded as the most important of these vigils (See Appendix 3 - Lieta 1996).

All night vigils are commonly held on the night before a **funeral**, and the Tswana term for this is **tebelelo**. Friends and family of the deceased gather, sometimes in the same room as the corpse. Most of the time is spent singing hymns. There may also be prayers and a short address (Pauw 1960:157).

A tradition of “keeping the deceased company” already existed in African societies. However, in traditional African religious practice, no vigil service as such was held (Pauw 1996). It was customary for one or two close relatives of the deceased to sit with the corpse throughout the night before burial, but they would sit in silence.

In practice, today, even traditionalists have a certain amount of Christian ritual associated with the burial of the dead. They will also have a service at the home of the deceased on the night before the funeral, and they will invite Christian friends and neighbours to sing Christian hymns (Pauw 1996).

Presler (1993) has published a study of all-night vigils in Shona society, in Zimbabwe. In this paper, he discusses three related uses of all night vigils among the Shona people. Firstly, he is concerned with vigils in Shona Spirit Religion, and he then discusses vigils as they function within churches, both mission churches and Independent Churches. Finally, he discusses the way all-night vigils were used by guerrillas, as a method of conscientizing the rural population during the bush war in Zimbabwe. His doctoral thesis (Presler 1994) is also concerned with the Pungwe (all-night vigil) movement in Manicaland, Zimbabwe.

He describes the results of the adaptation of the traditional vigil as follows:

In the recent history and contemporary reality of the Shona people of Zimbabwe, the all-night vigil of the Shona Spirit Religion has been adapted to become a crucible of social cohesion and empowerment in two diverse contexts - the liberation struggle which culminated in political independence and the religious renewal taking place among Shona churches in the independence period (Presler 1993:1-2).

The original form of the all-night vigil, called *Pungwe*, among the Shona was a gathering of the community which lasted from dusk to dawn. The purpose of this gathering was to experience the power of their ancestral spirits or *vadzimu*, especially through divination and possession.

This form of gathering has been adapted and is used by several different Christian churches. In Manicaland, these vigils are still called *Pungwe* (Presler 1993:2). The vigils include singing, preaching and praying, as do the Easter vigils in Thaba 'Nchu. The Power of the Holy Spirit is also emphasised at these gatherings, as a counter to the emphasis on possession by ancestral spirits in Shona Spirit Religion. Presler (1994:85) sees the Christian *pungwe* as a site of inter-religious confrontation - "an interreligious encounter within the context of culture. The inherent dynamism of the encounter entails mutual influence, with elements of appropriation, transformation and rejection on each side". This is because most Shona Christians are influenced equally by Christianity and Shona Spirit Religion (Presler 1994:86).

Presler (1994:97) has discovered that the word *Pungwe* in itself has no religious connotations, but is a generic term for any all-night gathering. The occasions on which a *pungwe* might be held include funerals, wedding festivities, and, in recent society, an all-night rock concert.

The tradition of revivals in America spread to Southern Africa under the influence of the Methodists, and the holding of all night vigils was encouraged as part of this movement (Presler 1994:195).

Consecration of a new archbishop in an Independent church is also a nocturnal event, with the service beginning around 9.00 PM on a Saturday night (West 1975:56). The service consists of hymns, prayers and Bible readings, and is therefore similar to the *Mvuselelo* of the Easter Vigil.

## **2.6 Literacy in Twentieth Century Rural African Congregations**

Rural congregations in Africa today operate much as the early Church did, for the simple reason that many of their members are unable to read.<sup>1</sup> A greater value is given to memorization than is the case in most Western congregations. This is seen in the fact that many members of the congregation at Thaba 'Nchu do not use hymn books or prayer books. In some cases, this may be because the people concerned cannot afford to buy these books, but some carry books and hardly refer to them. Therefore, this reflects a dependence on oral rather than written communication.

Established rituals with fixed wording play an important role in the Vigil, not only in the early part of the service, which is set out in the Anglican Prayer Book (1989), but also in the enrolment ceremonies. The hymns and choruses used tend to be those learnt by generations of church members, and are known by heart for the most part.

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<sup>1</sup>Christianity arose in a predominantly oral culture. We are so used to dependency on a written Bible that we cannot imagine how the early Church operated.

"In the time of the Roman Empire, literacy was widespread, but popular literature as we know it today did not exist" (Botha 1992:196). Writing materials were not generally available, and were expensive. In addition, those with poor eyesight found it impossible to read and write (Botha 1992:201). Ability to read did not have the same social prestige as it does in the Western society of the twentieth century, and often writing was a task carried out by slaves (Botha 1992:203). As literate slaves were generally available, there was little incentive for the wealthy classes to learn to read and write. Public money was not available for schooling (Botha 1992:202) and often those who did learn to read were taught by private tutors in the home, who were usually slaves or freedmen. This, in itself, shows how little value was placed on literacy for its own sake.

A minority of boys attended elementary school, for which classes were often held in the streets. They consisted of the sons and slaves of wealthy families. It seems that illiteracy was the norm among the poorer inhabitants of the Roman Empire.

In the Revival, the Bible was used at the beginning, when the passage which formed the subject of the Revival addresses was read. Thereafter, it remained on the table in the front of the church as a visual symbol, but was not handled or read from again. The preaching and singing in the Revival is all done without using books of any kind.

Once the formal part of the vigil had been concluded, the clergy and entire Sanctuary Party left the church, processing out with the singing of a hymn. The team to lead the Revival came forward, while the people began singing and dancing. A table covered in a white cloth was placed in front of the sanctuary, with a fly switch placed on it. The leader(s) sat behind the table.

At Thaba 'Nchu, Western and African elements have been fused together. During the Revival, it could be argued that African forms of communication are dominant, while during the Formal Sections Western structures prevail. We will see that traditional African forms have been reinterpreted in the churches, so that a Christian message is communicated using oral African forms.

## **2.7 A Note on the Guilds and Organizations in the CPISA**

The Mothers' Union play an important role in the day to day functioning of the parish. Traditionally, women were not allowed to exercise prominent leadership roles in the Church, except within women's organizations such as the Mothers' Union.

Similar organizations are common to all black churches. Pauw (1987: 172) discusses the sociological function of such groups:

The most important religious organizations are the so-called church *manyanos* (*umanyano*, an organization) which differentiate along lines of sex and age. In nearly every church, *Umanyano Lwamanina* (the Women's Association) figures prominently, often more prominently than its male counterpart. Some churches also have girls' and men's associations...The main activities of these associations are meetings held for the purpose of religious exhortation, but they also play an important role in the Organization of **fund-raising functions, which often provide an opportunity for social intercourse and recreation.**

Brandel-Syrier (1962:16) has reconstructed the history of the Manyano movement. The earliest record of women meeting together on Thursdays was among churches of the Swiss Mission, where women's groups met on Mission stations in 1877. The Methodists were the first denomination to organize women's groups on a large scale, particularly on the Reef in 1906.

The Mothers' Union exists in England, but is a fairly marginal group within the Church of England. The movement arose in the nineteenth century as a result of a wave of revivalism which led to the establishment of age and gender-based groups within congregations, emphasising personal spirituality. The establishment of local chapters of the Mothers' Union was a routine part of Anglican mission strategy wherever Anglican churches were established (Presler 1994:208).

In contrast to the movement in England, the Mothers' Union in Africa has grown in size and influence in the church. For the most part, the white settler women formed their own organizations, such as the Anglican Women's Fellowship in South Africa, so that the Mothers' Union is an organization for black women. This has freed them from the control of the whites, so that the Mothers' Union has become a forum for expressing an indigenous form of spirituality.

The aims of the Mothers' Union are listed as follows during the enrolment ceremony:

1. To promote Christian teaching at the level of marriage and to spread this teaching.
2. To encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and in the Christian way of life.
3. To promote universal Christian fellowship, unity in worship and service.
4. To encourage the conditions in society which are conducive to good family life and safety for children.
5. To help those who meet with problems in their family life.

6. To stand and take a vow as members to serve our congregation to the end.
7. To be merciful and charitable to the grieving and to the poor.

Thus, they are most concerned with caring for families and for those in need in the community.

### *2.7.1 The Role of Women's Organizations in the Church*

The members of the Mothers' Union at Thaba 'Nchu wear blue tunics and hats. Women's associations are found in all church groups, and most of them wear distinctive uniforms (Pauw 1960:91). In some churches, there are associations for girls (The St. Agnes Guild in the Anglican Church). These are always closely linked to the women's associations. It is less common to have an association for men, such as the Bernard Mizeki Guild in the Anglican Church.

Brandel-Syrier (1962:49) has noted the pride with which Manyano members regard their uniforms, and how they are always freshly washed and ironed.

The Mothers' Union is mainly concerned with performing practical tasks in the church, such as cleaning the church and preparing the altar linen, cooking for church functions, as well as prayer, and caring for bereaved relatives. They also run the St. Agnes Guild, which encourages young girls to be active church members, and prepares them to serve in the Mothers' Union as adults. Although much of the work of the Mothers' Union is done behind the scenes, such as cooking the meal outside the church during the Easter Vigil, and is therefore not visible to the congregation, it is clear that they are part of the foundation of parish life.

Although the Mothers' Union Organization originated in England, in Africa it has developed an distinctive character, the roots of which probably lie in the originally **Methodist Manyano Movement**. Women's prayer groups are common to all denominations, including African Independent Churches. Aspects of their prayer

sessions include emotional expression, confession, testimonies, and communal singing (West 1975:88).

Brandel-Syrier (1962:16) describes the purpose of the Manyanos as follows:

...the *Manyanos* arose from a deep religious instinct which calls for fellowship and sharing,...they are certainly in the country but also in town, the most powerful voluntary association cutting through traditional tribal groupings.

West (1975:89) describes the sense of community experienced by members of these groups as follows:

Members are bound through common ties of membership and friendship, through common experience (in which personal confessions and testimonies play an important part in drawing people together), and through co-operative action - whether in visiting the sick or raising funds for the church....Manyano groups, being essentially separate from the church congregation, also provide leadership opportunities for their members.

It is difficult to become a member of a Manyano. The leadership of these groups demand church membership in good standing, Christian, or at least legal marriage, and paying of church dues regularly as well as good moral conduct (Brandel-Syrier 1962:47).

In Thaba 'Nchu, there is a three month probation period for women wishing to join the Mothers' Union (Lieta 1996). Brandel-Syrier (1962:48) has recorded cases where the probation period is longer:

Each aspirant member has to undergo a period during which she is 'on trial' or 'on probation' up to some six months, after which she becomes officially accepted at a grand ceremony... and given badges or uniform"

The "grand ceremony" for new members of the Mothers' Union at Thaba 'Nchu takes place during the Easter Vigil.

### *2.7.2 Bernard Mizeki and his influence on the Development of All-Night Vigils in the Anglican Church.*

Bernard Mizeki was born in Mozambique, and travelled to Cape Town at the end of the nineteenth century with other young men, in search of work, in much the same way as rural people today travel to Johannesburg. He attended night classes run by the Society of St. John the Evangelist, a community of the Anglican church, and eventually became a Christian through their influence.

In 1888, he was one of two black catechists chosen to accompany Bishop G.W.H. Knight-Bruce to Mashonaland, in order to plant Anglican churches there. He was stationed at Mangwende, where he built up a congregation and gained influence with the local chief, eventually marrying one of the chief's granddaughters. In 1896 he was killed during the Shona rebellion by family members of Chief Mangwende, who were jealous of his influence with the chief. Another factor was that in the climate of rebellion, anyone who was associated with the colonialists, including the missionaries, was a natural target (Presler 1994:191). He is honoured as a martyr by the world-wide Anglican church, being commemorated on the 18th June.

Bernard Mizeki emphasised a radical discontinuity between Christianity and spirit veneration, but he also demonstrated great sensitivity to the local context and traditions. For example, he persuaded Chief Mangwende to declare every Sunday a *chisi*, a traditional day of rest (Presler 1994:191).

Among the practices promoted by Bernard Mizeki was the holding of all-night vigils. This practice was popular among members of the mission churches in the nineteenth century, especially at major festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. The vigils would often last for several days. Many of the missionaries were uncomfortable with the idea of all-night vigils, because of the similarity to those held in Shona Spirit religion (Presler 1994:194).

## **2.8 Conclusion**

It is clear, therefore, that the Easter Vigil can be traced back to the earliest period of church history. After being introduced to African churches in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was adapted and popularized so that it met distinctive African needs, such as the need for an expression of community. Thus, in African churches, the Easter Vigil has taken on the nature of a feast, including a shared meal. In addition, the (originally Methodist) Revival meeting has been incorporated into the Vigil, forming the Informal Vigil or *Mvuselelo*.



**Members of the St. Agnes Guild**



**Renewal of Baptismal Promises**

## **CHAPTER 3 - AN ANALYSIS OF THE FORMAL VIGIL**

### **3.1 Introductory Remarks**

This chapter consists of a description of events during the Easter Vigils over a three year period (1994-1996). In this chapter, we will concentrate on the formal section of the vigil, in order to discover the role played by oral communication in the event. The next chapter will include a discussion of oral communication during the *Mvuselelo*.

Using the theoretical framework for study and communication developed in Chapter 1, a special study of the following aspects will be made: participation, performance, the use of drama and story-telling, gestures and movements as well as the role of the audience and the use of music and visual symbols. These topics are important in orality theory, and will therefore provide the basic structure of the chapter. Before looking at these orality features of the vigil, it is necessary first of all to give a brief description of the different components of the vigil.

### **3.2 A Description of the Procedure of the Vigil**

#### *3.2.1 The 1994 and 1995 Programmes*

The Vigil followed the same basic structure in 1994 and 1995. Minor changes were made, such as in 1995 when no baptisms were performed during the vigil. There were two clear divisions of the service, the formal liturgy, and the less formal Revival, or *Mvuselelo*. Much of the formal section was prayer-book dominated, and it lasted from 6.00 PM until 10.00 PM in 1994 and from 8.00 PM until 11.00 PM in 1995. The *Mvuselelo*, then continued from the end of the formal service until daybreak (approximately 6.00 am).

The service began with the Lighting of New Fire, in which "the symbol of light is used to remind us of how the resurrection shatters darkness and death and brings us to the brilliance of the light of Christ" (Irwin 1991:61). This was followed by the Blessing of the Easter Candle, and the procession into the church.

The clergy led the procession, followed by the Lay Ministers. The Easter candle was carried at the head of the procession, and the words *Kreste leseli la rona*, in English "Christ, our Light" were chanted three times. The congregation responded by chanting *Liteboho ho Molimo* the English translation of which is "Thanks be to God". In Thaba 'Nchu, all the chanting is done in the Tswana language. After the Sanctuary Party<sup>1</sup> had processed to the front of the church with the Easter Candle, one of the clergy sang the Easter hymn, the *Exultet* (APB:204-207), called in Tswana *Phathalatso ea Paseka*. The whole congregation lit their candles (each brought one from home) from the Easter Candle. The lights of the church were then switched on.

Then followed the Liturgy of the Word, a series of seven readings, which followed the theme of redemption (APB:207-215). Some of the readings were done in a lively style, but in some cases it seemed as if the reader was struggling to read.

In 1994, there were thirty-four baptisms at this point. The congregation then renewed their baptismal vows, and the clergy sprinkled them with holy water (APB: 223-226). This is a symbolic rededication, and a reminder of their own baptism. An Easter hymn was sung during the sprinkling. In 1994, the hymn was "The Strife is O'er" and in 1995, it was "Jesus Christ is Risen Today". A server accompanied the priest, Fr. Kotsi in 1994 and 1995, and Fr. Lieta in 1996. The server carried a basin with the water, and the priest used a wooden stick to sprinkle the congregation. He would dip the stick in the basin and then shake the stick forcefully into the congregation, repeating this action several times while walking up the aisle, so that most of the congregation was sprayed.

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<sup>11</sup> Sanctuary Party -This is the name given to the group of people who sit in the sanctuary and participate in the leadership of the service. This usually includes clergy, lay ministers and servers. For the Easter Vigil, the Sanctuary Party is considerably larger than usual, as lay ministers from the outstations are all robed and accommodated in the sanctuary.

All this follows the established ritual for the Easter Vigil as laid down in the Anglican Prayer Book (1989). The entire service is conducted in Tswana, and the people participate enthusiastically in the singing and liturgical responses.

The following table demonstrates the programme during the 1994 and 1995 Easter Vigils:

**1994**

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
6.00 p.m.	Lighting of the New Fire.
6.30 p.m.	Baptism
7.00 p.m.	Baptismal Vows Renewed
7.30 p.m.	Readings
9.00 p.m.	St. Agnes Guild, new members enrolled
9.20 p.m.	Mothers' Union, new members enrolled
9.45 p.m.	Lay Minister Licensed
10.00 p.m.	<i>Mvuselelo</i> Commences
6.00 a.m.	Eucharist.

**1995**

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
7.30 p.m.	Lighting of New Fire
8.00 p.m.	Baptismal Vows Renewed
8.45 p.m.	Readings
10.00 p.m.	St. Agnes Guild, new members enrolled
10.20 p.m.	Mothers' Union, new members enrolled
11.00 p.m.	Two Lay Ministers Licensed.
11.15 p.m.	<i>Mvuselelo</i> commences
6.00 a.m.	Eucharist

### 3.2.2 *The Programme for 1996*

In 1996, with the coming of a new priest, Fr. Abraham Lieta, a new structure was introduced. A service of Evening Prayer was held at 6.00 PM. Between 7.00 and 10.00 PM, the *Mvuselelo* was led by the Lay Ministers. It began with an elderly Lay Minister in a suit reading set prayers, and then moved into a more typical Revival format (See 3.4).

At 10.30, the formal service was held, with the Lighting of New Fire and Liturgy of the Word, as well as the enrolments of new guild members. An Easter Eucharist was to be held at around midnight, after which there would be a break for refreshments, and the *Mvuselelo* would continue, led by the Bernard Mizeki Guild<sup>2</sup> and the Mothers' Union. In fact, the Eucharist only began about 2.00 a.m., and finished around 3.15 a.m. Thereafter, there was a short break in proceedings, while supper was served to the congregation, and the second part of the *Mvuselelo* began about 4.00 a.m., and lasted until just after 6.00 a.m.

The reason giving for splittling the *Mvuselelo* was that the first part would be led by lay ministers, and the second part by the Bernard Mizeki Guild. However, it is interesting to note that both parts of the *Mvuselelo* in 1996 were led by the same man. His technique of leading was not noticeably different. The major difference was that he was dressed in a black cassock, that is, as a Lay Minister, during the first part of the *Mvuselelo*, and dressed as a member of the Bernard Mizeki Guild, with the badge and purple waistcoat, during the second part of the *Mvuselelo*.

It will be interesting to see whether the practice of splittling the *Mvuselelo* at Thaba 'Nchu will continue in future years, or whether they will return to the older format.

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<sup>2</sup> Bernard Mizeki Guild is a men's organization within the Anglican Church in Southern Africa. They are known for their exuberant singing, preaching and worship leading. Guild members also play an important role in fund-raising for local congregations. They are named for the Anglican catechist and church planter Bernard Mizeki, who was martyred in Mashonaland during the rebellion of 1896. Mizeki is commemorated in the Church calendar for Central and Southern Africa on the day of his death, 18th June. His life story has been told in detail in Farrant's book (1966).

## 1996

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
6.00 p.m.	Evening Prayer
7.00 p.m.	<i>Mvuselelo</i> Commences
10.30 p.m	Formal Vigil Commences - Lighting of the New Fire
11.00 p.m.	Baptismal Vows Renewed
11.15 p.m.	Readings
12.00 midnight	St. Agnes Guild, new members enrolled
12.20 a.m.	Mothers' Union, new members enrolled
1.45 a.m	Lay Ministers Licensed
2.00 a.m.	Eucharist
3.30 a.m.	Meal
4.00 a.m.	<i>Mvuselelo</i> Continues

### 3.3 The Formal Section of the Vigil

As can be seen from the table above, in 1994 and 1995, the **formal section** of the vigil occupied approximately the first four hours of the vigil (6.00 PM to 10.00 PM in 1994, 7.30 to 11.00 PM in 1995).

There was some variation in procedure, and in the number of ceremonies to be performed. To a great extent, this part of the vigil followed the Anglican Prayer Book, and included the Lighting of the New Fire (APB 1989:202-207), the blessing of the Easter Candle and the Liturgy of the Word, the twelve readings set for the Easter Vigil, which were interspersed with hymns and prayers. A sermon was also preached by one of the clergy.

In 1996, a wooden pulpit had been introduced by Fr. Lieta, because he said that he needed more space for Sermon notes than he had on the Lectern. This reflects his greater level of education, and consequent greater dependence on reading and writing.

Then followed the enrolment ceremonies for new members of the St. Agnes Guild, and the Mothers' Union. At none of the Vigils were there enrolments for the Guild of Bernard Mizeki. Where baptisms were to be performed at the vigil, they usually occurred after the Lighting of the New Fire, and before the Liturgy of the Word.

In 1996, the Formal Section was sandwiched between two Revival Sessions, and took place between 10.00 PM and 1.30 a.m. The Liturgy of the Word was different from previous years in that it followed the Anglican Prayer Book completely, in that the set psalms were recited, whereas in previous years hymns or choruses had been substituted. The use of hymns or choruses probably led to more participation by the congregation, but in using the set psalms, Fr. Lieta was following the universal practice of the Anglican Church. The Formal Section was followed by a Eucharist, after which supper was served, and then the second Revival Session followed.

I will now describe the formal section, in terms of the set of orality categories discussed in Chapter 1 (See Section 1.4.1), even though it concerns a formal and prescribed liturgy.

### *3.3.1 Performance and Participation in the Formal Section of the Vigil*

The Lighting of the New Fire was performed outside the West door of the Church. It was led by the priest, who was accompanied by the Sanctuary Party - the other clergyman present, the Lay Ministers and Servers. The latter were already lined up, ready to process into the church. The rest of the congregation did not participate directly in the ceremony, although a few moved outside to watch the proceedings. The majority remained inside the church in darkness, and listened to the priest chanting outside. He followed the prescribed liturgy for this ceremony (APB 1989:202-204).

Traditionally, the words of the ceremony were chanted, and this is continued in many Anglo-Catholic churches. In more evangelical churches, the words would probably be spoken rather than chanted. Before the ceremony was performed, young boys from the congregation were responsible for actually kindling the fire.

Participation by members in the Formal Section of the Vigil was largely pre-arranged. The Anglican Prayer Book is designed to allow greater congregational participation in ceremonies than was permitted in the old liturgies. However, by its very nature, formal liturgical worship limits spontaneous participation. Only participation envisaged by the liturgy itself is allowed. Readings were done by members of the sanctuary party, especially the Lay Ministers. For the most part, participation in the formal part of the vigil was limited to reciting set responses and singing hymns and choruses. These hymns and choruses were usually selected and led by those leading the liturgy, but in some cases the choir, or a member of the congregation would begin the singing.

The new prayer book (APB 1989) has tried to encourage congregational participation in baptisms, by including responses for the whole congregation. Apart from this, the baptisms are usually performed by the priest, and shared in by the family and godparents.

in 1994, thirty-four children were baptized during the Easter Vigil, after the Liturgy of the Word and before Renewal of Baptismal Promises and the sprinkling with holy water (APB 1989:215-226). In 1995, no baptisms were performed at this time, and in 1996, the baptisms were performed at a separate gathering during the afternoon before the vigil, at which forty children were baptized. The major reason for the change was that Fr. Lieta considered it a more suitable time, rather than slotting large numbers of baptisms in during the vigil. Baptizing small children and babies in the middle of the night also presents practical problems. As mentioned in 2.1, Easter was the accepted time for baptism in the early centuries.

All participated in singing hymns and choruses. During the formal liturgy, most hymns were announced by the presiding priest. Some, however, were started and led by members of the choir or the Mothers' Union.

The Readings during the Liturgy of the Word were performed by Lay Ministers, each of whom was accompanied by a server, a male server in the case of a male Lay Minister and a female server in the case of a female Lay Minister. The server held a candle to give the Lay Minister extra light. In 1996, there were two exceptions, where a male reader was assisted by a female server, and a female reader was assisted by a male server. In 1994 and 1995 the candle was needed because the church was still in darkness at this stage. In 1996, the lights had been switched on again, but candles were still used. It is therefore probable that the candles have a symbolic as well as a utilitarian function.

All members of the guilds participated in their enrolment ceremonies, by singing and dancing, joining in responses and placing the uniforms onto the newly enrolled members. A considerable amount of preparation had gone into the ceremonies, so that each participant knew where to stand, and what to do. It is the high point of the year for these guild members.

At the beginning of the ceremonies, the entire guild came forward. In the case of the St. Agnes Guild, they sang a song which tells the story of St. Agnes. The Mothers' Union come forward singing a hymn. Each of these guilds has a banner, which is carried forward with great pride. The Mothers' Union's banner has a picture of Mary the Mother of Christ, and the St. Agnes' Guild banner has the picture of a lamb, which is often used as a symbol of St. Agnes, because the Latin word for lamb is *agnus*.

Performance played less of a role in the formal section than in the more oral-dominated Revival. However, the procession, and the sprinkling of the congregation with holy water, were vivid performances. The enrolment ceremonies were also performances in which members of the guilds were actively involved, and the rest of the congregation formed the audience.

The wearing of common uniforms, and knowledge of guild songs and rituals gives the members of the guilds a common identity and purpose. This was seen in the way

that they sat together, and participated whole-heartedly in the enrolment ceremonies. These could be seen as rites of passage (See 1.5.7) which come at the end of a probationary period, a period of liminality (See 1.5.9).

The licensing of a new Lay Minister, which took place at all three of the Vigils, was a performance by all the Lay Ministers and the Clergy. They all participated, carrying the Church banner in the same way as the St. Agnes Guild and Mothers' Union had carried their banners.

Performance clearly plays a role in every aspect of the Vigil - in the renewal of baptismal vows, the enrolment ceremonies, the carrying out of rituals and the licensing of lay ministers.

### *3.3.2 Drama and Story-Telling in the Formal Section.*

Again, this aspect is more prominent in the Revival Section. The processions etc. dramatise what is happening, and are visually oriented, as are the enrolment ceremonies. The St. Agnes Guild ceremony in particular is important to all the young participants, and is the high-point of their year.

The St. Agnes song is a form of story telling set to music. This is sung while the young girls who are members of the guild come forward, and again when they return to their seats at the end of the enrolment ceremony. It is a way of **stating their identity** as members of the guild, who follow the example of St. Agnes, and other martyrs, such as Peter and Paul. (See Appendix 1 for the words of the song).

The prescribed readings tell the story of salvation, going through various Old Testament stories, such as the creation, the sacrifice of Isaac, the Exodus from Egypt, the Covenant at Mount Sinai, leading up to the Easter Story. The better readers read with expression, but in many cases, the readers were struggling to read, resulting in a stilted style. The different styles of reading represent different levels of literacy among the readers. Younger members of the congregation noticeably read with more ease.

The sermon, preached by one of the clergy, included a certain amount of dramatisation, such as dramatic gestures and variation of tone. In 1996, the formal sermon was preached by Fr. Lieta, on the subject of the meaning of Easter. He included the English words "The empty tomb is the womb of Christianity". He also called his congregation to a greater level of commitment, and included the English words "If we did it today at Easter, why can't we do it every Sunday? Each Sunday is a small Easter."

In contrast, in 1995, the sermon was preached by the assistant priest, Fr. Jacob. His text was Genesis 3:1-19, which is one of the set readings in the Liturgy of the Word for the Easter Vigil (APB 1989: 208).

### *3.3.3 Audience Participation in the Formal Section*

The audience is certainly not passive during this time. They participate in singing hymns and choruses, sometimes with clapping and dancing, and in liturgical responses. The hymns are sometimes chosen by the clergy, who announce the number, after which the choir begin the singing. At other times, members of the congregation start singing spontaneously. In many cases, it is individuals or groups within the Mothers' Union who begin a chorus or hymn. On rare occasions, the clergy will actually stop the people from singing, if they want to do something else at that point, but **generally spontaneous singing is allowed to continue**. On two occasions, a member of the congregation began a hymn or chorus, which the rest of the congregation did not seem to know. In these cases, no one joined in with the singer, and he or she soon stopped singing, and someone else began a hymn or chorus which was taken up by the rest of the people.

During the enrolment ceremonies, the relevant sections of the audience become performers (i.e. the Mothers' Union, the St. Agnes Guild and the Lay Ministers). The lighting of individual candles from the Easter candle at the start of the service also ensures maximum audience participation.

### 3.3.4 *Gestures and Movements in the Formal Section of the Vigil*

From the beginning, while the congregation were waiting for the official start of the service, there was quiet singing, interspersed with more lively chorus singing, accompanied by dancing and clapping.

The congregation waited in silence while the Lighting of the New Fire was conducted. They lit candles from the Easter candle, and sang an Easter hymn, (115 - The English original of this hymn is "The Strife is O'er") during the procession of the sanctuary party, carrying the Easter candle. Each verse of this hymn ends with "Alleluia", and whenever this was sung, the entire congregation raised their candles above their heads.

During the Ministry of the Word, the congregation join in singing hymns and choruses when invited to do so. The prayer book recommends the singing or reciting of psalms and canticles between the readings, but songs and hymns provide for more congregational participation. Generally, the **mood** during this part of the service is **quiet and restrained**.

When the members of the St. Agnes Guild were invited to come forward, at every vigil, they did so singing and dancing. When new members were admitted by the clergy, they knelt at the altar rail. The priest prayed for each new member, blessed her with holy water, and handed each one a blue tunic before raising her to her feet. The sponsors, standing immediately behind the new members, slipped the blue tunics over their heads, and all crossed themselves. The whole St. Agnes Guild then moved back to their places, clapping, singing and dancing. The same song was sung when they went forward, and when they returned to their places. The words of the song remind the young members of the need for costly commitment, following the example of the martyrs in Rome.

The Mothers' Union danced forward in the same way, during the singing of a hymn. After the members had renewed their membership vows, the new members knelt at the altar rail. The priest blessed each new member in turn, shook her by the hand

and raised her to her feet. They then put on their blue jackets. After a final blessing from the priest, they moved back to their places, singing the hymn “Lord, dismiss us with Thy Blessing” in Tswana.

The members of the Guild of Bernard Mizeki danced forward when their turn came, singing and clapping on their books in time to the music.

When a Lay Minister was to be licensed, all the Lay Ministers came forward during the singing of a hymn, and carrying a banner saying “St Augustine’s Church, Lay Ministers”. The use of banners for the Mothers’ Union and St. Agnes Guild is widespread in the Anglican Church, but it is unusual to find the Lay Ministers carrying a banner as well. A banner is a visual symbol of the group that it represents, and this shows that the Lay Ministers of St. Augustine’s Church see themselves as a group within the church, similar to the Mothers’ Union.

At the close of the formal part of the vigil, the clergy, lay ministers and servers processed out of the church, during the singing of an Easter hymn. The candles on the altar were also extinguished, as at the end of a normal Sunday service.

### *3.3.5 The Use of Music during the Formal Section*

The Hymns used are **Tswana translations of the traditional English hymns** sung in English speaking churches. Most of the hymns sung during the vigil are Easter or Passiontide hymns such as “Glory be to Jesus” , “Jesus Christ is Risen Today” and “Rock of Ages”. These hymns are sung with enthusiasm, but the singing is quieter than for the choruses, and generally the congregation members either sit to sing or stand in one position, with little movement while singing.

**Choruses** are also sung. They tend to have simpler tunes and be shorter and more repetitive. Most choruses last approximately five minutes and they lend themselves to more exuberant singing, often accompanied by dancing and clapping.

In 1995, an **organ** was introduced together with a **choir**, mostly consisting of women. The organ was played by Fr. Kotsi's son, who had taken a course at the Arts Centre in Thaba 'Nchu. At times, the organ did not match the style of the **congregational singing**, but the organist often tried to **follow** the singing rather than lead it, as in most Western churches.

It seems that a desire to be like European congregations on the part of Fr. Kotsi was behind the introduction of the organ. He spent some years with a white congregation during his training. However, it does not seem that the congregation resent the organ, although they obviously manage to sing very well without it.

Fr. Lieta has encouraged the use of the organ, although this is hampered by the absence of a regular member of the congregation who is able to play. An "import" from the local Roman Catholic Church is recruited as often as possible, and according to Fr. Lieta, he receives positive feedback from members of the congregation whenever the organ is used. Families particularly like to ask him to play for weddings and funerals, so that, for example, he can play the wedding march.

### *3.3.6 The Use of Symbols during the Formal Section*

The symbolism of **darkness and light** is very prominent, especially during the Lighting of New Fire and the lighting of candles from the Easter Candle. The church is in darkness during these ceremonies. This is not unique to this congregation, but is encouraged in the Anglican Prayer Book (1989). The gradual lighting of the church by the candles lit from the Easter Candle is also a very impressive sight.

Other visual symbols used are the **vestments** worn by the clergy, Lay Ministers and Servers and the **uniforms** worn by the Guild of Bernard Mizeki, the Mothers' Union, the St. Agnes Guild and the choir. The banners carried by the Mothers' Union members, the St. Agnes Guild members and the Lay Ministers are important visual symbols.

The embroidered altar cloths should also be mentioned. In 1995, an orange and brown design was used, with a figure representing the risen Christ in the centre. In 1996, a floral design was used. In both cases, the cloths had bright colours and striking designs, adding to the air of celebration. The presence of numerous flowers and plants in the Sanctuary is most noticeable at Easter, because they would have been completely absent during Lent.

Most of the rituals and symbols used in Anglican tradition are extremely visual. The symbols used in the Easter Vigil at Thaba 'Nchu are no exception. The care with which these objects are maintained, and the pride with which the banners are carried and uniforms worn show that they symbols are deeply valued by the members of the congregation.

### **3.4 The Purpose of the Vigil**

The Easter Vigil is a celebration of the Easter events, but also a time of gathering for the larger community of St. Augustine's, Thaba 'Nchu. It is the only service of the year when the whole parish unites in this way.

Ayisi (1992:84) states that "ritual collaboration and common ritual allegiances are indices of common interest and mechanisms of solidarity". This is certainly true of the Easter Vigil, as it is a celebration not only of the Easter message, but also of the sense of community in the congregation, and between the main congregation and members of the outstations.

The sense of community during the Vigil is strong. Cragg (1969:150) has described an African community as follows:

*Muntu* or vital force binds each to all! in a mutual or acceptance community, essentially integrative, in which self-hood is not separable from the inclusiveness of relationships received and treasured from the older living and from the departed, and perpetuating towards the generations yet unborn, while extending laterally to all things in their respective, but subordinate powers, and inhering in God as the supreme and complete *Muntu*.

Pauw (1960:63-64) describes this sense of community as revealed in the district of Kuruman, where on the first weekend of each month, different congregations of the London Missionary Society churches would come together. The denominational leadership would attend business meetings, while ordinary members met together, and finally a eucharist would be celebrated on the Sunday afternoon.

Fr. Lieta said that many of the parishioners only come to church for the Easter Vigil, and then are not seen for the rest of the year (Lieta 1996). The Vigil is often used as an opportunity for lapsed members of the church to return and rededicate themselves, especially in the Renewal of Baptismal Promises (APB 1989:223-226).

The Easter Vigil is considered by many church members the most important service of the year. It is an opportunity for repentance, rededication and night-long celebration. It seems that African and European elements are able to co-exist in a reasonably amicable way, so that, particularly during the Revival, members are able to worship in an authentically African way, in which oral forms of communication are dominant.

The Easter celebration involves outlying chapelries coming into Thaba 'Nchu for the night. At one time, many would come in on Maundy Thursday evening, and stay until Easter Sunday morning, but this was found to be impractical, as there were no facilities to accommodate all the visitors. Therefore, festivities are now confined to Saturday night and Easter Sunday Morning.

Fr Lieta compares the coming together over the Easter weekend to the Jews going up to Jerusalem to celebrate major festivals. This is a suitable time, therefore, for the renewal of the people's commitment to God and the Church, and for the admission of new members to the guilds.

The admission of new members is preceded by a three month probationary period, during which initiates are required to attend confession or counselling sessions (Lieta 1996). During this time, they examine their motives for desiring to become

members, aided by the clergy and the leadership of the guilds. This could be called an example of a liminal phase in the initiate's life (See 1.5.7 and 1.5.11).

The Easter Vigil is clearly enjoyed by all participants. The atmosphere is relaxed and festive throughout, but the enthusiasm of the participants climaxes during the *Mvuselelo*. It is the central celebration of the year, an occasion for communal festivities, and an opportunity to rededicate oneself for the coming year.





**Preaching during the *Mvuselelo*.**

## **CHAPTER 4 - THE DYNAMICS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION IN THE INFORMAL VIGIL**

The last chapter consisted of a description of the Formal /Liturgical Section of the Easter vigil at Thaba 'Nchu as experienced over three consecutive years. We will now analyse the dynamics at work in the *Mvuselelo* in terms of Orality Theory, and also in terms of Speech Act Theory.

In this chapter, I will analyse the preaching (4.1), first using Speech Act Theory (4.1.3), and then Orality Theory (4.1.4). Then, I will analyse the chorus singing (4.2), using Speech Act Theory (4.2.1) and then Orality Theory (4.2.2).

### **4.1 Analysis of the Preaching during the Revival**

#### *4.1.1 The Texts Chosen for Preaching*

In 1995, the text chosen was Luke 24:1-7:

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel; and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise?"

The final chapter of Luke's gospel is the climax of his narrative. His account of the resurrection begins with a group of women discovering the empty tomb. The "they" in verse 1 refers to these women, as is clear from Chapter 23. The resurrection as such is not described by any of the gospels, but all emphasise its importance (Morris 1983: 332-333).

In Luke's account, Jesus is crucified on the eve of the Sabbath. As no work can be done on the Sabbath, the women had to wait until after the Sabbath, which ends on Saturday evening. Because of darkness it was only the following morning, the first day of the week (Sunday) that they were able to complete the burial of the body. On

reaching the tomb, they find the stone across the entrance rolled away, and the tomb empty. They are confronted by “Two men...in dazzling apparel” who tell them to look for Jesus among the living, not among the dead.

In 1996, the text chosen was Jeremiah 40: 4:

“But today I am freeing you from the chains on your wrists. Come with me to Babylon, if you like, and I will look after you; but if you do not want to, then don’t come. Look, the whole country lies before you; go wherever you please.”

The situation described in Jeremiah 40:4 is as follows:

The Babylonians had conquered Jerusalem. The Captain of the guard offered him either freedom in Israel or preferential treatment in Babylon. Jeremiah, however, refused the gesture, preferring to stay in Jerusalem with the poor people, those the Babylonians did not consider worth deporting (Kidner, 1987: 129).

Therefore, the speaker in Jeremiah 40:4 is the Babylonian Captain of the Guard. However, some of the preachers assumed that this verse reported the voice of God to Jeremiah, and by extension to those present on that evening.

#### 4.1.2 *The Procedure during the Mvuselelo.*

Strict instructions were given by the Master of Ceremonies before the *Mvuselelo* began:

“Our train is a fast-moving one; if you board it, you must do so correctly, otherwise it will spit you out.”

This was an interesting metaphor taken from the everyday experience of the participants in the *Mvuselelo*. When travelling to Bloemfontein, for example, many of them would use the train, and they would know that trains do not wait for stragglers! In the same way, the rules and requirements of the *Mvuselelo* would be enforced. Those who did not cooperate, who tried to monopolise the proceedings, would be “spat out”. Participants would show their disapproval by interrupting a sermonette with a chorus, or by not joining in the singing when someone started a chorus. Participants were instructed to be silent at once whenever the hand bell was rung by

the leaders, and also not to speak for too long, so that others might have a chance to preach.

Co-operation was a key concept in the *Mvuselelo*. Steps were also taken to ensure that a cross-section of people from the congregation took part in the preaching. This is the reason for the M.C.'s request for one person from each guild to preach. The *Mvuselelo* in 1995 was led by two men from the Bernard Mizeki Guild and one woman from the Mothers' Union. The major emphasis in the preaching during the *Mvuselelo* for both 1995 and 1996 was revival / repentance.

The choruses are known to all, as are the main ideas expressed, which focus on the truths underlying the community's identity, especially the cross-resurrection event. The main focus of the preaching is not on formulating the gospel in new and clever ways, but on restating known truths, and calling on the audience to put them into practice. Two further points are emphasised - the change in lifestyle which results from an act of repentance, and the desire to be close to God.

During the *Mvuselelo*, the majority of the choruses sung can be linked to the sermonettes. Thus, after the emotional challenge: "Now is the time for us to be saved..." the chorus which begins *Jesu ke Mmoloki wa ka* (Jesus is my Saviour) is sung.

My approach of analysing the sermonettes and choruses separately will obscure the connection between the preaching and the singing to some extent, but I will include cross-references between the two sections from time to time.

The biblical texts were not interpreted according to their historical context, as a Western preacher would endeavour to do. The emphasis was on liberation, primarily in a spiritual sense. The choice for or against following God's way was also strongly stressed. At times, English phrases were included in the sermons, probably for the benefit of the researchers. Examples are: "Thus says the Lord", "He was known as

the weeping prophet”, and “Jeremiah, the choice is yours. Today, I set you free, I liberate you.” The words “The choice is yours” were repeated several times.

The sermonettes for 1995 and for 1996 had a similar message and purpose - a call to repentance. Different texts were used, and different people participated in the preaching, but the same basic message was re-stated. Thus, the purpose of the informal preaching in the *Mvuselelo* is to stir up the congregation to repentance and a changed lifestyle, and to re-state familiar truths for all to hear.

#### *4.1.3 Analysis of the Sermonettes in terms of Speech Act Theory*

In this section, I will analyse the sermonettes using insights from Speech Act Theory, as discussed by J.E. Botha (1991:65-66) (See 1.4.3). This implies that the intention of the preachers is the central focus of this section.

The most common perlocutionary intentions seen in the sermonettes was the desire to stimulate the hearers to repentance and greater dedication. This was seen in the emphasis on choices, and specifically the choice to follow Christ.

In 1995, the emphasis was on choosing to rise with Christ, or to allow Christ to rise in your heart. Unethical behaviour was seen to be evidence that the Christ in a person's heart was still dead.

In 1996, the statement was also made that Jeremiah challenged people to repent of sin. These emphases can be linked to the enrolment and re-dedication ceremonies during the formal Vigil, and the renewal of Baptismal Promises, where the participants symbolically renew their commitment to God, the church and their church organisations.

In studying the sermonettes, I have categorised them in terms of their primary purpose as either directive, informative, encouraging or expressive. These categories are not water-tight, since all of the sermonettes have a directive element, as the purpose of the *Mvuselelo* is to move the audience to repentance, revival and

renewal. Nevertheless, there are sermonettes in which the directive element is not central, since another intention is dominant.

I have chosen seven sermonettes as typical representatives of the varieties of sermonettes preached during the *Mvuselelo*. I have not attempted a detailed analysis of **every** sermonette recorded because space is limited in a dissertation of this nature. The sermonettes have been numbered according to the years (1995 and 1996) and the order in which they were preached. Thus, the first recorded sermon in 1995 is termed S 95/1. I have analysed the sermonettes sentence by sentence, and then done an overall analysis of the sermonette.

#### 4.1.3.1 Sermonette S 95 /1

- a) *Ka nako ye ka letsatsi la ntlha la beke, ba tsayo leeto.*

At this time, on the first day of the week, they took a journey.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: constative (informative / narrative)

Perlocution: This statement introduces the sermonette. It refers to the women going to the tomb of Jesus on the first day of the week, for the purpose of embalming the body.

- b) *Batho ba ba ne batshwenyegile.* These people were worried.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (descriptive)

Perlocution: This sentence explores the feelings of the women, so that the audience can identify with them.

- c) *Ba fitlhela lejwe le butswe, ba fitlhela Jesu a seyo. Lebitla la Jesu le lolea.*

They found that the stone at the mouth of the tomb was moved and the body of Jesus was not there. The tomb of Jesus was empty.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Informative)

Perlocution: This statement repeats the story already told in the reading. It is a simple narrative account of the finding of the empty tomb.

- d) *Banna ba babedi ba a ba botse gore ba batlelang motshedi mo baswing.*

Two men asked them why they were looking for someone who is alive among the dead.

Form: Statement

Type of illocution: Constative (Informative)

Perlocution: The narrative account continues.

- e) *Motšha fetoga ka sena sebaka; gore o fitlhe kwa gae o le motho o mošwa.*

Young person, repent at this time, so that you may arrive in heaven (home)<sup>1</sup> a new person.

Form: Imperative

Type of Illocution: directive

Perlocution: There is a radical change in the direction of the sermonette at this point. Previous statements have been primarily re-telling the story of the resurrection and discovery of the empty tomb. Now, the speaker urges the audience, and especially the youth, to repent. The term *getoga* refers to the desired response from the audience. The preacher wants them to rededicate themselves to God during the Easter Vigil, to be revived in their faith.

- f) *Go na le mabitla a a suthang; A re tsogeng le Jesu gompiano.*

There are moving graves; Let us resurrect with Jesus today.

Form: Jussive subjunctive

Type of Illocution: directive

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<sup>1</sup> Referring to heaven as "home" is a common expression used by people from many church traditions.

Perlocution: Repentance is likened to being resurrected with Jesus, leaving the old sinful life and going on to a new life.

- g) Overall Analysis: This sermon is primarily of the Directive type, that is, the purpose of the preacher is to summon his audience to repentance. The first half of the sermon is a simple narrative account, but it is followed by a challenge expressed in three different ways:
- i) Repent (a call specifically directed to the youth present)
  - ii) Arrive in heaven, or at home, a new person. This could be seen as the motivation for repentance - make sure that you arrive in heaven, and that you become a new person.
  - iii) The preacher then calls the audience "moving graves", stating that they are in need of resurrection / revival, by means of a very concrete image. He concludes by calling them to rise from the dead with Jesus. The turning point in this message came when the preacher reached the words "the living among the dead". This brought him to the point that he wanted to make: there are living among the dead, and dead among the living. At that point, the narrative led him to a strongly directive climax: Are we alive or dead? Is Jesus alive in us?

#### 4.1.3.2 Sermonette S 95/2

- a) *Luka o rata go bua le motho ka molaetsa wa tsogo ya Morena Jesu.*

Luke wants to speak to a person about the message of Jesus' resurrection.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Informative)

Perlocution: The preacher is explaining the meaning of the passage which has been read, Luke's account of the discovery of the empty tomb.

- b) *Basadi fa ba bona lebitla le butswe ba tshoga.*

When they saw the opened tomb, the women were afraid.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Descriptive)

Perlocution: The preacher is exploring the emotional experience of the women involved in the incident, leading the audience to identify with them.

- c) *Barategi Moreneng, Kajeno Jesu Kreste o batla go tsena dipelong tsa rona.*  
Beloved in the Lord, Today, Jesus Christ wants to get into our hearts.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Directive)

Perlocution: This sentence is phrased as a statement, but its purpose is an indirect command. Since Christ wants to “get into” the hearts of those present, they should open themselves and allow Him to do so.

- d) Overall Analysis: All sermonettes preached had some directive aspects, as the central purpose of the *Mvuselelo* was to call the people to repentance and renewal. However, this sermonette is primarily informative, with the purpose of explaining the short passage, and only secondarily directive.

The second speaker was the Mothers' Union member who was one of the leadership team. She built on the first preacher's words, and reinforced them.

Once again, the narrative mode was abandoned once the preacher reached the words or image that triggered her **message**: the open tomb - Are our hearts **open** to Jesus? Has He **entered** our hearts?

#### 4.1.3.3 Sermonette S 95/6

- a) *Motlhomongwe Jesu yo, Kgale a sule pelong ya gago: Metsamayo ya gago; le dipuo tsa gago di tlile go re bontsha gore Jesu kgale a sule mo pelong ya gago.*  
Perhaps this Jesus has long been dead in your heart: Your way of living, your conversation will show us that Jesus has long been dead in your heart.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: constative (suggestive)

Perlocution: This speaker relates the message of repentance directly to the Easter story. He implies that Jesus could be dead in the hearts of his hearers, as seen by their unethical conduct towards one another. Despite the seriousness of this message, the “perhaps” with which the sermonette begins shows a respectful and non-aggressive form of preaching.

- b) *Tsayang leeto bomme, bontate, batšha mme le ikopeleng moya o o boitshepo, gore o re tsosolose mme re fetoge.*

Mothers, Fathers, youth, take this journey and ask that the Holy Spirit revive us, so that we may change.

Form: Imperative

Type of Illocution: directive

Perlocution: The speaker addresses everyone in the audience - adults, men and women and youth, and urges them to undertake a journey so that the Holy Spirit may revive them, enabling them to live changed lives.

- c) *Morutabana, le wena o mang le BA ipatlisise; mme o tsoge le Morena Jesu.*

Teacher and you who have graduated (BA) make an introspection, and rise with the Lord Jesus.

Form: Imperative

Type of Illocution: directive

Perlocution: The challenge to repent or be revived by the Holy Spirit, is repeated, this time directed to teachers and members of the congregation with tertiary education. They are challenged to examine their consciences and “rise with the Lord Jesus” on Easter Day.

- d) Overall Analysis: This sermonette was primarily directive. On this occasion, the call to repentance was expressed as the call to embark on a journey, resulting

in a change of behaviour, brought about by the Holy Spirit. The call was addressed primarily to the more educated members of the congregation, lest they should believe that their education was a substitute for experiencing revival.

#### 4.1.3.4 Sermonette S 96/1

- a) *Ke ya go bofolola gompiono.*

I release you today.

Form: Statement

Illocution: constative (assertive)

Perlocution: The speaker is quoting directly from the passage read (Jeremiah 40:4). These words are a dramatic beginning to the sermonette. The speaker plainly understands God to be the speaker, although in the original context, the speaker is a Babylonian soldier.

- b) *Fa go na le moeng gare ga rona, a a bofologe gompiono, ka madi a ga Jesu.*

If there is a visitor among us, let him / her be unchained today through the blood of Jesus.

Form: Jussive Subjunctive

Type of Illocution: Directive

Perlocution: The reference to visitors relates to the many people who visit the church at Easter time, and are not regular members of the congregation, or those who feel that they are outsiders. The speaker stresses that the Easter Vigil is the time for liberation through the blood of Jesus.

- c) *Ikgetheleng yo o le tla Modirelang.*

Choose whom you will serve.

Form: Imperative

Type of Illocution: Directive

Perlocution: This sentence is the central challenge of the sermonette, and expresses the theme of the *Mvuselelo*. The audience is presented with a choice - for or against God.

- d) *A ke o mo leke, mme o tla bona gore Modimo wa tshela.*  
Just try Him, and you will discover that God is alive.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: The speaker declares that he has experienced the reality of God, and urges his audience to do as he has done.

- e) Overall Analysis: This sermonette has an introductory function, since it is the first of the 1996 *Mvuselelo*. It introduces the central challenge to choose between following God's way on the one hand, and experiencing His gift of freedom from the "chains" imposed by the devil, and rejecting Him on the other hand. The challenge is repeated in different words:
- "let him / her be unchained"
  - "Choose whom you will serve"
  - "Just try Him".

The first statement involves a passive acceptance of God's action, while the following two sentences urge the audience to take action themselves. However, this threefold challenge to repentance follows the proclamation of God's liberating grace at Easter. Therefore, the message is not merely moralism. The saving work begins with God.

The Lay Minister leading the Revival, Abraham Mochoari, was the preacher in this case, and he was the first to start a chorus, at the end of his sermonette (C 96/3).

#### 4.1.3.5 Sermonette S 96/3

- a) *A re itumeleng phuthego, go supa gore re golotswe.*

Let us be jubilant, congregation, to show that we are freed.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: directive

Perlocution: This is a call to be joyful, in reaction to the repetition of the idea that this is a sorrowful night by two previous speakers. The reason for being joyful was given as the fact that they are freed, that is, that their liberation was an established fact.

- b) *Re tlhapisitswe mo mading a ga Krete, mme dibe tse di mašwe di setse sefapanong.*

We have been washed in the blood of Christ, and our worst sins have been left on the cross.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Informative)

Perlocution: The preacher is making a theological statement, that the congregation have been delivered from sin by the death of Christ .

- c) Overall Analysis: The primary purpose of this sermonette is to encourage the audience. The preacher does this by urging them to rejoice, and by declaring the reason to rejoice - their experience of deliverance through Christ. This sermonette is not a direct call to repentance and renewal, but the speaker links her message to the other sermonettes by using the same imagery and repeating the idea of freedom from sin as a result of the death of Christ. The resurrection is not mentioned, but the joy of salvation is central.

#### 4.1.3.6 Sermonette S96/11

- a) *Mafoko a letsatsila gompieno, Modimo o dira dikgakgamatso.*

In the words of today, God does wonders.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Assertive)

Perlocution: The preacher makes a dramatic statement, which opens the sermonette, and catches the attention of the audience at once.

- b) *Batho ba koba ditlhogo ba tlhabiwa..*

People bow their heads in shame.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: This is not the response one would normally expect to a statement that God does wonders. The people do not praise God, or wonder at His actions. Instead, God's actions make them ashamed.

- c) *Buka ya ga moprofeta Jeremia e bua le rona. Jeremia o ne a bitšwa a le dingwago di le robedi. A inyatsa a re o sa le monnye. Mme Modimo wa re:*

*“Ke go kgethile o sa le popelong ya ga mmago.”*

The book of the Prophet Jeremiah talks to us. Jeremiah was called when he was eight years old. He looked down on himself, saying that he was young. God said, “I chose you when you were still in your mother's womb.”

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Informative)

Perlocution: This paragraph is an aside, giving background information about Jeremiah, which is not directly concerned with the passage, or with the purpose of the *Mvuselelo*.

- d) *Ka gore nnete ga e ratwe; Re utlwa ka moo Jeremia, a tshwerweng a tsenngwa mo Kgolegelong.*

Because the truth is frowned upon, we learn how Jeremiah was arrested and thrown into jail.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (informative)

Perlocution: This, too, is background information, which the speaker has learnt from an outside source. It is not included in the designated passage.

- d) *Mme kajeno Modimo o re, "Ke ya go bafolola dikeetaneng tse o leng go tsona.*  
"But today," God says, "I am releasing you from the chains you are in."

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: This utterance is presented as a direct quotation of God's words to the congregation. It has a greater immediacy than merely stating that God has released them, as an impersonal report.

- e) *Wena o ka itlhophela gore a o rata go ntshala morago, kapa o rata go iphelela fela.*

You can choose for yourself whether you want to follow me, or to live as you like.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Directive

Perlocution: This sentence is phrased as a statement, but its aim is subtly directive. The preacher asserts that each of us has a choice to make, and joins with the other preachers in pointing to the need for repentance and revival among members of the congregation.

- f) *Go ne go na le mme wa mohumi, a na le morwa; Morwa wa mohumi o ne a na le tsala ya motlhoki. Morwa wa mohumi a rata yo wa motlhoki, a mo fa dijo fa a tshwerwe ke tlala; A ya le ene kwa ga bome; kwa ga bome; Mme wa mohumi o ne a tenega; Ngwana wa mohumi o ne a kopa dijo mo go mmagwe; mmagwe a fa ngwana wa modidi magogo Ngwana wa motlhoki o ne a araba mme o a re; Ga o direle nna, wa itirela. Ka tsasi le lengwe, Mmamohumi a dira skaffini mme a se fa ngwana yo a tshetse chefu; Fa a mo fa ngwana a re; ga o direle nna wa itirela. Ke fa ngwana wa motlhoki a ja dijo, a tlhokofala.*

There was a rich woman who had a son. The rich woman's son had a poor friend. He loved him very much and always shared food with him. Whenever he was hungry, he took him to his home. The rich woman became annoyed. The rich woman's son asked his mother for food, and she gave the poor boy leftovers. The poor boy replied and said, "You are not doing this to me but to yourself." One day, the rich woman prepared food, poisoned it and gave it to the poor child. The poor boy, receiving the food, said, "You are not doing this for me but for yourself." The poor child ate the food and died.

Form: Story

Perlocution: The preacher changes method, and tells this story in the middle of his sermonette, illustrating the evil deeds and greed present in human beings.

- g) *Baratiwa, re dira ditiro tse di maswe re nagana gore re a ba tlhokofatsa, kante go utlwa rona botlhoko, re sala ka matswalo.*

Beloved, we do evil deeds, meaning to hurt others, in return we are hurt. We are left with a guilty conscience.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (confirmative)

Perlocution: In conclusion, the preacher summarised the point of his short story - if we do evil deeds, we will harm ourselves in the process.

- h) Overall Analysis: This Sermonette is primarily Informative, although the Directive function is not absent. The information given is meant to stimulate the hearer to repent of evil deeds and attitudes, and to live differently in the future. The inclusion of the story is an interesting development. Story telling is an important feature of oral communication. In this context, the story is told to communicate an idea, that evil deeds harm the doer as well as the victim.

#### 4.1.3.7 Sermonette S 96/12

- a) *Bomme le borre go a utlwagala gore bosigo jo, re ya re lebile kae, ke bosigo jo bo khutsitseng, jo bo sa batleng leratla.*

Mothers and fathers, tonight there is a feeling of where we are going. It is a silent night, that does not want noise.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: The speaker described what he believed should be the mood of the event. He believed that there should be a stillness and solemnity as well as a sense of purpose among those who participated in the *Mvuselelo*.

- b) *Gompieno ke kgaotse dikeetane tse di ne di go fasitse. Morwa Modimo a re, "Kajeno ke go golotse, ka go go swela sefapanong. Fela fa o rata o tla ntshala morago."*

"Today, I have broken the chains that had fastened you."

The Son of God says, "Today, I have released you, by dying for you on the cross. If you like, you will follow me."

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (informative)

Perlocution: The preacher was proclaiming to his audience that Christ had broken their chains by means of the cross, and was inviting them to follow Him. There is no mention of the resurrection in this context. The release from chains is the result of the cross.

- c) *Kreste o bua ka motho mang le mang, e seng bakreste fela.*

Christ talks about anyone, not only Christians.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (informative)

Perlocution: The speaker directed his message to all people, whether they considered themselves Christians or not. Each person has a choice whether or not to follow Christ.

d) *Fa o sa rate go ntshala morago, boela kwa o tswang teng.*

If you do not want to follow me, go back where you came from.

Form: Imperative

Type of Illocution: directive

Perlocution: The speaker offered his audience a choice, whether or not to follow Christ. In so doing, he spoke the words which he believed Christ was saying to the congregation.

e). *O ne o ntsha madi; o reka motho, go ya go go bolaela yo o sa mo rateng. O dira ka letsogo le kobong o tla fumana moputso ka letsatsi la bofelo - Katlholo fela.*

You spilt blood. You used to pay money to somebody to go and kill for you the one you did not like. You thrive on bribery. You will get a reward on the last day - which is only condemnation.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Accusation

Perlocution: The preacher mentioned two forms of evil deeds - murder and bribery, and stated that the only reward for such deeds will be condemnation.

Paying someone to kill a person may also be a reference to witchcraft.

f). *Re tlhoile, baruti, banka rona, baagisane, bagolo ba kereke.*

We hate priests, fellows, neighbours, church elders.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Accusation

Perlocution: The preacher turned his attention to bad relationships between members of the community, and accused members of his audience of hating one another.

- g) *A re tlogeleng dipuo tse di maswe, mme re tsamaye le Jesu.*

Let us abandon bad talks, and walk with Jesus.

Form: Jussive subjunctive

Type of Illocution: Directive

Perlocution: Having listed instances of bad deeds, and bad relationships, the preacher urged his audience to abandon evil behaviour, and align themselves with Jesus.

- h). *O ka fenyha dilo tsotlhe fa o tsamaya, o robala le Jesu.*

You can overcome all things, when you walk and sleep with Jesus.

(These two verbs “walk” and “sleep” cover their whole lives, waking and sleeping, activity and resting).

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: The preacher intended to encourage his audience, to overcome evil intentions, and also everyday problems that they may face.

- i) *Bangwe ba re, Beibele ke story, ba e tseba go tswa kwa tshimologong go ya bofelong. Empa ga ba rate go dira ditiro tsa Modimo.*

Others say, “The Bible is just a story”. They know it from beginning to end. But they do not want to do the deeds of God.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Informative)

Perlocution: The preacher commented on the negative attitudes of people around him to the Bible and to Christianity. He was very emotional at this point, and paced around the sanctuary, gesturing at different parts of the audience.

- j) Overall Analysis: An emphasis on the cross of Christ is central to this sermonette. The speaker repeatedly says that Christ has broken their chains, and now gives them the choice whether or not to follow Him. The way of life without Christ is graphically portrayed as one governed by hatred and violence.

The speaker began with the text, but moved further and further away from it as his topic developed. Finally, he focused on the sins and wrongs from which people needed to be set free. He would have continued longer, but the congregation interrupted him with a chorus (i.e. the "train spat him out").

#### 4.1.3.8 Basic Types of Sermonettes

Having looked at seven representative sermonettes in some detail, I now "stand back" and reflect on the four broad types of sermonette that I have identified. In this section, I refer to other sermonettes beside these seven, the texts of which can be found in Appendix 1.

##### **a) Directive / Challenging Sermonettes**

The largest group of sermonettes is overtly directive, where the preacher clearly states the call to repentance and revival. Numerous terms are used - the hearers are asked to repent, to rise with Christ, to accept Jesus and to allow Jesus into their hearts. In S 95/6, the preacher urges the people to ask the Holy Spirit to revive their souls. In S 95/7, they are told to ask themselves how far they are from Jesus and to examine whether they are "good inside".

In 1996, most of the challenges in the sermonettes revolved around the idea of choice. God has released us from the "chains of sin" on the one hand, however, each of us has a free choice whether or not to be unchained. The audience is challenged to choose to serve God (S 96/1), to take a decision, begin a journey and

leave the bad ways of the world (S 96/7), and to come out of the well of sin (S 96/10). A clear action is to be taken by the person repenting, resulting in an observable change in behaviour.

### **b) Informative Sermonettes**

The most obvious aim of these sermonettes is to inform the hearers either of theological truths or of historical background information. Thus, S 95/2 is concerned with explaining the message of the passage (Luke 24:1-5). However, the explanatory function is never completely divorced from the directive function of the *Mvuselelo* as a whole. This sermonette also includes the directive statement "Jesus Christ wants to get into our hearts".

S 96/5 begins with historical information, including a reference to rebuilding the ruins of Jerusalem. This is immediately applied to the passage with the statement that Christ wants to rebuild the ruins caused by the devil. In addition to the metaphor of ruined lives, the speaker repeats the image of unchaining and resurrecting with Jesus. S 96/6 refers to bondage in Egypt as a symbol of bondage to sin. S 96/11 is strongly informative, repeating the idea that Christ has come to unchain or release us. The preacher then issues a directive challenge, urging his hearers to choose.

S 96/5 was preached by an elderly man, probably at least seventy. He preached three short sermonettes, interspersed with choruses which he himself led. It is interesting that in this case he was allowed to "hold the floor" for longer than most of the other preachers. It is likely that, if a younger person had tried to perform for this length of time, he or she would have been censored by the leadership. In his preaching, he summed up many of the points made by the other preachers, such as a challenge to commitment. He related this specifically to the death of Christ.

S 96/12 is largely informative, including the short story told to illustrate people's evil deeds and thoughts, and the results of evil action.

### **c) Encouraging Sermonettes**

There are a few sermonettes whose primary aim is to encourage the audience. These sermonettes stress the gifts of God, praise the dedication of the people, and sympathise with them in the difficulties which they face in their daily lives.

S 96/2 mentions creation as God's gift, and praises the people for their dedication seen in their attending the Vigil in spite of obstacles, and difficult conditions under which they are living. They are called upon to choose God's way.

A sermonette was given by an older man, aged about sixty. His sermon was repetitive, and lengthy. He repeated the theme of choosing for or against God. He referred to the chains with which the devil has bound human beings, and stated that each one has a choice whether or not to allow God to release him or her.

S 96/3, analysed above, is perhaps the clearest example of an encouraging sermon. It begins with a command to be jubilant, and then lists the reasons for rejoicing: we are washed in the blood of Christ, our worst sins have been left on the cross, our chains are broken. The preacher then returned to the theme of choice. She was a woman aged about fifty, and a member of the Mothers' Union, who was also a Lay Minister. She was the only woman who preached during the time that we were able to record the preaching. The previous preachers had repeated the idea that this was a "sorrowful evening". In contrast, the woman preacher called on her audience to be joyful as a response to deliverance from sin through the death of Christ.

S 96/6 repeats the promise to release those who are prepared, and S 96/13 proclaims God's promised gift of strength.

### **d) Expressive Sermonettes**

It is arguable that these utterances are not really sermonettes, as they are very brief, consisting of two to three lines. They do not make a separate contribution to the preaching, but express the speaker's thoughts and feelings, as well as his or her

response to what has gone before. The two examples are 95/3, the response by a member of the St. Agnes Guild, and the exclamation labelled 95/4.

The young girl from the St. Agnes Guild made the following brief response:

“My beloved parents; I also ask from God that I may arrive in heaven.”

It was noticeable that she did not attempt to preach to her elders, but rather responded, addressing them as “parents”.

After a chorus *Ke Simolola ka gore*, in which singers stated their dependence on God, and asked Him to help them to pray, the leader from the Mothers' Union spoke again, with great emotion and urgency:

“Hallelujah, Beloved; Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

Now is the time for us to be saved, Beloved, so that we can glorify Him”.

Expressive sermonettes were primarily vehicles for expressing the thoughts and feelings of the individual preacher, and also of the congregation as a whole, represented by the preacher.

#### *4.1.4 Analysis of the Sermonettes in terms of Orality Theory.*

##### 4.1.4.1 Performance in the Preaching

Performance in Orality Theory is a key issue which helps the researcher to understand oral texts<sup>2</sup>. Generally oral texts only exist in the form of live performances directed at an audience. Thus, Finnegan (1992:107 - 111) and Naudé (1996:20) argue that a text is not a finished project on paper, but a process, especially in oral communication, where the tone of the voice, actions, context and interaction between participants in the act of communication play a decisive role in the interpretation of the text.

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<sup>2</sup> Scholars debate whether examples of oral performance should be called “texts”, or whether this term should be confined to written items. I believe that oral performance should be seen as a different form of literature, and therefore oral performances can be called texts.

Thus, the term “oral” points to the fact that a text is more than purely verbal. There are always visual and symbolic aspects to an oral text / performance, such as the use of gestures and movement. This is also true of oral theological texts. Naudé (1996:22) explains that oral theology “refers to non-written forms of religious expression, but also to non-verbal aspects which constitute the total performance of oral theologies”.

Finnegan (1976:2) states that oral literature is “dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion”. There is a close connection therefore between the transmission of oral literature and its existence, which is not the case with written literature. There can be no oral literature apart from the actual situation in which it is performed, whereas written literature is recorded on paper, and can be read by someone who is totally separate from the original context.

Performance is a difficult topic to discuss in oral theory, simply because the relationship between performers and audience is complex, to the extent that it is sometimes not clear who the performers are. In the Mvuselelo, the preacher stands facing the audience, and is thus distinct from the audience for the period of his or her preaching. However, many different people are encouraged to participate in the preaching, and these people are drawn from the audience, so that one cannot say that the performers and audience are completely separate. In fact, as we have seen, Finnegan (1992:97) distinguishes seven different relationships between performers and audience in oral communication (See 1.4.1).

In 1994, the Revival was led by Fr. Jacob, but in 1995, there was a team of three leaders, two men from the Guild of Bernard Mizeki and one woman from the Mothers' Union. In 1996, the first Mvuselelo was led by seven Lay Ministers, including one woman. The second Mvuselelo was led by the Bernard Mizeki Guild, but the same person was the overall leader in both sessions.

Performance played an important role in all communication during the Revival.

Many of the addresses were highly **emotional** (expressing deep feeling) and **emotive** performances (stimulating the audience to share in the performer's emotions), which succeeded in moving the congregation. The singing was also more performance-oriented than the singing of traditional hymns, which tended to be done standing still or sitting. There was a great amount of body movement during the singing of choruses.

The leader had some control over who would come forward to preach. He would request, for example "A young person" or "an older woman". A person would then come forward in response to his request.

The overall leader would periodically give a loud shout, if he thought that the people needed to be prodded into action. In some cases, these shouts were met with laughter. Afterwards, all would respond by participating in the singing more enthusiastically.

#### 4.1.4.2 Audience Participation

The atmosphere during the Revival was one of informality, to the extent that members of the congregation were free to move in and out of the church at will. Food was kept cooking continually throughout the night, and members of the congregation periodically left the church to eat, or brought food in with them. There seemed to be no objection to people eating in church during this time.

The sharing of a meal is a time-honoured tradition in many African communities, whenever a festival is celebrated:

eating together is customary at a church *pungwe* when the vigil is an organized gathering of the entire community, and the meal is part of the *pungwe* itself (Presler 1994:216).

In 1996, there was a break in proceedings from 2.00 a.m., when the Eucharist ended until the second part of the *Mvuselelo* began around 3.00 a.m. During this time, food was served. Plates of food were passed from the pots outside the church to the people inside by members of the St. Agnes Guild.

The audience participated in singing to the fullest extent, and also responded to the speakers, murmuring encouragement, or shouting "Amen". The early sermonettes tend to be given by the leader(s) of the *Mvuselelo*. Later, other members of the congregation came forward to give an address.

Events were controlled by the leader(s) who would ring a small hand bell for silence when he / they considered it time to stop singing and go on to the next sermonette.

We have seen above that the audience often plays a direct role in the development of an oral text / performance. Finnegan (1992:98 - 100) also distinguishes **different kinds of audience**. Primary audiences are those for whom the message is actually intended. Secondary audiences are those who "overhear" the message. Thus, for the most part, I have been part of a secondary audience during the vigils that I have attended. However, during the 1996 vigil, phrases of English and Afrikaans were introduced into some of the sermons, indicating that we were consciously included in the intended primary audience.

Some influence on the event will result from the presence of researchers. This is unavoidable, however unobtrusive we try to be. We are both participants in the event and observers, so that we are both involved and remote from what is happening. The presence of a video camera undoubtedly caused the young people especially to "perform" whenever they believed that they were being filmed.

Finnegan (1992:99) also distinguishes between integral and accidental audiences. An integral audience is a group who come together for a common purpose. An accidental audience is simply a heterogeneous group who happen to be together on a particular occasion. The Easter congregation at Thaba 'Nchu is an integral audience, as they are members of a community. Some are irregular attenders, or are seen only at the Easter Vigil, but others are regular attenders, members of the guilds, etc. and have a common purpose of celebrating Easter and rededicating themselves to God and the church.

Finnegan also distinguishes between homogeneous and heterogeneous groups (1992:99 - 100). No audience is completely homogeneous. In the case of St. Augustine's, Thaba 'Nchu, the audience is of a common cultural background, although it includes a mixture of Sotho and Tswana people. There is a wide spectrum of ages, and both men and women are included. There is also a wide economic variation, ranging from doctors and bank managers to semi-literate farm labourers and unemployed people.

A final distinction is made between mass and personal audiences (Finnegan 1992:100), based on the degree of closeness in the interpersonal relationships between the communicator and the audience. As this service is a community based event, the audience is a personal one.

Finnegan (1992:123) notes the importance of the social and economic context of performers and audience. In this case, performers and their audience either reside in Thaba 'Nchu, or on the surrounding farms and in small towns. They are predominantly rural, with a semi-urban component. As we have already seen, there is a wide range of occupations, and levels of education. This is noticeable in the way that they communicate, although lack of formal education does not preclude a person from preaching or testifying.

It is also noticeable that the more educated audience members participate in events with the same enthusiasm as their less educated counterparts, so that there is no obvious division or lack of tolerance along class lines.

During the sermonettes, the congregation listened intently for the most part. In some cases, the speaker was overcome with emotion, and seemed to carry the congregation with him, to the extent that some of them were copying his gestures where they sat.

#### 4.1.4.3 Visual Symbols used in the Revival

Visual Symbols play an important role in oral communication; much more so than in written communication. They give an immediacy and clarity to communication which supplements the verbal aspect of communication.

The most obvious visual symbol used during the *Mvuselelo* was the **Fly-Switch**, an animal tail which was **used traditionally by an African orator**. The speaker gestured with it, waved it, or simply held it as a mark of authority or recognition. This was used in 1994 and 1995, but was absent altogether in 1996, suggesting that this symbol is optional.

The guilds remained together, and sang and danced as a body. Their uniforms and symbolic dress clearly played an important role for them. It is during the **Revival** that the Guild of Bernard Mizeki was most prominent. They often led the singing and dancing. This seems to be a major function of this guild in parish life. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of Bernard Mizeki's life and ministry.

Symbols such as candles and incense are very important to the congregation at Thaba 'Nchu, as are the robes and uniforms, which were all spotless for the occasion, and the banners belonging to the guilds. The incense is used extensively in the formal part of the Vigil, especially during the eucharist, to the extent that at times the altar is hidden from the congregation in clouds of incense.

Pauw (1960: 220) has suggested that much of the ritualism and symbolism of Roman Catholicism appeals to rural black congregations, as traditional African magico-religious practices were more action-oriented than belief-oriented. He cites the example of sacrificial meals: "Ritualism and emotionalism may be interpreted as expressions of a desire for a religion which is vividly experienced." This explains the popularity of symbols in the Anglican church.

#### 4.1.4.4 The Use of Gestures

Gestures are used to emphasise particular points, such as pointing with the finger when challenging the congregation to dedicated themselves to God. Some of the preachers also used gestures in the form of visual symbols, such as the woman who made the shape of a cross with her hands when she spoke of the crucifixion of Christ.

The elderly man who preached for the longest period was also the most energetic of the preachers. He ran up and down behind the communion rail, while preaching. When he spoke of following Jesus, he knelt briefly behind the communion rail, and then stood up and continued preaching.

Most of the preachers used symbolic gestures as a means of expressing their message, and as an aid to ensure that their audience understood. Gestures were traditionally used in story-telling sessions, and in drama.

At times, members of the congregation seemed almost hypnotised by the speaker, to the extent that they unconsciously began to **imitate** his or her actions. At one point, when an elderly member of the Guild of Bernard Mizeki began to speak, he actually fell on the floor in an animated way, while he continued speaking.

#### 4.1.4.5 Drama and Story-Telling in the Revival

In contrast to traditional Western-style preaching, such as the sermon during the formal part of the service, many of the addresses were **dramatised**, sometimes with the assistance of other members of the congregation. A speaker would call for a response from the audience, usually vocal, and several audience members would call out the response in unison. There is thus a dialogue between the performer and the audience, who play an active role in generating the performance.

#### *4.1.5 Conclusion of Sermon Analysis*

It is clear that the sermonettes preached during the *Mvuselelo* are markedly different from Western sermons. The feature one notices first is their length - around three minutes. Secondly, their purpose is not primarily intellectual stimulation or proclaiming new truths, but recounting old, unchanging truths, for the purpose of leading the congregation to an experience of being revived by the Holy Spirit. The *Mvuselelo* is taken extremely seriously by participants, but also enjoyed greatly. The level of participation and emotional involvement is high both in the preaching and in the singing.

I will now apply the same tools - Speech Act Theory and Orality Theory - to the choruses recorded during the Easter Vigils for 1995 and 1996.

#### **4.2 Analysis of the Choruses sung during the Vigil**

The two major components of the *Mvuselelo* are sermonettes and choruses. In fact, one could speak of a symbiosis between preaching and chorus singing in the Vigil. It is therefore artificial to separate the two components as I am doing here, as this does not allow me to indicate the interplay between a sermonette and the choruses which preceded and followed it. I have chosen this approach for the sake of easier comparison of sermonettes and choruses as different forms of oral communication. As with the sermonettes, I analyse the choruses in terms of both Speech Act Theory and Orality Theory.

A few choruses were repeated often. In particular, two choruses were repeated at least three times at all three of the vigils. Therefore, I analyse these two first.

I have classified choruses according to their central purpose, although, as with the sermonettes, no chorus has only one purpose. The categories involved are expressive, encouraging, prayerful and challenging. I will now analyse in detail an example of each category in terms of Speech Act Theory.

#### 4.2.1 Analysis of Choruses in terms of Speech Act Theory

In this section, we are dealing with musical items, not speeches. Nevertheless, the choruses are oral communication set to music, and therefore, to my mind it is legitimate to ask what the intention of this communication is, and therefore to analyse the choruses by means of Speech Act Theory.

##### 4.2.1.1 Chorus C 95/15

- a) *Ke Sekilwe ke Jesu* I am carried by Jesus.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: The meaning of this statement is explained by the rest of the chorus. Jesus is declared to be their "fortress", that is defence against evil, the one who answers prayers, and the one who died for them.

- b) *Ke dutse ho yena;* I abide with him;  
*Fubeng sa hae kajeno* Against his breast today  
*Ke a kgatholaha* I rest.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: This describes a position of trust, and intimacy enjoyed with Jesus.

- c) *Ke yena ya leng ha pelong tsa rona* He is in our prayers  
*Yena ya re shwetseng* The one who died for us,  
*Ke botshabelo ba rona* He is our fortress;

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Statement (assertive)

Perlocution: Jesus is described as their fortress, their defence and security in trouble, and the one to whom they pray. He can fulfil this role because He died for them.

- d) *O utlwa ha re bitsa ho yena* He always hears us when  
we call on Him  
*Jesu Morena ya re shwetseng.* Jesus, the Lord, who died for us.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (assertive)

Perlocution: This is a repetition of previously expressed ideas, in different words. The important concepts are that Jesus died for them, and that He hears and answers prayer.

- e) Overall Analysis: The important emphasis of this chorus is the relationship enjoyed between Jesus and the believer, especially in prayer, and the hope expressed that Jesus will act as a fortress and deliverer in times of trouble.

#### 4.2.1.2 Chorus C 96/16

- a) *Tsohang masole le rapele* Stand up Soldiers and pray  
*Eto la rona le telele.* For our journey is long.

Form: Jussive Subjunctive

Type of Illocution: Directive

Perlocution: Members of the congregation are addressed as "soldiers". They are called upon to pray, and to engage in a long journey.

- b) *Are ukeng dihloomo tsa rona,* Let's take up our arms  
*dihloomo tsa rona tsa moya* Our spiritual armaments.

Form: Jussive Subjunctive

Type of Illocution: Directive



- b) *Lekununtung le Morena.* In the secret place with my Lord.

Form: Phrase completing the former statement.

Perlocution: This speaks of sharing troubles with God. "Secret place" may refer to private prayer, but probably not exclusively.

- c) Overall Analysis: This chorus is **expressive**. It enables the singers to express their feelings and needs, and their belief that God is able to supply these needs.

#### 4.2.1.4 Chorus C 95/2

- a) *Ke na le moemedi* (x2)

I have an advocate

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (informative)

Perlocution: The song is stating an encouraging and strengthening belief, that the singers are not alone or powerless. This chorus is based on the format of a well-known hymn *Ke na le Modisa*: "I have a Shepherd".

- b) *Moya o halalelang* (x5)

The Holy Spirit.

Form: Phrase completing former statement.

Type of Illocution: Assertive

Perlocution: This phrase states the identity of the advocate - the Holy Spirit.

- c) Overall Analysis: This chorus is also one of the more popular choruses. It was sung twice in 1996 and three times in 1995. The emphasis on the Holy Spirit is a common theme in revival services, and in the revival tradition. It is a chorus which expresses an encouraging belief, in this case that the Holy Spirit acts as

their advocate. This may reflect the context of many of the congregation, farm workers with no one to empower them by taking their side as an advocate.

#### 4.2.1.5 Chorus C 95/4

- a) *Ke simolola ka gore* I start by saying  
*Go go rapela ha ke tsebe* I do not know how to pray.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Expressive

Perlocution: The singers express their need and feelings of helplessness and inadequacy by means of this song.

- b) *O Morena ka, A ko o nthuse* Oh, My Lord, Please help me  
*Go go rapela ka nnete.* To really pray to you in truth.

Form: Prayer

Type of Illocution: Request

Perlocution: After expressing their uncertainty and need of help, the singers turn directly to God, and ask for help in their praying.

- c) Overall Analysis: This chorus is a response to the preceding sermonettes, in which the need for revival / resurrection had been stated repeatedly, as well as the desire for a renewed life, and assurance of "arriving in heaven". This chorus expresses the idea contained in Romans 8, that the Spirit helps us in our prayers.

#### 4.2.1.6 Chorus C 96/3

- a) *Taba ya ka fatsheng lena* My purpose in this world  
*Ke gore ke rate Jesu.* Is to love Jesus.

Form: Statement

Type of Illocution: Constative (Expressive)



commitment. Prayer choruses are those which are addressed to God as prayers, and Challenging choruses are those which aim to challenge the singers, on a point of belief or behaviour.

### **a) Expressive Choruses**

The most striking characteristic of these choruses is that they give expression to the emotions and beliefs of the singers. C 95/1 expresses the mood of solemnity, and mysteriousness associated with all-night Vigils.

However, the focus is not entirely on suffering, but on victory through suffering: they then speak of resurrection, ascension and the kingship of Christ.

The theme of overcoming evil, and of victory over suffering, as well as spiritual warfare is prominent in the choruses and sermonettes of the Easter Vigil.

In C 95/3, the singers express their experience of being worried, and facing troubles, which they can share with God "in the secret place".

In C 96/2, feelings of joy and gratitude to God are expressed, and C 96/8 expresses faith in God, and their relationship to God as His children.

### **b) Encouraging Choruses**

These choruses aim to encourage other singers, often by reminding them of a theological truth. In C 95/2, they are reminded that the Holy Spirit is their advocate. In C 96/7, the Nguni words *Inkululeko Nkosi yam* (The freedom of my Lord) are repeated again and again.

In C 96/5 a vision of the new Jerusalem is described, and in C 96/10, a vision of heaven. In both cases, the visions are seen as a source of joy.

### **c) Prayer Choruses**

These choruses are prayers addressed to God. They include a request to help them in praying (C 95/4), and a prayer for them to receive the Holy Spirit - *The'u Moya, Nkosi* (Pour the Spirit, Lord).

Members of the congregation attend conferences of their respective organisations, Mothers' Union, Bernard Mizeki Guild etc., at which they learn choruses in different languages, which are then taught to the rest of the church. This is why Zulu and Xhosa choruses are sung by a predominantly Setswana-speaking congregation.

C 96/4 is a prayer for cleansing from sins, following a challenge to choose between God and sin:

*Nthole, Morena  
Ntlhatswe, tlhokodisise  
Ke be motle le nna.*

Find me, Lord  
Wash and Cleanse me  
So that I can be clean.

C 96/8 asks God for security in knowing that they are God's children, with their names written in His book, and therefore that they will not be condemned at the final judgement:

*Bitso la ka, kajeno o le ngole  
Le se ke la tloga bukeng ya hao.*

Write my name today,  
Let it not be removed from your  
book.

#### **d) Challenging Choruses**

The purpose of these choruses is to challenge or spur on the singers to greater dedication, and a greater experience of God and His power. Thus, in C 95/6, they are urged to "hunt for" God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

C 96/3 states that the purpose of life should be to love Jesus and to engage in evangelism among family and friends. In C 96/6, they are told to pray whenever they meet difficulties and in C 96/11 the challenge was issued in three ways: to leave the world, carry the cross and follow Jesus.

#### **e) Conclusion**

The choruses are clearly intended to encourage the singers, to enable them to express their thoughts and feelings, and to challenge them where necessary.

The overall atmosphere surrounding the chorus singing is one of rejoicing and enthusiasm.

#### *4.2.2 Analysis of the Chorus Singing using Orality Theory*

Now that I have analysed the chorus singing in terms of Speech Act Theory, I will study the choruses in terms of Orality Theory.

##### 4.2.2.1 Performance in the Chorus Singing

In chorus singing, all performance was done collectively, and there is no audience distinct from the performers. The only individual contribution was the act of starting a chorus, which the audience would either affirm by joining the singer, or, in rare cases, they would not sing, in which case the singer soon lapsed into silence.

##### 4.2.2.2 Audience Participation in the Chorus Singing

Participation in all chorus singing was universal and enthusiastic. During the Mvuselelo, the person preaching would usually begin a chorus, but he or she was soon joined by other members of the congregation. All would join in dancing, singing and even moving around the church.

This participation is

- ◆ an affirmation of identity, and of community
- ◆ a celebration of their unity, especially during the Easter service
- ◆ a celebration of life itself.

The music consisted of short, repetitive choruses, sung by the whole congregation, and usually begun by the person **who had just finished speaking**. At times, one of the members of the leadership team would begin a chorus, or a member of the congregation would begin the singing. This role tended to be taken by a few congregation members who know the hymns and choruses well. On two occasions during the 1996 Revival, someone began a chorus, and no-one followed. Whereupon, one of the recognised chorus leaders started up a chorus and the congregation followed. The reason behind this was either that the others did not know the chorus, or that it was judged unsuitable.

There may also have been members of the congregation with a recognised gift of starting the singing. Those who were not recognised as having this gift were not acknowledged when they began a chorus.

It is important to remember that the Easter congregation at Thaba 'Nchu includes groups from each of the thirty-six outstations which are served by the clergy at Thaba 'Nchu. Therefore, in many cases the same songs will not be known to all present.

During the 1995 vigil, the organist often tried to play along with the choruses, but not often with great success.

In 1996, the Bernard Mizeki Guild **improvised some home-made musical instruments**, such as a big electric school bell, and a plastic pipe which was blown in the same way as an Australian didgeridoo although not with great musical ability. For the most part, a single tone was produced. The school bell was held in the hand and struck with a round metal bar rhythmically in accompanying the choruses. This home-made orchestra shows great initiative and enthusiasm by the men who participated in the music in this way.

#### 4.2.2.3 Gestures and Movements during the Chorus Singing

In the early part of the Mvuselelo, participants would dance, sing, and clap, but generally remained in their places. Later, groups would dance back and forth through the building. In the final stages of the vigil, around 6.00 a.m., only a small group remained active and awake, while most had either gone home or fallen asleep, lying along the pews. The small group of active participants, who in the final stages numbered only about fifty, danced up and down the aisle, led by members of the Bernard Mizeki Guild and the man blowing the pipe.

Movement and noise aid in keeping the congregation awake, and dancing in groups involves a great number of people in events, as does congregational singing.

#### 4.2.2.4 Repetition

All choruses were repeated at least three times. The congregation would continue to sing a chorus until interrupted by a preacher, or by the M.C. ringing his bell. The shorter choruses, such as C 96/1: *The'u Moya, Nkosi*, were repeated about twenty times in the space of five minutes. For many participants, the words in these cases are less important than the experience of oral communication, and of participation together in a communal celebration.

The first two choruses analysed (C 95/15 and C 95/16) were sung at least five times at both the 1995 and 1996 Vigils. They were clearly known to all present, and sung enthusiastically. The challenging call to “stand up” and take up spiritual weapons in C 95/16 clearly combines well with the renewal of baptismal vows and acts of rededication in the formal part of the Easter Vigil.

#### *4.3 Conclusion*

The *Mvuselelo* is composed of the sermonettes and the chorus singing. They combine together to communicate a message, to allow individuals and groups to express their thoughts and emotions, and to reinforce a sense of community in the church, as well as a common World View (See 1.5.4).

Maximum participation was encouraged in the *Mvuselelo*. The choruses are sung by all present, and the leadership team tried to encourage as many people as possible to participate in preaching. The *Mvuselelo* is a vehicle for spontaneous expression, for which there is little opportunity in the formal section, where most participation is governed by a set liturgy.

## CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSIONS

### **5.1 The Aim of This Study**

The Purpose of this Dissertation has been to analyse oral communication in the Easter Vigil, in particular the *Mvuselelo*, or Revival, in which oral communication and the creation of oral theological texts predominate. In order to do this, it was necessary to make a study of the historical background of the event, and of the methods of communication used by African preachers in an oral context.

The *Mvuselelo* is an opportunity for members of the congregation to worship, sing and preach in a far more spontaneous way than is the case in an ordinary liturgical service. The elements of oral communication highlighted by Orality Theory are identifiable - performance, audience participation, drama, gestures and movement. It is also noticeable that many of the sermonettes follow the same theme, or repeat the ideas expressed by previous speakers. Thus, the purpose of many preachers is to reinforce the message already delivered in a previous sermonette, exhibiting the typically repetitious nature of oral communication.

The preaching and singing of the *Mvuselelo* are directed to a common end of bringing people to repentance/ revival/ renewal. This involves a decision and also action, resulting in a changed life. There is therefore a strong ethical dimension to the call for repentance.

Repentance is pictured in a number of very graphic ways:

There are the traditional Christian metaphors, not confined to the *Mvuselelo* and similar events:

- invite Christ into your heart
- be washed in the blood of Christ
- leave your sins on the cross.
- be sure that you will go to heaven.

There are also unusual ideas:

- Christ is dead in a person's heart, and wants to be raised.  
(He is not outside, wanting to be invited in)
- rise with Christ
- be unchained from the power of sin by the blood of Christ
- try Him

The preaching emphasises revival by the Holy Spirit, and deliverance from a bad situation, into a good situation. In 1995, this was pictured as deliverance from being a "walking grave" or having Jesus dead within your heart . The audience is urged to rise with Christ, or allow Christ to rise in their hearts. In 1996, they are invited to be unchained. Thus, the bad situation is enslavement to the power of sin, and they are urged to choose liberation from this bad situation, made possible by the death of Christ.

In both instances, the audience is offered the choice to rededicate themselves to God and the church, and to receive power or strength from God, which will enable them to live a new life.

## **5.2 Priorities for Further Research**

There is a need for the hermeneutics which operate in the informal sermonettes to be examined in detail. The approach of the preachers to the Bible, as well as to their own context, will determine their underlying theology and presuppositions.

The Easter Vigil is noteworthy for being a creative combination of Western and African cultural elements, and of the formal, liturgical section combined with the informal *Mvuselelo*. The relationship between these two elements is an issue which needs to be studied in greater depth.

I have briefly traced the background and function of the guilds in the church, specifically the Mothers' Union, the St. Agnes' Guild and the Guild of Bernard Mizeki. All of these organisations play an important role in the life and work of

Anglican churches in Southern Africa, and therefore should be studied in greater depth than has been possible here.

Specifically, there is a need to study the role played by women in the Easter Vigil, and in the life of the church, both as individuals and as members of women's organisations, such as the Mothers' Union. I have not attempted an in-depth study of this issue, but the following section includes introductory material on the subject.

### **5.3 A Discussion of Gender Roles in the Context of the Vigil**

Further research needs to be done on the subject of the role of women in the church at Thaba 'Nchu and similar communities. The following are relatively superficial observations, based on my experience and observations in the Easter Vigil.

During the Easter Vigil, men sit on one side of the church, and women on the other. This is a general trend in churches in that area. When communion is served, the men come forward first, followed by the Mothers' Union, and then other women. In his study in the district of Kuruman, Pauw (1960:85-86) records that men and women sat on opposite sides of the church, and when there were not sufficient chairs, the women sat on the floor.

Traditionally, women's leadership roles in the church have been limited to areas such as the Mothers' Union, and the running of the St. Agnes Guild for the young girls in the congregation. In St. Augustine's, Thaba 'Nchu there are women among the Lay Ministers and Servers, and the majority of the choir members are women. This reflects a greater freedom for women to exercise public leadership roles than is common in rural congregations.

The two priests are both male, but this is due to the fact that in the Diocese of Bloemfontein there are no women clergy, as a result of opposition from the bishop and a majority of the clergy. Around 70 % of the congregation consists of women,

and they participate in leadership approximately 50 % of the time, in both the formal section of the vigil and the *Mvuselelo*.

Women play a slightly less prominent role than the men in the Scripture readings (The Liturgy of the Word), because there are more male lay ministers and servers than female. Women dominate events during the Mothers' Union and St. Agnes Guild ceremonies. During the Revival, the overall leadership is predominantly male, but some women do participate in preaching and singing. Generally, the Revival is dominated by older members of the congregation (over 50 years of age), mostly men but including a few women. In 1995, as already mentioned, the Revival was led by a team of three, including one woman.

In 1996, the first Revival was led by seven Lay Ministers, only one of whom was a woman. The second Revival was led primarily by members of the Bernard Mizeki Guild, who, of course, are all men, but several women participated in preaching sermonettes and starting choruses.

In the Easter Vigil at Thaba 'Nchu, the women are responsible for the cooking and serving of the meal. Mercy Oduyoye (1979:112) has claimed that in cultic activities in Africa, women have tended to be relegated to background roles:

The cultic events in which women take complete charge are few and far between. The fact that women do the dancing and cooking for festivals does not compensate for their exclusion from the 'holy of holies' in the festivals.

Oduyoye (1979:112) sees the fact that women feel free to express dissatisfaction with these secondary roles as the result of Westernization. If this is the case, then the prominent role played by women in African Initiated Churches must also be seen as a sign of Westernization within these churches.

#### **5.4 The Analytical Tools used.**

In analysing the sermonettes and choruses which comprise the *Mvuselelo*, I have used the tools of **Orality Theory** and **Speech Act Theory**.

The use of Speech Act Theory has enabled me to identify the purpose of each utterance, and the actual style of communication. The weakness of this approach is that it deals with the sermonettes as linguistic units, and “dissects” them, revealing their component parts, without seeing them as units of oral theology. Therefore, after carrying out a Speech Act analysis of the sermonettes and choruses, I had to draw out the theological points expressed in the sermonettes, and included in the words of the choruses. Speech Act Theory proved less useful in analysing the choruses than in studying the sermonettes, due to the fact that the choruses are not speech in the strict sense of the word, but musical items. However, it was still helpful to identify the type of message communicated by the words of the choruses.

The strength of using the insights of Speech Act Theory was that every word or phrase was examined, and the speaker’s purpose identified. The results of using Speech Act Theory still did not enable me to interpret the sermonettes and the choruses in terms of their oral context and method of communication. For this, it was necessary to use insights from Orality Theory.

Orality Theory enabled me to study the sermonettes and choruses as oral communication, as oral texts performed before a live audience, although they have been reduced to written texts in this study. Thus, I was able to identify aspects such as performance, audience participation, gestures and drama in the sermonettes. Again, identifying these characteristics of oral communication proved easier with the sermonettes than with the choruses.

### **5.5 Jesu Kreste, Khosi ea rona, o tsohilel**

I chose this Easter proclamation, taken from the Exultet, as the title of my study since it encapsulates the purpose of the Easter Vigil: to celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!

This truth is clearly proclaimed in the formal liturgy of the Easter Vigil as well as in the *Mvuselelo*, along with resulting truths, such as the forgiveness of sins, the promise of heaven, and the power of the Holy Spirit. The need for repentance / renewal / revival and for resulting ethical conduct is also strongly emphasised.

In a sense, there is a tension between the truth proclaimed, and the circumstances, and behaviour which fall below the ideal. Thus, the preachers can proclaim "He is risen", but at the same time tell the congregation that they may be "walking graves", and Christ may not yet have risen in their hearts.

In spite of the seriousness with which the Vigil is approached, the overall atmosphere is one of celebration. This even includes the typical African aspect of a festival - a shared meal. The purely African *Mvuselelo* has been added to the Western liturgy, in such a way that there does not seem to be conflict between the different cultural aspects. A transformation of the liturgy and of the church structures has also taken place. This is seen in the importance of singing in both sections of the Vigil, as well as the important role played by the guilds.

The preaching of the *Mvuselelo* is an opportunity for the development of a local theology and for participation and self-expression by the normally silent majority in the church, especially the women and the youth.

The Easter Vigil, as it is practiced at St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Thaba 'Nchu and at similar churches, is thus a creative adaptation of traditional Christian ritual to meet the needs of African people.

## APPENDIX 1 : CHORUSES AND SERMONETTES FOR 1995 AND 1996

### 1 Translation of the Hymns and Choruses for 1995

#### C 95/1

Jona, Jona (x2)  
Ke 'tsatsi le botlhoko  
O tseba tsa rona tsotlhe  
Diphiri, makunutu  
Jona, Jona (x2)  
Ke 'tsatsi le botlhoko

Oh! Oh! (x2)  
This is a sorrowful day.  
He knows all our  
Secrets, mysteries.  
Oh! Oh! (x2)  
What a sorrowful day.

#### C 95/2

Ke na le moemedi (x2)  
Moya o halalelang (x5)

I have an advocate (x2)  
The Holy Spirit (x5)

#### C 95/3

Ke mmolella ditsietsi  
Tse nkhatshang tsa lefatshe.  
Ke role tsotlhe tse ho nna  
Lekunutung le Morena.

I tell Him my troubles  
The troubles that disturb me on earth.  
I give Him all (my difficulties)  
In the secret place with my Lord.

#### C 95/4

Ke simolola ka gore  
Go go rapela ha ke tsebe.  
Oh! Morena ka, A ko o nthuse  
Go go rapela ka nnete.

I start by saying:  
I do not know how to pray.  
Oh! my Lord, please help me  
To really pray (to) you in truth.

#### C 95/5

Jesu ke Mmoloki wa ka  
O nkhetsetse bodulo  
Kea mo rata, hob'a nthata  
A neile bophelo.

Jesus is my Saviour.  
He selected a place for me.  
I love Him because He loves me;  
He gave me life.

#### C 95/6

Tsoma Ntate le Moya (x3)  
Tsoma Ntate le Moya }  
Umoya oyincwele } (x2)

Hunt for the Father and the Spirit (X3)  
the Holy Spirit (x2)

#### C 95/7

Mosepedi enwa, o na kena  
Yo samileng lejwe - a robala  
Bosigo a lora - A le haufinyana  
A le haufinyana - Le Morena.

I wish that pilgrim was me  
Who put a stone under his head to sleep  
In the night he dreamed - being nearer  
Being nearer to the Lord.

#### C 95/9

Felenga tswa-tswa-tswa  
O re lebe ka tsalano  
Utlwa ga re rapela

In the desert he was troubled  
Look at us with friendship  
Hear when we pray

C 95/10

Jesu ka poifo ya 'go  
Ka tlalelo mo tshimong  
Ka mokgoro le dimapo  
Ka mebitlwa mo tihogong  
Ka lerumo le ditshotlo  
Ka lefifi le ditlhong  
Re go bitsa ka bonolo

Jesus in your reverence  
In tribulations in the garden  
With the cross and nails  
With thorns on the head  
With the spear and mockings  
With darkness and shame  
We humbly call unto you

C 95/11

Jesu ka kgaogo ya 'go  
Ka go lala mophupung  
Ka go tihaba ga lebitla  
Ka go rula mo losong  
Wena yo o na wa tihatlhoga  
Le go tsena mo pusong  
Kgosi, re a ikobela

Jesus, through your death  
BY lying in the grave  
By the piercing pain of the grave  
By the resurrection from the dead  
You who ascended  
And to enter into the kingdom  
King, we humble ourselves before  
you.

C 95/12

Mae-mae-mae-mae-mae

Mae-mae-mae-mae (humming)

Ke dumetse ho Morena  
Ke mo neile pelo ea ka  
O ineetse ho mpoloka  
Ke mo rata bakeng lena  
Lefu la hae le a mphedisa  
Rato la hae le a nthabisa

I have believed in the Lord  
I have given Him my heart  
He has offered to save me  
I love Him for that reason  
His death gives me life  
His love makes me happy

C 95/13

Pele e tla re meso  
Metsi a boitshegang  
A gago a re mimle  
*Soprano (S):* Thuso ya rona  
*Alto, Tenor, Bass:* Re lelela Morena  
*S:* Yo dirileng  
*A, T, B,:* Legodimo le lefatshe  
*S:* A go bakwe Jesu  
*A, T, B:* Alleluya, Alleluya  
*S:* Morena wa rona  
*A, T, B,:* Alleluya, Alleluya  
*S:* Kgosi ya dikgosi  
*A, T, B:* Alleluya, Alleluya  
*S:* Ke ene lesedi  
*A, T, B,:* Alleluya, Alleluya  
*S:* Lesedi la rona  
*All:* Ke ena ya tla retsenya legodimong.

Before dawn comes  
The great water  
That carried us  
Our help  
We cry for the Lord  
Who created  
Heaven and Earth  
Glory be to Jesus  
Alleluya, Alleluya  
Our Lord  
Alleluya, Alleluya  
King of Kings  
Alleluya, Alleluya  
He is the light  
Alleluya, Alleluya  
Our light  
He is the one who will lead us into  
heaven.

C 95/14

Ruri, ruri lefa le falotse  
Nope e kgwagetse jaoka nonyane  
Mo motlhaleng was ene mothaisi  
Mogala watshawanela go kgaoga  
Ruri mekgwa ya rona e gona

Truly, truly, even if we have survived  
(?) is hanging like a bird  
On the trails of the hunter  
The rope has had to break  
Truly we have our ways

Re utlwa re tshwana lenonyane  
A go bwe, a go bakwe

We feel like a bird  
Jesus, the Son of God.

Ruri, ruri le fa le falotse  
Nope e falotse jaaka nonyane  
Mo mothleng wa ene mothaisi  
Mogola wa tshwanela go kgaoga  
Ruri mekgwa ya rona e gona  
Re utlwa retshwana le nonyane  
A go bakwe, a go bakwe  
Jesu Morwa Modimo

Truly, truly, even if we have survived  
(?)has escaped like a bird  
On the trails of the hunter  
The rope has had to break  
Truly we have our ways  
We feel like a bird  
Let him be praised, let him be praised  
Jesus the Son of God.

### C 95/15

Ke Sekilwe ke Jesu  
Ke dutse ho yena  
Fubeng sa hae kajeno  
Ke a kgatholaha  
Ke yena ya leng thapelong tsarona  
Yena ya re shwetseng  
Ke botshabelo ba rona  
O utlwa ha re bitsa hoyena  
Jesu morena ya re shwetseng.

I am carried by Jesus  
I abide in him  
Against his breast today  
I rest.  
He is in our prayers  
The one who died for us,  
He is our fortress;  
He hears us when we call on Him.  
Jesus, the Lord, who died for us.

### C 96/16

Tsohang masole le rapele  
Eto la rona le telele  
Are kukeng dihlobo tsa rona,  
dihlobo tsa rona tsa moya  
Ntwa ya rona ese e qadile  
eleng ya moya  
Sa rona ke tiholo ho Jesu  
ya refang matla

Stand up Soldiers and pray  
For our journey is long  
Let's take up our arms  
Our spiritual armaments

Our spiritual warfare has started  
Ours is victory in Jesus  
Who gives us strength.

### 2.The St. Agnes Guild Song

Kgethang ka lehlohonolo  
Wena mo swela tumelo  
Le morweetsana ya tshepo  
O re latele baroki  
Ee, e ka kgona re roke  
Ene senatla se sentle  
Se lwanela Jesu Krete  
Ka ntwana e matlho a montsho

Choose with fortune  
You martyr  
And the trusting girl  
Bring us praise singers.  
Yes, we have to praise  
She who is the wonderful heroine  
Who fought for Jesus Christ  
In an intensive battle.

O re ke mohapa tiholo  
Tse fokolang tsa lefatshe  
Tse kgethilweng ke Modimo  
Di tla tswa dintwa tse maatla

She said, He is the conqueror.  
The weak of the work  
Chosen by God  
Will produce victorious battles.

Ruri tse maatla tsa Roma  
Tsa na tsa hlolwa ke ene  
Ya hlahlogelang segolong  
A ba a du'a ha habo

Indeed, the powerful of Rome  
Were conquered by Him  
The one who ascended to the highest  
And He sat at His home / heaven.

Motse wa Roma wa duma  
Ke mo go swetseng tumelo  
Le mo mopostolo Petoro  
Le Paulose bahale

The city of Rome roared  
Where people died for the faith  
And where the Apostle Peter  
And Paul were heroes

Bao ba ileng ba lwana  
Dintwa tse dingwe tse molemo  
Ee, Kreste itukisetsa  
Go ba latela Jehova

Who fought  
Other holy wars  
Yes, Christ was prepared  
To follow them Jehova.

### 3. Translations of the Informal Sermons during the Revival for 1995

#### S 95/1

Ka nako ye ka letsatsi la ntlha la beke,  
ba tsayo leeto, batho ba ba  
ne batshwenyegile:-  
Ba fitlhela lentswe le butswa  
Ba fitlhela Jesu a seyo.  
Lebitla la Jesu le lolea.

At this time, on the first day  
of the week, they took a journey  
these people were worried.  
They found that the stone  
at the mouth of the tomb  
was moved and the body of Jesus was not  
there.

Banna ba babedi ba a ba botsa gore  
ba batlelang motshedi mo baswing.

It was empty. Two men asked them  
why they were looking for someone who is  
alive from the dead.

Motšha fetoga ka sena sebaka;  
gore o fitlhe kwa gae o le motho  
o mošwa  
Go na le mabitla a o suthang;  
A re tsogeng le Jesu gompiono.

Youth, repent at this time  
that you may arrive in heaven (home)  
a new person.  
There are moving graves;  
Let us resurrect with Jesus today.

#### S 95/2

Luka, o rata go bua le motho ka  
molaetsa wa tsogo ya Morena Jesu;  
Basadi fa ba bona lebitla le butswa  
ba tshoga;  
Barategi Moreneng! Kajeno Jesu Kreste  
o batla go tsena dipelong tsa rona

Luke wants to speak to a person  
about the message of Jesus' resurrection.  
Women were afraid when they saw the  
opened tomb  
Beloved in the Lord, today, Jesus Christ  
wants to get into our hearts.

#### S 95/3

Batswadi baaka ba barategang;  
Le nna ke ikopela go Modimo gore  
ke fitlhe legodimong.

My beloved parents,  
I also ask God that I may arrive in heaven.

#### S 95/4

Alleluya, barategi; Alleluya, Alleluya!  
Ke nako ya gore re pholosiwe  
barategi, mme re tle go paka.

Alleluya, beloved, alleluya, alleluya!  
Now is the time for us to be saved.  
beloved, so that we can glorify Him.

#### S 95/5

Ndizi buza ukuthi, namhlanje

I ask myself, today

ndi muamkele uJesu na?  
Se ingathi a nga ngena  
entliziweni yam: Nge li langa  
aVusiwe ngalo.

S 95/6

Motlhomongwe Jesu yo, Kgale  
a sule pelong ya gago:  
Metsamayo ya gago; le dipuo  
tsa gago di tlile go re bontsha  
gore Jesu kgale a sule mo pelong ya  
gago.

Tsayang leeto bomme, bontate,  
batsha mme le ikopeleng mowa  
o o boitshepo, gore o re tsosolose  
mme re fetoge.

Morutabana, le wena o nang le BA  
ipatlisisise; mme o tsoge le Morena  
Jesu.

S 95/7

E ka ba o na le kagisho  
le bakererki ka wena le baagisane  
ka wena?

O bokgakala jo bo kae le Jesu:  
wena mokaulengwe?

Ke rata re ka tsalwa loša, ra  
tlogela ditiro tsa rona tsa kgale.

A ke Mowa wa Modimo o  
tshologele mo go rona:-

Iketele, mme o ipone gore o ntse jang.  
Fa o itebelela mo seiponeng;  
o yo montle, A ka mo gareng ga gago  
go Siame?

have I accepted Jesus?:  
I wish that He would get into  
my heart; especially on this day  
of His resurrection.

Perhaps this Jesus has long been  
dead in your heart:  
Your way of living; your conversation will  
show us that Jesus has long been dead  
in your heart.

Mothers, Fathers, youth, take this journey  
and ask that the Holy Spirit receive our  
souls so that we may change.

Teacher, and you who have graduated  
(BA), make an introspection, and rise  
with the Lord Jesus.

Do you have peace  
with your fellow church members and  
neighbours?  
My friend! How far are you from Jesus?

I wish that we can be born again, and  
leave our old deeds.  
May God's Spirit be poured on us  
visit yourself and discover yourself.  
When you look at yourself in the mirror;  
are you good, are you good inside?

4. Translations of the Informal Sermonettes during the Revival for 1996

S 96/1

Ke ya go bofolola gompiano;  
Fa go na le moeng gare ga rona,  
a a bofologe gompiano, ka madi  
a ga Jesu.  
Ikgetheleng yo o le tla Modirelang.  
A ke o mo leke, mme o tla bona  
gore Modimo wa tshela.

I release you today!  
If there is a visitor among us  
Let him / her be unchained today  
through the blood of Jesus.  
Choose whom you will serve.  
Just try Him, and you will discover  
That God is alive.

S 96/2

Bana beso re popo ya matsogo a  
mmopi ke a le leboga lona ba lo  
itshwentseng go tla moketeng wa  
Paseka; Ke a itse gore ba bangwe ba  
tlogetse balwetsi, ba bangwe ba tlogetse  
masea.

Moletsa o re, ikgetheleng yo le tla  
modirelang gompiano;  
Mantswe a a buwa le Moruti,

Brothers, sisters, we are the creation of  
the Creator. I thank you, you who took  
pains to come to the Passover feast.  
I know that others left the sick and

babies behind.  
The message says: choose who you  
will serve today;  
These words talk to the priest,

Mme, Ntate, ngwana, Motšha, legodu  
kapa molotsana.  
Re tshela ka thata, re palelwa ke  
go rapela;  
Satane o re bofa maoto le mabogo.  
Mme Jeremia o re fa tšhono,  
ya gore re ikgethele, phirimaneng  
ye e botlhoko.

#### S 96/3

A re itumeleng phuthego, go  
supa gore re golotswe.  
Re tlhapisitswe mo mading a ga  
Kreste, mme dibe tse di mašwe  
di setse sefapanong.

#### S 96/4

Go buiwa ka dikeetane; dikeetane  
tse di kileng tsa golega Motho  
Kwa tshimong ya Edene;  
Kreste a re o di golotse  
dikeetane tseo.  
Mme Kreste a golola batho  
mo go golegweng; fela ga -  
twe Motho;- a ikgethele gore  
o rata go sala o golegilwe  
Kgotsa o batla go gololwa;  
Dikeetane tse e ne e le lefufa.

#### S 96/5

Balsraele ba ne ba tlhoka tse, mme  
fa Jeremia a ba bolelela gore  
Modimo o reng ba mo tlhoya  
Fela Modimo o ne a mo golola.  
A bona bopelotlhomogi go Modimo.  
Jeremia yo, o kile a tshwenyega  
ka matlotla o gagabo, a rata go a tsosa.  
Gompieno, Kreste o tshwenyegile  
ka modiradibe;  
Mme o rata go tsosa matlotla  
a a sentsweng ke Satane  
e leng rona batho.  
Motho yo botlhale a ka ikgethela  
Jesu yo o tlhotseng;  
Fela fa o sa batle o tla sala  
o bofilwe ke dikeetane tsa sebe  
A wena mophuthego o ipaakantse  
go tsoga le Morena Jesu;  
Kapa o santse o rata go  
boela dibeng tsa gago, tse o  
neng o phela ka tsone?

#### S 96/6

Ke gopola nako e re kileng ra ba  
botshwarwa kwa Egepeto;  
Kileng ka latlha dibe teng.

mother, father, child, youth, thief  
or the craftiest peron.  
We live under difficult conditions  
we are unable to pray.  
The devil binds our feet and hands.  
But Jeremiah gives us a chance,  
that we may choose for ourselves,  
on this sorrowful evening.

Let us be jubilant, congregation,  
to show that we are freed.  
We have been washed in the blood  
of Christ, and our worst sins have been  
left on the cross.

The talk is about chains, chains  
which bound man in the Garden  
of Eden;  
Christ says He has unfastened those  
chains.  
And Christ unchained people who were  
bound, but it is said a person should  
choose;- whether he / she prefers to  
remain bound or wants to be unchained.

These chains were jealousy.

The Israelites lacked these  
Jeremiah told them God's message  
and they hated him.  
But God released him.  
He found mercy in God.  
This Jeremiah got worried about  
the ruins of Israel and wanted to rebuild them  
Today, Christ is worried about this sinner

And He wants to rebuild the ruins  
caused by the devil, which are  
we the people.  
A wise person shall choose Jesus  
who conquered.  
But if you don't want, you will remain  
fastened by the chains of sin.  
What about you church goer, are you  
prepared to resurrect with the Lord Jesus?  
Or do you want to return to your sins,  
with which you have been living?

I remember the time when we  
were in bondage in Egypt;  
I threw away my sins. And the

Mme Morena a raya morafe wa  
gagwe a re; boela gae Kanana.  
Jesu Krete o re bofoletse  
dikeetaneng tsa sebe.  
Kajeno lena mokreste o etsang?  
Hona, joalo, ke nako ya ho  
lokololwa, eseng hosasa;  
O bine joaloka mmina thoko  
yo o a reng; Ee, kajeno ke  
thabile ke ngwana wa Modimo.

S 96/7

Ke kopa gore ditsala lo tseyeng  
leeto: Mme Ke fa ba bararo sebaka  
fela.

CHORUS, beginning *Boha seema, fa ba hlaha ka khoro*

Mo o leng teng; mo o tletseng  
Mamphemphe a sebe; Fela Jesu  
o re; Bosigo jo, ke go golotse  
fa e le gore o ikemiseditse.

CHORUS, beginning *Ha tsela e le thata rapela*

Dira tshwetso tsala, E re ka  
leeto le, o ke o fetoge, o boele morago.

Tlogela ditsela tsa lefatshe le tse  
di sa siamang.  
Bosigong jo, Krete wa go  
tlamolola, fa a le tseleng go  
ya Babilona.  
Fa o sa rate go tsamaya  
le Jesu lesa!  
Go teng nako ya kotulo; O  
ka dira dibe, fela di na le moputso  
wa tsone.  
Kreste ga a pateletse motho;  
Empa motho wa ikgethela  
Moya o fokela ko o ratang teng.

S 96/8

Jesu Krete o ne a tshwere  
loeto lo lo thata; mme a re;  
fa e le wena, ke go lokolola  
mo matlhekgeng;  
Ke emisiwa ke monwana yo  
o ntshupileng.

CHORUS: *Inkululeko Nkosi yam (x5)*

Ga ke itse gore monwana yo,  
o supile ntlha efe?  
Bangwe ba sheba Moruti, fela  
monwana yo o supile wena tsala.

Lord told His people, saying:  
Return home to Canaan.  
Jesus Christ has released us from  
the chains of sin.  
This today, christian, what are you doing?  
This very time, is the time for you to be  
unchained, not tomorrow,  
and sing like a praise singer who says,  
Yes, today, I am happy,  
I am the child of God.

Friends, I ask you to take the journey;  
and I give a chance to preach,  
to three people only.

There where you are; full of the  
worst sins, Jesus however says,  
"This night, I have released you,  
but only if you are prepared."

Take a decision friend, and through this  
journey, get changed and return from  
your sins.  
Leave the bad ways of this world.

This night, Christ unchains you, as  
He is on the way to Babylon.

If you do not want to go with Jesus,  
do not go.  
There is time for reaping; You may  
sin, but sin does have its wages.

Christ does not force anyone  
But anyone chooses for himself / herself  
The wind blows wherever it pleases.

Jesus Christ was on a difficult journey,  
and said, "As for you, I have released  
you from wreckages.

I am made to stand, by the finger that  
is pointing at me.

The freedom of my Lord.

I do not know in which direction this finger  
is pointing.  
Other people look at the priest, but  
this finger is pointing at you, my friend.

Fa e le wena, go tla tswa  
mo go wena, gore a o  
ikgethela go tsamaya le Jesu.

S 96/9

Monna, erile a kopana le madi a Jesu  
sefapanong; A lemoga gore o ne  
a le mo sedibeng sa sebe.  
Di teng dilo tse di tshwereng banna le basadi;  
Mme mohau wa Jesu o re emetse  
gore re tswa botshwarong re phologe.

S 96/10

Gompieno re bofолоlwa ka madi  
a ga Kreste;  
Mme lentswe le bua le nna le  
wena gore re amogele Kreste,  
mo dipelong tsa rona,  
Fa o setse o sule, ke katlholo  
fela.  
Mme mo direle o sa le mo  
lefatsheng;  
Kreste o tlile mo lefatsheng go  
tla go re funolola mo dikeetaneng  
tsa ga Satane.  
Wena o ikgethelang?  
Go gololwa ke Kreste Jesu?  
Kapa, go bofiwa ke Satane?

S 96/11

Mafoko a letsatsila gompieno,  
Modimo o dira dikgagamato  
Batho ba kōba ditlhogo, ba thlabiwa ke ditlhong  
Buka ya ga moprofeta Jeremia  
e bua le rona.  
Jeremia o ne a bitšwa a le dingwaga  
di le robedi;  
A inyatsa a re o sa le monnye.

Mme Modimo wa re; ke go kgethile  
o sa le popelong ya ga mmago  
Ka gore nnete ga e ratwe; Re  
utlwa ka moo Jeremia, a tshwerweng  
a tsenngwa mo Kgolegelong;  
Mme kajeno Modimo o re; ke ya go  
bofolola dikeetaneng tse o leng go  
tsona;  
Wena o ka ithophela gore a o  
rata go ntshala morago, kapa o  
rata go iphelela fela.  
Go ne go na le mme wa mohumi,  
a na le morwa;  
Morwa wa mohumi o ne a na le tsala  
ya motlhoki.  
Morwa wa mohumi a rata yo wa

As for you, it will depend on you  
whether you choose to go with Jesus.

Coming across the blood of Jesus  
a man started to realise that he has  
been deep in the well of sin.  
There are things that are holding back  
men and women. The grace of Jesus is  
waiting for us to come out of bondage and  
be saved.

Today we are being unchained by the  
blood of Christ;  
And the word speaks to you  
and me, that we should accept  
Christ in our hearts.  
When you are already dead, only  
judgement remains.  
Do serve Him while still on earth.

Christ came to the world to release  
us from the chains of Satan.

What do you choose?  
To be released by Christ Jesus?  
Or, to be bound by Satan?

In the words of today,  
God does wonders.  
People bow their heads in shame.  
The book of the Prophet Jeremiah  
talks to us.  
Jeremiah was called when he was  
eight years old.  
He looked down on himself, saying that  
he was young.  
God said, "I chose you when you were  
still in your mothers' womb."  
Because the truth is frowned upon,  
We learn how Jeremiah was  
arrested and thrown into gaol.  
But today, God says, "I am releasing you  
from the chains you are in."

You can choose for yourself whether  
you want to follow me, or  
to live as you like.  
There was a rich woman who had a son.

The rich woman's son had a poor friend.  
He loved him very much and always  
shared food with him. Whenever he

motlhoki, a mo fa dijo fa a  
tshwerwe ke tlala; A ya le ene  
kwa ga bome;

Mme wa mohumi o ne a tenega;  
Ngwana wa mohumi o ne a kopa  
dijo mo go mmagwe; mmagwe a fa

ngwana wa modidi magogo;  
Ngwana wa motlhoki o ne a  
araba mme o a re; Ga o  
direle nna, wa itirela.  
Ka tsasi le lengwe, Mmamohumi  
a dira skaftini mme a se fa  
ngwana yo a tshetse chefu; Fa a  
mo fa ngwana a re; ga o direle nna  
wa itirela.  
Ke fa ngwana wa motlhoki a ja dijo,  
a tihokofala.  
Baratiwa, re dira ditiro tse di maswe  
re nagana gore re a ba tihokofatsa,  
kante go utlwa rona botlhoko,  
re sala ka matswalo.

#### S 96/12

Bomme le borre go a utlwagala gore  
bosigo jo, re ya re lebile kae; ke  
bosigo jo bo khutsitseng, jo bo sa  
batleng leratla.  
Gompieno ke kgaotse dikeetane  
tse di ne di go fasitse;  
Morwa Modimo a re, " Kajeno ke go  
golotse, ka go go swela sefapanong.  
Fela fa o rata o tla ntshala morago."  
Kreste o bua ka motho mang le mang,  
e seng bakreste fela.  
Fa o sa rate go ntshala morago,  
boela kwa o tswang teng;  
O ne o ntsha madi, o reka motho  
go ya go go bolaela yo o sa mo rateng.  
O dira ka letsogo le kobong  
O tla fumana moputso ka  
letsatsi la bofelo - Katlhola fela.  
Re tloile, baruti, banka rona,  
baagisane, bagolo ba kereke.  
A re tlogeleng dipuo tse di  
maswe, mme re tsamaye le Jesu.  
O ka fenyha dilo tsotlhe fa o  
tsamaya, o robala le Jesu.  
Bangwe ba re, Beibele ke  
story, ba e tseba go tswa kwa  
tshimologong go ya bofelong.  
Empa ga ba rate go dira ditiro  
tsa Modimo.

#### S 96/13

Re tshabela mathata a rona, re  
palelwa ke go emelelana le one,

was hungry, he took him to his home.  
The rich woman became annoyed.  
The rich woman's son asked his mother  
for food, and she gave the poor boy  
leftovers.

The poor boy replied and said,  
"You are not doing this to me but  
to yourself."

One day, the rich woman prepared  
food, poisoned it and gave it to the  
poor child.  
The poor boy, receiving the food, said,  
"You are not doing this for me but for  
yourself."

The poor child ate the food and died.

Beloved, we do evil deeds, meaning  
to hurt others; in return  
we are hurt; we are left  
with a guilty conscience.

Mother and fathers, tonight there is a  
feeling of where we are going. It is  
a silent night, that does not want noise.

Today, I have broken the chains  
that had fastened you.  
The Son of God says, "Today, I have  
released you, by dying for you on the cross  
If you like, you will follow me."  
Christ talks about anyone, not only  
Christians.  
If you do not want to follow me,  
go back where you came from.  
You used to pay money to somebody  
to go and kill for you the one you did not like  
You thrive on bribery. You will  
get a reward on the last day -  
which is only condemnation.  
We hate priests, fellows, neighbours,  
church elders.  
Let us abandon bad talks, and walk  
with Jesus.  
You can overcome all things, when  
you walk and sleep with Jesus.  
Others say, "The Bible is just a story."  
They know it from beginning to end.

But they do not want to do the deeds  
of God.

We run away from our problems, we  
are unable to stand against them. But

fela Jesu o ne a wa a tsoga  
Ka sefapaano, a ya pele ka loeto.  
Molaetsa wa gompiano ke kgololosego,  
Molaetsa wa topoioloi,  
Molaetsa wa kutlwelobotlhoko.  
Jesu Krete o ne a lopa maatla  
a Modimo Rara, gore a golole  
motho mo sebeng.  
Jesu o ne a utlwisisa, mmefa  
a utlwa botlhoko o ne a lopa  
maatla go tswa go Modimo.  
Fa a kopile, motho o ne a utlwa  
mme Kgololosego e be teng.

A le rona, re diriseng maatlana,  
fa re le mo monateng le mo  
mathateng.  
Lorato lwa boamaruri le le  
batlwang ke Krete, ke lone le  
fang Kgololosego.  
Sekai: Fa batswadi ba kolobetsa  
ngwana, ba dumela gore ba mo  
abela Modimo.  
Fela fa ngwana a tlhokofala  
ba mo lelela. Goreng ba lla ba  
lebetse tshepiso ya bone,  
fe ba e tsereng pele ga moruti  
le phuthego.

## **5. Choruses for 1996**

### 96/1

The!u moya, The!u moya (x2)  
The!u moya, Nkosi (x2)

### C 96/2

Jesu ke mmoloki wa ka  
o nkgethetse bodulo  
Ke ya mo rata hoba a nthata  
O nneile bophelo.

### C 96/3

Taba ya ka fatsheng lena  
Ke gore ke rate Jesu  
Le go tsebisa baheso  
Thabo e bonoang go eena.  
Lefu la hae lea mphedisa.  
Rato la hae lea nkhodisa.

### C 96/4

Ke se ke utlwile  
Jesu fa o mpitsa  
O mpona ke latlhigile  
U re, wa mpholosa.  
E ke dumetse

Jesus fell and rose with the cross  
and continued His journey.  
Today's message is freedom, the  
message of deliverance,  
the message of mercy.  
Jesus Christ asked God the Father  
for strength to save humanity from sin.

Jesus was understanding and when He  
felt pain, He asked for strength from God.

Having asked, man obeyed and salvation  
came.

May we also use this strength  
when we are in comfort as well  
as in difficulties.  
True love that Christ wants  
is the one that brings salvation.

e.g. When parents take the child for  
baptism, they agree that they give the  
child to God.  
But when the child dies, they cry for him.  
Why do they cry? They have forgotten  
their promise which they made before  
the priest and the congregation.

Pour the Spirit (x2)  
Pour the Spirit, Lord. (x2)

Jesus is my Saviour  
He selected a place for me.  
I love Him because He loves me.  
He gave me life.

My purpose in this world  
is to love Jesus  
And to let people know  
The joy that is found in Him.  
His death makes me live.  
His love satisfies me.

I have already heard  
Jesus when you called me,  
Seeing me wandering,  
Saying, you will save me.  
Yes, I have agreed,

Nthole, Morena.  
Ntlhatswe, tlhokodisise  
Ke be notle le 'na.

Find me, Lord.  
Wash and cleanse me  
So that I can be clean.

C 96/5

Boha seema, fa ba hlaha ka khoro  
Jerusalem e mocha.  
Pina tsa bona tse tsoisoang ke nyakallo.  
Ke madi a konyana.

Look at the entrance as they appear  
through the gate - The new Jerusalem.  
Their songs are raised with joy.  
It is the blood of the Lamb.

C 96/6

Ha tsela e le thata rapela  
Rapela....Rapela (x4)

When the road is difficult, pray  
Pray.....Pray (x4)

C 96/7

Inkululeko Nkosi yam (x5).

The freedom of my Lord. (x5)

C 96/8

Bitso la ka, kajeno o le ngole  
Le seka la tlôga bukeng ya hao.  
Nako ya ka ha e fitlha, u nthole.  
Ke ngwana hao; Ke ngwana hao.

Write my name, today.  
Let it not be removed from your book.  
When my time comes, do find me.  
I am your child, I am your child.

C 96/9

Ndine 'zono ezinintsi (x2)  
Ezi hluphu 'moya wam.  
Wa khathazeka umoya wam.  
Thelu 'moya, Nkosi yam (x4)

I have a lot of sins (x2)  
Which trouble my soul.  
My soul is disturbed.  
Pour out the Spirit, my Lord (x4)

C 96/10

Tsela ka e bona - E nyolohang  
E kena hodimo - Moo ho kganyang  
Mangeloi a matle - A hoetlhe a nkisa  
Ho Morena (x2)

I saw the ascending road,  
Reaching up to heaven, where there is  
Splendour. Beautiful angels took me  
To the Lord (x2)

C 96/11

Siya lefatshe le tsa lona  
O rwale sefapaano o ntatele (x2)

Leave the world and all that belongs  
To it. Carry the cross and follow me.  
(x2)

C 96/12

O! Mpho le monyetla wa tokollo.  
Le pholoso e sa feleng  
Modimo re boka wena  
Ka seo o se entseng.  
O botshabelo ba rona  
Le pholosa ka ho se feleng  
Le tokollo pheletsang.

Oh! What a gift and privilege  
Of deliverance and eternal salvation.  
God, we thank you  
For what you have done.  
You are our fortress  
And salvation forever  
And deliverance from condemnation

C 96/13

Modimo re boka wena  
Tsohle di entswe ke wena  
Modimo re boka wena (x4)

God, we thank you  
For everything is done  
By and through you.  
God, we thank you (x4)

C 96/14

Njalo, Njalo siyathandaza  
Siyantikela, siyadumisa (x6)

Everytime, Everytime we pray  
We offer, we praise (x6)

C 96/15

Ba inkele sefapano  
mahetleng a bona  
Ba tie ba shoele dikano  
Tsee ba le ho tsona.

They must carry their cross  
On their shoulders,  
So as to die for their vows  
which they have taken.

C 96/16

O! ke tsatsi tsatsi la mahlomola  
Tsatsi leo morena nea  
Rona a shweleng ka lona.

Oh! This is the day.  
The day that is full of sorrow.  
This is the day our Lord died

## **APPENDIX 2 : INTERVIEW WITH FR. LESLIE KOTSI**

**(April 1994)**

Fr. Leslie Kotsi was the rector of St. Augustine's Anglican Church, Thaba 'Nchu.

### **1. What percentage of your congregation are able to read and write?**

- in Tswana - 100% of the young people.
- in English and Afrikaans - 20% of the adults.

This area is mostly Tswana speaking. Most of the young people go to school, and the drop-out rate is low.

### **2. How does this influence your services?**

"I try to be as simple as I can"

" Don't be a sophisticated man with high theology"

In the 36 outstations of the parish, the situation is very different from that in the town of Thaba 'Nchu itself. In the outstations, of which St. Peter's-on-the-Hill was once one, the majority of the older people are unable to read and write.

In Thaba 'Nchu, Fr Khotsi uses the new (1989) Anglican Prayer Book in its Tswana translation, for the sake of the young members of the congregation. In the rural congregations, the old version, known as the South African Prayer Book, based on the 1662 prayer book, is used. The older people prefer this service.

### **3. To what extent do you use visual symbols in your worship, preaching and teaching?**

"We do use symbols, especially during Lent."

The Stations of the Cross, and the Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday have tremendous impact on their lives.

There are no statues in the church, but Fr Khotsi believes that they would be helpful, and hopes to acquire some in the future.

The reserved sacrament is kept in the church, and is used for taking communion to the sick.

#### **4. Is illiteracy a problem for you?**

“Yes, especially among the adults.”

Fr Kotsi went on to explain that communication with his congregation is not a major problem, as he relies largely on verbal communication in their mother tongue. Unlike some of his missionary predecessors, and most of his white colleagues today, he does not have to rely on an interpreter. He consciously tries to be simple, in order to reach the people, and encourages them to ask questions after services.

The congregation is partly rural and partly urban. In addition, he has the 36 outstations, which are composed mainly of farm labourers and their families. Malnutrition is often a problem in the rural areas.

Fr Kotsi considered his parish an excellent training parish for newly ordained clergy, because they are exposed to such a variety of situations.

Unemployment is a major problem in Thaba 'Nchu. Fr Kotsi estimated that 75% of his congregation do not have regular work. However, their commitment to the church is remarkable. Attendance at Sunday services is high, and there is a feeling of excitement among them. Giving has also increased. Students are

encouraged to give R2.00 per month, pensioners R4.00 per month, workers R10.00 per month, and professionals R30.00.

Funerals are major occasions for the whole community, and involve an all-night vigil similar to that held at Easter. Food is also cooked and served outside the church throughout the night, for those participating.

#### **5. Comments on hymns and choruses.**

The choir is responsible for choosing hymns and choruses to be used in services.

A favourite hymn is Rock of Ages, and Amazing Grace is also popular. Most hymns tend to be direct translations of hymns of European origin into Tswana or Sesotho.

The congregation also enjoys singing the less formal choruses. A favourite chorus has the simple words "Re ya leboga. Amen" meaning "Thankyou. Amen." These words are sung over and over again.

#### **6. Comments on the Easter Service.**

Easter is the most important time of the year for the Anglican congregation at Thaba 'Nchu. Even lapsed members of the church make an effort to be present at the Easter vigil. The Renewal of Baptismal vows is an impressive ceremony, and moves all who attend.

The Easter congregation in 1994 was 1 200, although between three and four thousand people were present at 4.00 am on Easter morning.

At the later service, at 10.00 am on Easter morning, there were approximately 2500 communicants.

All food for the vigil was donated. No money had to be spent on food. One member of the congregation donated a cow, and two others gave sheep.

The service began at 6.30 p.m on the Saturday evening with the Lighting of the New Fire, outside the church. Fr Khotsi baptised 59 children, and then led the congregation in the renewal of their baptismal vows. The admission of new members of the Mother's Union and St. Agnes Guild are seen as important parts of the service.

#### **7. Comments on the St. Agnes Guild.**

This is the guild for young girls. The meetings involve prayer and Bible Study. The leaders also arrange for teaching on topical issues. For example, local nurses were invited to give sex education to the members of the St. Agnes Guild. A young girl can join the guild before she is confirmed, but all have to be baptised members of the Anglican Church. In addition, all members of the St. Agnes Guild must be virgins, as St. Agnes was.

#### **8. Comments on the Mother's Union.**

The rules of the Mother's Union organisation state that it is open to any woman. However, among black congregations, only married women may join the Mother's Union. The leadership of the Mother's Union exercise strict discipline among their members. For example, an unmarried mother is forbidden from taking communion for one year after the birth of the child. This is not the decision of the church, or the clergy, but of the Mother's Union. After this period, the woman is reinstated, and the child may be baptised.

#### **9. General comments on the congregation of St. Augustine's , Thaba 'Nchu.**

The average Sunday congregation :

1st and 3rd Sunday's of the month - 7.30 am eucharist:150

2nd and 4th Sundays of the month - 10.00 am eucharist: 900-1000  
communicants, especially in Summer.

### **APPENDIX 3 : INTERVIEW WITH FR. ABRAHAM LIETA, EASTER 1996**

**1. Would you say that the Easter Vigil is the most important service of the year? Why?**

Yes. It is a Wonderful Experience. We are preparing for it all through Lent. There is a change, with excitement and expectation.

“Oh definitely. There are some who don't attend, you know, especially the men, there are some who just attend the Easter service. Then he says, “I've got enough for the whole year.” (laughs) So, it is a main one, it is where the Mothers' Union get vested, St. Agnes and everybody from the outstations is here. And you saw the number of Lay Ministers that were around there, I mean it was fantastic. I felt like introducing them and saying. “So and so from this, So and So from that side”, you see. So it is definitely the most important, more important than Christmas in our Black Tradition, because in Christmas you really struggle to get people to Church., because people have identified Christmas with friends, holidaying, going away. But Easter - everybody goes to his church.”

There were 1 200 communicants, but many more present, as, for instance, there were many young people.

**2. What changes have you personally made to the Vigil? Why?**

The Sound system is new, and we have a few problems with the microphone. It is still relatively new.

“Well, it's more a result of my background, where I'm used to continuous services, continual happenings. In the past there was something like, you do this, have a break, do that, have a break, and I thought that could bring in a bit

of ill discipline, because some people could be out, and then they still be out when we go to the next step. They could go to the shop. But if you have all of them here, even if some slumber and sleep, but they wake up in Church again. It is the total experience.

So, that's why I made a change. It's sort of like having all those - lighting of the Easter Candle, Liturgy of the Word, Renewal of Baptismal Vows. After starting the Eucharist, and then you have the vesting of the Mothers' Union and then you have the Eucharist, and then you have the procession. I had actually wanted to take a longer route, to go out, but I had to confer with the people, which is a good thing. This is my first Easter."

**3. What other Vigils take place during the year? When? Who leads them?**

This is the only one. There are other vigils in the Prayer Book, but I try them at Sasolburg and they say, "We don't know this."

Funerals - yes. The only vigils that we know would be Easter and funeral vigils or sometime for the unveiling of the tombstone. Although it's a different thing. It's a bit lighter, because the person has died. It's more like a celebration. It will be an all night vigil. In Sebokeng we cut out the thing of vigils, because people were getting killed. From that they said, "No more vigils. Only family members together, and the priest saying a prayer in the house."

But generally here it is being held. Lay ministers lead these vigils.

**4. Why are baptisms, enrolments of new guild members, etc. done at the Easter Vigil? Is there a special significance?**

Yes. Because, somebody explained it this way: He said, "St. Augustine is our Jerusalem. That's where we get to see people from the rest of the big family."

It was somebody from an outstation. It is the only time when St. Augustine is a parish. All members are there, you know.

In the past, I'm told, people used to stay here from Thursday, sleep here and so on, but Father Leslie changed this, because there are no good sleeping facilities around here, so it is a bit unfair. Why not have them come only on the Saturday night? Then, they are here for the whole night, and Sunday they can leave.

**5. What is the role of the various guilds in the life of the parish - the Bernard Mizeki and Mothers' Union, St. Agnes Guild?**

Well, Bernard Mizeki is more an evangelistic arm of the church, you know. They are also the ones who help with the vigil, not so much in the capacity of leading but of providing the music and preaching part of it and singing. So they provide a very big help. They are a great pastoral help in ministering to people where there is a bereavement, just to have them there singing those hymns and also providing those short sermonettes. It is a great help, definitely. So, I usually transport when I have a funeral, the Lay Minister who is the leader of the worship as well as some members of the Bernard Mizeki who will be going. People say, "OK This is our Church. and they are singing this rhythm, so our church is supporting us." With the result that if a case comes whereby none of the Bernard Mizeki people are able to go, they say, "The Church did not support us."

Where there is a funeral, especially where a member of the guild has died, or a family member, there is a ministry of presence, just being there and singing.

And then secondly, Bernard Mizeki does help. In their constitution there is a statement that they must do something for their church, they should report at every conference, what have they done? They are very good at raising money.

To the same extent, yes, the Mothers' Union, they also help the church, maybe not so much financially, but generally, because they provide some members of the council. They also lead the St. Agnes Guild.

The servers are also very good also at funerals, although mainly for the big services.

## **6. How do new guild members prepare for enrolment?**

They go through what they call a three months' probationary period. They go to a confession or have a counselling session. Their motivation is examined, and they are encouraged to become more active in the church.

So, that's what I did. I spoke with them, "What made you want to become a member of the Mothers' Union?" I asked them funny questions: "Is it because someone who was a member of the Mothers' Union cut a very good figure when she passes there and you say, 'My, I like that dress!' But then both mentioned that their mothers were members of MU and if you are a member of the Mothers' Union you are respectable. Even if a person is not a member of the Anglican Church, if you wear this uniform, they respect you.

They talk about discipline and the fact that, if you are just an ordinary member you can get cross with someone, but if you are wearing this emblem, you say, "I was told not to fight, not to do like that". You say, "You wait for me, when I get away and change these clothes, then I will come and show who I am." And then, by the time you take off the vestment, you start thinking, "Is it a really good idea to go and challenge this person?"

For three months, they are said to be "on trial". They wear black and white, and then they get told about Mothers' Union. And then of course you saw when they were being admitted. It is a very touching little service.

## Handbooks

Well, I know that there is a Mothers' Union one which is printed in English. St. Agnes Guild - it is the same, but the approach is different. They come up with a chorus, you know, I mean a very rousing chorus. Then, somewhere in the middle they come and sing a very traditional Song of Mary "My Soul doth Magnify the Lord" and in between they also sing another rousing hymn.

There is some creativity. What happens is each priest could do his own little thing depending on the local conditions.

### **7. Why was the organ introduced? Is it used every Sunday? Do the people like it?**

I was not here, but I think it was Fr. Leslie. That was his vision. He did his training, as a deacon and so on in a white parish. So, I think he felt that people must try to go up to that standard.

The challenge that I have is to try to excite people enough to want to learn how to play the organ, and to use it so it does not become a white elephant. We have someone who is originally from the catholic church. He does come - he is now an Anglican, but he has not got the same loyalty as someone who is originally Anglican.

### **Do most of the people enjoy the organ?**

Oh yes, they do. When he is around, people say, "Ah, now, this is the church." When we process in, he plays some nice music, which is very nice, I must say. And then you get the music, the organ, and then you've got the incense. We had a lot of incense tonight. You know, it just adds to the beautiful atmosphere. So people do like it, particularly when it comes to weddings, they really like

that. It's got a professional touch - the wedding march, and so on. Also at funerals, when they are held here. The family usually makes some arrangement, speaking to the conductor - "Please get that organist. Let him play." So, people do like it, but I need to tell them that we need local people to learn how to play.

**8. What is the indigenous term for the "Revival"? What does it mean?**

Mvuselelo, which means, "getting you woken up."

That which wakes you up - it is a thing of encouragement, it is a spiritual getting awake. And what happens is that each person has a chance to say something. This is the only time in the Anglican Church when every person, a child or old people, has got a chance to come up and say, from what has been read, I also want to come up and explain, or testify.

**Do you, as the rector, have any say as to who preaches or what is preached?**

No. Not exactly. And in fact, what happens is I was here for a short while, the first session of Mvuselelo and the M.C. had a lot of trouble getting people from the congregation to come up. And after a time, it dawned on me that it was because I am around. So, people don't want the priest to hear them preaching. They are lay people, and he could be critical of what they are saying. So I asked the M.C. what happened after I left. He said, "Father, I got more than the five I was looking for." Although sometimes I sneak in, when they are in the thick of it, and I just come in the back. Some of the things that they say are wonderful.

**Is the Revival always led by lay people? Is it ever acceptable for a priest to lead it?**

No, No. I think people would be intimidated by that. Unless you are a member of the Bernard Mizeki Guild as a priest. But even then when you are a member of Bernard Mizeki Guild you also preach according to their format, you know, about three minutes.

**Who decides on the text to be preached on?**

Well, with the Bernard Mizeki Guild, it is just those people. It is the chairman who decides on the text, I think, the one who has been designated to be the chairman for the evening. He is the one who says, "I need two men. Now two women, I need a young man. " So, they are the ones who decide. They pick up a text, you know, just a verse out there and you preach about it.

They just pick up a text, just a verse out there and they say, "You preach about it." But, sometimes they are quite spot on. I mean like the one they had from Jeremiah, the one about Babylon and the chains falling off, and so on. I thought it fitted very well as something that comes before the Easter vigil where you say Jesus has shattered the chains, you know, the fear of death, chains of sin., I though it fitted in very well. I was also intrigued by how did they come to that verse. I thought, "Why are they saying about Babylon?" until I saw about the chains. Then, I said, "Okay, it refers to salvation."

**9. How would you describe the relationship between the more formal service and the Revival?**

It's very difficult to explain it, because I had a very interesting thing happening yesterday. One of the Lay Ministers, the one who was doing so far the commentary for the readings, when we had the Liturgy of the Word, yesterday

we had the Seven Words. He said, "When we sing, we must sing Anglican hymns. You may sing Zionist hymns or choruses, but then you must end up by singing Anglican hymns."

But then later when he was preaching, he was M.C., he turned also to the Bernard Mizeki and said, "Come out with that rousing chorus."

So, it is very difficult to explain that relationship, it is sort of like, people want to have it separate. We have Anglicanism, then we have non-Anglican choruses, Methodist hymns as they would say. Sometimes you feel the need to sing those choruses, those non-Anglican hymns and then you also find at the service people go through singing formal hymns, and at the collection or at the peace then they sing choruses. But then, immediately after singing those vibrant hymns, when we say, "Now we come to the Eucharist", then it is back to the more formal hymns.

And they can fight you if you ever come up with a jazzed up version of what is said to be a very gentle communion hymn. They look at you and say, "No. that is not Anglican." But they are people who have just been through this good chorus and so on.

It is an uneasy relationship, but they exist side by side. You just have to try to balance it, you don't have to make a choice. I know of one priest who wouldn't allow Bernard Mizeki things in the church. Ultimately, there was a compromise. The collection could be done after he had made the dismissal.

People say, "We need these things", because if you only sing the European hymns, which are translated into our language, but still very Eurocentric in the sense that they are of European origin, people are not feeling very happy. They will end up attending these Zionist churches. We may not maybe lose members, but we lose that commitment, because they become nominal members but not really committed. You have to keep the two in tension.

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